

A photograph of three business professionals in a meeting. On the left, a man with glasses and a beard, wearing a grey suit, is gesturing with his hands while speaking. In the center, a woman with a large afro hairstyle, wearing a tan blazer, is smiling and looking towards the man. On the right, an older woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a white shirt, is looking towards the man. They are all looking at a document or laptop screen in front of them. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office setting with large windows.

ICMA

ICMA CREDENTIALING ADVISORY BOARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS AND
ANNUAL REPORTS**

June 2023

ICMA | credentialing program

ABOUT ICMA

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, advances professional local government through leadership, management, innovation, and ethics. ICMA provides member support; publications; data and information; peer and results-oriented assistance; and training and professional development to more than 12,000 city, town, and county experts and other individuals and organizations throughout the world. The management decisions made by ICMA's members affect millions of individuals living in thousands of communities, from small villages and towns to large metropolitan areas.

ICMA Credentialing Advisory Board Policies and Procedures
Review of Applications and Annual Reports
Updated May 2023

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To learn more about the ICMA Voluntary Credentialing Program, please visit icma.org/icma-voluntary-credentialing-program.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The ICMA Voluntary Credentialing Program recognizes professional local government managers who through their education and experience, their adherence to high standards of integrity, and their commitment to lifelong learning and professional development are deserving of the credential. Credentialed Managers gain this recognition from ICMA through a peer review credentialing process that emphasizes not only their participation in professional development activities but, more importantly, what they learned from these activities. ***What distinguishes Credentialed Managers and Candidates is their commitment to plan for continuous personal improvement, to reflect upon their development activities, and to document their learning for peer review.***

Credentialing Program Background

The ICMA Executive Board sought member input in 2001 on how to design a program to ensure that it will meet its intended purpose of recognizing professional local government managers and promoting lifelong learning. Members were encouraged to participate in discussions at state or affiliate meetings or communicate their views to any member of the ICMA Executive Board. In addition, a survey went out to provide an opportunity for members to comment on all aspects of the proposed program. The ICMA Executive Board adopted the policy outline of a voluntary credentialing program at its July 2001 meetings.

- ICMA President Dave Mora appointed a nine-member Credentialing Advisory Board to advise on implementation and on granting credentials. The first credentials were granted by the ICMA Executive Board at its May 2002 meeting.

The Credentialing Advisory Board (CAB) is responsible for implementing the Voluntary Credentialing Program and for reviewing and advising the ICMA Executive Board on issues related to the Program. Implementation includes 1) reviewing applications and making recommendations on granting credentials and 2) reviewing annual reports on professional development activities and what was learned.

CAB members are advised to:

- Not show favoritism toward applicants who are known socially or personally.
- Be thoughtful about e-mail communications—especially in light of public records laws.

II. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

- Staff assigns applications to two board members after verifying that the applicant:
 - is a Full Member of ICMA,
 - has completed the Management Assessment (formerly Applied Knowledge Assessment) within the past 3 years,
 - has a regionally accredited or DETC-accredited university listed in Who's Who
 - is not the subject of a current ethics investigation and has not been publicly censured within the last 5 years.
- The two board members determine first whether the applicant has the required executive experience and second whether the professional development plan is adequate. Review criteria are outlined below.
- For each application, the two board members can vote YES, NO, or MAYBE. The reviewers may confer as needed. If both reviewers vote YES on granting the credential, the recommendation goes forward to the member review period. If either board member votes NO or MAYBE, the application is reviewed by the full CAB during its monthly meeting.

- A final list of recommendations is completed in time to post online in the e-newsletter *Leadership Matters* for member perusal prior to submission to the ICMA Executive Board. A minimum of 14 days is allowed for member review before transmittal to the executive board.
- Before the e-newsletter *Leadership Matters* goes out, the CAB chair or ICMA staff should notify any members who are not recommended and the reason.

Local Government Executive Experience

Local government experience at the executive level differs from management experience at the department or program level. Experience at the executive level **entails leadership /oversight and decision-making responsibility for multiple departments, as well as responsibility for maintaining significant relationships with elected officials, appointed boards and commissions, and external stakeholders.**

Assessing Titles

Title is not necessarily descriptive of responsibilities. The following are some questions the CAB may have when assessing titles:

Q: *Does time spent as an Acting Manager count?*

A: Yes.

Q: *Does all time as a Deputy or Assistant count?*

A: Yes.

Q: *Does COG Director experience count?*

A: Yes.

Q: *What other titles in the organization may have full credit executive level responsibilities?*

A: Some titles, such as Management Services Director or Administrative Services Director, could either be a department head position or a full credit executive position. Ask the applicant to fill out the Other Experience Questionnaire.

Q: *Does “Assistant to” experience count?*

A: Generally, it does not because the “Assistant to” title implies a position that is project oriented and that is in a support role without broad executive level decision-making and supervisory authority. If there is a question about this, ask the applicant to fill out the Other Experience Questionnaire.

Q: *Does state league experience count?*

A: Yes. According to the ICMA Constitution, state municipal league staff are considered in service to local government, so broad executive or assistant experience with a state league would be eligible for full credit.

Q: *Does experience in a special district count?*

A: It depends. Some special districts have multi-responsibility functions. Follow up with the applicant to find out whether the manager of the single purpose district has responsibility across several functions within the district (some special districts have their own fire, police, medical, etc.). See Appendix E for a questionnaire to aid in this exchange.

Q: Do department head positions count?

A: Prior experience as a local government department head qualifies for half credit toward the required executive experience, provided the applicant is currently employed in an executive position in local government and has been employed in such a position for at least three years for credentialed manager status or one year for candidate status.

Q: How do we assess eligibility for half credit for other than local government experience?

A: An applicant whose primary experience has been in some area other than local government (such as significant executive experience in the military or in other levels of government) will be given the opportunity to demonstrate how the applicant’s prior experience qualifies for half credit toward required “executive experience” by filling out the Other Experience Questionnaire.

Table 1 (below) describes the qualifications needed for recognition as Credentialed Manager or Credentialed Manager Candidate depending on the applicant’s education and executive-level experience. Tables 2 and 3 show the requirements when the applicant seeks recognition based in part on half credit for department head experience. For half credit to be granted for non-executive level positions earlier in an applicant’s career, the applicant must currently be serving in an executive-level position. For applicants for credentialed manager status, their last three years of work must be as an executive in local government (full credit position). Credentialed manager *candidate* status requires only that the last year be executive experience. This local government executive experience must be the most recent work experience and the applicant must currently be in a local government executive position unless he or she is in transition. No more than six years’ credit will be given for “other” experience.

Graduation from an accredited program is required for degree credit. For the Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Public Policy (MPP) degrees this requires graduation from a program accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). The MPA and MPP are the most common NASPAA-accredited degrees, but other qualifying degrees under this requirement include the Master of Public Affairs and Master of Public Management degrees.

Table 1. Qualifying for Admission Entirely on Education and Executive-Level Experience

	Required Combination of Education and Years of Executive-Level Experience			
	MPA or MPP Degree plus...	Other Graduate Degree plus...	Bachelor's Degree plus...	Less than Bachelor's Degree plus...
Credentialed Manager	7 years of executive experience	8 years of executive experience	9 years of executive experience	15 years of executive experience
Credentialed Manager Candidate	5 years of executive experience	6 years of executive experience	7 years of executive experience	13 years of executive experience

*Credit can also be awarded to graduates of selected Leadership Development Programs (see p. 8).

Table 2. Qualifying for Credentialed Manager Status Based on Combination of Executive-Level and Department Head Experience

The applicant must be serving in an executive-level position and must have served at that level for at least 3 years			
If MPA or MPP degree... required 7 credit-years consist of full credit for years of executive level experience and half credit for experience as a department head	If other graduate degree... required 8 credit-years consist of full credit for years of executive level experience and half credit for experience as a department head	If bachelor's degree... required 9 credit-years consist of full credit for years of executive level experience and half credit for experience as a department head	If less than a bachelor's degree... required 15 credit-years consist of full credit for years of executive level experience and half credit for experience as a department head

*Credit can also be awarded to graduates of selected Leadership Development Programs (see below).

Table 3. Qualifying for Credentialed Manager CANDIDATE Status Based on Combination of Executive-Level and Department Head Experience

The applicant must be serving in an executive-level position and must have served at that level for at least 1 year			
If MPA or MPP degree... required 5 credit-years consist of full credit for years of executive level experience and half credit for experience as a department head	If other graduate degree... required 6 credit-years consist of full credit for years of executive level experience and half credit for experience as a department head	If bachelor's degree... required 7 credit-years consist of full credit for years of executive level experience and half credit for experience as a department head	If less than a bachelor's degree... required 13 credit-years consist of full credit for years of executive level experience and half credit for experience as a department head

*Credit can also be awarded to graduates of selected Leadership Development Programs (see below).

Other Executive Experience Issues

Q: Are life or retired members eligible to be credentialed?

A: The applicant must have been in service to a local government or must have clearly demonstrated a commitment and connection to the profession for the last 5 years.

Q: Do applicants receive credit for graduation from leadership development programs toward the credential?

A: They can get credit for the following programs:

ICMA Leadership Development Programs

- Leadership ICMA – one year
- Emerging Leaders Development Program – six months
- Mid-Career Managers Institute – six months
- Two ICMA leadership development programs BONUS – additional six months

Other Leadership Development Programs

- MMANC/SC Credentialed Government Leader Program – six months
- Certified Government Chief Information Officer Program – three months

Professional Development Plans

- **Professional Development Needs:** For the initial application, professional development needs are guided by the results of the Management Assessment (formerly Applied Knowledge Assessment). Because conditions and circumstances can change rapidly, the member may identify a specific need at any time and the member is encouraged to review and modify this section as appropriate.
- **Learning Goals:** There should be a statement of short term learning goals, i.e. what will be addressed in the coming year. The member should consider ICMA's Practices for Effective Local Government Management and Leadership and the results of their own Management Assessment in preparing their professional development plan and learning goals.
- **Planned Professional Development Activities:** This section should illustrate that the member has given appropriate consideration to how the member's learning goals for the year will be met. It is recognized that specific planned activities for the coming year are subject to change for many reasons. However, the member is encouraged to be as specific as possible regarding conferences, meetings, workshops, seminars, etc. that the member plans to attend.
- If more information needs to be added to the plan, forward or link to the sample plan located at <https://icma.org/credentialing-program-sample-annual-report> (under Career Development, Credentialing, Resources) to the applicant and request that the applicant add more information, copying the Credentialing Program Manager. See Appendix A for a sample communication. See Appendix F for a sample professional development plan.
- The Knowledge of the Code of Ethics (Integrity) item in the Management Assessment is based solely upon the ICMA Code of Ethics, so any plans including this item should possibly include a review of the Code of Ethics.

Q: *How specific should professional development plans be?*

A: The applicant will not always be able to indicate specific conference or workshop sessions in advance due to schedules not yet being published. Therefore, the CAB agreed that the focus of the plan should not be on specific activities, but directed toward what specific learning goals the member plans to accomplish and a general outline of how he or she plans to do so. The CAB has agreed to be conservative in reviewing plans having found that weak plans often lead to insufficient annual report. Please note that resources such as recommended reading and workshops, sample plans, and other resources can be found in the Credentialing Resources section of icma.org.

Q: *Can one type of activity make up the entire professional development plan?*

A: Yes. If a member plans to attend an intensive educational session that lasts 40 hours or more, such as the SEI Leadership Institute, that is fine. Also, if a member is in transition or is facing budget difficulties, relying on books, webinars, or podcasts focusing on professional development and leadership is acceptable as long as learning is demonstrated and reported.

III. REVIEW OF ANNUAL REPORTS

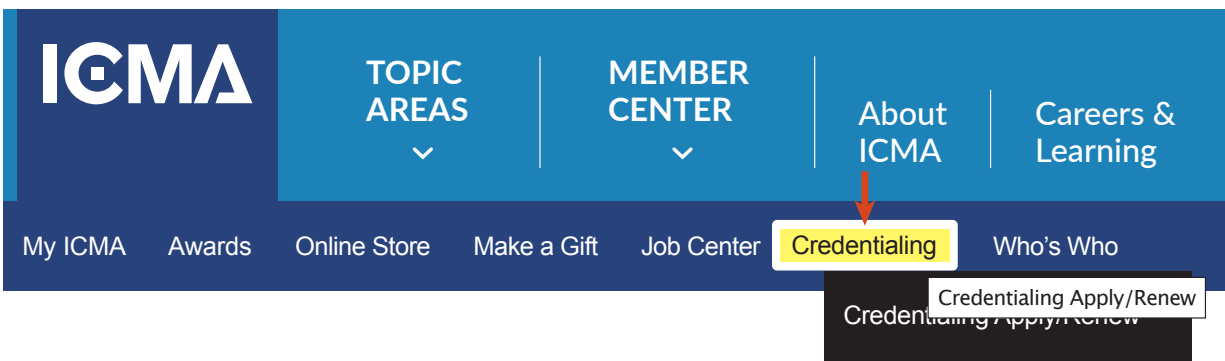
- Annual reports are assigned to only one board member at first. If that board member votes "Maybe" or "No", the annual report is assigned to the entire CAB for review.
- If a CAB member receives his or her own annual report for review, that member should alert ICMA staff to have their report reassigned.
- The CAB has agreed to be liberal in its annual report reviews, taking a "mentor" rather than

“enforcer” role. For response to a weak report, a sample communication is provided in Appendix B. This sample provides information on what is expected from the member the following year. In cases when a member has submitted a weak report, the CAB will ask for a revision. The point is to coach, not to create work, so a partial revision focusing only on two or three activities is fine. Explain to the member in terms of how it helps him or her, not in terms of how it helps the CAB. See Appendix G for the sample annual report that members see inside the system.

- The CAB has agreed to communicate with each member individually. The purpose is to provide reinforcing feedback to those who submit good reports or personal guidance to those who submit weak reports. The CAB has also agreed to pay special attention to first-year reports because it is important to make sure members understand what is expected from the beginning.

Preparing your Annual Report

- To prepare your annual report, visit here:



My Profile

The online form will prompt you to fill in:

1. Professional development needs for the coming year
2. Learning goals for the coming year
3. Planned Activities for the coming year
4. Completed Professional Development Activities

Completed Professional Development Activities

Generally, professional development consists of structured learning, such as participating in workshops, webinars, listening to podcasts or studying books, so long as they are focused on professional development and leadership. (*Casual reading of newspapers and magazines is not considered “structured learning”.*) The structured learning itself is the professional development activity and counts towards the 40-hour professional development requirement. For example, doing a strategic plan is not professional development. Attending a workshop or studying a book to improve your strategic planning skills is a professional development activity.

Every ICMA member commits to 40-hours annually of professional development (Tenet 8 of the Code of Ethics). ***What distinguishes Credentialed Managers and Candidates is their commitment to plan for continuous personal improvement, to reflect upon their development activities, and to document their learning for peer review.***

Some advice for maximizing learning: as members advance in their careers, they often lament that training activities rarely provide grand, new solutions or insights. Such unrealistic expectations can lead to skepticism of any presenter, author, or trainer and cause our attention to wander. The mind closes, rather than opens, to learning. We may miss even small, useful kernels of new knowledge.

Attention and reflection help capture more of these kernels. Taking notes increases our attention. Later, even brief reflection or review of our notes seems to expand and help retain concrete learning. If time is available, greater learning gains can occur by preparing a journal of thoughts and reactions, discussing ideas with a colleague, or studying more on the topic.

Members are required to create a new professional development plan at the same time they submit their annual reports. (The software will ask for the new plan first, then the annual report of completed activities, and then the member can click “Submit”.) The CAB has agreed to check to make sure the new plan is adequate.

There are two ways to fill in your completed professional development activities: linear reporting and wholistic reporting (in December 2019, the ICMA Executive Board approved the addition of wholistic reporting as an option).

Linear Reporting of Completed Activities

- Using the online form, fill in each individual activity along with the date, description, study area and hours completed. Completed activities must be more than a recitation of activities attended. What is required is a thoughtful reflection discussing the impact of the year’s professional development (i.e., how the activity has improved the member as a person or a manager, or how the member applied the information obtained from the professional development activity in his or her work). This can also be in the form of “lessons learned” or “takeaways” from the activity.
- Completed activities in the annual report may be different from planned activities due to changes in circumstances or offerings.
- Below is an example of a reflective entry:

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add - Credentialing Professional Development" with a close button (X). The form is for a customer named "Mr. Christopher Whittaker, ICMA-CM, CPM". It includes the following fields and content:

- Activity Name:** "Book Reading"
- Activity Date:** "7/1/2020" (with a calendar icon below)
- Description:** "I read the book 'Stand Out 2.0' I read the book by Marcus Buckingham, took the assessment, and attended a workshop led by Felicia Logon. Buckingham's thesis is that people tend to undervalue their strengths and overvalue areas in which they aren't as strong. This picks up on his earlier work around strengths—that we have inherent strengths and should spend our time using and honing them instead of focusing on where we aren't as strong. In this book he posits that teams are stronger and well rounded precisely because team members are not each well rounded."
- What I personally learned (Not what was taught or said):** "The 2.0 assessment was designed to measure your 'impact' on others—how you're 'being' rather than what you're 'doing'. I learned that my strength role was Advisor (a practical, concrete thinker who is effective when reacting to and solving problems). My secondary strength roles are closely grouped—Stimulator, Creator, Equalizer, Pioneer—meaning—I use all of them frequently. The assessment resonated with me, and reemphasized the importance of ensuring you're in a relationship and a job where you can use your natural strengths everyday, and that you recognize, value and use the different strengths of team members."
- Activity Hours:** "3.5"

At the bottom of the form are "SAVE" and "Cancel" buttons.

Wholistic Reporting of Completed Activities

- In December 2019, the ICMA Executive Board approved the addition of Wholistic Reporting as an option for recording the 40 hours of completed activities that are required each year. With this change, credentialed managers and candidates may a) continue to report their completed activities individually as they have done in the past, or b) provide a single list of activities with a reflective summary that reports what the manager or candidate has learned from the activities wholistically and comprehensively.
- How to Enter a Wholistic Report in the Credentialing System: See Appendix K.

Assessing the 40-hour Requirement

- The application includes a two-page overview of “Guidelines for Fulfilling the Annual Professional Development Commitment (“What Counts”). That overview can be found in Appendix C.
- The CAB has also approved the following as being eligible professional development activities, as long as the member briefly outlines a specific example of what he or she **personally learned from each activity**.
 - Short sessions, such as one-hour sessions or keynote speeches at conferences or meetings (In reporting learning from national and state conferences, hours reported should be commensurate with the sessions/conference hours attended, not including social events or missed sessions. Generally speaking, one or two conferences do not equal 40 hours of professional development. For a conference to count as an activity, at least two separate sessions must be listed and learning discussed from both. ICMA annual conference in-person attendees should record actual hours spent in sessions and keynotes up to a maximum of 19.5 hours.)
 - Intensive, week-long executive institutes, such as the SEI Leadership Institute at the University of Virginia
 - Job shadowing in other communities
 - Learning time spent overseas in active military service or as a military consultant
 - Volunteer work where the member can demonstrate that something related to local government management was learned
 - Studying books, preferably followed by discussion with colleagues (count actual time spent reading up to 10 hours per book)
 - Toastmasters, up to 10 hours per year
 - Writing for published textbooks or reports
 - Reading and/or research in preparation for serving as adjunct professor
 - Professional development completed while working with an executive coach
 - Retired and life members can include information about what was learned from travels and other retirement activities if appropriate
 - The actual time spent as the mentee in formal mentoring activities, up to 20 hours
 - The actual time spent as a mentor in formal mentoring activities of non-staff, up to 10 hours
 - The actual time spent as the mentee as part of the ICMA Coaching Program, up to 20 hours
 - The actual time spent coaching as part of the ICMA Coaching Program, up to 10 hours
 - Serving on professional development/association boards and committees, up to 5 hours

Personal Development and Interpersonal Communication

Personal development and interpersonal communication are among the core competencies identified as being necessary for effective local government management and are therefore appropriate for a professional development plan. The CAB will recognize a maximum of 20 hours (of the required 40 hours of annual professional development) for a structured program of work with a trained life or career coach, therapist, or other trained professional. The annual report needs to address lessons learned from these activities, but these may be generalizations in order to protect the privacy of the member. Reading related to these activities counts toward the 20-hour maximum.

The CAB will recognize a maximum of 5 hours (of the required 40 hours of annual professional development) for a structured program of work with a fitness coach, nutritionist, or other physical training professional. The annual report should address the benefits derived from these activities as they relate to the performance and well-being of the member. Reading related to these activities counts toward the 5-hour maximum.

Mentoring

While credentialing is primarily about one's own professional development, mentoring the next generation of managers is of great value to our profession. The time spent as a mentor for non-staff can count up to 10 hours toward the 40-hour annual professional development requirement, if the mentee is not an employee of the ICMA Credentialed Manager.

If the mentee is an employee, the relationship is considered a work responsibility, and mentoring credit will not be granted unless mentoring is completed through a formal program such as the ICMA Emerging Leaders Development Program, the ICMA Coaching Program and state partners, the Local Government Management Fellowship Program, a college internship, or similar program approved by the Credentialing Advisory Board chair.

To receive credit, the mentoring relationship must be a commitment of at least six months between an ICMA Credentialed Manager and a college student or local government employee or intern. The purpose of the mentoring relationship must be to help the mentee prepare for a career in local government management.

The mentor must report in the annual report the name and position of the person being mentored, as well as the frequency, duration, a brief description of the subjects covered, and learning the mentor gained from the experience.

Time spent coaching as part of the ICMA Coaching Program can also be credited as meeting the credentialing requirement up to a maximum of 20 hours per year. These sessions are generally one-time sessions of an hour or less. For credit, the coaching must be documented as to the position of the person coached, the duration, and a brief description of the nature of the coaching.

Teaching is considered by the CAB to be different from mentoring. Hours of learning in preparation for teaching college, continuing education courses, workshops, webinars, and so on, related to the local government management profession, count toward the 40-hour requirement. The teaching itself does not count.

Additionally, learning to mentor is different from mentoring. Attending a course on mentoring or reading a book on mentoring is a regular professional development activity that does not fall under the mentoring policy.

Work Activities

On-the-job activities (work) are not considered to be professional development. On the other hand, if the work in question requires structured learning, such as book study and discussion or workshops in

order to perform the work, credit for the structured learning is appropriate. The structured learning itself would be considered a professional development activity or activities. Work is practice, but professional development is the study of how to practice. For example, doing a strategic plan is work. Attending a workshop to improve your strategic planning skills would be considered a professional development activity. Serving on boards and committees as part of normal job duties are not considered professional development activities and are not allowable towards annual professional development hours. However, up to 5 hours may be counted towards annual professional development hours for serving on professional development/association boards and committees as long as the member demonstrates what they personally learned from the activity.

IV. ANNUAL REPORT EXTENSIONS

- Extensions of up to 180 days can be granted by the CAB Chair in cases of extenuating circumstances such as severe medical emergency, death in the family, or very recent job change. In the case of a job change, the member must include information on what kind of activities are planned during the extension period.
- Extensions of up to one year can be granted by the CAB Chair in cases of major, ongoing life events, such as medical problems.

V. RETIRED CREDENTIALLED MANAGER DESIGNATION

Retired members who have been credentialed for at least 5 years are eligible to become Retired Credentialed Managers. Retired Credentialed Managers do not have to submit annual reports unless they desire to retain the “active” credential.

VI. MEMBERS IN TRANSITION

Members in Transition (MITs) are encouraged to remain in the Voluntary Credentialing Program. It is important to attend state and regional meetings to network and stay current while in transition. However, if one cannot attend as many conferences as they would like, there are other ways to fulfill the requirement. Members may fulfill part or all of their annual professional development commitment through professional reading from the local library or other sources. They may count actual time spent studying up to ten hours per book.

Also, the multi-rater assessment deadline can be extended until two years after the start date of the member’s new position, whether it is in the private or public sector.

VII. MEMBERS WHO ARE NO LONGER IN SERVICE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Some Credentialed Managers may leave the local government management profession and wish to keep the Credentialed Manager designation. The Voluntary Credentialing Program is a program to recognize local government management professionals who have attained a certain level of education and executive level experience, who are committed to the ICMA Code of Ethics and who, on an annual basis, engage in at least 40 hours of professional development that enhances their local government management skills. It is appropriate for Credentialed Managers not in the service of local government to maintain the credential if they are working in an area closely related to local government (for example, local government consulting,

state or regional agencies that deal primarily with local government, etc.) or if they plan to return to local government management in the future.

A Credentialed Manager not in the service of a local government, in order to maintain the credential, must continue to submit an annual report that reflects at least 40 hours of professional development that is related to local government management. While almost everything can be “related to local government management” in one way or another, there needs to be a clear relationship between what is reported and local government management. For example, training specific to state, federal, military, private sector, or civic programs/work would not be acceptable. Consultants are particularly cautioned not to report on their consulting work, but on structured activities that were a part of their continued local government professional development.

VIII. CORRECTIVE ACTION

The purpose of the Voluntary Credentialing Program (VCP) is to promote, encourage and recognize a commitment to a structured approach to continued professional development and life-long learning by ICMA members. Every effort should be made to interact with participants in a positive, coaching manner. However, the VCP has standards and requirements which must be enforced if the program is to have meaning over the long term. As a last resort, some members may have to be dropped from the program for failure to meet the standards and requirements of the program. Three types of status change are fairly straightforward:

Voluntary withdrawal. A participant can make a voluntary withdrawal at any time simply by giving notice to ICMA.

Failure to submit annual report. The failure to submit the annual report within the required timeframe will result in the member being dropped from the VCP with no further action by the CAB or the ICMA Executive Board.

Ineligible because of ethics violations. Anytime the ICMA Committee on Professional Conduct and the ICMA Executive Board reviews a member’s actions as a possible violation of the ICMA Code of Ethics, the member’s status as a “Credentialed Manager” should be reviewed concurrently and dealt with appropriately. If the CAB, in carrying out its normal review process, believes that a participant has provided false or misleading information either in an application or an annual report, a report should be filed with the ICMA Committee on Professional Conduct and this should be handled as a regular investigation.

To date, the CAB has identified two other events that could trigger a recommendation that a member’s status as a Credentialed Manager be reconsidered. These are:

1. Failure to complete a multi-rater assessment or approved alternative within the first five years of obtaining the credential. The VCP requires that a participant complete a pre-approved multi-rater assessment or alternative once during the first five years in the program. If a member does not want to use such an assessment because of sunshine laws or other valid reasons (example: an unstable political environment), the CAB will allow other well-documented external feedback. This is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For “Members in Transition” or members with new jobs, the multi-rater assessment deadline can be extended up to two years after the start of the member’s new position.

The multi-rater assessment requirement is not required after the first multi-rater is completed. It is also not required for members who have been granted the “Retired Credentialed Manager” designation and for actively credentialed members who are retired from all sectors. Actively credentialed members who are retired from local government, but not retired from the private sector or academia, must still fulfill the requirement. It is understood that such members will need to work with CAB staff to devise an alternate method of gathering external feedback.

The CAB will allow up to a one-year grace period on a case-by-case basis and will strongly encourage the member to provide evidence of a documented external feedback process in order to guide the member's professional development activities. If the CAB determines that the member is not in compliance with the multi-rater assessment requirement, it will recommend that the member be dropped from the program.

2. Failure to provide evidence of an acceptable professional development program in the required annual report. "Evidence of an acceptable professional development program" is that a participant reports on each professional development activity during the year in a "what I did - what I learned" format. The CAB believes that it is essential that the participant reflect upon and document the outcome of any professional development experience. This is an area that requires judgement, and it is imperative that the CAB perform its coaching role in explaining to the participant what is required and why it is required. If a participant's annual report is deemed unacceptable and is not corrected to the satisfaction of the primary reviewer, the CAB will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to drop the member from the program.

Drops and Reapplications

The credentialing drops process is based on the membership drops process. ICMA Credentialed Managers receive three reminders before their annual report deadlines (see Appendix G for an example) and one reminder at end of the three-month grace period. Those who do not respond are dropped from the program and notified.

If a member submits an unacceptable annual report, the Credentialing Advisory Board gives the member ample time to edit and resubmit. If the member does not respond, staff follows up and extends the deadline. If the member still does not respond, he or she is dropped from the program.

A participant who has lapsed may reapply unless he or she has otherwise become ineligible. A participant reapplying after three years must take the Management Assessment (formerly Applied Knowledge Assessment) again. With reinstatement, the prior years of participation will count toward the requirement that a multi-rater assessment be completed within five years.

IX. MULTI-RATER ASSESSMENT POLICY FOR VOLUNTARY CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

Executive board policy states that "at least once during the first five-year period, a credentialed manager must complete a pre-approved multi-rater assessment or alternative." In December 2019, the Executive Board voted that after the first multi-rater requirement has been fulfilled, all subsequent multi-raters will be voluntary and count towards the fulfillment of professional development hours.

After the first five-year period, there is no requirement to continue multi-rater assessments. However, it is recommended that a multi-rater assessment be completed every five years, or as significant career changes occur, such as a position change (i.e. going from Assistant City Manager to City Manager or vice versa), a significant change in the makeup of the governing body, or to see how results may have changed as the manager's career has matured, etc. The Management Assessment (formerly Applied Knowledge Assessment), which ICMA Credentialed Managers take before applying for the program, is a self-assessment of knowledge, but the multi-rater assessment is an assessment of practice. It is NOT a performance evaluation.

The purpose of this policy is to define what is meant by "alternative multi-rater assessment." In order to be accepted, an alternative multi-rater assessment must meet the following criteria:

- Have all characteristics of a 360-degree assessment, which is an assessment of practice from several sources
- Involve supervisor(s), elected officials, peers, subordinate staff, and individuals who you work with outside the organization
- Address most of the [ICMA Practices for Effective Local Government Leadership](#)

The Credentialing Advisory Board has approved a number of assessments and maintains the list [here](#). ICMA Credentialed Managers must use one of these assessments for their multi-rater to be accepted. This list should not be considered as an endorsement; it is simply a list of assessments that have received approval as meeting the credentialing multi-rater requirement based on the ICMA Practices.

If you wish to have a tool approved and added to the list you must submit a request in advance. Requests must include a sample of the tool and the tool MUST meet the above criteria. Reviews will happen twice a year. Deadlines for submission are the first Monday in June and the first Monday in December. To submit an assessment for review, you may e-mail your request to credentialing@icma.org. The review period may take up to 90 days from the submission deadline. Given that reviews happen twice per year, please consider your multi-rater due dates as you determine whether or not to request an alternative assessment. All requests will receive a response with a decision via e-mail after the 90-day period.

In the event that a manager does not want to use such an assessment to fulfill the requirement because of sunshine laws or other reasons, the Credentialing Advisory Board may allow other well-documented external feedback. The member's annual performance review is not the same, and does not qualify, for reasons such as the fact that the performance is based on the member's job performance, achieving goals set by their supervisor, and does not relate to the principles for effective governance that are being assessed in the credentialing process. If requested in advance, the CAB will evaluate these other types of external feedback on a case-by-case basis.

For Members in Transition, the multi-rater assessment deadline can be extended up to two years after the start date of the member's new position, whether it is in the private or public sector. Staff can grant the initial one-year extension. A second one-year extension must be approved by the CAB. The multi-rater assessment requirement will be completely waived for retired members or those who have formally announced retirement from all sectors.

Using a Multi-Rater as a Completed Activity

If a multi-rater assessment is completed on a voluntary basis, beyond the initial five-year requirement, it could qualify as a professional development activity that can count towards the required 40 hours to maintain the credential. The manager could get up to 10 hours for completing the tool by doing the following (the 10-hour credit may only be claimed once every five years):

- Completing one of the pre-approved assessments and receiving results
- Reporting completion of the assessment in the online annual report renewal
- Providing a narrative on how the results of the assessment will be used.

Note: The initial mandatory multi-rater that is to be completed within the first five years of being in the program does NOT count toward a completed professional development activity. Completed activity credit only applies to multi-raters that are on the approved list. Exceptions can be made for members no longer working in local government. Staff will work with them on the appropriate tool. Completed activity credit may only be applied once every five years.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE COMMUNICATION, WEAK PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Dear _____,

I am a Credentialing Advisory Board member and the primary reviewer of your application. **I am writing to request that you edit and resubmit your professional development plan by [insert deadline here].**

Specifically, [insert specific advice here].

You can edit your plan using the following steps:

- Log in at www.icma.org
- Click on MY ICMA at the top right of the screen
- Select History/Tracking from the Credentialing menu (in blue)
- Scroll down to Previous Submissions and click View Detail next to report that needs to be edited

A sample plan is attached, and can also be found at www.icma.org, Career Development, Credentialing, Resources.

Please let me know if you have any questions! You can reach me via e-mail at [insert e-mail address here] or via telephone at [insert number here].

Sincerely,

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE COMMUNICATION, WEAK ANNUAL REPORT

Dear _____,

I am a Credentialing Advisory Board member and your primary reviewer. Thank you for submitting the annual report required to maintain the credential. Your commitment to professional development is so important to the public we serve and the profession will respect you for lifelong learning and growing.

We know how tough it is in very busy schedules to make these extra efforts, but the CAB can only ensure the integrity of the program if we know what was learned during your professional development activity. As we advance in our careers, we tend to hunger for dramatic revelations and are often disappointed or only mildly entertained by conference sessions, workshops, etc. Most training activities provide only small lessons. To retain these small lessons seems to require more attention and reflection. This reflection is the means to take our professional development to a higher level. Credentialing aspires to help us get something more concrete and enduring from our training efforts than just a feeling. The annual report should demonstrate this by spending less time describing each activity and more time giving one example of something specific we learned or applied for each activity. Thus, we urge you to track your completed activities online (under My ICMA, Credentialing, then Credentialing History/Tracking) so that when you are due to submit your annual report, you will have it in good form.

A sample annual report is attached and also located at www.icma.org, Career Development, Credentialing, Resources to show how managers have provided the kind of detailed information that we think is helpful and pertinent. Some guidelines:

- Work must have some structured learning to which it relates, such as book study and discussion or workshops. The structured learning itself would be considered a professional development activity or activities. For example, doing a strategic plan is work. Attending a workshop to improve your strategic planning skills would be considered a professional development activity.
- Activities should also relate to the practice areas you have chosen to improve based on the Management Assessment (formerly Applied Knowledge Assessment) or other assessments, supervisor's suggestions, current issues of the organization, etc.

We congratulate you and support you as you continue to fulfill your professional development plan and pursue the goal of lifelong learning.

APPENDIX C: GUIDELINES FOR FULFILLING THE ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENT (“WHAT COUNTS”)

Statement of Principle

Continuing education must accomplish two purposes simultaneously.

First, it must allow the participant to grow intellectually and/or to refine specific job- related skills appropriate to fulfilling the needs identified through the Management Assessment (formerly Applied Knowledge Assessment), multi-rater assessments, job performance evaluations, self-assessments, and other feedback and to adapt his/her behavior accordingly.

Second, it must be defined broadly enough to recognize that people learn differently and need access to different avenues of learning. Thus, it must allow not only for different modes of learning but also for different providers (including ICMA, state associations, universities, and others) and different delivery techniques (ranging from traditional seminars to Web-based instruction to video conferencing). The simultaneous need to move beyond the sharing of “war stories” and to be flexible is at the heart of the dilemma of the “what counts” question. Too much flexibility leads to too little quality. Too much rigidity leads to a lack of access and leaves members unable to meet the challenges identified for them.

Each member should document annually how he or she has improved competency in the practices required of a local government manager. This annual improvement may result from a variety of professional development/learning experiences, including but not limited to professional reading; participation in formal university courses; active participation in workshops, seminars, or conferences focusing on the practice(s) where improvement is desired; and experiential learning. These professional development experiences should involve a minimum of 40 substantive hours each year. Because a plan of professional development is required each year, participants should not try to address all of the identified needs in any one year.

Questions that the participant in the Voluntary Credentialing Program should ask himself/herself in planning his/her annual professional development activities

I. Will the educational experience be relevant to the practice area(s) I need to develop?

The answer to this question should reflect a direct relationship between the practice to be improved and the activity.

- Which practice area was identified for improvement?
- How will the educational experience address the practice area identified?

II. Will the educational experience challenge and engage me by exposing me to new knowledge or new ways of applying existing knowledge?

The participant must be asked to do more than listen to a presentation and walk away with a handout. Here are the questions a participant should be able to answer about the educational experience after he/she has completed it:

- (a) What was the nature of the experience (ICMA workshop, state association simulation exercise, Web-based course, university course, independent study)? (b) What were the requirements of the experience? (What reading was required? What material was distributed? What follow-up was there?) (c) How many hours did the experience take, including “homework” assignments? (d) How

were the participants involved in the experience (vigorous exchange, simulations, group exercises)?
(e) Was there an opportunity to evaluate the specific educational experience by providing direct feedback to the instructor/presenter?

III. Will it strengthen my professional capacity?

The experience must be one that addresses an identified need and that helps the manager to become an even stronger professional.

- Specifically, how did you/do you plan to relate the knowledge or skills gained through the experience to the particular practice area you want to improve? How will you follow up the educational experience to enhance your professional competence?

APPENDIX D: OTHER EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

VOLUNTARY CREDENTIALING QUESTIONNAIRE EVALUATION OF OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

Why am I receiving this questionnaire?

Your application for ICMA's Credentialed Manager program has been received by the Credentialing Advisory Board (CAB). Before proceeding with its evaluation of your application, the Board seeks clarification on your experience as a senior-level executive in public service. The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide the CAB with the information needed to determine if partial credit should be awarded for prior administrative service or interaction with local government, including special districts, state or federal government, military bases, or other government service.

What qualifies as a senior executive position?

The Credentialed Manager Policies and Procedures give full credit for the following appointed senior executive positions. (Elected positions do not qualify.) If your position title differs from these but is equivalent in responsibilities, provide an explanation in the section below on additional credit for administrative experience.

Local government experience at the executive level differs from management experience at the department or program level. Experience at the executive level entails leadership/oversight and decision-making responsibility for multiple departments, as well as responsibility for maintaining significant relationships with elected officials, appointed boards and commissions, and external stakeholders.

For credentialing purposes, a senior executive is:

- An appointed city/town/county/tribal manager, deputy manager, assistant manager, (or equivalent) or acting in any of these positions;
- An appointed chief executive, deputy chief, or assistant chief (or equivalent) of a state municipal league;
- An appointed chief executive, deputy chief, or assistant chief (or equivalent) of a council of governments.

What are the minimum requirements to be eligible for ICMA credentialing?

If you are currently in a senior executive position, as defined above, for at least the past 12 months but less than 36 months, *proceed to the next step for senior executives with at least 12 but less than 36 months of experience.* (This also applies if you are currently in transition but held a senior executive position for at least 12 months in your most recent position.)

If you are currently in a senior executive position, as defined above, for at least the past 36 months, *proceed to the next step for senior executives with at least 36 months of experience.* (This also applies if you are currently in transition but held a senior executive position for the most recent 36 months of employment.)

If you answered no to both questions, you are not eligible for ICMA's Credentialed Manager designation. We hope you will reapply once you have met one of these criteria for senior executive experience.

I am currently (or most recently, if in transition) a senior executive with at least 12 but less than 36 months of executive-level experience. Do I qualify?

Applicants with at least 12 but less than 36 months of senior executive experience and who expect to meet the requirements for a fully Credentialed Manager in the next two years are eligible for Credentialed Manager Candidacy if they satisfy these education and experience criteria:

	MPA/MPP	Other Graduate Degree	Bachelor's	Less than Bachelor's
Credentialed Manager Candidate	5 years credit*	6 years credit*	7 years credit*	13 years credit*

Applicant must have minimum of one year of executive experience to count other experience.

* Half credit is awarded for years of service as a department head.

Detailed qualifying explanation charts available on pages 7 and 8.

I am currently (or most recently, if in transition) a senior executive with at least 36 months of executive-level experience. Do I qualify?

Applicants with at least 36 months senior executive service are eligible for the Credentialed Manager designation if they satisfy these education and experience criteria:

	MPA/MPP	Other Graduate Degree	Bachelor's	Less than Bachelor's
Credentialed Manager	7 years credit*	8 years credit*	9 years credit*	15 years credit*

Applicant must have minimum of one year of executive experience to count other experience.

* Half credit is awarded for years of service as a department head.

Detailed qualifying explanation charts available on pages 7 and 8.

How do I get additional credit for my experience in other administrative positions not at the senior executive level in municipal or county government?

The CAB uses the following information in considering granting partial credit for administrative experience other than in municipal or county government and at other than the senior executive level. *Positions below department head level, "assistant to," or "management assistant" are not eligible for additional experience credit toward credentialing.* Provide a separate description for each position for which you seek credit.

1. Title of position:

Name of employer:

First and last dates in position:

Repeat if you are requesting consideration for more than one position.

2. For each position in #1, describe the organization. Is the organization governmental, nonprofit (501c3), or a for-profit firm? If governmental, is it a municipal or county government, a special district, state government, federal government, military, or international? Provide details on how the organization is governed and your role in that governance structure.

Title of position:

Describe organization:

3. For each position in #1, provide a copy of the jurisdiction's organization chart(s) during your tenure. If it changed during your tenure, please explain the changes involving this position and dates of those changes.

4. How much credit toward your credential should each position in #1 receive?
 - Full credit for a local government executive position that is not titled CAO or Assistant CAO.
 - Half credit for a department head or equivalent administrative position.
 - Half credit for a military, non-profit, special district, or private sector executive position involved in or interacting with local government.

5. Describe your responsibilities in the organization-wide budget process, long range financial plan, audit review and monitoring of the entity's financial condition.

6. Describe your authority to (1) hire, fire, discipline or formally evaluate employees, or (2) make a recommendation for such personnel actions. Does your authority extend beyond a single department or office?

7. Describe to whom you reported, the number of reports between you and the chief executive, and your accountability to any standing governing body committee, any commission/committee appointed by your governing body.

8. Add any other information that will help explain the complexity of this position.

What other ways can I get additional credit for experience toward the Credentialed Manager designation?

ICMA also offers credit for graduation from its leadership development programs as well as credit for approved non-ICMA leadership development programs. Graduation from one of these programs should be indicated on the credentialing application to receive credit. The following experience credit can be used towards meeting credentialing requirements:

ICMA Leadership Development Programs

- Leadership ICMA – one year
- Emerging Leaders Development Program – six months
- Mid Career Managers Institute – six months
- Two ICMA leadership development programs BONUS – additional six months

Other Leadership Development Programs

- MMANC/SC Credentialed Government Leader Program – six months
- Certified Government Chief Information Officer Program – three months

APPENDIX E: VOLUNTARY CREDENTIALING PROGRAM SPECIAL DISTRICTS QUESTIONNAIRE

If you wish for your experience in a special district to be considered as “local government experience,” please complete the following:

1. Describe how your special district is analogous to a general-purpose local government:

2. What is the primary purpose/service of the special district?

3. What other services does the special district directly provide?

- Police protection
- Fire protection
- Emergency medical service
- Construction/repair of streets, sidewalks, storm drainage
- Water service
- Sewer service
- Parks/recreation programs
- Transportation services
- Other

4. Please add any other comments you have about the special district or your experience in the special district:

5) Please attach any charter materials that will assist the Credentialing Advisory Board in determining your eligibility for the Voluntary Credentialing Program.

APPENDIX F: SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Section 1. Professional Development Needs Identified by the Management Assessment, ICMA's Practices for Effective Local Government Management and Leadership or Other Sources

- Staff Effectiveness
- Media Relations
- Presentation Skills

Section 2. Learning Goal

Instructions: The learning goal should relate to improving skills that will help your job performance, however, the professional development activities you plan should be study of those skill areas, not your actual work activities.

Sample: Of the practice areas identified above, this year I plan is to focus on media relations and presentation skills. My goal is to improve my ability to speak publicly and communicate with citizens so that I can, for example, do a better job of communicating the reasons for decisions that are made by the local government. Improving communications with citizens and the media will help to strengthen my confidence and will improve the credibility of the local government's decision-making capability.

Section 3. Planned Professional Development Activities Related to My Practice Areas

Instructions: This is the most important part of your professional development plan. Please be detailed. Tell which conferences and/or sessions you plan to attend. As in the sample below, identify some specific books. Do not include work activities. Only professional development counts to meet your credentialing requirements. For example, doing a strategic plan is work. Attending a workshop or studying a book to improve your strategic planning skills is professional development. If you are on a tight budget, remember that you can fulfill your 40-hour commitment through professional reading from the library coupled with book club discussions with colleagues.

Sample: I will look for sessions on media relations and presentation skills when I register for the ICMA Annual Conference and state association meetings (the agenda has not yet been published). I will study at least two books and discuss with my colleagues. One of the books I have identified is ICMA's Ten Steps to Effective Presentations Training Workbook. I will also take a college-level course on media relations, and will identify what I have learned from all these activities when I submit my annual report.

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE ANNUAL REPORT

Instructions

An annual report **should**:

- Specifically address the professional development needs identified through assessments or other feedback (unless plans had to change)
- Report on at least 40 hours of professional development, even if some of that deviated from your original plan or practice areas
- Fully explain how you engaged in each professional development activity
- Give one specific example of something you learned from each activity (**this is the most important part of the annual report**)

An annual report **should not**:

- Provide a résumé listing
- Address work activities (from local government, consulting, or other work)
- Address professional development that cannot be related to local government management

Note: Generally, professional development consists of structured learning, such as reading or workshops. The structured learning itself is the professional development activity and counts towards the 40-hour professional development requirement. For example, doing a strategic plan is not professional development. Attending a workshop or reading a book to improve your strategic planning skills is a professional development activity.

Examples are shown below; they are not exhaustive, and they vary considerably as to how many continuing education hours each would represent.

Sample Annual Report

Activity Name: ICMA Annual Conference

Description: At the ICMA Annual Conference, I participated in a facilitator workshop conducted by Study Circles Resource Center; participated in an ICMA University Workshop “Essential Management Skills;” participated in an ICMA University Forum “Ethics and the Public Trust;” and served as a facilitator for the ICMA University Forum.

What I Learned: From the facilitator workshop I learned a facilitator must be impartial, is responsible for creating a safe environment, manages expectations, models desired behaviors and keeps the discussion on purpose. From Essential Management Skills I learned the importance of being proactive in engaging citizens in assisting the elective governing body to develop the policy agenda for the community. As managers, we need to develop mechanisms to assure we put public in public policy. We need to develop and provide resources for automatically finding and engaging vested parties in the decision making process. From Ethics & the Public Trust I learned that a free lunch is rarely as innocent as we think. It is best to always pay for your own. The public expects your compensation is sufficient to cover your lunches. If it is a legitimate business expense, claim it on your taxes or seek reimbursement from your employer according to their policies or your contract.

Activity Hours: 19.5

Activity Date: September 17, 2016

Activity Name: Teaching

Description: I assisted John Nalbandian in team-teaching a 40-hour graduate course on infrastructure management to nineteen students. It involved preparing for sixteen 3-hour classes and reading over eighteen articles and two books. My prep time totaled 26 hours.

What I Learned: I refreshed my knowledge and learned new basic technical terms and issues related to infrastructure planning, financing, design, and management. One specific item learned was the importance of technology not only as a tool for managing infrastructure, but how important it is to consider technology itself as an element of a community's infrastructure.

Activity Hours: 26

Activity Date: August 6, 2016

Activity Name: Reading

Description: I read ICMA's *Media Relations for Local Governments* and discussed my findings with the city's PIO.

What I Learned: I learned more effective ways to improve my working relationships with the media, specifically to be proactive, after assuring my policy body is informed, about providing the media with breaking news; to not play favorites among the media; and to encourage elected officials to provide quotes.

Activity Hours: 10

Activity Date: October 1, 2016

Activity Name: Local Government Visits

Description: I visited several local governments and spent several weeks meeting with my counterparts in a foreign country to learn the key to their communities' long-term success; how they plan for their future; how they sustain themselves economically through redevelopment, etc.

What I Learned: I learned a new way to look at the process for building a new community. I began to search for what made these foreign cities successful for centuries. What makes them desirable places to live a thousand years after they started? Will my city be around 100 years from now? A thousand years from now? Are there things that I can do now to influence creation of this new city to make it more likely that it will be around 100 years from now? Also, I was very much encouraged and heartened by the astonishing redevelopment going on in Eastern Europe. One old industrial city, for example, is being turned into an exciting city ripe for new technology and the innovative young. I also spent some time learning about minority and immigration issues. Like a number of other European countries, the birth rate is less than what is necessary to sustain population. Therefore, they must have immigration to continue to succeed economically. However, the largest minority group is not assimilating as would be ideal. I also got to watch the Parliament of the EU in action. It is impressive the way the 25 countries have chosen to work together and consolidate.

Activity Hours: 5

Activity Date: April 17, 2016

APPENDIX H: STAFF COMMUNICATION TO ICMA-CMS, ANNUAL REPORT REMINDER

Dear {ind_badge_name},

Thank you for your commitment to professional development and lifelong learning, and thank you for participating in the Voluntary Credentialing Program.

You may renew your credential by signing in to www.icma.org and then clicking on My ICMA. You will see a Credentialing menu option on the My ICMA page. Click the option Credentialing Apply/Renew and then click on the Renew button. You will be prompted to enter in your new professional development plan, followed by your report of completed activities.

The Credentialing Advisory Board will review your annual report within 45 days of the deadline and let you know if they have any questions. Confirmation notices will go out after that.

Also, to maintain the ICMA credential, members must complete a multi-rater assessment within the first five years of entering the Voluntary Credentialing Program. Credentialed Managers must choose from this list of preapproved multi-rater assessment tools, which are designed to assess the ICMA Practices for Effective Local Government Leadership. The assessments are not a performance evaluation. Please be aware that the list of preapproved assessments is not an indication of endorsement by ICMA. This is simply a list of assessments that have received approval as meeting the credentialing multi-rater requirement based on the ICMA Practices.

After the first five-year period, there is no requirement to continue multi-rater assessments. However, it is recommended that a multi-rater assessment be completed every five years, or as significant career changes occur, such as a position change (i.e. going from Assistant City Manager to City Manager or vice versa), or a significant change in the makeup of the governing body, to see how results may have changed as the manager's career has matured, etc. The multi-rater assessment is an assessment of practice and the Credentialing Advisory Board sees this as a benefit to the manager.

If a multi-rater assessment is completed on a voluntary basis, beyond the initial five-year requirement, it could qualify as a professional development activity and count towards the required 40 hours to maintain the credential. The manager could get up to 10 hours for completing the tool by doing the following:

- Completing one of the pre-approved assessments and receiving results
- Reporting completion of the assessment in the online annual report renewal
- Providing a narrative on how the results of the assessment will be used

NOTE: The initial multi-rater that is to be completed within the first five years of being in the program does NOT count toward a completed professional development activity. Completed activity credit only applies to subsequent multi-raters that are in the approved list or have been pre-approved by the credentialing staff. Completed activity credit may only be applied once every five years.

Next five year mark: {ind_assessment_due_date_ext} (Use this date if you need to complete your first multi-rater or have completed the initial requirement and seek to complete one voluntarily)

Please reply if you have any questions or concerns or if you would like more information about the Retired Credentialed Manager designation.

Sincerely,

Voluntary Credentialing Program Team

APPENDIX I: COMMUNICATION TIPS WHEN ASKING FOR MORE INFORMATION

Background: Over the years, we have accumulated a few good ideas on how to make sure credentialing advisory board e-mails are read and understood by busy credentialed managers. Here is a list:

- Include a deadline in the subject line so the member will realize your message is not a form letter. For example, "ICMA Credentialing, pls reply by _____."
- Include explicit instructions along with deadline at the **beginning** of the e-mail body. This will help to ensure that the member reads the entire e-mail and that there is no question about your intent.
- Avoid phrases like "it would be great if" and/or "please consider" when you require a revision in order to approve. This causes members to think your suggestion is for next year or that you do not really care whether they revise.
 - For example, say "Please edit and resubmit your annual report at <http://icma.org/credentialing> by November 15 instead of "Please think about adding some more substance."
- Attach sample professional development plan or sample annual report as appropriate, but also reference that these can be found in the Credentialing Resources section of icma.org
- Use bold font (sparingly) to highlight important messages, but remember that some member's e-mail programs do not keep formatting. Important messages should appear close to the beginning of the e-mail. Busy members may miss important deadlines/requests if they appear at the end.
- Copy the Credentialing Program Manager.
- If a member does not understand what you are looking for or if a member has had same issue for several years, a phone call is probably in order (as opposed to e-mail).

APPENDIX J: EXECUTIVE BOARD POLICY STATEMENT REGARDING VCP

(First approved by the ICMA Executive Board in July 2001 and amended September 2002, January 2003, June 2004, February 2005, July 2009)

Eligibility: Who Will Be Eligible To Apply For The Credential?

To be eligible to receive the credential, an individual must be a Full Member of ICMA, adhering to the ICMA Code of Ethics and its rules of enforcement as a requirement of membership. A member must also be in service to local government or have clearly demonstrated a commitment and connection to the profession within the last five years.

Members who have received a private censure for violating the ICMA Code of Ethics are eligible to apply for the credential.

Members who have been publicly censured or have had their credential revoked as a result of an ethics violation should wait a period of time (five years is recommended) before being eligible to receive a credential, and must demonstrate focused professional development in ethics.

Qualifications: How Will Members Earn The Credential?

A certain combination of education, experience, and continuing professional development will be required to earn the credential.

Education:

Most credentialed managers have earned university degrees. For credit toward the credential, the degree must be from a regionally accredited or DETC-accredited university. Applicants with less than a bachelor's degree will be required to meet a higher threshold of executive-level experience to obtain the credential, as reflected on Tables 1-3 in this manual.

Experience:

Executive experience includes full-time, appointed service as a manager/CAO and/or service as a senior assistant or similar position. Although the nature of the duties and responsibilities are more important than the position title, generally speaking, department head, assistant to, and administrative assistant experience does not meet the criteria for full credit. Responsibilities limited to one functional area, for example, do not qualify for full credit, while responsibilities across several functions will be considered.

Other experience can count toward the requirement on a half credit basis if the applicant currently occupies an executive (full credit) position in local government and has been in an executive-level position in local government for the last three years; for Candidate status the applicant must have occupied an executive position in local government for the past one year. Previous local government department head experience receives half credit. An applicant whose primary experience has been in some area other than local government (such as significant executive experience in the private sector, the military, or in other levels of government) will be given the opportunity to demonstrate how the applicant's prior experience qualifies as executive experience based on the criteria defined below.

To be counted toward the required accumulation of experience, the professional role must include **all** of the following executive level responsibilities in local government:

- Staff management
 - Supervising the development and performance of staff in the organization.
 - Having a continuing direct relationship with operating department heads on the implementation and administration of programs.

- Financial management
 - Having significant responsibility for the preparation and administration of operating budgets.
 - Interpreting financial information to assess the fiscal condition of the community, determine the cost-effectiveness of programs, and compare alternative strategies.
- Policy facilitation and implementation
 - Having significant responsibility in the development and analysis of public policy alternatives and in the implementation of policy once adopted.
 - Helping elected officials and other community leaders identify, work toward, and achieve common goals and objectives.
- Service delivery
 - Ensuring effective performance in the delivery of local government services by anticipating future needs, organizing work operations, and establishing timetables for work units or projects.
 - Having responsibility for diverse, major staff and/or line functions
 - Having significant decision-making responsibility

Combining Education and Experience:

The credential requires a minimum number of years of executive service that varies depending on the education of the applicant. The minimum number of years of experience are:

- Masters degree in public administration or policy: 7 years
- Other masters degree: 8 years
- Baccalaureate: 9 years
- Less than Bachelor’s 15 years

Continuing professional development:

To qualify for the credential, the applicant must complete the ICMA Management Assessment (formerly Applied Knowledge Assessment) to help identify professional strengths and areas for improvement.

Applicants will complete a short application describing what was learned from the ICMA Management Assessment (formerly Applied Knowledge Assessment) and a plan for addressing, over the next year, the identified development needs. They will also report on how the 40-hour professional development obligation was met during the preceding year.

Within five years of obtaining the credential, holders of the credential must complete one of ICMA’s multi-rater assessments or submit a report of some independent evaluative experience.

What if a Member Doesn’t Yet Meet the Credentialing Requirements?

Members who do not yet meet the combined education/experience requirement but who expect to attain it within two years may apply for Credentialed Manager Candidate status, (see Tables 1–3 on pages 7 and 8). Benefits of candidate status include being able to receive the full credential as soon as an individual meets the requirements due to already being approved, as well as being able to plan more structured activities.

EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS AS A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE

The Following Appeals Policy is Available to Members:

For each applicant, the Credentialing Advisory Board must make a recommendation to grant or not grant the credential and to confer as needed if reviewers disagree on a recommendation. Staff or the Credentialing Advisory Board must notify any members who are not granted the credential of that fact and the reason in writing. The applicant may appeal the recommendation of the Credentialing Advisory Board to the ICMA Board Membership Committee in writing (to credentialing@icma.org) within 60 days of notification. The Membership Committee's decision is final. This is an appeal process and therefore is based on a review by the Membership Committee of information that has already been submitted to the CAB. If the member has new or additional information that they wish to be considered, they must provide it to credentialing@icma.org so it can first be considered by the CAB.

Maintenance: How Will Members Maintain the Credential?

The credential is renewable as long as ICMA membership is maintained, compliance with the ICMA Code of Ethics is maintained, an annual report describing 40 hours of professional development has been submitted, and a multi-rater assessment has been completed at least once during the first five years of participation.

The CAB has the authority to grant a waiver of up to one year if a member shows that a major, ongoing life event has interfered with his or her ability to meet the professional development requirement of 40 hours or his or her ability to submit the annual report. The CAB has the authority to grant a waiver of all or a portion the 40 required hours if a member demonstrates that such a waiver is justified. This is determined on a case by case basis. Staff can grant a one year extension on the multi-rater assessment requirement if a member has had a change in employment or loss of employment. Any extension beyond that must be approved by the CAB.

In reviewing the program in December 2004, the board noted the importance of identifying additional ways in the future to provide value for members who have been in the program several years. One opportunity that was noted was for senior Credentialed Managers to focus more on coaching/mentoring others than on documenting professional development activities.

Title: What Will the Credential be Called?

ICMA-CM ICMA Credentialed Manager

Ethics: How Will the Credential Relate to Enforcement of the ICMA Code of Ethics?

The Committee on Professional Conduct (CPC) has the authority to review and recommend the removal of a member's credential. The CPC shall follow the Rules of Procedure for Enforcement (Rules) of the ICMA Code of Ethics for this review. The Executive Board in making its determination shall also follow the Rules. No loss of credentialing would become final without the consideration and approval of the Executive Board. The revocation of a member's credential shall be reviewed under the Rules simultaneously with any pending ethics complaint.

Administration: Who Will Administer the Program and How?

A Credentialing Advisory Board of up to fifteen Credentialing Advisory Board members will advise on implementation issues and on granting credentials.

APPENDIX K: HOW TO ENTER A WHOLISTIC REPORT

Below is a screenshot of the activity entry section. You only fill out one entry for a wholistic report. There are two examples below that you may use to model the level of detail acceptable for this type of report. The activity hours should be the TOTAL hours (minimum 40.0 hours) spent for the multiple activities listed in the report.

Add - Credentialing Professional Development ✕

customer: Ms. Jane Doe, ICMA-CM

activity name:

activity date: Required

description:

what I personally learned (not what was taught or said):

activity hours: Required

Example 1:

Activity Name: Wholistic Credentialing Report

Activity Date: 7/1/19

Description:

I attended the XX Annual conference in Anytown, US, June 18-20, 2019. I attended the XX Conference Anytown US, May 3-4, 2019.

I attended the XX Annual Conference in Small Town, US, February 6-8, 2019. I participated in numerous ICMA/ State Association webinars, 2018/2019.

I read the book Atomic Habits by James Clear.

I read the book 4th Dimension Leadership by Ron Holifield.

What I Personally Learned (not what was taught or said):

2018 and 2019 was a major transitional year for me. I had planned on focusing on Strategic Leadership, Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement, and Technological Literacy. To an extent I did, but the situation in My Town shifted my focus and attention. The end of my last report had the following in it "I've got a great support team and as I write this report, I am gainfully and happily employed as the City Manager for the City of My Town. I am blessed and will not take this new opportunity lightly." To that end, I have been extremely fluid in my focus and trainings over the last year.

In the culmination of my training over the last year, I can say I am a better manager and person from them. There was no one session or book that I read that drastically changed how I manage or approach our profession, rather Atomic Habits reminded me of what I do daily but reinforced my approach to life and my focus on intentional and successful habits. 4th Dimension, reminded me of my leadership habits and what I value in who I am in this life – a father, a husband and a manager – in how I desire to live my life. A reminder and a refresher of proven leadership competencies. At the Municipal conference, I attended operational sessions that focused my attention on how to implement the concepts and policy recommendations I'd been making to my council. The XX Conference got me jazzed about technology and really thinking about artificial intelligence and autonomous transportation – how both will affect our culture, nation and local communities.

The State Management conference brought me back to the value of relationships and collaboration. The City Management Association conference is made up of primarily managers and deputy managers. The value of knowledge and experience of my fellow managers – in a venue that I can talk with them and engage in a safe place to share my questions, my fears, and my ideas is priceless. The time I spent asking questions about challenges I am facing – professionally and personally, resulted in great ideas...but more importantly, created (or reinforced) relationships that I can rely on (or lean on) in the future as I move into the future and am challenged in my management and leadership skills.

Conclusion: In my personal life, as I said in my last report, the last few years have been hard on my career and my family. Being asked to be the My Town City Manager was an honor, but it has had its own challenges and stigmas. I struggled for some time to regain my focus as a City Manager. I didn't feel adequate as a husband to my very successful wife. I felt inadequate in my skills as a manager, a leader, and ultimately as a person (man). Over the last year, attending conferences, reading books, participating in webinars, and engaging with my colleagues from around the state and nation has ignited my passion, renewed my confidence, and put me in a place of loving the local government management profession.

I have taken the last year to be the best manager of my career. My trainings and continuous focus on improvement have helped me be successful in my profession as a City Manager and as a husband and a father. I am blessed to be in this profession and I value the credentialed manager program and am proud to be a member of this esteemed group.

Activity hours: 40.0

Example 2:

Activity Name: Professional Development Activities

Activity Date: 7/1/19-6/30/19

Description: List all conferences, webinars, activities and/or books read (which should equate to least 40 hours during the reporting period)

What I Personally Learned (not what was taught or said):

This past year has been a productive learning experience for me as I continue my commitment to professional

development and lifelong learning. Three experiences left important lessons for me or inspired me during the past year. My experience in the Public Executive Leadership Academy (PELA) at UNC, Daniel Pink's keynote on timing during the ICMA conference in Maryland, and my state managers' association's "Preventing Suicides for First Responders" session presented during the winter conference.

The PELA program is focused on developing community leadership skills along with executive leadership skills. There were two sessions I found to be particularly useful during PELA, "The Local Government Imperative" by Bob O'Neill, retired city manager and ICMA Executive Director, and "Life, Work and the Pursuit of Balance" with George Manning, Professor of Psychology and Business at Northern Kentucky University. I have used Bob's lessons on the next big things in local government and 10 characteristics of great organizations to guide my team's performance and leadership development during the past year. George's lessons on being "flexible, wise and kind in supervising staff" has been a lesson I continue to use daily.

Daniel Pink's keynote at the annual ICMA conference in Maryland was very interesting and insightful for me. I was so intrigued with his research on timing that I read his book "When: The Scientific Secrets to Perfect Timing." Understanding my energy and focus levels has allowed me to rethink how I organize my days. I now try to complete my analytical more focused tasks in the morning and complete the more creative and routine tasks during the afternoons and evenings. I enjoyed the book so much that I shared it and its teaching with others.

Lastly, the session on "Preventing Suicides with First Responders" during winter conference was a valuable and important learning experience for me. I gained a better understanding on the mental health and stress related issues that first responders are experiencing in today's world and the need for additional support and services to assist them in times of crisis. This was such a powerful session for me that I took the idea of a more formal program back to our emergency services department and requested they implement a similar program.

Activity hours: 40.0



INTERNATIONAL CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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