

Updated 2024

# National Association of Plan Advisors

## Continuing Education Policy

### Purpose

NAPA members who have earned a NAPA designation have demonstrated the knowledge and skill required to support retirement plans. NAPA designation holders have committed to adhering to the principles and rules of the NAPA code of conduct. Designation holders also commit to an annual continuing education requirement designed to ensure that they continue to develop the knowledge and skill required to serve as competent and ethical professionals.

### Continuing Education Requirements

#### Annual Continuing Education Requirement

NAPA designation holders must complete ten (10) hours of Continuing Education (“CE”) each calendar year following the calendar year the designation is earned. CE hours must meet the Continuing Education Content Standards outline below.

Each calendar year a minimum of four (4) hours of the annual ten (10) hour CE requirement must cover retirement plan (“Relevant Topics”) identified in this continuing education policy statement. In addition, a minimum of one (1) hour of CE credit earned annually must address professional ethics and the ARA’s Code of Professional Conduct (“Ethics”). The remaining five hours may be on any topic relevant to a NAPA member’s professional development (“Professional Development”) in the retirement field.

#### Continuing Education Content Standards

Reported CE must meet the following standards qualify for continuing education credit:

- Content must be developed by person(s) qualified in the subject matter.
- CE hours reported shall match the actual time on task rounded down to the nearest five (5) minute increment.
  - One (1.0) hour of CE is equivalent to 50 minutes of instruction or study time on task
  - After the first 50 minutes, CE hours may be accrued 5-minute increments where 5 minutes is equal to one tenth (0.1) CE credits.
  - CE will not be accepted for any event less than 45 minutes time on task. This is equivalent to a nine-tenths (0.9) CE threshold.

### Relevant Topics

Relevant Topics that will satisfy the four (4) hour retirement plan education requirement includes, but is not limited to, the following Relevant Topics:

- Retirement Plan Legislative and Regulatory Updates
- Qualified Plan Features and Administration
- Fiduciary Responsibilities
- Retirement Plan Employer and Participant Communications
- Retirement Plan Products
- Retirement Plan Sales Process
- Supplemental Executive Retirement Plans (SERPs)
- Executive Key employee retention programs
- Customized Executive benefit programs
- Informal funding implementation strategies
- IRAs
- Tax-Exempt & Governmental Plans

### Professional Development

All continuing education topics that promote a NAPA member's professional development in the retirement field qualify for NAPA Professional Development CE (including non-technical topics such as marketing and advanced ID training). Broad categories include topics such as:

- Investments & Insurance
- Participant Issues
- Business Management, Operations & Development
- Personal Development
- Technology

## Simplified CE Chart

Domain	Credit Requirements	Topics
Ethics	1 credit	Business Ethics, Professional Ethics
Relevant Topics	4 credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retirement Plan Legislative and Regulatory Updates</li> <li>• Qualified Plan Features and Administration</li> <li>• Nonqualified Plan Features and Administration</li> <li>• Fiduciary Responsibilities</li> <li>• Retirement Plan Employer and Participant Communications</li> <li>• Retirement Plan Products</li> <li>• Retirement Plan Sales Process</li> <li>• Supplemental Executive Retirement Plans (SERPs)</li> <li>• Executive Key Employee Retention Programs</li> <li>• Customized Executive Benefit Programs</li> <li>• Informal Funding Implementation Strategies</li> <li>• IRAs</li> <li>• Tax-Exempt &amp; Governmental Plans</li> </ul>
Professional Development*	5 credits	Investments & Insurance Related Topics, Participant Issues, Business Management, Operations & Development, Personal Development, and Technology

**\*Please Note:** For purposes of fulfilling your Professional Development requirement, Relevant Topics can be earned in the place of Professional Development. Earn **Relevant Topics** and **Ethics** CE by enrolling in our member benefit [Live](#) and [On-Demand Webcasts](#).

## Reporting Requirements

### Third-Party CE

- Designation holders are responsible for reporting third-party CE activity using the [NAPA CE reporting system](#).
- Records of completion of third-party CE must be maintained by the designation holder for a minimum of two (2) calendar years following the calendar year for which the CE credit is reported.
- Third party CE is subject to audit.

### NAPA Provided CE

- NAPA will record CE credit for participation in NAPA CE events.
- NAPA will ensure that that NAPA provided CE meets both continuing education content standards and addresses retirement plan related Relevant Topics.

## Compliance and Audit

The audit of third-party CE is conducted for the benefit of all NAPA members and credential holders. The CE audit process demonstrates NAPA's ongoing commitment to professionalism and the integrity of the program. The CE audit process helps ensure compliance with the CE policy, but more importantly, will help NAPA identify opportunities to continuously improve the CE program.

### The Audit Process

NAPA will conduct an annual audit of reported third-party CE. The audit will encompass a randomly selected representative sample of designation holders who reported third-party CE the prior calendar year. Designation holders who are randomly selected for the CE audit will be asked to provide suitable documentation to substantiate the claim that reported third-party CE meets the Continuing Education Content Standards. In general, the documentation must demonstrate:

- The content was developed by a subject matter expert with expertise pertinent to the subject matter
- Time on task for the CE credit awarded
- The member has successfully completed or participated in the entire program

The designation holder subject to audit will also be asked to provide a description of the CE session for any third-party CE reported to satisfy the ethics or retirement plan related Relevant Topic requirement.

## Suspension of Designation

NAPA designations may be suspended for the following reasons:

- Failure to comply with the NAPA Continuing Education Policy
- Failure to renew NAPA membership or pay NAPA credential maintenance fee as applicable
- Violation of the NAPA Code of Conduct

### Failure to comply with the NAPA Continuing Education Policy

Designation holders will have until March 1 of each calendar year to report CE for the prior calendar year CE cycle. NAPA provided CE earned prior to March 1st of each calendar year may be applied to the CE reporting cycle for the prior calendar year. In no case will CE be recorded for more than one CE reporting cycle. If the failure to comply with the NAPA Continuing Education Policy results from the audit of third-party CE, the designation holder will have 60 days from the date of notification to correct the deficiency.

### Failure to renew NAPA membership or NAPA credential maintenance fee

Designation holders are expected to remain NAPA members in good standing and make timely payment of any designation maintenance fee that may be required by NAPA. Failure to pay any required fees prior to March 1 of each calendar year will result in suspension of the designation.

### Violation of the NAPA Code of Conduct

Suspension and or revocation of designations due to actual or reported violation of the NAPA Code of Conduct is addressed in the NAPA Code of Conduct Disciplinary Procedures.

### Revocation of Designation

The designation will be revoked for designation holders who do not correct the deficiency or deficiencies that initiated the suspension of the designation within the parameters outlined in this policy statement and/or any communications from NAPA regarding the suspension of designation.

If the designation is revoked, all NAPA records and reports will be updated to reflect the revocation. This may include updating the designation holder database available to the public.

### Reinstatement

Reinstatement may be granted if the following conditions are met prior to the end of the calendar year following the calendar year a designation is suspended or revoked:

- The [reinstatement application](#) and new membership application is submitted,
- Required fees including membership, credential maintenance and reinstatement fees are paid in full, and
- Documentation is provided demonstrating required CE has been earned in the 12 months preceding the submission of reinstatement application.