GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

- CERTIFIED COMPOST OPERATIONS MANAGER™
- CERTIFIED COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL™
- CERTIFICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Candidate Handbook for Certified Compost Operations Manager™ (CCOM™) and Certified Composting Professional (CCP™)

Make an Impact on your Career!

THIS HANDBOOK CONTAINS:

- Eligibility requirements for the CCOM™ and CCP™ credentials
- How to apply to earn these certifications
- The content outline for the CCOM™ and CCP™ qualifying tests
- Resource list
- Policies and procedures, including:
  - How to schedule your test
  - How to maintain your certification
  - How to use the credential and display the logo
  - Professional Code of Ethics
  - Disciplinary procedures
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1.1 SCOPE OF THIS HANDBOOK
The Candidate Handbook for Certified Compost Operations Manager™ (CCOM™) and Certified Composting Professional™ (CCP™) has been prepared for the use of individuals who are interested in or are applying to participate in the total process to achieve the CCOM™ or CCP™ certification and then maintain their credentials with recertification.

1.2 INTRODUCTION
Congratulations on taking the first step toward becoming credentialed composting professional. The Certification Commission welcomes you to our credentialing program. The US Composting Council created the Certification Commission (USCC) as a semi-independent body with a mission to develop and administer national, valid, credible, vendor-neutral Certification programs for the composting industry which, in turn, benefits the community’s business and environmental outcomes. The Commission researched and built its program based on data from the field that reflects the knowledge, skills, performance and expectations for composting operations managers and those that support these operations. For more information on certifications please see: www.CertificationsUSCC.org

1.3 CERTIFICATION AT A GLANCE
The USCC Certification Commission is offering two credentials, the Certified Compost Operations Manager™ (CCOM™) and the Certified Composting Professional™ (CCP™).

Certified Compost Operations Manager™:
Understands all aspects of composting operations, from feedstock arrival through marketing and uses, including environmental controls and the larger context of organics recycling and waste management. See Appendix A for a detailed list of expected knowledge.

Certified Composting Professional™: Has a similar knowledge base as the CCOM™, but has gained that through a variety of work and training experiences, instead of at a compost manufacturing facility. Consultants, equipment providers, educators, program managers and even regulators could all earn a CCP™

To earn a CCOM™ or a CCP™ an individual must:
1. Complete the application
2. Meet the eligibility requirements
3. Take and pass the CCOM™ or CCP™ test
4. Receive your certification
5. Maintain your certification through ongoing education

1.4 HISTORY
The compost manufacturing industry has seen vibrant growth over the last two decades. There have been many who have been instrumental in developing the profession and working toward credentialing. As early as 2000 the USCC Board of Directors created a Professional Credentials Committee to begin investigating training and certification for facility operators. In 2010 the Composter Training Program was launched, with the introduction of the
Compost Operations Training Course (COTC). In 2014 the Composting Council Research and Education Foundation (CCREF) received funding from the 11th Hour Project, a program of the Eric and Wendy Schmidt Foundation, to begin the process of creating a professional certification for the compost manufacturing industry. Two years later, the USCC Board accepted the recommendations of the CCREF and empaneled the first Certification Commission to launch the credentialing program. The Certification Commission has the distinct honor of leadership by five Commissioners who have each spent many years in the field of organics recycling. Their commitment, experience, involvement, and breadth of understanding has culminated in developing a credentialing program that represents the best and most current practices in compost manufacturing.

1.5 CCOM™ AND CCP™ ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

Composting facilities vary significantly in size and scope. Compost Operations Managers who achieve the professional certification CCOM™ will be competent to work with a variety of feedstocks, using various technologies, and to produce compost products that meet the qualities required by their markets. They will be able to design effective compost management and safety programs utilizing goal-setting, understand professional compost facility management methodologies and guidelines; implement composting management program(s); modify the program(s) as necessary to achieve reasonable goals; and adhere to all codes, laws, and applicable policies and procedures. Certified Composting Professionals who achieve the CCP™ will be knowledgeable in compost manufacturing and facility management but are not required to have the direct manufacturing experience that CCOM™ candidates have. They occupy a variety of roles that support composting facility operations, including advisors, service and equipment providers, compost operation educators, and regulators. Through their training and work experience, they have gained comparable knowledge of compost facility operations as CCOMs.

These certifications are valid for a three year period, provided that annual maintenance fees are paid. After three years the credential may be renewed. Requirements for renewal are obtaining at least 30 hours of professional development hours (PDHs) or retaking and passing the test, plus paying applicable fees.

1.6 SCOPE OF PRACTICE STUDIES

Delineating the essential tasks required for competent practice is a rigorous process. The focus groups and advisory panels for the Scope of Practice studies were composed of professionals who have been selected to be representative of experienced practitioners, and subject matter experts to facilitate and guide the development of this organic recycling certification credential. These industry representatives from composting facilities, academia and regulatory agencies played a vital role in delineating the essential duties, and KSA’s (knowledge/skills/abilities) of compost operations practitioners.

Throughout the delineation of responsibilities and tasks, the USCC staff leaders and advisory panels were asked to adhere to the principle that each task covered these criteria: 1) objective and observable, i.e., it must be possible to delegate the task to a colleague; 2) foundational for all practitioners, i.e., applicable regardless of operational size, and; 3) not tasks or skills that are essential across many fields, i.e., not specific to compost operations management, such as arriving to work on time, or communicating clearly with co-workers.
2.1 CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics is intended to reflect the standards and behavior that Certification Commission certified practitioners and program applicants expect of each other as they perform their duties and that reaffirm the value of holding a credential. The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to ensure public confidence in the integrity and service of certified professionals while performing their duties. The Code of Ethics identifies the types of circumstances that may compromise the reliability of the Commission’s ability to establish, or certify, a certificate holder’s or program applicant’s ability to perform the essential tasks of the vocation with at least minimal competency.

For purposes of this Code of Ethics, “essential tasks” are defined as the general vocational duties that are expected to be performed by certified professionals. “Minimal Competency” is defined as the ability to perform the essential tasks effectively, with minimal supervision.

The Commission does not monitor on-the-job behavior or actions. Adherence to these ethical standards is expected from all certificate holders and applicants. Any found or reported action of a certificate holder or applicant that compromises the reliability of the certification process, is in violation of the Code of Ethics, or that shows gross incompetence, negligence, dishonesty or fraudulence while performing the essential tasks of their certified vocation may be subject to removal of his or her certified status.

All certificate holders and applicants are expected to adhere to the following standards of professional conduct and ethics:

1. We represent ourselves truthfully, honestly, and to the best of our abilities throughout the entire certification process, and in performance of the essential tasks described in section 5 of this handbook.
2. We adhere to all CCOM™ and CCP™ test site rules, making no attempt to complete a test dishonestly or to assist any other person in doing so.
3. We protect proprietary or confidential information that has been entrusted to us as if it were our own.
4. We state only what we know to be true and are clear about opinions & assumptions vs. facts.
5. We are transparent about who we are, and whom or what we represent online
6. We take ownership of our online activities, the content we have created, and any missteps we have made along the way.
7. We uphold the policies, rules, regulations and laws that govern our activities.
8. We report unethical or illegal conduct to appropriate authorities, and if necessary, to those affected by the conduct.

2.2 NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Certification Commission does not discriminate against any individual because of race, gender, age, religion, disability, veteran status, or national origin. The Certification Commission and its testing partners endorse the principles of equal opportunity.

Eligibility criteria for test and certification under certification programs are applied equally to all applicants regardless of race, religion, sex, national origin, veteran status, age, or disability.
3.1 TEST ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The minimum test eligibility requirements are the prerequisites that candidates must substantiate before being allowed to sit for a certification test. Candidates must show that they meet the following four requirements:

1. AGE: Twenty one (21) years of age or older.
2. EDUCATION: Graduation from a US high school or its equivalent (GED); including the equivalent of a high school program outside the United States.
3. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS: To ensure that all applicants are prepared to pass the certification test, the Commission requires that all CCOM™ and CCP™ applicants have completed at least one instructor-led, basic course on compost operations of three (3) or more days. Courses that meet this training requirement are pre-screened to assure that they cover to some extent all nine knowledge domains. Attending courses on other topics related to composting and organics recycling will be counted for maintaining certification (continuing professional development) but would not count towards the training needed to qualify for taking the test the first time. Likewise, attending conferences and symposia on related topics will count toward continuing professional development, but not initial certification.

Additional Training requirements for the Composting Professional

The Commission requires that all CCP™ applicants have completed at least Five (5) days of training in composting operations and compost use. This must include at least one training of 3 days (or longer) in compost operations, which must include hands-on activities and/or a field trip. If the training course is less than 5 days, the CCP applicant must document an additional one or two days of training in any aspect of compost facility management.

4. WORK EXPERIENCE BY CERTIFICATION TYPE:

Compost Operations Manager

To qualify for the CCOM credential, the candidate must have a minimum of the equivalent of 2 years of full time experience related to organics recycling, including a minimum of 1 year working full-time in compost facility operations, or the equivalent if working less than full time (eg, 2 years at half-time). Candidates with experience in managing one or more composting facilities are ideal candidates for a CCOM™.

Composting Professional

Because the CCP candidate may have worked with or for many different compost facilities for short periods of time, the Commission requires a minimum of 4 years of full time experience related to composting facility design, implementation and/or operation. This could be in the role of consultant, engineer, equipment designer or sales, regulatory compliance, or as an educator of compost operators.

NOTE: Membership in the USCC is NOT a requirement for eligibility for either the CCOM™ or CCP™.
4.1 SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Applying for certification is a two-step process:

1. SUBMIT AN APPLICATION WITH A NON-REFUNDABLE FEE

The CCOM™ and CCP™ applications are accepted continuously on a year-round basis. If approved, the candidate will be required to take a test at a local proctored testing site that is selected during the application process.

The application provides documentation that you meet the four eligibility requirements to be certified, as listed in section 2.1. The fee covers the cost to review the application. Candidates must apply online at: www.CertificationsUSCC.org. Applications require payment by credit card.

Submitting an application attests that you have read this candidate handbook. Also by submitting an application a candidate agrees to be bound by the Code of Ethics outlined in section 2.

The Commission will review eligibility upon receipt of candidate application.

If eligibility requirements are not met, candidates will have two years to fulfill the eligibility requirements and update their application at no additional cost. After two years, a new application must be submitted.

2. SCHEDULE, PAY FOR, TAKE AND PASS THE TEST

Once a candidate has submitted an application, and it has been approved as meeting the four eligibility requirements, the candidate will receive instructions by email on how to schedule a test appointment and other pertinent information about the test.

The test itself is taken on a computer at a testing center operated by PSI Services, Talent Measurement Division. They have over 600 testing centers across North America.

Candidates who are approved will have a window of 30 days to schedule their test. After 30 days the test scheduling window provided to each candidate expires, refunds will not be issued for expired test authorization messages and candidates will be required to reapply and pay all test fees.

The test must be taken within 90 days of receiving the notice of application approval and instructions for test scheduling.

4.2 CANDIDATES WITH SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Certification Commission acknowledges and complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will offer the test in a center and manner that is accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative arrangements for candidates with disabilities.

If you have a documented disability (including a visual, orthopedic, or hearing impairment; health impairment; learning disability; emotional disability; or multiple disabilities) and need modification to the usual testing conditions, you may request special testing accommodations (e.g., magnifying lens, etc.) to take the CCOM™ and CCP™ certification test, or other certification tests.

Appropriate documentation must be sent that sufficiently explains your disability and all requested accommodation(s). You must include either a letter from an appropriate professional (e.g., physician, psychologist, occupational therapist, educational specialist) or evidence of prior diagnosis or accommodation (e.g., special education services). Any professional providing documentation should know of your disability, have diagnosed and/or evaluated you, or have provided the accommodation for you. The documentation letter you obtain from that professional should include the following information:

a). Identification of the specific disability/diagnosis;

b). A brief description of the disability;

c). A description of past accommodations made for the disability;

d). A description of and explanation for requested testing accommodation(s);

e). Signature and title of the professional.

*If you have been diagnosed as having an emotional disability, your letter from the appropriate professional should include identification of the DSM-IV classification of the diagnosis.

Your request for special accommodations must be received at least five weeks before the test date. Please see Appendix D for the ADA Accommodation Request Form. If you do not notify the Certification Commission of needed accommodations at the time of application, the accommodations will not be available at the time of the test.

If you have specific questions regarding the provisions of a testing accommodation, please contact administrator@CertificationsUSCC.org.
### 4.3 Certification Fees

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee Description</th>
<th>Fee 1</th>
<th>Fee 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Submittal Fee (due on submission)</td>
<td>$79</td>
<td>$99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Fee (due on test scheduling)</td>
<td>$349</td>
<td>$449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-testing fee after failing (2 retakes allowed)</td>
<td>$99</td>
<td>$129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Test (optional)</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual maintenance fee (starts the year after certification)</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification Renewal Application (every three years, documents continuing education)</td>
<td>NO FEE</td>
<td>NO FEE</td>
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The compost manufacturing industry has seen vibrant growth over the last two decades. There have been many who have been instrumental in developing the profession and working toward credentialing.
SECTION 5 – SCHEDULING A TEST

5.1 SELECTING AN APPOINTMENT TIME
Candidates must select a preferred date and time for their test during the application process. The scheduling system confirms your appointment and will send you an email.

5.2 CHANGING A TEST APPOINTMENT
Candidates can reschedule test appointments. There is no charge for rescheduling test appointments, but appointments must be rescheduled at least two (2) business days before the scheduled test date. For example, if your appointment is at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, you must cancel by 11:00 a.m. the previous Thursday. Candidates who do not reschedule their test appointment within that time frame or who do not appear to take the test will be considered no-show candidates and will forfeit all fees.

5.3 CANCELLATION
Candidates may cancel a testing appointment. There is no refund for cancellations. Candidates who cannot reschedule their test appointment or are unable to test for any unforeseen reason, may withdraw.

5.4 MISSING A TEST APPOINTMENT
Candidates who do not appear for their test appointment, are more than thirty (30) minutes late for their appointment, do not have their ID or cannot present valid ID will not be allowed to test and will forfeit all fees. If this occurs, candidates are eligible to reapply, and must pay all required test fees, again. Unlike failing candidates, candidates who miss their original test appointment are not required to wait 90 days before they can retake the test. There is no waiting period for no-show candidates. As soon as they pay for and receive their test scheduling notification, they can schedule another appointment to test.

SECTION 6 – THE TEST

6.1 TEST CONTENT OUTLINE
The Composting Council Research and Education Foundation (CCREF) convened a series of industry focus groups and conducted a scope-of-practice survey to identify the primary tasks performed by general compost facility managers and operators. The fundamental purpose of this study was to establish and validate appropriate content areas for the CCOM™ and CCP™ certification tests. The result of this process includes this Test Content Outline, which sets forth the tasks and skills necessary for composting professionals to perform. It is the position of the Certification Commission that the content areas outlined here are not exhaustive to the qualifications of all organic recycling vocations, but represent a general level of proficiency and theoretical knowledge.

The Test Content Outline provides candidates with a blueprint for the CCOM™ and CCP™ tests. The questions that candidates will be asked are based on the content domains described in this outline. Candidates must not only understand the tasks themselves, but the underlying knowledge and skills required to perform them effectively. There were nine areas (content domains) identified during the job performance study, each weighted equally.

The nine domains, listed alphabetically, are:
1. Business Acumen
2. Composting Purpose and Vision
3. Composting Science
4. Equipment & Service Maintenance
5. Feedstock Management
6. Health & Safety
7. Process Control & Quality Assurance
8. Regulatory Compliance
9. Site Management

The detailed components of the content domains can be found in Appendix A.
6.2 PREPARING FOR THE TEST

STUDY TIPS
Taking a test can be intimidating, but you can reduce this anxiety by being prepared.

ORGANIZE
Begin by making a calendar outlining a daily schedule of topics for review. Every time you complete a topic, give yourself a mini review. As a guide, you may want to review this section (Section 6–Tests) for an overview of the topics that will be included on the tests.

IDEAS FOR PREPARING
Find the handouts, binder or other training materials you received when you took your basic compost operations course. Outline topics for review, what you need to study and how much time you need to spend studying. Create flashcards and use mnemonics to remember things that are enumerated.

FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH COMPUTER TESTING
Since you will take the test on a computer, you should familiarize yourself with general computer principles, such as filling out applications and knowing the keyboard. You will be given instructions at the test site on how to take the computer-based test. One of the best ways to familiarize yourself with the test is by taking the practice test offered by the Certification Commission.

FIND A STUDY GROUP
Remember how well study groups worked in high school and college? They work just as well when studying for a certification or credentialing test. Find a group of fellow professionals who might be preparing for the same test and study together.

KNOW WHERE THE TEST IS BEING CONDUCTED
Once you schedule your test and select a specific test site, make sure the email confirmation sent to you has all you need to know in order to go directly to the test site on the day of your test.

GET PLENTY OF SLEEP THE NIGHT BEFORE THE TEST
It is important to get a good night’s sleep the night before the test. Make sure you have plenty of sleep and rest well the night before the test.

Taking a test can be intimidating, but you can reduce this anxiety by being prepared.
SECTION 7 – TEST DAY

7.1 IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
Upon arrival to the proctored test site, a candidate must present their government-issued photo ID such as driver’s license or passport. If either of these documents are not present at the time of registration the candidate will not be allowed to take the test.

7.2 TESTING SITE REQUIREMENTS
Candidates must leave their belongings (including cell phone) at the check-in location, but all candidates will be provided with a pencil and one sheet of blank paper for each test they are taking. No rest room breaks are permitted during testing.

The test is computer-based, and candidates will receive login instructions from the proctor. Throughout the test the proctor will monitor the test-takers. When a candidate has completed their test, the scratch paper will be collected and the test-taker may leave the room quietly and will not be allowed back into the room.

7.3 TEST LOGISTICS
The total testing time for the CCOM™ and CCP™ test are 115 minutes. Seventy-five minutes are allotted for answering the test questions, plus 30 minutes for login, tutorials, and survey questions. The CCOM™ and CCP™ tests each contain a total of 75 questions. Each question lists four possible answers, only one of which is the correct or best answer. The candidate’s test score is based on the responses to the scored questions.

7.4 INCLEMENT WEATHER OR EMERGENCIES
If there is inclement weather, or weather emergencies on the day of the test that prevent a candidate from arriving within their scheduled time, candidates must check the following link: https://evm.vitapowered.com/ProctorConsole/ResourceClosureStatus/ResourceClosureStatus.aspx
Candidates will be allowed to reschedule their test appointment with no rescheduling charge due to inclement weather or weather emergencies.

7.5 MEDICAL EMERGENCIES
An emergency is an unplanned medical event that arises less than 24 hours before the candidate’s scheduled test appointment. Candidates with medical or personal emergencies can submit a written emergency withdrawal request to the Certification Commission, along with any pertinent medical documentation. If approved, a full refund will be issued in the same manner in which the original payment was made.
8.1 TEST SCORING METHOD
Candidates are scored only on those items that have been aligned to the test specifications of the current Scope of Practice Study and validated for scoring. Items have been reviewed and pretested to ensure quality. Your total score on the test will be “pass” or “fail” based on the number of items answered correctly.

Answering at least 70% of the 75 scored items correctly is passing.

8.2 PASS/FAIL RESULTS
Candidates who take the CCOM™ or CCP™ test will receive preliminary results by email within 24 hours or one business day of upon completion of the CCOM™ or CCP™ test. Official results are sent within approximately four weeks of completing the CCOM™ or CCP™ test.

The Certification Commission has developed its certification program for you and we want to be responsive to you! If you have ideas or comments on the application process or things we should consider as we develop the policies, procedures and pre-requisites for our test, please send us an e-mail at: administrator@CertificationsUSCC.org.

8.3 CONFIDENTIALITY OF TEST SCORES
The test score (pass or fail) is confidential and will not be disclosed unless the Certification Commission receives a written request to do so from a candidate or is directed to do so by subpoena or court order. A candidate wanting scores released to another entity must indicate in writing which particular scores may be disclosed and identify specifically the person or organization to which the scores should be revealed. No candidate scores will be given by telephone, fax or electronic means for any reason.

8.4 RETAKE POLICY
No refunds are provided for those who fail the Certification test. Candidates who fail the test can retake the test two times. The fee for the retake is $99 (USCC member) or $129 (nonmember) for each attempt. The first retake can occur immediately. We require a 3-month break before a second retake can occur. After three failures (original attempt plus two retakes), candidates interested in taking additional retakes will be required to appeal to Certification Commission. Appeals will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

9.1 APPEAL PROCESS
ELIGIBILITY
If you believe that your certification application was denied due to a misunderstanding regarding the amount or nature of your training or experience, you may submit an appeal, in writing, to the Certification Commission. This must be submitted via e-mail to appeal@CertificationsUSCC.org.

This appeal must provide a detailed clarification of your earlier submission; general requests to review an application will not be considered.

After the appeal is reviewed, a letter will be sent either confirming or reversing the earlier decision. No additional application fee is required.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Any appeal regarding basic policies and procedures should be submitted via e-mail to appeal@CertificationsUSCC.org. The appeal must provide information or documentation that assists in evaluating the appeal. The Commission will consider appeals relating to its policies and procedures.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TEST QUESTIONS
If you feel that any of the questions on your test had no correct answer or were faulty in any way, you should send an e-mail, within five days of taking your test, to appeal@CertificationsUSCC.org. Indicate your name, the test center where you took the test, the date of the test, your registration number, and specific details about the problem with the question.
SECTION 9 – POST-TEST: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

You may also inform your test center supervisor and ask him/her to submit an irregularity report, although you should also submit a report directly to the Commission.

What kinds of problems might you report?

a). Typos in a question or in the directions.

b). Questions that you believe have no correct answer or multiple correct answers.

c). Problems with pictures or graphics.

d). Problems with the test center or audio equipment.

e). Other problems.

Your feedback will be used to review the item statistics and validate the final scoring of the test.

9.2 RECORD MAINTENANCE

It is the responsibility of the applicant/candidate to keep copies of any correspondence between you and the Commission and/or the Commission’s testing vendor that may be necessary to submit an appeal or if your application is audited by the Commission. Keep copies of all supporting documentation you submitted and documentation of all the trainings related to organics recycling that you have completed in the event that the Commission performs an audit of your application.

When you complete your application, you certify that all of the information provided in connection with your application is accurate and complete to the best of your knowledge and ability. You also stated that you understood that the Commission will rely upon the information provided in evaluating your application and that providing false information will disqualify you from receiving or maintaining any credential offered by the Commission. See the “Code of Ethics” Section 2.1. In compliance with national standards, the Commission will audit select applications to ensure that applicants have provided accurate and complete information and this may include requesting documentation of your work experience, training, formal education, or other related issues.

Further, keep copies of all of your continuing education documents for your records as you will need these when applying for recertification/re-credentialing.

9.3 POLICIES FOR USING THE CCOM™ AND CCP™ MARK

The CCOM™ and CCP™ Mark is a powerful marketing tool available to individuals as they build industry confidence in their skills and professionalism. CCOM™ and CCP™ third-party certification includes use of this mark as long as the individual continues to conform to specific certification standards. The Policies for “Using the CCOM™ or CCP™ Mark” found in Appendix G was prepared to assist and guide CCOM™ and CCP™ professionals in promoting their certification achievement. There are a number of usage policies you must review and understand before moving forward with using the mark, so please ensure you read it thoroughly.
10.1 Certification Renewal

Once you have achieved your Certification, that credential is valid for three years. During that time, you must:

1. Pay an annual maintenance fee
2. Stay current with advances in the field through the process of continuing education. You must document that continuing education and provide that documentation order to stay certified. If you allow your certification to lapse you must take a new test.

10.2 Continuing Education Requirements

Continuing education requirements are the same for CCOM™ and CCP™ credentials.

Thirty (30) professional development hours (PDHs) are required for recertification. PDHs may be earned by completing Commission-approved PDH programs (for no additional fee) or by applying and paying for PDHs from non-approved sources. Examples of continuing education are conferences, in-service training, workshops, webinars, on-line educational opportunities, brown bags, forums, study, etc. All PDHs must be earned within the three-year certification period, and a percentage of applicants will be audited upon recertification.
Certification must be renewed every three years, and requires 30 Professional Development Hours, plus annual administrative fee to stay current.

10.3 CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE AND RENEWAL FEES

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>USCC MEMBER</th>
<th>NON-MEMBER</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Payment to stay current</strong></td>
<td><strong>$100</strong> Annually Starting the year after achieving certification</td>
<td><strong>$150</strong> Annually Starting the year after achieving certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Payment to credit PDHs from Commission-approved trainings</strong></td>
<td>NO CHARGE</td>
<td>NO CHARGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Payment to credit PDH’s from non-approved training</strong></td>
<td>is calculated based on course duration</td>
<td>NOTE: At this time, all PDH-related fees are being waived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to one instructional hour</td>
<td>$20 per PDH</td>
<td>$25 per PDH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;1-10 instructional hours</td>
<td>$16 per PDH</td>
<td>$20 per PDH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10-20 instructional hours</td>
<td>$12 per PDH</td>
<td>$15 per PDH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;20-30 instructional hours</td>
<td>$10 per PDH</td>
<td>$12.50 per PDH</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;30-40 instructional hours</td>
<td>$8 per PDH</td>
<td>$10 per PDH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;40 instructional hours</td>
<td>$6 per PDH</td>
<td>$7.50 per PDH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following steps must be taken to maintain certification:

1. Pay annual certification maintenance fee
2. Complete 30 hours of professional development during your three-year certification period.
3. After each PDH-earning event, submit the credits via the online form which will be provided to you after you earn your CCOM™ or CCP™.

If the event is not pre-approved, you will have the option of getting the training provider to have their event approved or applying for and paying for the credits yourself. The fee for CCOMs and CCPs to have a course approved depends on the number of hours of the course.

In addition to the electronic master file for your PDH credits, the Commission recommends that every candidate should also maintain your own records of continuing education units during the three years between recertification renewals.

4. Prior to the expiration of your certification, complete the certification renewal application online. If you have not completed 30 PDHs, you will have the option of retaking the certification test. The test fee is the same as for first-time test takers, $349 for USCC members and $449 for non-members.

Certification must be renewed every three years, and requires 30 Professional Development Hours, plus annual administrative fee to stay current.
IN THE AREA OF BUSINESS ACUMEN, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
Explains how various products and service can fulfill specific customer needs and desired customer-level outcomes (e.g. fast, easy to use, safe to use, inexpensive, clean).
- Understands how composting compares to landfills and other competitions’ claims for meeting community and customer needs.
- Recognizes geographic constraints and preferences.
- Knows local, state, and federal product procurement requirements.
- Recognizes distribution alternatives and their trade-offs.
- Understands the role of branding, marketing, public relations, and promotional marketing in creating prospects for sales and keeping the market informed about the compost product.
- Builds customer loyalty through strong customer service.
- Balances the incomes derived from providing recycling services to waste generators and product sales to compost users.

IN THE AREA OF COMPOSTING PURPOSE AND VISION, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATION MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
- Recognizes key community needs and the desired community-level outcomes such as:
  - Decrease landfilling/extend landfill life
  - Environmental protection (air and water quality)
  - Supporting the local economy and providing “green sector” jobs
  - Recycling regional wastes into resources used regionally
- Understands the factors of composting that cause communities concern (e.g., traffic, run-off, fires, odors, unsightliness, noise and pests).
- Explains role of compost in management of soil in:
  - Home, facility, and industrial landscaping and turf management
  - Commercial horticulture
  - Agriculture sites
  - Stormwater and green building applications
- Environmental remediation
- Communicates the professionalism required of all members of the field.

IN THE AREA OF COMPOSTING SCIENCE, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
Recognizes the role of chemistry and biology to composting processes.
- Influences and controls the six key process variables (feedstocks, oxygen, moisture, pile shape and size, time and temperature).
- Applies odor science to identifying and managing odor problems.
- Understands concept of compost maturity and how to measure maturity.
- Knows when to use different composting methods for best results.

IN THE AREA OF EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES MANAGEMENT, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
- Identifies and implements equipment maintenance requirements.
- Ensures that equipment operators are trained in the safe operation of equipment.
- Tracks service contracts and contractors’ compliance with their contract.

IN THE AREA OF FEEDSTOCK MANAGEMENT, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
- Understands how geography and availability of feedstocks affect the end product quality and quantity.
- Understands the properties of various types of feedstocks and how each affects the composting process and product.
- Identifies and procures appropriate bulking agents and amendments.
- Minimizes contaminants through screening of incoming feedstocks and removal processes.
- Understands how to manage and blend feedstocks to produce the desired recipe for optimal composting.
APPENDIX A: CCOMTM AND CCPTM KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS (AREAS) AND TOPIC

IN THE AREA OF HEALTH AND SAFETY, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
Employs a hazard analysis process to minimize risk.

- Understands unique hazards of composting (e.g. bioaerosols, hygiene).
- Implements compost fire prevention and control techniques.
- Understands and controls disease vectors.
- Demonstrates and requires use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Requires use of "lock-out, tag-out" procedures.
- Creates and updates a facility safety operations manual.

IN THE AREA OF PROCESS CONTROL AND QUALITY ASSURANCE, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
Understands and implements process monitoring requirements and tools (e.g. temp probe, O2 probe). Executes basic field tests (e.g. bulk density).

- Executes basic sampling procedures (grab sampling, composite sampling, windrow, pile).
- Prepares and submits samples to lab for analysis.
- Understands and interprets lab analysis data sheets to identify process changes required.
- Uses value-added processing as appropriate (screening, blending, bagging).
- Explains impact of equipment choices on production rates, production quality, materials handling logistics, and consumer satisfaction.

IN THE AREA OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
Knows key local, state, and federal regulations and standards.

- Understands the facility permits and each permits’ compliance process.
- Understands the complaint process and potential outcomes.
- Prepares for inspections.
- Uses inspection and complaint feedback to improve facility operations quality and communicate the facility’s commitment to quality and to the community.
- Understands user and consumer protection and labeling requirements.
- Understands formal rule-making process and how to participate in it.

IN THE AREA OF SITE MANAGEMENT, THE COMPETENT COMPOSTING OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COMPOSTING PROFESSIONAL:
Controls site cleanliness, weeds, pests and security.

- Recognizes site layout needs, strengths and limitations.
- Calculates site tonnage and volume.
- Plans and coordinates vehicle traffic.
- Documents daily site activities.
- Uses appropriate controls of stormwater, contact water and leachate.
- Monitors and manages feedstock, in-process and final product inventory and storage.
- Implements various odor management techniques.
APPENDIX B:
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Can I submit the application without all my information?
   No. We need to ensure that applications are complete when submitted. This is for two reasons. One, the Commission needs to ensure that all information is available during our review process to determine eligibility. In addition, allowing you to submit the information at a later date would require additional staff and support to track who submitted an application and then confirm the additional information.

2. Can I submit the application without payment of the application fee and send payment later?
   No, all fees are collected at the time of application or registration. We accept credit cards and PayPal.

3. If I start the application but can’t finish, can I save it and continue it later?
   Yes. Keep your log-in and password and you can log in and out as often as you would like. The Commissioners will not review your application until it is complete and submitted with payment of the application fee.

4. What if I have not taken a 3 (or more) day course in compost operations?
   The Certification Commission requires that all applicants have completed at least one training course in compost operations that is three days or longer. This is to ensure that all applicants have the basic understanding of compost manufacturing. If you are unsure if a particular course would satisfy this requirement, please contact us at administrator@certificationsUSCC.org. We maintain a list of courses that meet this prerequisite.

   EXAMPLE: An applicant has taught the same one day professional composting operations training program three times over the past three years. That does not count toward the 3 day or more professional organics recycling training prerequisite.

5. If I’ve taught professional compost management programs, will this satisfy the 3 day requirement of organics recycling training?
   Yes. If you have taught 3-day (or longer) courses related to managing composting operations, then this satisfies the training requirement. If the curriculum is less than 3 days, then that does not meet the training requirement.

   EXAMPLE: An applicant has taught the same one day professional composting operations training program three times over the past three years. That does not count toward the 3 day or more professional organics recycling training prerequisite.

6. I’ve been an organics recycling professional for a long period of time but can’t document 3 days of training. Can I apply to take the Commission’s test?
   At this point, the answer is no. Compost operations management requires knowledge of specific content that is primarily learned through both formal courses and work experience. In order to be sure that operations managers and composting professionals have this knowledge, we believe that all applicants should have basic training before earning certification. This training can take multiple forms (see answer to Question 4 above).

7. I’ve been a solid waste professional for a long period of time but not working in compost operations. Can I apply to take the Commission’s certification test?
   Perhaps. You wouldn’t qualify for the CCOM™ but you may qualify for the CCP™ credential. That depends on the exact nature of your work. The work experience required to qualify to take the CCP™ test is 4 years of full time work (or the equivalent) supporting composting operations. For example, this could include doing site plans for composting facilities, providing equipment solutions, assisting regulatory compliance, or teaching courses related compost manufacturing.

8. I’ve been diverting and collecting organics and delivering them for composting for more than 2 years. Can I apply for the Commission’s test?
   No. The Commission’s Scope of Practice Study focused on tasks of compost operations managers and the test is designed for the managers of composting operations and those who support these facilities. We hope to develop certification for organics collectors and haulers in the future.

9. I’m certified as an composting manager by another organization. Does that satisfy the Commission’s prerequisites to apply for the Commission’s test?
   While the Commission commends you for obtaining certification from another organization, we are not accepting that as proof of meeting the Commission’s prerequisites for the test. The primary goal of the Commission’s test is to validate the Commission’s application process and test for compost operations manager and professionals in supportive roles to compost operations/facility management. While the
Commission would like to accept all individuals who want to take the test, our focus must remain on creating a valid and credible test. The Commission has not investigated the validity of certifications from other organizations as evidence for having the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities needed by compost operations managers.

10. When will I find out if I’ve been accepted to take the test?
Upon submitting your application, you should receive an e-mail confirming the Commission’s receipt of your application. If you do not receive this within one business day, please immediately send an e-mail to: administrator@certificationsUSCC.org.
Within four weeks of submission, you will be notified if you have met the Commission’s eligibility requirements and can take the test. If you are accepted, you will be provided information about how to schedule your test. If you are determined to not be eligible, you will be informed why, and what you could do to meet the prerequisites. The application fee is non-refundable.

11. How do I document that I’ve met the prerequisites?
On the application you will provide the details of your training and work experience. You must provide sufficient details so that if audited your information can be verified. Specifically, you need to obtain a Work History Verification Letter from each of your employers. This is required to show you meet the work experience requirements for the credential you are applying for. Please see Appendix E for a sample Work History Verification Letter. It is your responsibility to upload these letters into the CCOM™/CCPTM application portal, where there will be clear instructions to guide you.

12. Where and when will the tests be offered?
Once a candidate gets a confirmation email from the Certification Commission that they are qualified and accepted to schedule a time and day to take their test. That same email provides instruction to access the test scheduling system provided by PSI Services, the official test delivery partner of the Certification Commission. In the online scheduling area, you can view and select from more than 600 test centers and view and select open times and dates at the test center you choose. That means you can take your test any week of the year.

13. How long is my test appointment?
The CCOM™ and CCP™ test is in English and will consist of 75 multiple choice questions. The test is time limited and your test appointment is 90 minutes.

14. Will you provide study materials?
Refer to section 5.4 on page 10 which talks about test prep. Test prep materials are under development but are not yet available. Go to www.CertificationsUSCC.org and click on “stay connected” to get notice when the prep materials are available.

15. Once I take the Commission’s test, when will I receive my results?
Candidates who take the CCOM™ or CCP™ test will receive preliminary results via email within 24 hours of completion of the test and official results with the paper Certificate within four to eight week.
The Commission has developed its certification program for you and we want to be responsive to you! If you have ideas or comments on the application process or things we should consider as we develop the policies, procedures and pre-requisites for our test, please send us an e-mail at: director@CertificationsUSCC.org.
1. Review the Candidate Handbook for Certified Compost Operations Manager™ (CCOM™) and Certified Composting Professional™ (CCP™) for information about applying for the Commission’s credentialing tests.

2. Determine whether you are now eligible or will soon be eligible to take the test. (To review the prerequisites, see Section 3 of this handbook.)

3. Complete the Test Application online and pay your application fee. All applications must be submitted electronically. Mailed or faxed applications will not be accepted. The fee must be paid before formal review can begin.

4. Within one business day of submitting your application, you will receive an email notification of receipt of your application. If you do not receive this confirmation, send an email to administrator@certificationsuscc.org. Read the frequently asked questions (see Appendix B).

5. Within four weeks after you submitted your application you will receive an email notification of your eligibility. If your application is denied, you will receive information on where you fell short and what you can do. If you are approved, you will receive instructions from PSI on how to schedule your test and pay the relevant test fees. Please read all instructions and notifications from the Commission carefully and follow the directions. If you do not receive the email with instructions, please send an email to administrator@certificationsuscc.org

Tests will be offered at PSI testing centers in cities throughout the United States.
APPENDIX D: ADA ACCOMMODATION REQUEST FORM DIRECTIONS

If you need to request ADA Special Accommodations, you will do that online when you are completing your application. Below is an example of the form you will be asked to complete. Mailed or faxed forms and documentation will not be accepted. If you are requesting an accommodation(s), your application will not be considered complete until this form and any required accompanying documentation is submitted online. Any delay in submitting this form online may affect the timeline for determining your eligibility.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
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<td>Street Address</td>
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<td>ZIP</td>
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<td>E-Mail Address</td>
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DISABILITY DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

The following guidelines serve to describe what is required in order to validate a request for special accommodations due to disability.

1. A prior history of accommodations, without demonstration of a current need, will not necessarily warrant approval of special accommodations.

2. Qualified individuals with disabilities are required to request accommodations every time they apply to take the Commission’s tests.

3. Request for accommodations and appropriate, supporting documentation, must be complete and must provide evidence of a substantial limitation to physical or academic functioning. Documentation clearly defines the extent and impact of the impairment(s) upon current levels of academic and physical functioning.

4. Clinical evaluations must be performed by a licensed/certified or otherwise qualified professional with credentials appropriate to diagnose a candidate’s disability consistent with the provisions of the ADA.

5. Details about the professional’s area of specialization and professional credentials, including certification and licensure, must be provided.

6. Documentation must be submitted on official letterhead from a licensed or qualified health care provider who has tested the candidate and diagnosed a physical or mental impairment.

7. Documentation must be not be more than three years from the date of this application.

8. Documentation for all disabilities should describe the extent of the disability, the criteria for the diagnosis, the diagnosis, the type and length of treatment and the recommended accommodation. Terms such as “problems,” “deficiencies,” “weaknesses,” “differences,” and “learning disability” are not the equivalent of a diagnosed specific disability. The disability must be specific. The following guidelines serve to describe what is required in order to validate a request for special accommodations due to disability.

To avoid unnecessary delays, the applicant must ensure the submission of all required information and documentation in accordance with the above directions and guidelines. Special accommodations will be made to the extent possible to provide the applicants with the same opportunity as other candidates to succeed at the test. However, due to the requirement to maintain the psychometric nature and security of the test, no special accommodations or modifications may be allowed if they threaten to fundamentally alter the nature or security of the test. All accommodation(s) must be approved by the commission or its appointed representative(s). Once an accommodation(s) has been granted, it may not be altered during the test.
SAMPLE WORK HISTORY VERIFICATION LETTER (ON ORGANIZATION’S LETTERHEAD) CCOM™

Applicants are required to show the equivalent of at least two years of full-time employment in the industry, which must include one year of full-time employment in compost facility operations for CCOM™. CCP™ applicants must demonstrate at least four years of full-time employment in work that supports compost facility operations. It is your responsibility to upload these letters into the application portal, where there will be clear instructions to guide you.

<Date> To the USCC Certification Commission:

This letter is to verify that <Candidate’s Name> has worked in composting operations or in support of compost operations (eg, permitting, siting, environmental protection, equipment, consulting, training, etc)

Organization name:
Address:

Duration: from <Start Date> to <End Date> (may include multiple start and stop dates)

Was this employment full time? (yes/no)
If not, please estimate % of full time:

Primary responsibilities of the candidate included:

If you have any questions, please contact <Supervisor Name> at <area code and phone number> or <work e-mail address>.

Sincerely,

<Supervisor Signature>

<Date>

<Supervisor Name>

Relationship to applicant:
(check all that apply):

____ worked with the candidate as a supervisor
____ worked with the candidate as <insert role or position>.
____ utilized the candidate as a <insert role or position>.
____ other (please specify: ________________________________ )
I. INTRODUCTION

The Certification Commission of the USCC owns the certification marks for CCOM™, Certified Compost Operations Manager™, and CCP™, Certified Composting Professional™, which it awards to individuals who successfully complete the Certification Commission’s initial and ongoing certification requirements. The Certified Compost Operations Manager™ (CCOM™) and Certified Composting Professional™ (CCP™) is represented by certain graphic depictions known as the CCOM™ or CCP™ Mark (Mark). This includes but is not limited to any representation of the CCOM™ or CCP™ certification by letter designation, graphic logo, words, or other such representations of the Certified Compost Operations Manager™ or Certified Composting Professional™, whether protected by trademark or not. Adherence to these policies is required as part of being certified (CCOM™-CCP™ Handbook, 3.1.7.) This document is prepared to assist and guide CCOM™ and CCP™ professionals in promoting their certification achievement.

These policies are important because they help avoid confusion regarding the source, sponsorship, endorsement, third party usage, and affiliation of you and your services with respect to your use of the CCOM™ or CCP™ and any Mark which is representative of the CCOM™ or CCP™. It is important that the USCC Certification Commission protect and manage the integrity of the certification program including any representative Marks and maintain its meaning, status, ethics, and integrity to the highest level in such a manner that it continues to represent a high standard of excellence and accomplishment by those who hold the certification. These policies are general and may not cover all circumstances. If you have a question about a situation which may seem unclear, please contact the commission at: administrator@certificationsuscc.org.

II. BENEFITS OF USING THE CCOM™ AND CCP™ MARKS

The CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks are credentials for individuals. Businesses and organizations may not represent themselves as certified. However, businesses and organizations are allowed and encouraged to proudly display and announce their hiring or contracting with certified individuals provided those individuals comply with the policies herein.

CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks also include, but are not limited to, the following logos (collectively “Logos”), which may be updated from time to time. The CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks are credentials for individuals. Businesses and organizations may not represent themselves as certified. However, businesses and organizations are allowed and encouraged to proudly display and announce their hiring or contracting with certified individuals provided those individuals comply with the policies herein.

Using the CCOM™ and CCP™ marks:

- Promotes the value of industry certification to the entire composting community and the requirements that have been met by each person who has achieved the CCOM™ or CCP™.
- Increases your marketability in the industry. Potential employers, clients, and regulators are all more inclined to trust the skills, professionalism, and ability of professionals who bear the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks.
• For CCOMs: Builds confidence and trust in your ability to manage a compost facility. When potential employers and clients see the CCOM™ Mark next to your signature or in your personal literature, they are ensured that your skills have evaluated by a third-party, non-biased organization and have successfully met the requirements of Scope of Practice standards.

• For CCPs: Demonstrates to potential compost manufacturing clients that you have the knowledge and experience to understand their operations and challenges.

• Allows for easier entry into new markets. Whether it’s a new industry segment or a new international market, the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks on your resume or professional literature makes a positive statement regarding your industry commitment to potential clients.

• Provides a faster communications tool. The challenge for any professional is to communicate their skills and professionalism quickly and effectively. The CCOM™ or CCP™ Mark is one tool that does this. It is a small Mark with a BIG message.

III. WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF THE CCOM™ AND CCP™ MARKS.

CCOM™ and CCP™ Mark(s) are trademarks of the Certification Commission of the US Composting Council (registration pending). Only individuals who have received notice of their certification may use or approve for use the Mark associated with their certification. No organization or person shall use a Mark in connection with an individual, or represent in any way that the individual has achieved the CCOM™ or CCP™ credential, until receipt of written authorization by the certified individual.

The Mark shall be displayed as described in this document. Failure to conform to these requirements may result in a request for formal corrective action, suspension or revocation of certification status, public notice of revocation to protect the CCOM™ or CCP™ reputation, or legal action.

The Certification Commission grants permission to those who have earned the CCOM™ or CCP™ credential the honor and advantage of using the CCOM™ or CCP™ Marks as a complement to the individual’s identity. Along with that permission, the Commission provides these written policies and their ongoing advice on proper use and display of the CCOM™ or CCP™ Marks.

DISPLAY OF MARK

The CCOM™ or CCP™ Mark shall only be used in direct connection with the individual who has earned the credential. The Mark can be used in or on the individual’s signature, website, letterhead, business cards, placards and other promotional materials. An individual who is a CCOM™ or CCP™ may list their credential, including the logo, in association with their name, wherever their name is used, as long as they grant permission, for as long as they are certified.

Businesses or organizations who employ or contract with a CCOM™ or CCP™ may use the Marks if and only if:

1. The Mark is linked to or used in direct association with the certified individual
2. The nature of the relationship between the individual and the company is clear, and
3. The Mark is removed when the relationship ends or the individual is no longer certified.

In addition, a company may use the Mark separately from the name of the certified individual (for example, on a different webpage from where the CCOM™ or CCP™ is identified) if and only if:

• The certified individual is either the company owner or employed as a .5 FTE or greater
• The Mark is hyperlinked to the name(s) of the CCOMs or CCPs

IV. GRAPHIC POLICIES FOR LITERATURE AND ADVERTISING

COLOR OPTIONS

Marks can be used in color or black & white. When using the CCOM™ or CCP™ Marks in color, it must be produced using Pantone 350U. Note that the ™ symbol must be visible and positioned to the bottom right of the logo.

VISIBILITY

The CCOM™ and CCP™ certification Marks shall not be cropped. The Mark must be 100% visible and the CCOM™ and CCP™ letters must be legible.

REPRESENTATION

The Mark shall not appear in a manner that may directly or indirectly represent non-certified professionals as certified by the Certification Commission of the USCC.

SIZE

For visibility and legibility, the CCOM™ and CCP™ logos shall be reproduced no smaller than ½ inch in diameter in print materials.
V. HOW TO USE VARIOUS GRAPHIC FILE FORMATS OF THE CCOM™ OR CCP™ MARK

The Commission provides the Mark specific to your certification as digital files in various graphic formats on this page of the Commission’s website—http://certificationsuscc.org/Get-Certified/CCOM-or-CCP Marks. We provide the logos in different formats for optimal use in different media such as printed materials, Word or Power Point documents, web pages, and general communications. See below for details on choosing the appropriate graphic format for your needs.

JPEG
- Common image format
- Can be used in a variety of settings (Word and PowerPoint, general communications)

GIF
- Good for use on a website, such as on your home page

TIFF
- Select when using the Mark in a page layout program, such as Adobe Page Maker
  - May need to select “MAC” or “WIN” file depending on your operating system

EPS
- Select if you plan to significantly increase or decrease the size of the Mark for printing or higher quality communications
  - EPS graphic files are not pixel based and may be sized at will with no decrease in image quality

VI. POLICIES FOR REPRODUCING THE CCOM™ AND CCP™ MARKS

To maintain quality control over the appearance of the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks, the Commission requires that all reproductions be made from the original artwork, be readable, legible, on recommended backgrounds, and have consistent color use. The information below will provide your print vendor the information necessary to create proper reproductions of the Mark.

ORIGINAL ARTWORK
All reproductions of the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks must be made from the original reproduction artwork provided by the Commission.

LEGIBILITY
The impact and legibility of the printed CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks will be lessened when crowded with other visual elements. A “clear zone” surrounding the Marks have been established as an area into which no other graphic imagery or other visual elements may enter. As shown below in D, this space is determined by the cap height of “CCOM™” and “CCP™” the typographic element of the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks. The one exception to this rule is when the Mark is used within text.

To ensure optimum legibility of the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks, a minimum reproduction size of 1/2” is recommended. If reduced to a smaller size, the overall legibility and visual impact of the Mark may be compromised. If reproduction quality of the Marks cannot be guaranteed when reproduced at ½ inch, a larger size may be necessary. The Marks in the text paragraphs on this page are shown at the minimum ½ inch size.

APPROVED BACKGROUNDS
The positive CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks should be used on light colored backgrounds ranging from white to values no darker than 40% black. The CCOM™ and CCP™ Mark should be reversed if used on dark backgrounds from 50%—100% value of black.

COLOR OPTIONS
Consistent use of color in the CCOM™ and CCP™ Mark is important to establish immediate recognition of individuals certified by the Commission. Printers should refer to the Pantone color formula guide for an exact color and density match.
VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHEN CAN I START USING THE MARK?
When you have satisfactorily completed all of the requirements for your will receive notification to the email you provided within your application. You will subsequently receive the collateral material for you to promote your status. You may immediately start to use the Mark. You may also contact the Commission with any questions, comments, or concerns at info@certificationsuscc.org. They will answer questions and proof your materials if you desire. Do not promote yourself as a CCOM™ and CCPTM™ until you have received notification.

2. WHY IS THE COMMISSION SO CONCERNED WITH ENFORCING CORRECT USE OF THE CCOM™ AND CCP™ MARKS?
Enforcement of the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks is consistent with our mission. It is important that the CCOM™ and CCP™ certification Marks do not fall into common use. If the USCC Certification Commission fails to take appropriate steps to prevent generic use of its Marks, it could lose its trademark rights, which would mean anyone could claim he or she is CCOM™ and CCP™ even if they have not met the rigorous certification requirements. If the Marks no longer stand for the competent and professional standards the USCC Certification Commission has established, then the Commission will be unable to assure the public that the persons displaying the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks have in fact met qualification requirements and practice standards and adhere to the code of ethics.

3. WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T FOLLOW THE POLICIES FOR CCOM™ AND CCP™ MARKS USAGE?
As a CCOM™ and CCP™ certificants you agree to adhere to the rules and regulations set by the USCC Certification Commission, and conforming to these policies is a condition of continuing your CCOM™ and CCP™ designation and being permitted to display the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks. If you do not follow, you will be subject to the USCC Certification Commission’s disciplinary process which may result in the revocation of your certification status.

4. HOW DO I USE TRADEMARK SYMBOLS IN MY E-MAIL DOCUMENTS?
The USCC Certification Commission understands that trademark symbols do not always translate when sent in e-mail messages, so we recommend using the (R) and (tm) alternatives in your e-mails. This way, no matter what e-mail program the recipient uses, the message that the Marks are protected by trademark law is conveyed.

5. MAY I INCLUDE A HYPERLINK TO THE COMMISSION’S WEBSITE ON MY WEB PAGE?
Yes. Please understand, however, that these links take the user completely out of your site and directly to the Commission’s site. Framing (putting a box or frame around the CCOM™ and CCP™ Marks) is not allowed.