Candidate Chronicle

A newsletter for Texas CPA examination candidates published by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy

Volume 27 April 2013

Candidates May Request ADA Accommodations

A number of Texas CPAs have, over the past several years, passed the uniform CPA exam with testing accommodations covered under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) passed by Congress in 1990. The Act requires the Board to provide testing accommodations to individuals who have documented **a permanent disability that substantially limits a major life activity.**

In order to establish that a disability meets this criterion, Texas applicants must submit various forms and supporting documentation when submitting the Application of Intent. Once your request for accommodations is approved, you have three years to complete the exam before the forms must be resubmitted. Failure to include the forms with the Application of Intent can delay evaluation of the application.

Some of the forms have sections that require the input and signature of a third party, such as the doctor who made the diagnosis and, if you were granted accommodations as a student, a school administrator. Candidates who are requesting accommodations should allow themselves extra time to get everything together for submission. The necessary forms may be found on the Board website, www.tsbpa.state.tx.us, under the Examination/Qualifications/CPA Exam/ADA Accommodations menu. The Board bears responsibility for any costs associated with providing accommodations.

The ADA recognizes a number of challenges that can hamper a candidate's ability to test successfully and provides a number of possible solutions that can level the playing field. Each accommodation must be substantiated by a medical professional through testing or other evaluative instrument. For example, a candidate who has attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may be granted additional time to test and a separate room in which to test. Some candidates with diabetes may need a separate room or logistical accommodations; another with multiple sclerosis may need more time and/or logistical provisions such as a foot rest. An ASL interpreter may be needed by a candidate with hearing loss, and a candidate with permanent vision loss may be allowed a service dog and reader and/or scribe.

The current list of special accommodations available includes separate testing rooms, additional breaks, double-time, time-and-a-half, head movement mouse, sign language interpreter, Intellikeys keyboard, reader, amanuensis (scribe), Magic Arm and Super Clamp, screen magnifier, mouse trackball, Zoom Text, and other logistical provisions.

Not all Prometric centers are able to provide every accommodation. Making the request well ahead of time will allow you to be directed to an appropriate center once your request is approved. If you believe you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, be sure to submit the appropriate forms to give yourself the optimum logistical situation for testing.

More Possibilities for international Testing Available

The number of Prometric testing centers where international candidates may take the U.S. CPA exam continues to grow, but every candidate must meet the requirements of one of the 55 jurisdictions that administer the exam in order to qualify for testing and become licensed. The 55 jurisdictions include all 50 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands. These jurisdictions work with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy, the American Institute of CPAs, and Prometric to assure the security, integrity, and uniformity of the exam.

Because it is these 55 jurisdictions that actually confer the CPA license, each candidate must choose a jurisdiction to which to apply and meet all their criteria, which vary from state to state, before becoming eligible to test. Once the candidate has passed the exam and fulfilled all other requirements, including work experience, that jurisdiction will issue the license. Being licensed in Texas, or another jurisdiction with comparably high standards, will facilitate applying for reciprocity in other jurisdictions if you decide to do so in the future.

The exam is in English and has the same content no matter where it is taken, but there are additional fees and requirements that are peculiar to each country in which the exam is offered. Be sure to familiarize yourself thoroughly with the international testing process before concluding that that is the path that will best serve you. The process is covered in detail on NASBA's website, http://www.nasba.org/international/international-exam/. The table below shows where international candidates may be eligible to take the Uniform CPA Exam.

Status	Can Test in These Countries						
C = Citizen PR = legal status of permanent or long-term resident	U.S.	Japan	Brazil	UAE	Lebanon	Kuwait	Bahrain
U.S. C/PR	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Japan C/PR	X	X					
Argentina C/PR	X		X				
Colombia C/PR	X		X				
Venezuela C/PR	X		X				
Bahrain C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
Egypt C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
Jordan C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
Kuwait C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
Lebanon C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
Oman C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
Qatar C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
Saudi Arabia C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
UAE C/PR	X			X	X	X	X
Yemen C/PR	X			X	X	X	X

NASBA Fee Schedule

Section		
	AUD	$195.35
	BEC	$176.25
	FAR	$195.35
	REG	$176.25

NOTE: You may register and pay for only one section of the exam at a time.

Professional Literature Available Free

Examination candidates who have a Notice to Schedule from NASBA can get access to a free six-month subscription to professional literature used in the computerized CPA exam. To sign up, go online to https://www2.nasba.org/NASBAWeb.nsf/ENCD and complete the subscription form. The online package includes *AICPA Professional Standards, FASB Original Pronouncements,* and *FASB Accounting Standards Codification.*

Richard J. Caturano, chairman of the American Institute of CPAs, left, presented the UT Dallas team with a $10,000 check for winning the 2012 AICPA Accounting Competition. Team members are, L-R, Samuel Teichelman, Shahrzad Azimi, team captain April Crawford, and Trey Sweeney. Adviser John Barden, a senior lecturer in the Naveen Jindal School of Management at UT Dallas is at the right.

UT Dallas Accounting Students Win AICPA Competition

Four University of Texas at Dallas students earned first place and a $10,000 prize in the 2012 AICPA Accounting Competition. The prize is to be used for education- or career-related expenditures. Team members were April Crawford, captain, Shahrzad Azimi, Trey Sweeney, and Samuel Teichelman. Faculty advisor was John Barden, a senior lecturer at UT Dallas. The students were challenged to advise a hypothetical presidential candidate who must address some of the country's biggest economic concerns, such as the national debt, income tax reform, and Social Security.

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The winning entry, which they called "Working Capitol," proposed a simplified tax code with major restructuring of personal income tax brackets. The UT Dallas students said they "felt that the burden of income taxes is far too high for many American families, that it is time to fairly tax individuals based on their actual income."

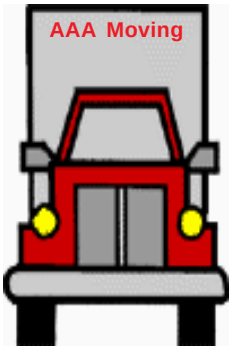
Their proposal called for implementing a 5% value-added tax on gross profits of businesses to reduce noncompliance and expand the tax base; eliminating the corporate income tax to avoid raising the price of consumer goods; restructuring the existing tax brackets and adding a 0% bracket for those making less than $50,000 annually; capping the mortgage interest and charitable contribution deductions for high-income filers at 23%; and modifying capital gains to one-half of the taxpayers' marginal rate based on income.

A team from Albion College, Albion, Michigan, took second place, and a team from North Carolina State University, Raleigh, placed third. From 125 entries, 20 teams were chosen for the semifinal round. The top three teams from that round traveled to Washington, DC, where they competed through in-person presentations and question-and-answer sessions before a panel of judges that included directors from the U.S. Government Accounting Office and the Department of State.

The UT Dallas team came in third in the 2011 competition and first in the 2010 competition.

Moving??

Be sure to keep your contact information current.



Use any of these methods:

- **Online under "Online Services" at www.tsbpa.state.tx.us**
- **By email to: exam@tsbpa.state.tx.us**
- **By phone: 512-305-7853**
- **By mail:**
  TSBPA
  333 Guadalupe, Twr 3, Ste 900
  Austin, TX 78701

Preparation Is the Key to Successful Interviews

The very best advice you get about the job interview process may be to **expect the unexpected**. The better prepared you are, the greater your self-confidence and the better the image you project. In addition to the traditional questions asked in job interviews, hiring managers often throw in a few curves that bear no apparent relevance to the job for which you are applying. Estimate how many windows there are in New York. On a scale of 1 to 10, rate me as an interviewer. What songs best describe your work ethic? Upon reflection, it may become apparent that the interviewer is merely wanting to see how well you think on your feet, how your thought process works, or how well you think under stress. With hundreds of electronic applications flooding human resources offices, interviewers may go beyond the expected to help differentiate among candidates to determine who will fit into the company's culture and make a good member of the team. The interview is also the opportunity for you to gauge if the job and company are good fits for you.

A college admissions counselor at a small New England liberal arts college once asked an applicant what she thought of Play-doh. She heard the question as asking about Plato and began answering accordingly when the interviewer interrupted and explained he was asking about the modeling compound not the Greek philosopher. The upshot of this was that the potential student concluded that perhaps this school's culture was not one with which she would be comfortable. It was the wrong place for her, and she eventually chose a larger, traditional university that seemed to be a better fit. It is often possible during an interview to peer into the future and see that a particular employer is not the right one for you, and that is just as important as the employer's concluding that you are not the right candidate for them. Landing the wrong job can be as bad as not landing one at all.

There are a number of websites that discuss the sort of off-the-wall questions that are cropping up in interviews these days, and the "right" way to respond to them. Most often, how you answer is more important than getting the right answer, if there is one. One bygone television ad advised, "Never let them see you sweat." That applies here as well. Prepare and practice your interview technique from start to finish. Plan what you will wear and make sure it is clean, pressed and appropriate. In the accounting field, a suit is a good bet, but it is always better to be overdressed than underdressed. Get a haircut. Drive the route at the same time of day as the interview and leave yourself plenty of time to arrive 10 minutes ahead of the scheduled interview, anticipating the possibility of a fender bender in your lane that slows you down. Many a job was lost by a candidate who arrived late. Your academic record and test scores got you the interview, but the interview will get you the job.

Outstanding Candidates who attended the December 2012 swearing-in ceremony included, L-R, Brent Monson, Jonathan M. Looney, Andrew J. Smith, Caitlin J. Halpert, Molly M. Marino, Kiet G. Nhan, and Tyler D. Norton. Not pictured were Veronica B. Envila, Bryna K. Benhoff, Jonathan C. Cherry, Lindsay A. Hermsen, Ashley E. Hubbard, and Ling Qin.

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Social Media Image Can Harm Employment Chances

The hiring managers of today are making use of social media sites such as Facebook as part of their vetting process when evaluating potential hires. This can spell doom for your chances of employment despite a favorable impression made in the interview if you are careless about the image you project on social media sites. It is important to be mindful of what you post on social media sites and what is posted about you by others.

Say, for example, you and another candidate are about equal in your education, experience, and other requirements. So, the hiring manager decides to Google the two of you to see what else he or she can learn. Up pops the link to your Facebook page, where you've posted photos of your best friend's bachelor party, including one of you with a beer in one hand and a cigarette in the other. Not a good impression, right?

Or, you've posted a profanity-laced diatribe about your landlord or, worse, your current employer or coworker, OR a profile on a Linked In page that is substantially different from the resume you submitted to the company? Suddenly the two equally qualified candidates may not seem so equal any more. Be sure the image you project on social media sites is the one you presented in formal interaction with the potential employer and the image you have been working to project.

You don't need to get off social media sites altogether, but avoid giving the impression that the internet is where you spend hours of your time. Your time — and your image — will both be better served by time spent networking or otherwise searching for opportunities. Time is also better spent on polishing your resume, writing thank yous to those with whom you've interviewed, and researching possible employers — even in getting your clothes washed and pressed for your next interview or shopping for a better pair of shoes and matching socks.

A potential employer who is checking you out on social media is trying to get a handle on how trustworthy you are. If she thinks Facebook is your sounding board of choice, she might think twice before hiring you for a job where discretion and trust are musts.

Read back issues of the Candidate Chronicle at www.tsbpa.state.tx.us.

Scheduling Your Exam

Once you receive your Notice to Schedule, you may schedule to take the Uniform CPA Examination at any Prometric testing center located in one of NASBA's 55 jurisdictions in the U.S., Guam, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, or North Mariana Islands. Prometric Testing Centers in Texas cities are listed below.

www.prometric.com/cpa

Schedule early, as dates, times, and locations may fill quickly.

Abilene
Amarillo
Austin
Beaumont
College Station
Corpus Christi
Dallas (2 locations)
El Paso
Ft. Worth/Bedford
Houston (2 locations)
Houston/Clear Lake
Houston/Greenspoint
Lubbock
McAllen
Odessa
San Antonio (3 locations)
Tyler
Waco
Wichita Falls

Exam Candidates, Accounting Students, and CPAs,

with alcohol or drug dependency or mental health issues can use the services of the

Accountants Confidential Assistance Network

All referral services are confidential and are provided free by CPA volunteers in recovery who are interested in helping others. ACAN has proven to be beneficial to prospective CPAs as well as those in the profession.

If you need help, call

1-866-766-2226

Administered by the Texas Society of CPAs and Funded in Part by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy

LEGAL NOTICE: The identity, communications and fact of membership of anyone attending this group are confidential and protected under penalty of law under *Chapter 467* of the *Texas Health and Safety Code*.

Where Are Texas's 2007 Licensees and What Are They Doing There?

We were curious where the Texas CPAs certified in 2007 were now living and what career paths they were following. We asked our Information Resources Department to research these questions and come up some answers. This is what they found:

Of the 1,701 CPAs who were certified by the Texas Board in 2007, 1,564 are active, i.e., they are paying their annual fees, reporting their CPE, and maintaining active licenses. Twenty-five of those live outside the U.S.: 2 are in Canada, 3 are in Australia, 8 are in Europe, 8 are in Asia, 2 are in Africa, and 2 are in the Middle East.

Of those who remained in the U.S., 1,367 reside in Texas. CPAs from the 2007 group who moved out of Texas, but not out of the U.S., headed for 36 different states plus the District of Columbia; one has an APO address. California, with 24, and New York and Colorado, with 13 each, attracted the largest number.

Those who remained in Texas headed overwhelmingly for the largest metropolitan areas. There are 252 with Houston addresses, but the Houston metropolitan area as a whole drew many more, including 38 to Katy, 25 to Spring, 31 to Sugar Land, 18 to Pearland, and 23 to The Woodlands. Dallas attracted 141, but many more were drawn to the area: 53 to Plano, 25 to Frisco, 19 to Coppell, 15 to Lewisville, 15 to Richardson, 14 in Irving, 11 to Carrollton, and smaller numbers to other metro communities.

One hundred and one from this group live in Austin, but others relocated to communities surrounding Austin. Sixty live in San Antonio, 38 live in Fort Worth, and 13 are in El Paso. The remainder are spread around the state.

More than twice as many of those with domestic addresses are in non-public practice as are in public practice. The numbers tell the story:

Non-public Practice		Public Practice	
Industry	731	Employee	385
Federal Gov't	37	Part-time in Tx	52
Education	25	Inc., officer, director	23
Local gov't	21	Sole prop in Tx	19
State gov't	20	Part-time outside Tx	17
Other	75	Sole prop outside Tx	2
Not employed	157		
	1066		498

Also Good to Know . . .

Scholarship Money Still Available. Money is available for fifth-year scholarships for accounting students who will be enrolled this summer at a participating Texas college or university. Applications for the summer must be submitted to your financial aid office no later than May 15. Your financial aid office can answer questions about additional eligibility requirements. Applicants must submit an Application of Intent along with the scholarship application. Those who have already been approved to take the Uniform CPA Exam are no longer eligible.

Additional funds have been allotted for fifth-year students during the 2013-2014 academic year. Applications for the fall semester 2013 should be submitted no later than August 31, 2013.

Changes to the Audit Section Begin in July. Beginning with the July-August 2013 testing window, about half the questions in the Audit section of the CPA exam will be new questions that incorporate the AICPA Clarified Statements on Auditing Standards (SAS). The standards have been redrafted by the Auditing Standards Board (ASB) to make them easier to read, understand, and apply. In addition, the ASB converged the standards with the International Standards on Auditing. As a result of these and other improvements, the generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS) now more clearly state the objectives of the auditor and the requirements with which the auditor must comply when conducting an audit in accordance with GAAS.

Resources Available for Students and Candidates. Both the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) and the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) have a number of online resources for both students considering accounting as a career and those who have completed educational requirements and are ready to take the CPA exam. Check out NASBA's website at www.nasba.org and AICPA's at www.thiswaytocpa.com. The NASBA site has links to each jurisdiction's licensing equirements and contact information.

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