

**INFORMATION**

for the

**NORTH CAROLINA  
CERTIFIED FLOODPLAIN MANAGER  
PROGRAM  
(CFM® Program)**

**NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF  
FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS**



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# **NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS**

## **CERTIFIED FLOODPLAIN MANAGER PROGRAM**

### **(CFM<sup>®</sup> Program)**

The North Carolina Association of Floodplain Managers (NCAFPM) has established a state program for certifying floodplain managers. This program recognizes continuing education and professional development that enhances the knowledge and performance of local, state, federal, and private-sector floodplain managers.

The role of the state's floodplain managers is expanding due to increases in disaster losses, the emphasis being placed upon mitigation to alleviate the cycle of damage-rebuild-damage, and a recognized need for professionals to adequately address these issues. Floodplain managers come from a variety of curricula and backgrounds; there is no college-level degree program for floodplain management. This certification program will lay the foundation for ensuring that highly qualified individuals are available to meet the challenge of breaking the damage cycle and stopping its negative drain on the state's human, financial, and natural resources.

The formation of a professional certification program is recognized as an effective means to:

- Formalize a procedure to recognize and provide an incentive for individuals to improve their knowledge of floodplain management concepts;
- Enhance individual professional development goals;
- Promote an understanding of relevant subject matter that is consistent statewide;
- Convey new concepts and practices; and
- Build partnerships among organizations and agencies that share the goal of advancing sound floodplain management.

#### **I. GOALS**

The primary goal of the NCAFPM Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) Program is to help reduce the state's flood losses and protect and enhance the natural resources and functions of its floodplains by improving the knowledge and abilities of floodplain managers in North Carolina. This goal will be achieved over time by:

- Encouraging self-study and attendance at training courses by requiring testing to obtain certification;
- Requiring continuing education as a condition for re-certification; and
- Encouraging local governments to give priority when hiring floodplain managers to those who are certified.

A second goal of the CFM Program is to increase the prominence of floodplain management in decision-making by local officials and the public. This goal will be achieved on a larger scale and over a longer time frame by:

- Improving the recognition of floodplain management as a specific discipline;
- Increasing the status of floodplain managers as knowledgeable professionals in a complex and important field;
- Providing greater credibility and visibility for the profession; and
- Increasing the educational and training opportunities for floodplain managers through partnerships with other organizations.

## **II. TARGET AUDIENCE**

The NCAFPM CFM Program is directed toward individuals from widely varying occupations, interests, and educational backgrounds who have routine floodplain management duties. This includes representatives from the following groups; community/state/federal officials, the private sector, academia, interest groups, and private citizens. For the purposes of the NCAFPM CFM Program, two definitions are set forth below.

- Floodplain management—Activities and efforts undertaken to reduce flood losses and human suffering and to protect the natural and beneficial values and functions of floodplains.
- Certified Floodplain Manager—Any person certified in floodplain management by the NCAFPM or certified by programs recognized by the NCAFPM.

## **III. ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATIONS**

The NCAFPM recognizes floodplain manager certifications in two categories. CFM® is a registered trademark of the ASFPM Certified Floodplain manager Program and available only to valid CFMs.

### **A. NCAFPM Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM)**

This certification is granted by the NCAFPM directly to individuals who demonstrate knowledge of national and state standards and programs of floodplain management by passing a written examination, and pay the fees required under Section V.A.7.

### **B. Certified Floodplain Manager Programs Recognized by the NCAFPM**

This Certification is granted directly by the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) or another accredited state certification program for individuals who apply and successfully pass the exam, but reside or work outside of North Carolina.

#### IV. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The majority of effort required for the operation of the NCAFPM CFM Program will be provided by volunteers and contracted assistance. The time and effort required of members of the NCAFPM Board of Directors will be minimized by careful preparation of materials by the NCAFPM Professional Development Committee and the NCAFPM CFM Program Administrator.

##### A. The NCAFPM Board Of Directors Will:

- Have overall responsibility for establishing policy and guidance for administering the NCAFPM CFM Program;
- Establish policies, procedures, budgets, and other administrative tools for operation of the NCAFPM CFM Program;
- Appoint an Administrator for the CFM Program;
- Appoint the NCAFPM Professional Development Committee with staggered terms, each member of which will serve a two-year term with no term limit; and
- Promote the concept of certification with all categories of employers related to floodplain management and with local officials and the public.

##### B. The Chair of the NCAFPM will appoint members and the Chair of the NCAFPM Professional Development Committee (PDC). Members of the PDC should be CFMs. The NCAFPM Professional Development Committee will have a maximum of seven voting members who will include:

- A representative of the North Carolina Emergency Management's Mitigation Section;
- A representative of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Region IV Mitigation Directorate;
- Two members of the association who represent local government;
- A member of the NCAFPM who represents the private sector; and
- A representative of academia.

Other NCAFPM members who are CFMs are encouraged to serve as non-voting volunteers to the committee. Most meetings of the NCAFPM PDC will be conducted through telephone conference calls, supplemented by fax ballots where appropriate. The NCAFPM PDC will have responsibility to:

- Develop exams on which to base certification;
- Develop an exam study guide;
- Prepare promotional materials; Develop, implement, and operate the NCAFPM CFM Program in accordance with and under the direction of the NCAFPM Board of Directors;
- Approve standards for certification;
- Evaluate training courses to prepare individuals for certification;

- Maintain quality control for the examination program;
- Develop administrative contracts for assisting the NCAFPM CFM Program; and
- Evaluate training courses for continuing education credit toward certification renewal.
- Publish in the NCAFPM newsletters any information related to the NCAFPM CFM Program, including schedules for training and testing;
- Prepare an annual business report covering operation of the NCAFPM CFM Program, including financial information, budget for the coming period, and status of certifications;
- Publish an annual directory of Certified Floodplain Managers, including names, addresses, types of certifications held, and date awarded;
- Coordinate with state chapters, EMI, FEMA, and other agencies;
- Gather input from other certification programs;

**C. The Administrator of the Certified Floodplain Manager Program will provide support to the NCAFPM Professional Development Committee. The Administrator will have responsibility to:**

- Recommend certification and renewal requirements;
- Recommend fee schedules;
- Recommend continuing education requirements;
- Score tests;
- Develop application packets and process applications;
- Prepare and distribute certificates and congratulatory letters;
- Maintain the database for CECs, applications, accreditations, renewals, and other administrative details; and
- Other duties identified in the MOA for Administration.

**D. Consultants may be retained by the NCAFPM Board to provide administrative functions for the NCAFPM CFM Program.**

The administrative office shall be the office of an agency, organization or company under contract to NCAFPM to perform the administrative duties of the NCAFPM Program. The contract shall be renegotiated from time to time with the same or another office. It is expected that the fees for the program will cover all the costs to the administrative office contract. This should fall under A. or B. The NCAFPM CFM Program will be advertised through press releases, newsletter articles, announcements at conferences, and by direct mail to the NCAFPM membership.

**V. PROCEDURES**

**A. NCAFPM Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM)**

The initial NCAFPM Certified Floodplain Manager certification will be granted upon: (1) submission of a completed application and payment of the required fees; (2) submission a Professional Reference Form; and (3) passing the certification examination.

**1. Application**

Individuals may apply directly to the NCAFPM by obtaining an application packet, completing the application, and returning it to the NCAFPM with the appropriate fee. The application will require basic information regarding the applicant's identity and one written reference. Optional information will be requested to help the NCAFPM maintain demographic information and determine the fairness of the exam. The application shall be signed by the applicant acknowledging that the award of a certification will be based upon meeting all the minimum qualification requirements and achieving a satisfactory score on an exam to be prepared and scored by the NCAFPM. The applicant shall further agree to abide by the Code of Professional Conduct

**2. References**

A Professional Reference Form will be required as part of the application, preferably from the applicant's immediate supervisor. If the applicant is retired or self-employed, the reference should be from a colleague, client, or other professional knowledgeable about the applicant's abilities. In lieu of this Form, a letter of reference incorporating the information requested on the Form is acceptable. The contact on the Form or letter will be notified of the applicant's successful certification.

**3. Examination and Notification**

Upon receipt, review, and approval of a complete application by the NCAFPM, the applicant will be eligible to take the NCAFPM certification examination to be offered at the NCAFPM annual conference or other approved locations as approved and specified by the NCAFPM Professional Development Committee. All applicants must pass the exam, which measures a person's knowledge of a community's responsibilities under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and related floodplain management topics.

Applicants approved for certification will be notified by mail. A certification number will be assigned to the individual and the appropriate certificate will be issued, designating the applicant as an "NCAFPM Certified Floodplain Manager."

Applicants who fail to pass the examination will be notified in writing. They will be eligible for re-examination within one year or at the next NCAFPM annual conference, whichever date is later, upon payment of a re-examination fee.

#### **4. Renewals**

Certifications awarded directly by the NCAFPM will remain in effect for two years. At the end of two years, each Certified Floodplain Manager must submit a renewal application to NCAFPM and enclose the renewal fee. The application will be used to update the Certified Floodplain Manager's credentials and to document completion of the required continuing education credits (see Section VII. below). When these conditions are met, a two-year renewal will be issued. Those individuals meeting the minimum qualifications will be notified within 30 days after expiration date. Those not fulfilling the requirements for renewal by the due date will be decertified and so notified.

#### **Late Renewal**

If a CFM makes an application for renewal within 30 days of the expiration date, he/she may still re-certify provided he/she does the following: (1) complete a CFM renewal form, (2) pay the renewal fee plus the late fee, and (3) submit proof of having earned the required 16 CEC's. In this scenario, the exam is not retaken. If the certification has been expired for more than 30 days, decertification is final. If special circumstances prevent timely renewal, the NCAFPM Board may consider an appeal of these requirements.

#### **5. Decertification**

- a. A CFM may be decertified for failure to fulfill the requirements specified in Section V.A.4 of this Charter by the renewal date.
- b. A CFM may be decertified for unprofessional conduct if he/she has:
  - (1) Been convicted of a crime or any felony directly related to his or her professional duties;
  - (2) Falsified, intentionally destroyed, or modified official records or documents relating to his or her professional duties, or otherwise knowingly provided misleading information related to his or her duties or floodplain management;
  - (3) Received or solicited money or anything of value directly or indirectly that may be expected to influence his or her actions or judgment in a manner outside of commonly acceptable practices or values;
  - (4) Used his or her position in an illegal, dishonest, or unprofessional way to influence or gain a financial or other benefit, advantage or privilege for his or her benefit or for benefit of his or her immediate family or organization with which he or she is associated; or
  - (5) Violated the Code of Professional Conduct in Section X of this Charter.
- c. Information on a CFM's unprofessional conduct must be submitted to the NCAFPM Program Administrator in writing. No anonymous submittals will be accepted. If the NCAFPM CFM Program Administrator determines that



consideration of decertification may be warranted, the charges and all supporting documentation will be provided to the CFM by certified mail. The CFM shall have 30 days upon receipt thereof to respond in writing to the charges.

- d. If a CFM has not fulfilled the renewal requirements by the renewal date or has not responded to the charges of unprofessional conduct by the specified deadline, he or she will be sent a registered letter of decertification, stating that the he/she may not classify him or herself as an “ASFPM Certified Floodplain Manager” or use the ASFPM Registered Trademark CFM in any way for a period of time specified in the letter. He/she may reapply to take the CFM exam after that date.
- e. If the CFM does submit the appropriate papers by the deadline, the procedures in Section V.A.6.b of this Charter shall be followed.

6. **Appeals**

If an application for certification or renewal is denied, the applicant may appeal the Administrator’s decision to the NCAFP Board, according to the guidelines specified below. An appeal is a request for review of a decision made by the Administrator. An appeal may be made on the grounds that the decision was in conflict with this Charter.

a. **Initiating an Appeal**

The applicant must submit an appeal request in writing to the NCAFP Board within 60 calendar days of being notified of the decision being appealed. The following materials must be enclosed with the letter requesting an appeal:

- (1) A copy of the Administrator’s decision and any other pertinent documentation;
- (2) A statement clearly identifying the reasons for the appeal, along with the appropriate fee; and
- (3) Written support and/or justifications of the reasons for appeal.

b. **NCAFP Board Review of Appeals**

Upon receipt of a request for an appeal, the following actions will be taken:

- (1) The NCAFP Board will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and indicate whether additional materials are needed. Such acknowledgment will occur within 60 days of the date of the receipt of the request for an appeal.
- (2) The NCAFP Board Chair shall select three NCAFP Board members to form an Appeals Panel for review of the case. NCAFP

Board members who reviewed the original application packet are not eligible to sit on the Appeals Panel.

- (3) The Appeals Panel will make its decision based on review of the materials. The appellant may request a teleconference interview with the Appeals Panel. All expenses involved in such an interview will be borne by the appellant.
- (4) The Appeals Panel will complete its review and make a decision to uphold or deny the appeal. If the appeal is upheld, the preceding Administrator's action is so modified. If the appeal is denied, the preceding Administrator's action stands.
- (5) The Appeals Panel will prepare a summary report of its findings. The decision of the Appeals Panel is binding. The final decision will be reported to the entire NCAFP Board. The appellant will be notified within 10 days of the NCAFP Board's decision.
- (6) If the NCAFP Board upholds an appeal, the appeal fee shall be refunded in full.

## **7. Recordkeeping**

The Administrator shall keep a record of, applications, certifications and accreditations granted and denied re-certifications, and appeals and subsequent actions. A list of NCAFP Certified Floodplain Managers shall be displayed at the NCAFP annual conference and other meetings, and in the NCAFP Directory and other publications as directed by the NCAFP Board. Individual test results and application materials will be confidential.- Direct responsibilities will be covered in the MOA.

## **8. Fees**

To cover the costs of administering the NCAFP CFM Program, fees will be collected for specific actions. All checks shall be made payable to the North Carolina Association of Floodplain Managers and shall be deposited in a special CFM Program account maintained by the NCAFP Treasurer. The following fees shall be charged for certifications described in Section III A and B:

	<u>NCAFPM</u> <u>INDIVIDUAL</u>	
	Member*	<u>Others</u>
Examination Fee	\$ 100	\$ 170
Biennial Renewal Fee	\$ 50	\$ 170
Re-take Exam Fee	\$ 50	\$ 50
Late Renewal Fee	\$ 75	\$ 75
Request for Appeal Fee	\$ 80	\$ 80

Additional fees may be established.

An applicant that cancels from taking the exam, with at least two weeks notice to the Administrator, will receive a 50% refund. No refund will be given if the cancellation occurs with less than two weeks notice.

\* Corporation and Agency Memberships do not make an applicant eligible for the member rate in this certification process. The applicant needs to be an individual member of NCAFPM to get the member rate.

## **VI. EXAMINATIONS**

The North Carolina CFM exam shall be approved by the ASFPM Certification Board of Regents (CBOR) and NCAFPM's Professional Development Committee. All exams will be "closed book" and will be held in a proctored classroom environment. All examinations will be pass/fail and the results will be held in strict confidence. The Association will publish and maintain a study guide.

The exam measures a person's knowledge of a community's responsibilities under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and related floodplain management topics. The exam will cover topics such as the Overall Context of Floodplain Management, Floodplain Mapping, NFIP Regulatory Standards, Regulatory Administrative Procedures, Flood Insurance, Flood Hazard Mitigation, the Natural and Beneficial Functions of Floodplains, and others.

The exam consists of approximately 120 questions. At least 70% of the answers must be correct in order to earn a passing grade.

NCAFPM CFM Program examinations will be given at each NCAFPM annual conference and other locations as approved and specified by the NCAFPM Board. Re-examinations will be granted at an approved location upon payment of the re-examination fee. Re-examinations must be taken within one year of the initial examination or at the next annual conference; otherwise the fee for an initial examination will be charged. The NCAFPM Professional Development Committee will arrange for proctors at all examination sites.

## **VII. MAINTAINING CERTIFIED STATUS**

An initial NCAFPM Certified Floodplain Manager certification will be valid indefinitely, provided that the applicant complies with the biennial (every two years) renewal requirements including :

- Submittal of renewal application;
- Submittal of renewal fee;

### **Continuing Education**

- The *Guidance for Continuing Education Credit (CECs) ASFPM Certified Floodplain Manager Program (CFM® Program)* is adopted by reference
- This includes the requirement for submittal of proof of 16 continuing education credits (CECs) earned within the previous 24 months.
- Publicity for NCAFPM / NC Emergency Management training and conferences will identify how many CECs they are worth
- If a workshop, seminar, conference or training course has not been granted CECs by ASFPM, the Certification Committee will determine the number of CECs to be granted a CFM.
- The NCAFPM Professional Development Committee will assist the Board and NC Emergency Management in developing training courses by ensuring the CFM exam subject matter is considered when developing training.
- Applicants for certification renewals may request the NCAFPM PDC to review training courses or conferences not on the list of approved programs. The NCAFPM PDC will evaluate these requests to determine the quality of training and their relevance to floodplain management. If a training course is deemed to meet the training requirements of the CFM Program, the NCAFPM PDC will determine the number of CECs to be granted (depending upon the floodplain management content), notify the applicant, and place the new program on the NCAFPM's list of approved programs.

Approximately 90 days before the two-year anniversary of their original certification, NCAFPM Certified Floodplain Managers will be sent a notification for the biennial renewal, along with a form on which to record CECs earned. Those not fulfilling the requirements for renewal by the due date will be sent a letter of decertification, stating that the individual may no longer classify him or herself as an NCAFPM Certified Floodplain Manager.

## **VIII. COORDINATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

Many organizations have interests that focus wholly or in part on improving floodplain management. The NCAFPM CFM Program will coordinate with ASFPM, Chapters of ASFPM

and other related associations and will complement those that have their own certification programs.

## **IX. CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Certified Floodplain Managers will agree to follow the Code of Professional Conduct.

*As a CFM®, I agree to fully comply with the following tenets of the Code of Ethics in all of my professional responsibilities. I will:*

- *Protect the health, safety, property, and welfare of the public in the practice of my profession;*
- *Establish and maintain a high standard of integrity and practice;*
- *Practice honesty and integrity in all of my professional relationships with the public, peers, and employer;*
- *Be truthful and accurate in my professional communications;*
- *Not express a professional opinion in deposition or before a court, administrative agency, or other public forum which may be contrary to generally accepted scientific and floodplain management principle, without fully disclosing the basis and rationale for such an opinion;*
- *Foster excellence in floodplain management by staying abreast of pertinent issues;*
- *Enhance individual performance by attention to continuing education and technology;*
- *Avoid conflicts of interest resulting in personal gain or advantage;*
- *Be economical in the utilization of the nation's resources through the effective use of funds, accurate assessment of flood-related hazards, and timely decision-making;*
- *Maintain the confidentiality of privileged information;*
- *Promote public awareness and understanding of flood-related hazards, floodplain resources, and flood hazard response; and*
- *Be dedicated to serving the profession of floodplain management and to improving the quality of life.*

## **X. SPECIAL NEEDS/ADA COMPLIANCE**

It shall be the policy of the NCAFPM to comply with the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (28 CFR Part 36) and in compliance with NCAFPM Procedures.

Special arrangements may be made available to applicants for certification at the examination site by submitting a written request to NCAFPM with a letter from a licensed physician or health

care specialist knowledgeable of the requester's disability stating the specific needs to be accommodated. An accommodation will be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities to the extent the accommodation does not fundamentally alter the examination, cause disruption to other test takers or cause an undue and unreasonable burden to the NCAFPM. NCAFPM may deny special accommodations which include but are not limited to unlimited testing time, modification of the format or content of the examination, paraphrasing or translating the test materials by a reader or interpreter.

All requests for accommodations must be sent to the NCAFPM and received not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the examination. Late requests for an accommodation may not be honored.

## **XI. CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS**

The approved *ASFPM Confidentiality and Records* policy and any amendments are adopted by reference.

## **XII. EXAM HOSTING AND PROCTORING**

The approved *ASFPM Exam Hosting and Proctoring* policy and any amendments are adopted by reference.

## **XIII. DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY**

Professional certification is a peer review process administered through the North Carolina Association of Floodplain Managers. Participation in the Certified Floodplain Manager Program is strictly voluntary. The program is designed to establish educational, training, and experience criteria related to floodplain management, hazard mitigation, and the National Flood Insurance Program, and to certify that an individual applicant has met these criteria.

The North Carolina Association of Floodplain Managers and the Association of State Floodplain Managers assume no liability for any action or decision made by individual Certified Floodplain Managers during the normal course of performing their prescribed duties and responsibilities of managing development within the identified floodplains, as established by criteria of the NFIP or state and mandated by their respective employer or local government agency. Furthermore, any list of Certified Floodplain Managers should be used with care. The North Carolina Association of Floodplain Managers has not attempted to independently verify the information submitted by certification applicants. We strongly recommend that anyone using the professional services of any NCAFPM CFM listed individual or firm contact that individual or firm directly and request and verify their references and credentials. Further, the ASFPM and NCAFPM assume no liability for any action or decision made by an ASFPM accredited state entity in accepting, denying, certifying, or re-certifying CFMs.

ADOPTED: October 6, 2000  
AMENDED: June 6, 2005  
AMENDED : January 22, 2007

AMENDED: November 22, 2015

*William R. Tingle*

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William R. Tingle, Executive Director  
North Carolina Association of  
Floodplain Managers

November 22, 2015

Date