



# **Certified in Volunteer Administration**

## **CANDIDATE HANDBOOK**

### **2012**

- ❖ **Registration Period: October 1, 2011 - March 1, 2012**
- ❖ **Local proctors and test sites must be identified by all candidates by April 30, 2012**
- ❖ **CVA Exam: May 23, 2012 (via the internet)**
- ❖ **Deadline for Submission of Portfolio: December 31, 2012**

#### **Statement of Nondiscrimination Policy**

CCVA does not discriminate among applicants on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or marital status. The CVA credentialing program is open to salaried and non-salaried individuals in the field of volunteer resource management.

Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration  
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## **THE CVA CREDENTIAL**

Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA) is a professional certification in the field of volunteer resources management. Originally developed by the Association of Volunteer Administration (AVA), the program is now sponsored by the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration (CCVA). This credential recognizes practitioners in the field of volunteer resources management who meet specified standards as measured through a process of testing and peer review.

CCVA promotes the standards for volunteer resources management as stated in *Professional Ethics in Volunteer Administration*, and views these principles as an essential part of one's competence in the field. Candidates for the CVA credential are required to affirm their intent to uphold these ethical standards.

An international CVA registry is maintained on the CCVA web site.

**Note:** Any eligible individual from any country may earn the CVA credential. However, at this time CCVA publishes the exam only in English.

## **CORE COMPETENCIES**

A core competency is defined for the CVA program as the knowledge, skills and ability (KSAs) required for competent/satisfactory practice in the field of volunteer resource management. The CVA Core Competencies were identified by topic experts in the field and verified through a membership survey.

CVAs will successfully demonstrate knowledge and application skills required for competent practice in the following areas:

- Ethics
- Organizational Management
- Human Resources Management
- Accountability
- Leadership and Advocacy

## **CVA ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The competency-based CVA program consists of a two-part measurement format to capture a candidate's knowledge and application skills based on practical experience. **Candidates must pass both components in order to earn the CVA credential.**

More specifically, the two components are:

### **The CVA Examination**

- 80 multiple choice questions
- Two-hour proctored examination is offered via the internet once a year on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday in May
- Candidates are responsible for arranging an appropriate proctor to sit with them during the exam.
- The examination is developed by trained topic expert volunteers on the CVA Test Committee
- All scores are identified as pass/fail.

### **The CVA Portfolio**

- Philosophy Statement: 100-250 words
- Ethics Case Study: 100-250 words
- Management Narrative based on CVA Core Competencies: 1500-1750 words
- All three components must be submitted at the same time. A panel of trained CVAs conducts a peer review of Portfolio submissions based on clearly defined criteria.
- All scores are identified as pass/fail.

*"The content from the CVA credentialing process has made a tremendous impact on how I lead volunteers, communicate with our staff, and advocate in the community. Thank you for providing and implementing this program!"*

*Kathy Gottlieb, CVA  
Matz Museum of Jewish Heritage  
Beachwood, OH USA*

## Use of the CVA Appellation

Individuals successfully completing both components of the credentialing process may use the **CVA** appellation after their names.

## Eligibility Criteria

- The equivalent of at least three years of full-time volunteer resources management experience, salaried or non-salaried.
- A minimum of 30% of an applicant's current position is related to volunteer resources management.
- Two letters of professional recommendation from supervisors, colleagues, etc.

## Registration

Registrations are accepted between October 1 and March 1. Submit the completed application form, two letters of recommendation from an individual in a senior position or colleague and appropriate fees to the CCVA office.

## 2012 Registration Fee

Early Bird (Oct. 1 – Dec. 31)	\$ 210 US
Regular (Jan. 1 – March 1)	\$ 265 US

*Discounted fees for members of Points of Light Institute/Hands On Network, ALIVE, Volunteer Canada or VolunteerMatch:*

Early Bird (Oct. 1 – Dec. 31)	\$ 195 US
Regular (Jan. 1 – March 1)	\$ 225 US

## CVA Toolkit

Upon registration the CVA Toolkit is e-mailed to candidates. It contains a self-assessment tool, details about the e-testing process, and study tips on how to prepare for multiple-choice examinations. A sample Portfolio is also included.

## Refunds

Refunds will not be granted to individuals requesting to withdraw from either portion of the CVA program after March 1. Appeals will be reviewed by CCVA in cases where a special circumstance (such as a medical emergency) may warrant a refund. Appeals must be submitted in writing to CCVA.

## THE CVA PORTFOLIO

Candidates must submit a completed Portfolio by the end of 2012. The portfolio has three sections:

- Personal Philosophy Statement
- Ethics Case Study
- Management Narrative

## Submission Instructions

All sections of the Portfolio must be submitted at the same time. All submissions become the property of CCVA.

## Peer Assessment Criteria

All Portfolio submissions are scored on a pass/fail rating scale. Candidates must receive a total score of at least 105 out of a possible 140 points in order to pass.

## Philosophy Statement

Writing a statement of philosophy of volunteerism has been an exercise many CVAs say was their most profound experience in the credentialing process. The Statement must be:

- Reflective of personal beliefs and values
- Well written
- 100-250 words in length

## Ethics Case Study

Ethical decision-making is a critical skill in today's workplace. CVA candidates demonstrate their ability to identify an ethical dilemma and its implications based on the core values of the profession. The Case Study must be:

- Substantive
- Related to the CCVA core values
- Well written
- 100-250 words in length

## The Management Narrative

A management narrative is a written analysis of a successful or unsuccessful program or project in which the candidate was or is involved as a volunteer resources manager or administrator. The Narrative must:

- Demonstrate professional leadership
- Analyze strengths and weaknesses
- Describe actions and results
- Be well written
- 1500-1750 words in length

*"The process of applying, testing, writing my portfolio and receiving my credential has greatly enhanced my reputation as an expert in the field of Volunteer Management. Because I work with people that manage volunteers in a very large state, I felt it was absolutely necessary to have specialized training in this field... CCVA gave me that opportunity."*

*Sherry Hostetter, CVA  
Texas Association Against Sexual Assault  
Austin, TX USA*

## **THE CVA EXAMINATION**

Content expert volunteers develop an examination that accurately reflects the roles, responsibilities, knowledge and skill sets required for competent practice by individuals in volunteer resources management.

### **Primary Reference**

The textbook, *Volunteer Administration: Professional Practice*, serves as the primary reference for the CVA Exam. A list of additional references is also provided. Candidates are encouraged to use the self-assessment tool as a guide to identify which topic areas they need to read and study.

### **CVA Content Outline**

The CVA Content Outline is based on a Job Analysis Study of practitioners in the field that identified the knowledge, skills and abilities required for competent practice for an individual with three years of experience in volunteer resources management. A detailed Content Outline (updated in 2008) is included in the CVA Toolkit.

### **Test Specifications**

The CVA examination contains 80 multiple choice questions which test your knowledge and your ability to apply that knowledge to specific situations as presented in case studies. This exam is scored using the criterion-referenced standard. CCVA uses a Scaled Score Scale of 0 to 400, with a score of 300 required to pass.

## **E-Testing and Proctors**

The CVA exam is offered using the Exam-Soft online testing system.

Candidates have a full two hours to take the examination at a computer location of their choice, and proctors must be present for the entire testing period. A practice test will be available during the weeks prior to the exam date so that candidates can familiarize themselves with the testing software and the exam format.

Candidates are expected to specify a test location and proctor by April 30. Many options are available, such as a volunteer center, college, or one's own organization. CCVA can assist candidates with identifying a proctor, and will provide specific guidance to all proctors regarding their role.

## **Exam Results**

Test results are sent ONLY by mail to the individual candidate. Results will not be given by telephone, fax or e-mail. CCVA is concerned with only reporting valid scores. On rare occasions, circumstances may invalidate test scores. CCVA retains the right to cancel or withhold any exam scores. Invalid scores fall into two categories:

- (a) Doubts may be raised by the examination administrator or another candidate of suspected misconduct or cheating by a candidate. Candidates are expected to cooperate with any investigation to determine if the score is invalid.
- (b) In rare instances, there may be a problem with the examination materials or the test site. Such situations will be investigated and a determination made. Scores will not be invalid in these instances.

In addition, CCVA may cancel or invalidate any candidate's score if, upon investigation, violation of policies is established.

## **Comments about the Examination**

Candidates may forward their comments in writing to CCVA within 10 business days of the examination.

All questions and comments concerning the examination are reviewed by staff and volunteers prior to candidates being notified of test results.

Candidates do **not** have access to their examinations or to specific questions after taking the exam. Any complaints about the conduct of the examination should be submitted in writing to CCVA within 10 days following the examination.

### **Special Accommodations**

If you have a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act you may request special accommodations by completing the appropriate section of the Registration Form. The information you provide regarding your disability and your need for accommodation will be treated with strict confidentiality.

### **CANDIDATE SUPPORT**

In order to encourage candidates throughout the CVA process and to maximize the potential for success, CCVA offers several types of support:

- Optional conference calls to review requirements for both the Exam and the Portfolio components
- A listserv for candidate questions and mutual support
- An on-line Practice Test to enable candidates to become familiar with the testing software.
- Individual matching with CVA volunteers who can provide general guidance and support

Participation in any of these is voluntary and in no way guarantees successful completion of the credentialing process.

### **APPEALS**

All appeals by a CVA candidate must be submitted in writing to CCVA within 60 days of notification of denial of credits and/or recertification. CCVA will acknowledge receipt of all appeals in writing within 30 days of receipt of appeal. All appeals are confidential.

CCVA will attempt to resolve all appeals within 60 days of receipt of appeal in accordance with the CCVA Board-approved guidelines. If resolution is not reached, the decision will be referred to the CCVA Board of Directors and their decision is final.

### **RENEWAL**

#### **General Guidelines**

Upon earning the CVA credential it remains valid for five calendar years. CVAs must participate in ongoing professional development to maintain their CVA status.

#### **Renewal Credit Units**

The basic CVA renewal credit unit is the Professional Development Unit (PDU). A wide variety of activities that promote continued learning, professional development or leadership in the field may be submitted for PDU credit toward renewal of the CVA credential.

CVAs must earn 35 PDUs per five-year Renewal Cycle. In addition, a personal philosophy statement of 100-250 words must be submitted as part of the renewal process.

Upon earning the CVA, individuals receive a copy of the CVA Renewal Guidelines with complete instructions and details on how to earn and track PDUs.

## PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

### *As a professional in volunteer administration I accept responsibility:*

to develop a personal, coherent philosophy of volunteerism as a foundation for working with others in developing volunteer programs;

to help create a social climate through which human needs can be met and human values enhanced;

to promote understanding and the actualization of mutual benefits inherent in any act of volunteer service;

to develop volunteer programs and initiatives that respect and enhance the human dignity of all persons involved;

to respect the privacy of individuals and safeguard information including written, electronic, audio-visual and verbal formats identified as confidential;

to understand and treat with respect individuals from diverse backgrounds;

to develop a program that will enhance and extend the work of paid staff;

to contribute to the credibility of the profession in the eyes of those it serves;

to pursue excellence even when resources are limited, and seek to overcome obstacles to excellence;

to improve my knowledge, skills and ability to make judgments;

to reflective decision making with the intent of advancing the long term greater good;

to be kind, compassionate and generous in all actions so as to minimize the harm done to others in the performance of my duties;

to have an open and impartial process for collecting and evaluating information critical for making decisions;

to have impartial and objective standards that avoid discriminatory or prejudicial behaviors;

to assure clear communication regarding commitments made on behalf of the organization, staff or volunteers;

to identify policies, procedures and circumstances that might result in a conflict of interest and address them appropriately;

to the truth, assuring that all interactions with volunteers and other paid staff is founded on the premise of open and honest interaction;

to understand and work to promote the core ethical values of my profession, not compromising those values for convenience.

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**Certified in Volunteer Administration**  
**2012 REGISTRATION FORM**  
**Registrations must be received by:**  
**March 1, 2012**

**Mail this completed form and two letters of recommendation to:**

CCVA, P.O. Box 467, Midlothian, VA 23113 USA

**1. Candidate Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Experience in Volunteer Resources Management: \_\_\_\_\_ # of years**

Candidates must have the equivalent of three years of full-time experience related to volunteer resource management. The three years may be earned over several years and include part-time service. A minimum of 30% of your current position must be related to volunteer resource management. It may be volunteer or salaried experience and can include program development and management, consulting, teaching, writing, etc. Only include your most **recent** experience to meet the eligibility requirement. Use additional page if needed

Dates: From	To	Organization Name and Location	Title of Position

**3. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to the following terms:**

- I will arrange a local proctor by April 30, 2012 and notify CCVA accordingly.
- I understand I must take the CVA exam on May 23, 2012 at a computer location of my choice.
- I understand I must complete my Portfolio by December 31, 2012.

*(continued)*

**4. Professional References:** Two reference letters must be submitted with your application. Letters should be from individuals familiar with your work in volunteer administration such as colleagues or supervisors. Letters should confirm your past activity in the field and that you are an appropriate candidate for the CVA credential.

**5. Is English your native language?**    \_\_\_\_ YES        \_\_\_\_ NO

**6. How did you learn about the CVA program?** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What is your primary reason for seeking this credential?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. Fee:**        **Early Bird (Oct. 1 – Dec. 31)** \$210 US        Members of POL-HON, ALIVE, VolunteerMatch, or Volunteer Canada: \$195 US

**Regular (Jan. 1 – March 1)** \$265 US        Members of POL-HON, ALIVE, VolunteerMatch, or Volunteer Canada: \$225 US

**9. Textbook Order:** You may order a copy of Volunteer Administration: Professional Practice from CCVA. (This is the primary reference for the CVA Exam.)

**Cost: \$75.00 USD**, domestic shipping included. Additional international shipping fees may apply.

YES – please mail me a copy of the textbook.  
I have included my payment of \$75.00 here, or with my online payment.

**10. Payment Options:** Make checks payable to CCVA. All checks and money orders must be in USD. Credit card payments are accepted electronically via PayPal on the CCVA website at [www.cvacert.org](http://www.cvacert.org). A personal PayPal account is not required to use this option.

**STATEMENT OF ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

*I affirm the information submitted above is accurate and meets the eligibility requirements of the CVA credential sponsored by CCVA.*

*I have read and agree to uphold the principles of Professional Ethics in Volunteer Administration as identified on page 6 of the CVA Candidate Handbook.*

*I agree not to share the specific content of CVA Exam questions with other candidates, colleagues, trainers or friends. I understand my responsibility to maintain the security of this Exam.*

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Request for Special Accommodations

**Professional Documentation:** This form must be completed by an appropriate professional to ensure CCVA is able to provide the required test accommodations. Include an explanation of the nature of the candidate's disability and the appropriate accommodation.

*The applicant discussed with me the nature of the test to be administered. It is my opinion that because of this applicant's disability s/he should be accommodated by providing special arrangements as indicated.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_