

Computerized CPA Exam: How it Happens

Effective with the implementation of the Computerized CPA Examination, application deadlines were eliminated, allowing candidates to apply at any time of the year. The application process in CBT for Illinois candidates will incorporate the following steps:

- A candidate submits an application and fee(s) to the Illinois Board of Examiners for credentials evaluation (if required) and to be authorized to take one to four different sections of the CPA exam. **We strongly encourage first-time applicants to submit their academic credentials for evaluation before submitting the application to test.**
- Once eligibility to take the examination is determined, an approval letter is sent to the candidate. At the same time, an electronic Authorization To Test (ATT) is sent to the National Candidate Database (NCD) maintained by NASBA (National Association of State Boards of Accountancy). The Authorization To Test is valid for 90 days.
- After NASBA receives the Board's Authorization To Test, NASBA contacts the candidate by email or US mail to request examination fees for grading, computer test (seat) time, digital photo at the test center and their processing fee. The "payment coupon" will state the amount of examination fees to be paid by the candidate and method of payment based upon the sections the candidate has been authorized to take. You are required to pay the full amount for all parts approved in the Authorization to Test. If your Authorization to Test is for four exam parts, you must pay the full fee for all four parts. You cannot pay by test part individually, even though you are allowed to *schedule* each exam part separately. The payment coupon is issued 24-72 hours from the date the ATT is processed.
- Once correct fees are received from the candidate, NASBA issues a Notice to Schedule (NTS) to the candidate and also informs the Board of Examiners. The candidate is instructed to contact the Prometric Testing Center to schedule a day and time for testing for each section. **The Notice to Schedule (NTS) is valid for six months from the date of issue. This means that the candidate must schedule and take all sections that were authorized within six months of the NTS issue date.** The NTS is valid once for the sections approved. Retests cannot be taken using the original NTS if part(s) are failed.
- The Board of Examiners must approve advisory scores from the AICPA before release to the candidate. Advisory scores are released to the board office and to the candidate twice in each testing window. The first release is approximately seven weeks into the testing window, with approximately 60% of those scores released. The second release occurs 2-3 weeks after the close of the testing window.
- After scores are received, the candidate submits subsequent application(s) and fee(s) to the Board office to be re-authorized to take failed sections or sections not previously scheduled in CBT or sections for which the candidate did not appear (no shows or cancellations by the candidate). **We cannot process an application for any sections completed for which scores have not been issued to the candidate. You must wait to receive your scores before reapplying for any repeat sections.**