



MAXIMIZE
YOUR
CREDENTIAL
& MEMBERSHIP



CERTIFIED

You have the knowledge to back up the numbers:

- By passing the CPA exam and maintaining your license, you are a proven experienced professional.
- Completing 120 hours of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) every three years shows your dedication to staying current.
- It's more than just your word, the state regularly audits CPAs to ensure they are in compliance.

PUBLIC

You have a responsibility to do what is right.

- Fulfilling your ethics requirements demonstrates a commitment to doing what is right.
- Critical decisions can be made based on the information you provide, because CPAs serve the public interest not our own.
- Accountants are consistently ranked above bankers, attorneys and business executives for their honesty and ethical standards in the Gallup poll of Americans.

ACCOUNTANT

You are a well-rounded financial expert.

- Auditing and attestation, Financial Accounting and Reporting, Regulations and Business Environments and Concepts.
- While many CPAs specialize in one area it is this broad understanding that allows them to provide the best advice.
- The exam and CPE are constantly being updated to match changes in the accounting world.

“Why maintain?
Do you remember how hard you worked to get your CPA?”

–MSCPA Industry Member

KEEPING YOUR CPA

Don't let the requirements of 120 CPE hours scare you away from maintaining an active certification.

The [Montana Board of Public Accountants](#) accepts more courses than ever before and meeting the continuing education requirements can be easier than you think.

Last year half of all Montana CPAs had their CPE audited.

The most common issues found were not completing enough hours and not providing sufficient documentation for classes attended. MSCPA classes are automatically uploaded to the NASBA tracker, entering your other CPE is critical to staying in compliance.

What counts for CPE credits?

The Board of Public Accountants has adopted new CPE rules that will affect your CPA license going forward. Under the amended rules, a program qualifies as acceptable CPE if it contributes directly to the licensee's knowledge, ability and/or competence to perform the licensee's professional responsibilities. All active permit holders are required to maintain 120 hours of CPE, including two hours of ethics, to maintain an active license.

In addition to more options for obtaining CPE, active licensees must complete at least 50% (60 hours) in technical fields of study in a rolling 3-year period. Two hours of the technical study must be in ethics.

In-house training programs

- Does your company provide in-house training? These classes count if they are necessary for you to do your job. MSCPA offers an in-house training service that can provide you with exactly the type of training your team needs.

Live courses

- Live classes provide a new perspective and help you network with other finance professionals.

Conferences

- Conferences offer tailored education by allowing you to select sessions you find most relevant.

Webcasts

- Live webcasts are considered a live course; archived webcasts may count as self-study under certain circumstances.

Self-Study

- You can earn credit on your own time and your own budget. Self-study programs must be a minimum of one-half credit hour, but credit may be earned in one-fifth or one-half increments after the first one-half hour credit is earned. A self-study course that is offered by a sponsor that IS NOT a NASBA Registry sponsor receives half credit. Those courses must be at least 50 minutes to receive any credit.

Personal development courses

- From communications to career planning, the range of personal development courses allowed is broad.

Writing & teaching

- Sharing your knowledge through writing can account up to 25 percent and teaching up to 50 percent of your required CPE hours.

Nano-learning, blended learning, technical committee work and technical reviewer of qualified CPE programs.

- Nano-Learning: An educational program incorporating multiple learning formats, different delivery methods and is synchronous and asynchronous. Nano-learning is earned at one-fifth credit hour. Nano-learning courses must be offered by a NASBA National Registry of CPE Sponsor to receive any CPE credit.
- Blended Learning: An educational program incorporating multiple learning formats, different delivery methods and is synchronous and asynchronous.
- Technical Committee work: A committee of an international, national or state professional association, council or member organization, or a governmental entity that supports professional services or industries that require unique and specific knowledge in accounting or tax compliance and serves as a resource to identify issues regarding the practice of accountancy and develops technical or policy recommendations on those issues.
- Technical Reviewer of qualified CPE Programs: A subject matter expert other than the course developer who reviews a group, self-study, nano-learning, or blended learning program to ensure the program is technically accurate, current, and addresses the stated learning objectives.

MAXIMIZE YOUR CREDENTIAL

Is your company maximizing on your CPA's license potential?

Clients, customers and the business community at large value what the CPA license means. Don't miss an opportunity to promote the good things that license brings to your company.

- Do your marketing materials mention that you have a CPA on staff?
Be sure to note this on business cards, stationery and company brochures.
- Don't forget your company's website!
Often the web is the first place the public goes for information about your company. Make the CPAs in your office a part of your company image.
- Tell your bank or credit union. They value knowing you have a highly trained accountant on staff.

ACTIVE CPA?

What is an "active" CPA?

After passing the Comprehensive Uniform CPA Exam, a CPA can maintain an active or inactive license. Only an active license holder can use the CPA designation on business cards, letterhead or a company website.

What does it take to be active in Montana?

CPAs are required to maintain 120 hours of continuing professional education every rolling three-year period and must include two hours of ethics credits. This might sound like a lot of classroom time, but it's actually very manageable. That's only five days of course time annually. And with a variety of CPE options available, out-of-office time can be minimized.

Isn't an inactive CPA enough?

In today's fast changing world it is more important than ever to have someone on staff who is keeping up on the changing accounting rules. Only an active CPA has verified they have the most current information. If you invest in a computer you make sure to keep it updated to get the best performance; hiring a CPA requires the same continued investment to make sure you get the most out of your people.

MSCPA: Your Professional Home

Whether you have one or several CPAs on staff, it's important for them to have access to their larger professional community. That's what the Montana Society of CPAs provides. We're 1,800 plus members strong, offering CPAs the opportunity to grow their knowledge and their network. Learn more at www.mscca.org

MEMBERSHIP

What's in it for me?

MSCPA is a member-based professional association for ALL CPAs licensed in the State of Montana. It is our mission to inspire, empower, and impact our members to achieve professional excellence. We work to do this through 5 pillars:

MEMBERSHIP MSCPA is your professional home, we are here to facilitate your success through your entire career.

SUSTAINABILITY We strive to be great stewards of your investment in MSCPA. MSCPA is over 100 years old and we are working to make sure we are here for the next 100 years.

CONNECTION MSCPA connects you with your peers and others who can help you get ahead.

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE We are committed to providing you quality relevant CPE options to keep you informed.

ADVOCACY MSCPA is your voice at the state and federal level. We are the only organization looking out for CPAs at the Montana State House.

We have over 300 members working outside of public practice at over 200 different organizations. Over half of these members are the lone member at their organization and most are the only CPA on staff at their organization. While CPAs working in public accounting typically have a community of other CPAs working right next to them, CPAs working in industry are often on their own. MSCPA is the community you need to stay connected to the changing accounting world.

Last year MSCPA rolled out the Community Roots online community. This is the place for CPAs in Montana to connect and communicate with other CPAs across the state. We are excited to offer this member benefit to allow you to reach out to others to help solve each other's problems.

Each year the Industry Conference focuses on issues important to members working in industry. The MSCPA Industry Conference Planners pick the topics and make sure the event is tailored to your needs.

The MSCPA advocacy agenda tries to create the best possible environment for all CPAs. Members in industry serve on the committees creating the agenda. We encourage you to reach out if you have an interest in helping in this area.

WANT YOUR EMPLOYER'S SUPPORT?

Share this brochure with them or ask us to send them one - this is a great resource to help you approach your company in supporting your efforts.

CPE & Events

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Held every June

Networking, entertainment and learning. All that AND you can earn up to 12 hours of CPE.

FRAUD CONFERENCE

Held every September

Offers several different speakers and topics on Fraud and Ethics.

INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

Held every March

Designed for CPAs working in business, industry, not-for-profit and government.

This two-day conference is filled with a variety of two-hour sessions that focus on topics the MSCPA Industry Conference Planners hand-pick.

GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

Held every May

The Montana Society of CPAs' Governmental Audit, Accounting and Financial Reporting Committee is proud to present a conference that focuses on accounting, auditing and reporting issues affecting Montana's local governments. This conference has been designed for auditors of local governments, representatives of city, county, town and district governing boards and accountants from city, county, town and school district business offices.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLASSES

August though January

CPE Clusters are offered throughout August to January in various cities. These clusters consist of 2-3 days with 2-instructors and a wide variety of topics. We also feature other classes in some years: Farm & Ranch, Technology Conference, Oil & Gas and Federal Tax Updates.

“A CPA has gone the extra mile to get the certification and it is a recognized sign of excellence across all industries. If you want someone to go the extra mile for you and your operation, hire and support the ongoing excellence of a CPA!”

– Teri Norcross

SALARY SURVEY

Have you ever wondered . . .

- How much do CPAs working as CFOs and controllers make?
- How does it compare to CPAs working for non-profits or government?
- How much vacation time and sick leave does your company provide?
- Does anyone offer non-traditional working arrangements?

MSCPA Industry Group conducts a survey of our members working in business, industry, non-profit and government. The survey asks about salary ranges for CPAs, CFOs, Controllers, Assistant Controllers and Accounting Staff depending upon their experience. It asks questions about vacation time, sick leave, insurance and retirement as well as nontraditional working arrangements.

If you did not participate in the salary survey but would like a copy they can be purchased by contacting jean@mscpa.org for \$250.

Track your professional development classes with the CPETracking from the State Board and NASBA. Any live classes or MSCPA webinars you take from MSCPA will automatically be included in the CPETracker. You can also manually add courses you've taken with other vendors.

2019-20 CPE Audit Results

- 838 people audited
- 161 failures

Out of the 161 Failures:

- 86 not enough hours (.5-120)
- 65 documentation issues
- 7 missed ethics requirement
- 2 resolved
- 2 waivers by Board

In the end 20 people had their license administratively suspended.

CPE TRACKER

HELP YOUR EMPLOYER SEE THE POTENTIAL IN YOUR CREDENTIAL

Your employer hired a CPA for a reason.

But often they don't realize that you need their support to maintain that license. Use this brochure to develop talking points to share or give the brochure directly to the decision-maker in your company to emphasize how they will benefit from your active CPA license.

Renewing your license

Whether you're active or inactive, you must renew your license with the State Board of Public Accountants every year.

Click [here](#) for the State Board of Public Accountants website.

HELP YOUR EMPLOYER SEE THE POTENTIAL IN YOUR MSCPA MEMBERSHIP

- Connect meaningfully with peers and mentors
- Access the best learning opportunities in the classroom and BEYOND
- Stay ahead of your career
- Interact with leaders from all walks of life
- Inspire others
- Share your enthusiasm and unique abilities
- Network with the best and brightest
- MTROOTS - your online community
- Attend EXCELLENT events

INSPIRE. EMPOWER.
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MONTANA SOCIETY *of* CPAs

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IMPACT. EXCELLENCE.

PO Box 138
Helena MT 59624
406-442-7301
mscpa.org