

How CAs Can Become CPAs

Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) are qualified accountants in the United States who have passed the Uniform Certified Public Accountant Examination and have met additional state education and experience requirements for certification as a CPA. In most US states, only CPAs who are licensed are able to provide to the public, attestation (including auditing) opinions on financial statements. According to Wikipedia, the exceptions to this rule are Arizona, Kansas, North Carolina and Wyoming, where although the “CPA” designation is restricted, the practice of auditing is not.

In the present times of fast-paced globalisation, the qualification of a CPA will prove to be a valuable additional asset for the Chartered Accountants across the globe. Following are the 13 information tips which can help a Chartered Accountant become a Certified Public Accountant.

- (1) Although the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) conducts uniform examination nationally, each State has got its own requirements to sit for the exam.
- (2) AICPA is a parent body, however only an individual State can decide the pre-requisites to sit for the exam in that respective State.
- (3) It is our responsibility to choose the State depending upon one’s qualification and experience.
- (4) Once we choose the State, eventually all the States will ask our qualification and experience to be evaluated by the designated body (approved by AICPA/NASBA).
- (5) But, as of now, only Colorado State recognises Indian Chartered Accountants and so does not require evaluation before admission to sit for the exam.
- (6) However, after passing the exam, Colorado State does not award ‘CPA’ as at that stage it asks us for evaluation of the qualification and experience.
- (7) Now the CPA exam is conducted online (through prometric centres), but only within USA. There are four subjects only and one can choose to sit individually or together. The pass percentage is 75.
- (8) Exam questions mostly comprise Multiple Choice questions (say 60-70%), other objective formats (say 10-20%) and descriptive-simulation models (balance 20%).
- (9) On an average, generally all the States require a minimum of 150 credit hours to be complied PLUS completion of the Ethics test (which can be written from home—passing grade is 90%), before a CPA is awarded.
- (10) Then you will be given “Active” status of CPA, based on which you can practise in that State. You can sit for the exam in one State and after passing, shift to another State by providing valid reasons. The “Active” status will be passed on to the other State, provided ethical test requirements of the other State are complied with.
- (11) As for Colorado State is concerned, both CPA pass certificate and Certificate of License to practice are same. But, other states like Delaware, the CPA pass certificate is different from Certificate of License to practise.
- (12) To maintain the “Active” Status of CPA certificate, certain credit hours are to be maintained annually. For example, in Colorado State, it is 80 credit hours for two years with a minimum of 2 credit hours each year towards the subject of ethics.
- (13) The relevant details can be availed from the websites www.nasba.org and www.cpa2biz.com



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