

**Policies for the Accredited Payments Risk Professional (APRP) Program of  
NACHA—The Electronic Payments Association**

Effective November 1, 2017

1. **Certifying Agent:** NACHA—The Electronic Payments Association (NACHA) is the certifying agent for the Accredited Payments Risk Professional program.
2. **Nondiscrimination:** NACHA does not discriminate among applicants based on age, sex, race, religious preference, national origin, handicap, or marital status. NACHA complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and are committed to ensuring that no disabled individual is deprived of the opportunity to take the APRP examination solely by virtue of that disability. Special testing arrangements may be made according to the requirements of ADA if a written request for accommodations is received at least 60 days, but in no case less than 4 weeks, prior to the examination. Written description and verification of the disability should be included with the request for accommodation.
3. **Previous Experience:** Candidates are strongly encouraged to have a minimum of two years previous experience in the payments risk field at the time the examination is administered.
4. **Accreditation Requirements:** To achieve accredited status, the candidate must satisfactorily complete an examination consisting of 120 multiple choice questions. Twenty (20) of these questions are being piloted for use on future exams and will not be scored. Cut-scores will be established by NACHA in conjunction with the APRP Oversight Panel.
5. **Test Date:** The Accredited Payments Risk Professional examination will be offered within a two (2) week window, as determined by NACHA. The 2018 examination test window will be Monday, March 5, 2018 through Saturday, March 17, 2018
6. Registrations for the 2018 APRP examination must be received by NACHA by Friday, February 23, 2018 **(There will be no refunds, substitutions or deferrals for the 2018 testing window.)**
7. **Test Administration:** The APRP examination is administered at various testing facilities affiliated with PSI; validation and score/result reporting is administered by NACHA. (For the purpose of these policies, test “scores” refer to test results, which are reported only as “pass” or “no pass.”)
8. **Test Admittance:** To be admitted to the test center on the scheduled test date, the candidate must present a document bearing the candidate’s picture and signature, such as: (a) a driver’s license or state identification card, (b) a government/employment identification badge, (c) a valid passport, or (d) a notarized photograph and signature. The candidate’s identification will be compared by the examination proctors against a roster of candidates registered to sit for the exam. Admission to the testing center will not be granted without proper identification. Candidates not listed on the roster will not be permitted to sit for the exam.

NOTE: The candidate’s name on the roster must match the name on the photo identification used. Candidates must ensure that they have registered for the examination using the name as it appears on their photo identification and must notify NACHA of any name changes/corrections prior to scheduling testing dates and times with PSI. Candidates are advised to arrive at the test site at least 15 minutes before the test time; however, in some circumstances, candidates may be requested to wait until their scheduled time before entering the testing center.

9. **Test Locations and Times:** The test site location is selected by individual test registrants from the various sites offered through PSI. The specific start time for test administration is at the discretion of the testing facility, based on appointment availability for the selected date.
10. **Appointments for testing dates and times must be made directly with PSI.** Information on scheduling your appointment for testing will be included in your exam confirmation letter.
11. **Test Length:** Candidates will have three hours to complete the examination.
12. **Delivery of Study Materials:** NACHA will send the registered candidate an email containing a link to the electronic version of the *APRP Handbook*. The 2018 version of the *APRP Handbook* will be available by November 30, 2017, until the end of the registration period. The candidate may purchase a printed copy of the *APRP Handbook* from NACHA if desired.
13. **Cancellations and Fee Refunds:** There will be no refunds for cancellations for the 2018 APRP exam window.
14. **Substitutions:** There will be no substitutions allowed for the 2018 APRP exam window.
15. **Exam Appointment Changes within Testing Window (Date, Time, & Location):** No fee will be charged for a change of appointment date, time, or location within a particular testing window. However, all such appointment changes must be made directly with the computer-based testing facility at least three business days in advance of the scheduled exam date. No changes to appointment date, time, or location will be permitted if less than three business days prior notice is provided.
16. **Walk-in Candidates:** Applications for the APRP exam must be received by NACHA in accordance with the registration deadlines established by these APRP Program Policies. Walk-in candidates at the exam site are not allowed.
17. **Results Reporting:** NACHA will send final pass/no pass letters to candidates approximately six to eight weeks after the final day of the 2018 testing window. Pass/no-pass information will be provided to appropriate participating Regional Payments Associations at the same time that final letters are sent to candidates.
  - Successful candidates will be notified that they have passed the examination.
  - Unsuccessful candidates will be notified that they have not passed the exam and will be provided with a report on general topic areas requiring improvement (a diagnostic analysis).
18. **Questions about Scores/Results:** All questions about exam results should be addressed in writing to Tryann Delaney, Director, Education & Accreditation, NACHA, 2550 Wasser Terrace, Suite 400, Herndon, Virginia 20171, [tdelaney@nacha.org](mailto:tdelaney@nacha.org), within 60 days of the date the results of the exam are released.

Because of the need to maintain exam security due to the limited size of the APRP exam question bank, exam questions and answer sheets cannot be made available to the candidate. NACHA does not provide a list of questions answered correctly or incorrectly. The only information available regarding the candidate's performance is provided on the individual score/result report.

19. **Ownership of Testing Material:** All testing materials and completed exams are the property of NACHA and will not be returned to the APRP candidate or Regional Payments Association/Direct Financial Institution Member.

20. **Reexamination:** Candidates who are not successful in any examination attempt may retake the exam, during subsequent testing windows, as often as necessary, provided a new registration fee is paid for each examination.

21. **Verification of Scores/Results:** Requests for rescoring will not be allowed for the 2018 APRP exam.

22. **Scores/Results Cancelled or Invalidated by NACHA:** NACHA is committed to reporting only valid exam scores/results and to protecting the integrity of the APRP Program and related examination. On rare occasions, circumstances may make exam scores/results invalid (e.g., candidate misconduct, breach of exam security, invalid testing conditions, faulty exam materials, policy violations, acts of God, etc.). NACHA reserves the right to cancel or withhold any exam scores/results if, in the opinion of the APRP Oversight Panel, there is adequate reason to question their validity. NACHA and the APRP Oversight Panel strive to ensure security, implementation of adequate policies, and fairness in all exam administrations and program administration.

- If scores/results are determined to be invalid because of candidate misconduct, the candidate is to cooperate in the investigation and will be provided with information on procedures to ensure his fair treatment. Fees will not be refunded or applied to future exams if the misconduct is confirmed.
- If scores/results are determined to be invalid because of circumstances beyond the control of the candidate, NACHA and the APRP Oversight Panel will investigate the situation(s). If the scores/results cannot be validated, NACHA will arrange for a makeup examination (either at a special date/time or on the next regularly scheduled testing window, at the discretion of NACHA and the APRP Oversight Panel) for no additional registration or materials fees.

Note: Environmental distractions at the testing center such as noise are considered circumstances beyond the control of NACHA. Refunds or makeup examinations during the same testing window will not be granted for environmental distractions.

23. **Validation Period:** Accreditation is valid for five years from the date the accreditation is awarded. Successful candidates (Accredited Payments Risk Professionals) are authorized to use the initials *APRP* behind their names for the accredited period (5 years). Accredited Payments Risk Professionals receive an APRP lapel pin, a certificate, and logo suitable for addition to business cards and stationery. APRPs are authorized to use these awards throughout the period of their accreditation. Requests for replacement APRP lapel pins or certificates must be submitted to NACHA in writing. Requests for replacement a lapel pin must be accompanied by a \$25 replacement fee. Requests for a replacement certificate must be accompanied by a \$25 replacement fee.

24. **Renewal of Accredited Status:** Accredited Payments Risk Professionals may renew their accredited status for an additional five years beyond the current expiration date by achieving a passing score on another APRP examination or by earning sufficient continuing education credits within their current five (5) year accreditation period.

- A candidate may choose to maintain his accreditation by achieving a passing score on another examination in either the fourth or fifth year of their current accreditation period. A passing score on another examination will result in the validation of the candidate's APRP status for an additional five (5) years beyond the current accreditation period. If unsuccessful in re-testing in either the fourth or fifth year after accreditation, the candidate's original APRP status will expire at the end of the fifth year.
- A candidate whose accreditation has lapsed may be awarded APRP accreditation (valid for five years) at any time by achieving a passing score on another examination.

- A candidate may choose to maintain his accreditation by submitting sufficient continuing education credits. In order to retain APRP status, an APRP must earn sixty (60) continuing education credits within the five (5) year accreditation period, with no more than twenty (20) credits earned in any one year.

**More information regarding the filing of continuing education credits, including reporting dates, will be updated following the administration of the 2018 exam window.**

APRPs are not required to submit supporting documentation with the continuing education credit reporting form. However, each APRP must maintain records documenting APRP continuing education credit activity for three years following the date reported. An audit of APRP renewal credits is conducted annually by NACHA, and candidates who are audited will be required to submit documentation for continuing education credits filed with NACHA. Examples of acceptable documentation include copies of programs for seminars and training sessions, copies of articles written, etc. Any credits that cannot be documented by the APRP during the audit process will be disqualified. NACHA will send all APRPs an annual confirmation of accepted credits in May of the calendar year immediately following the year in which the continuing education credits were earned. Each continuing education credit reporting form must be signed by the APRP and must be accompanied by the appropriate processing fee.

Only educational activities covering risk and related payments issues are eligible for APRP renewal credits and are identified within the *Accredited Payments Risk Professional Reporting Guidelines for Reporting Continuing Education Credits*. Eligible topic areas are covered in the *APRP Handbook* and the *NACHA Operating Rules* and include the six general risk topics as noted on the following page.

## ACCREDITED PAYMENTS RISK PROFESSIONAL (APRP) PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

(As Approved November 1, 2017)

General Guidelines: In order to retain APRP status, an APRP must earn sixty (60) continuing education credits within the five-year accreditation period, with no more than twenty (20) credits earned in any one year.

The reporting year for APRP renewal credits is January 1 to December 31. APRP continuing education credits must be reported annually. *Deadlines and fees for submission of credits will be determined at a later date.* APRPs are not required to submit supporting documentation with the continuing education credit reporting form. However, each APRP must maintain records documenting APRP continuing education credit activity for three years following the date reported. An audit of APRP renewal credits is conducted annually by NACHA, and candidates who are audited will be required to submit documentation for continuing education credits filed with NACHA. Examples of acceptable documentation include copies of registration forms or programs for seminars and training sessions, copies of articles written, etc. Any credits that cannot be documented by the APRP during the audit process will be disqualified. NACHA will send an annual Statement of Credits summarizing continuing education credit activity each spring. Each continuing education credit reporting form must be signed by the APRP and must be accompanied by the appropriate processing fee.

**POLICIES FOR EARNING CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS: Only educational activities covering risk related to payments issues are eligible for APRP renewal credits. Eligible topic areas are covered in the APRP Handbook and include the following six general topic areas (NOTE: Should questions arise during data entry regarding credits submitted, NACHA will contact applicants for clarification):**

Fundamentals of Payments Risk Management	Payment Systems	Payments Risk Policy & Governance	Payments Risk Management System & Controls	Physical & Information Security	Regulatory Environment
DETAILS TO COME	DETAILS TO COME	DETAILS TO COME	DETAILS TO COME	DETAILS TO COME	DETAILS TO COME

Formula for calculating credits:

1 renewal credit is awarded for each 50 minutes involved in one of the qualifying education programs described on page 2. Example: You participate in an hour and a half teleseminar. The total number of minutes is 90. You divide the 90 minutes by 50, which equals 1.8 credits (partial credits are accepted providing they are at least .1).

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS: COMPLETED CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT REPORTING FORMS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE FOLLOWING REPORTING YEAR PROCESSING FEE:

- Member - TBD/reporting year
- Nonmember - TBD/reporting year
- \$TBD Late Filing Fee

**Note: A reporting year is the calendar year during which continuing education credits were earned.**

**Completed forms and processing fees submitted via check or credit card should be forwarded to: NACHA – The Electronic Payments Association, 2550 Wasser Terrace, Ste. 400, Herndon, VA 20171 or faxed to our secured fax line, 703-713-1641**

TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ELIGIBLE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT: Below is a description of the types of educational programs eligible for continuing education credits and the number of credits that may be earned from each type of program. Continuing education programs do not need to be approved by NACHA provided that they fall within the categories of eligible topic areas as defined on the previous page.

Professional Seminars/Training	Teaching (APRP-Related Topics)	Publishing Articles/Books/Papers	Volunteer Service	Professional Service/Membership
<p>1 renewal credit is awarded for each 50-minute seminar or training session. A maximum of twenty (20) credits may be earned in this category per renewal year.</p> <p>Examples of eligible seminars include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NACHA conferences</li> <li>The Payments Institute</li> <li>Regional Payments Association training sessions &amp; conferences</li> <li>Association for Financial Professionals Conferences (National and Local)</li> <li>Attendance at NACHA's Payments Innovation Alliance Meetings</li> <li>Federal Reserve Bank/Treasury training seminars</li> <li>Financial institution-sponsored training</li> <li>Related industry conferences/courses</li> <li>Self-study programs (A maximum of 10 credits may be earned using Self-study programs per renewal year).</li> </ul> <p>Examples of ineligible seminars/training include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network software training</li> <li>IRS compliance training</li> <li>Health savings/flexible spending account training</li> <li>IRA training</li> <li>Check ordering training</li> <li>Client training</li> <li>Exhibitor/booth duty</li> <li>Educational sessions presented at Payments Innovation Alliance meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Self-Study Program Guidelines:</b></p> <p>A sponsor letter validating/attesting to completion of the program (signed by the sponsoring organization and participant's supervisor) must be generated and saved by the participant for his/her records in the event of an audit.</p> <p>Examples of eligible Self-study programs include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-instructor lead webinars</li> <li>Web-based learning systems</li> <li>Video learning systems</li> </ul> <p>Examples of ineligible Self-Study Programs include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading books</li> </ul>	<p>2 renewal credits are awarded for each 50 minute seminar or training session. A maximum of sixteen (16) credits may be earned in this category per renewal year.</p> <p>NOTE: One-on-one training of in-house staff does not qualify. Sessions must be structured in a formal environment and include formal agenda, supporting documentation and handouts. Minimum size for each training session/seminar is 3 attendees (not including instructor).</p> <p>Also, training of new hires to enable them to perform the position they are hired to perform does not qualify.</p>	<p>A maximum of ten (10) credits may be earned in this category per renewal year.</p> <p>One (1) renewal credit is awarded for each 500 words published</p> <p>Published articles/books/papers must not be solely for in-house use.</p>	<p>A maximum of ten (10) credits may be earned in this category per renewal year.</p> <p>NACHA and RPA Committees</p> <p>NACHA Committees*</p> <p>Six (6) renewal credits are awarded per year, per group for active participation, to a maximum of ten credits per renewal year for the Oversight Panel, Rules &amp; Operations Committee, Rules Enforcement Panel, NACHA Task Forces (RMAG, GRAG); NACHA Compliance &amp; Operations Standing Rules Group, Risk &amp; Quality Standing Rules Group, and Product Innovation Standing Rules Group</p> <p>RPA Committees*</p> <p>Three (3) renewal credits are awarded per year for active participation, to a maximum of six (6) credits per renewal year for Forum Communications Committee and Task Groups, Forum Operations Committee and Task Forces</p> <p>*NOTE: Participation on the following committees is not eligible: Conference Planning, Education, and Business. Also, membership in the Executive Committee of either NACHA's Board of Directors or the RPA's Board of Directors does <u>not</u> qualify for credit.</p> <p>NACHA and RPA Board of Directors</p> <p><u>NACHA Board of Directors</u> Six (6) renewal credits are awarded per year.</p> <p><u>RPA Board of Directors</u> Two (2) renewal credits are awarded per meeting, to a maximum of six (6) credits per renewal year.</p>	<p>A maximum of ten (10) continuing education credits may be earned in this category per year.</p> <p>Payments Innovation Alliance Four (4) credits per for attendance/participation at Alliance conference Calls. (Attendance at Alliance meetings will be worth a stated number of credits. Attendees will receive a Documentation of Attendance for each meeting).</p> <p>NACHA Affiliate Program Four (4) credits per Quarterly Rules Update conference calls.</p> <p>NOTE: Educational sessions attended at Payments Innovation Alliance meetings may not be submitted for additional credits under the Professional Seminars/Training category.</p>

• Informal discussion groups				
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25. **Database Maintenance – Address Verification; Continuing Education Statements of Activity:** APRPs are requested to notify NACHA, in writing, of address and employment changes. Participating Regional Payments Associations are encouraged to notify NACHA of such changes if and when and if they may have such information.
26. **Release of Information:** NACHA and the participating Regional Payments Associations are committed to protecting the candidate's right to confidentiality of records. The only information available for release is the candidate's status as an APRP (accredited, not accredited, expired accreditation or revoked accreditation), the year of accreditation and the year of expiration or revocation (if applicable). No other information about accredited candidates will be released to any third-party without written authorization by the candidate. NACHA will retain information about the APRP for at least two years after accreditation status has expired or been revoked. A fee of \$5.00 will be assessed for processing any transmission of exam results to a third-party.
27. **Release of Scores/Status via Telephone:** To ensure confidentiality, candidates' results and status will only be released by mail, even to the candidate. The candidate may request information on status in writing by mail, facsimile transmission, or e-mail.
28. **Failure to Appear for Examination:** If a candidate does not appear at the appropriate testing site, on the exam date, with proper identification, the candidate forfeits all fees and must reapply for future testing and pay all applicable fees. If a candidate cannot attend the examination due to his own illness, death in his immediate family, or other emergency medical situation, NACHA will evaluate a written request accompanied by an appropriate verification of the situation or emergency (i.e., doctor's excuse or death certificate). The first option for remedy will be to defer the candidate's registration to the next exam offering. (NOTE: In such cases, the candidate would be charged the deferral fee defined by these APRP Program Policies.) Refunds will be considered only on a case-by-case basis.
29. **Expired Accreditation:** Accredited Payments Risk Professional status expires five (5) years after accreditation is awarded. Participating Regional Payments Associations/Direct Financial Institutions Members will assist NACHA in enforcing expired accreditation, i.e., the association will report to and coordinate with NACHA any contact it has with former APRPs whose accreditation has expired (or been revoked) but who continue to use the APRP designation and logo. Enforcement will be done by NACHA in writing to applicable participants.
30. **Revoked Accreditation:** Accreditation will be revoked if the candidate is subject to any legal or regulatory actions resulting in termination of duties related to ACH payments. Conviction in a court of law for financial improprieties or a regulatory order prohibiting employment in a financial institution will constitute sufficient cause to revoke APRP status. Other possible reasons for revocation of accreditation include unauthorized possession and/or distribution of exam questions/answers or other testing materials, falsified registration forms or other misrepresentation. Revocations may be appealed in writing to the APRP Oversight Panel.
31. **Refusal of Application:** NACHA may refuse the application of a candidate that has been subject to legal or regulatory actions resulting in termination of duties related to ACH payments or for any verified misuse of the APRP logo or identifying marks prior to valid initial accreditation or reaccreditation. Candidates whose applications have been refused may appeal the decision to the APRP Oversight Panel.
32. **Right to Refusal:** NACHA reserves the right to grant or refuse, at its sole discretion, program participation to any applicant.



33. **Record Retention:** Exam answers will be retained by NACHA for one year after the date of the exam. NACHA will retain records on successful candidates for the term of their accreditation and at least two years after expiration of accreditation. Information on candidates whose accreditation has been revoked will be retained for at least two years after revocation.
34. **Voluntary Surrender of APRP Status:** Candidates may at any time voluntarily forfeit their Accredited Payments Risk Professional status. Candidates should submit resignations to NACHA in writing with a brief explanation of action (although encouraged, details are not required).
35. **Duties of the Examination Proctor:** Each exam location is supervised by a proctor(s) appointed by the testing facility and to act on behalf of NACHA. Proctors will ensure that all participants have valid credentials and identification; no written materials or other extraneous materials are brought into the exam room; no cheating occurs; exam starts promptly and is properly timed; no one enters or leaves the exam room during the exam period (except in emergency situations); order is maintained in the exam room; and that all APRP Program policies for testing are adhered to. Proctors may not answer any questions about the content of the examination.

Proctors may dismiss candidates from the exam for any of the following reasons:

- candidate is not authorized to be admitted to exam, including lack of appropriate identification;
- candidate creates a disturbance, is abusive, or otherwise uncooperative;
- candidate possesses any written materials (e.g., notes, pre-printed materials, etc.) at his seat when testing begins or begins work on the exam before being instructed to do so by the proctor;
- candidate gives or receives help, or is suspected of doing so;
- candidate attempts to remove exam materials or notes from exam room;
- candidate attempts to take the exam on behalf of someone else; or
- candidate leaves the room for any reason during the exam period without the express permission of the proctor. In emergency situations (e.g., restroom or to attend to a health or emergency need), proctor may allow candidates to leave exam room one person at a time. Candidates are not allowed to take anything out of the room — no papers, handbags, briefcases, book bags, etc., if they want to be readmitted to finish the exam. Smoking, adding money to a parking meter, getting a refreshment, etc., are NOT acceptable reasons to leave the exam room with re-admittance.

Candidates may appeal dismissal to the APRP Oversight Panel within 60 days following release of exam results.

36. **Accredited Payments Risk Professional Oversight Panel:** The APRP Oversight Panel is the administrative review board for the Accredited Payments Risk Professional Program. The panel consists of ten (10) to fourteen (14) volunteer members including the chairperson of the APRP Oversight Panel, ACH Network professionals drawn from the NACHA family, and NACHA staff. The chair of NACHA's Board of Directors appoints the chair of the APRP Oversight Panel, who then selects panel members from the nominations received. Each member of the APRP Oversight Panel must have a thorough understanding of the risks inherent to the payments ecosystem.
37. **Accreditation of APRP Oversight Panel Members:** APRP Oversight Panel members are prohibited from sitting for the APRP examination for two years after their service on the Panel has expired. APRP Oversight Panel members will earn continuing education credits for sitting on the Panel and are eligible for reaccreditation while a Panel member through the continuing education process.

38. **Policy Amendment:** These policies may be amended from time to time by a majority of the APRP Oversight Panel present and voting. Candidates are subject to policies in effect at the time they take the examination. Accredited Payments Risk Professionals are subject to the policies of the APRP program as they are approved and implemented by the APRP Oversight Panel and NACHA.