



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1 100

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
(FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND COMPTROLLER)
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES
DIRECTORS OF ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COMPONENT FUNCTIONAL
COMMUNITY MANAGERS

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Financial Management Certification Program – Certification Requirement Alternatives

Reference: Department of Defense Instruction 1300.26, “Operation of the DoD Financial Management Certification Program,” May 2018

In accordance with the reference, Financial Management (FM) coded employees are required to complete the Department of Defense Financial Management Certification Program (DFMCP) certification within two years of assignment, and to maintain continuing education requirements as assigned per level as a condition of employment. As an exception to policy stated in the reference (including, but not limited to sections 3.5, 4.2 and 7.1), FM workforce members may also present and maintain one of the following five professional certifications to meet any of the three DFMCP certification levels:

- **Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM)**
 - Continuing education required: 80 hours every 2 years
- **Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM)**
 - Continuing education required: 80 hours every 2 years
- **Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)**
 - Continuing education required: 120 hours every 3 years
- **Certified Management Accountant (CMA)**
 - Continuing education required: 30 hours every year
- **Certified Public Accountant (CPA)**
 - Continuing education required: 120 hours every 3 years

To satisfy the DFMCP certification requirement using one of the five professional certifications listed above, FM workforce members must be in an active and current status.

This exception to policy which permits use of the five professional certifications listed above is consistent with congressional intent, reduces the burden on employees who maintain these professional certifications, and lowers recruitment barriers. These five professional certifications emphasize the certified public accountant concepts necessary to assist the Department in addressing the 45% of audit notice of findings involving systems, and will promote proficiency in all FM competencies.

FM workforce members using one of the five professional certifications in lieu of the DFMCP certification are responsible for presenting proof of a valid and active certification within the two years prescribed by DoDI 1300.26. Thereafter, FM workforce members must maintain their active professional certification by remaining compliant with all continuing education requirements associated with the certification as determined by applicable State, association, or regulatory requirements. FM workforce members are authorized no more than 81 hours of official time to pursue one of the five professional certifications, consistent with the DoDI provisions pertaining to level three DFMCP certification. Additionally, members are authorized official time to complete the continuing education requirements necessary to maintain their certification, as specified above. Reimbursement for professional certification expenses is limited to that authorized in “DoD FM Related Professional Certifications and DoD Civilian Reimbursement for Associated Expenses,” December 13, 2018, found at <https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/Organization/Policy-Regulation.aspx>.

FM workforce members with an approved professional certification who fail to obtain or maintain an active status must obtain a DFMCP Certification within the prescribed two year window. The DFMCP due date does not reset upon certification program change/crossover.

This exception to policy is valid for two years or until incorporated into DoDI 1300.26, whichever occurs first. Implementation Operating Instructions are attached. If you have additional questions or comments, please contact Ms. Kimberly Carder at 703-697-0841 or kimberly.k.carder.civ@mail.mil; or Ms. Kirstin Riesbeck at 703-614-4819 or kirstin.h.riesbeck.civ@mail.mil.

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Douglas A. Glenn
Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of
Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer

Attachment:
As stated

OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS:

Department of Defense Financial Management Certification Program (DFMCP) Alternative Professional Certification

Upon starting a position, all Financial Management (FM) Members will be assigned a Department of Defense Financial Management Certification (DFMCP) curriculum in the Department of Defense (DoD) Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) Financial Management Learning Management System (LMS). Once an FM Member achieves an approved Alternative Professional Certification as outlined in Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) (OUSD(C)) Memo, “Department of Defense Financial Management Certification Program – Certification Requirement Alternatives”, dated 21 January 2021, he/she should complete the steps listed below to update his/her account.

**NOTE: Human Resources POCs will not be able to update the code within the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) until the Defense Civilian Human Resources Management System (DCHRMS) migration is complete.*

In the DoD WHS FM Learning Management System (LMS):

1. The FM Member adds the “Alternative Professional Certification” curriculum to his/her learning plan. This process will mirror the process used for assigning the Primary/Alternate track for the standard certification process.
2. The FM Member records the “FM Alternative Professional Certification Documentation” item and attaches documentation provided by applicable state, association, or regulatory agency indicating the member’s CURRENT certification status. The entry date must match the date the certification was awarded or annual sustainment date.
3. The FM Member then records the applicable completion item below:
 - a. Alternative Professional Certification Complete – CPA
 - b. Alternative Professional Certification Complete – CDFM
 - c. Alternative Professional Certification Complete – CGFM
 - d. Alternative Professional Certification Complete – CISA
 - e. Alternative Professional Certification Complete – CMA
4. The member’s supervisor for the DFMCP reviews the submission and documentation for completeness and either recommends for approval or denies in accordance with OUSD(C) Memo, “Department of Defense Financial Management Certification Program – Certification Requirement Alternatives”, dated 21 January 2021.
5. The member’s Component Certification Authority (CCA) reviews the same submission and documentation for completeness and either approves or denies in accordance with

OUSD(C) Memo, "Department of Defense Financial Management Certification Program – Certification Requirement Alternatives", dated 21 January 2021.

6. Upon completion of the CCA review, an OUSD(C) Quality Assurance Officer performs the final review of the submission and documentation for completeness and either approves or denies the achievement in accordance with OUSD(C) Memo, "Department of Defense Financial Management Certification Program – Certification Requirement Alternatives", dated 21 January 2021.
7. Upon completion of this process, the DoD WHS FM LMS sends an automated message to the FM Member notifying him/her of "Alternative Professional Certification" approval or denial with comments as applicable.
8. On a weekly basis, DoD WHS FM LMS Administrators remove incomplete FM Certification Curricula and add an indicator of which "Alternative Professional Certification" was approved in a field which will appear on the FM-09A-User-Data_Ver2.csv report for those FM Members who:
 - a. Have approved "Alternative Professional Certification Complete" items within the previous seven days.
 - b. Have approved "Alternative Professional Certification Complete" items AND have been reactivated within the previous seven days.
 - c. Have approved "Alternative Professional Certification Complete" items AND have had a change in the DFMCP level assigned to the FM Member's position within the previous seven days.
9. On a monthly basis, DoD WHS FM LMS Administrators add the Continuing Education and Training (CET) curriculum of the appropriate DFMCP level assigned to the position of FM Members who:
 - a. Have obtained approved "Alternative Professional Certification Complete" Items within the previous month.
 - b. Have obtained approved "Alternative Professional Certification Complete" Items AND have been reactivated within the previous month.
 - c. Have obtained approved "Alternative Professional Certification Complete" Items AND have had a change in the DFMCP level assigned to their position within the previous month.
10. The DoD WHS FM LMS sends an automated message to the FM Members notifying them of their CET curriculum assignment.
11. Prior to the completion of the 2-year CET cycle, each FM Member approved for an Alternative Professional Certification will record CETs in the DoD WHS FM LMS following the guidance published in the previous standard operating procedures (SOP) with the following change:
 - The FM Member will complete only one entry for the total number of CET hours required for DFMCP level assigned to his/her position, regardless of the continuing education hours for the "Alternative Professional Certification." FM

Members must annotate their entry with the following language entered in the comments field: “Continuing education requirements have been met in accordance with the requirements of the selected ‘Alternative Professional Certification.’”

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. If I use a professional certification to meet my requirement, does this mean that I now hold a DoD FM Certification Program credential?
 - No, you are not certified in the DoD FM Certification Program, you have chosen an alternative certification program to meet your FM certification condition of employment.
2. What documentation for my professional certification am I required to provide?
 - Documentation for a professional certification must be a document from the professional certification authority that shows that you are current with the professional certification.
3. Why is the policy limited to only five of the DoD approved professional certifications? I have one of the other 15 DoD approved professional certifications that is not covered by this policy; can I use it instead?
 - No, only the five Professional Certifications listed in the memorandum are accepted per the policy. These five professional certifications are consistent with 2012 National Defense Authorization Act FM Certification Language. Additionally, the CPA was emphasized by Congress for achieving auditability; the CMA and CISA certifications assist in addressing the 45% of audit notice of findings involving systems, and the CDFM and CGFM provide a broad coverage of all FM competencies.
4. If I pursue obtaining a professional certification to meet my DFMCP requirement, will I get reimbursed for getting a professional certification?
 - Reimbursement will be limited to what is already authorized upon assignment to a new position requiring a higher level FM certification per DoD FM Related Professional Certifications and DoD Civilian Reimbursement for Associated Expenses dated Dec 13, 2018 found here:
<https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/Organization/Policy-Regulation.aspx>.
5. What if I choose to obtain a professional certification and do not complete my professional certification within two years of appointment of my position?
 - If you need additional time to complete your Certification, you may request a time extension from your organization's Component Certification Authority (CCA). CCAs have the discretion to grant time extensions in one-year increments provided there is adequate written justification for the request. Find a Time Extension Request and instructions under the Time Extension Request Tab here:
<https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/Resources/training-resources.aspx#resource3>

**NOTE: Time extensions must be approved in the DoD WHS FM LMS prior to your certification deadline and may be requested no sooner than 90 days prior to your certification deadline.*

6. What if my continuing education cycle for my professional certification is different from the DFMCP CET cycle?
 - You are still required to record your good standing per the DFMCP CET deadline. The DFMCP CET cycle is established based on the date the professional certification is approved in the DoD WHS FM LMS. Prior to the DFMCP CET due date, you will be required to record one entry for CETs in the DoD WHS FM LMS with the required total number of hours required for DFMCP level assigned to your position. While the alternative certification chosen may be different than the DFMCP level assigned to your position, you must record the CETs equivalent to DFMCP level assigned (e.g. 1/2/3 = 40/60/80). This will allow the DoD WHS FM LMS to record completeness. Entry will be annotated with the following language entered in the comments field: “Continuing education requirements have been met in accordance with the requirements of the selected Alternative Professional Certification.”
7. What if I used a professional certification to meet my DFCMP Level 2 requirement and I am promoted to a DFMCP Level 3 position?
 - No additional steps are required. The “Alternative Professional Certification” will continue to meet the certification requirement as a condition of employment, regardless of the level.
8. What if my professional certification expired during my DFMCP CET cycle?
 - You will be required to work with your professional certification organization to reactivate your professional certification prior to your DFMCP CET due date, otherwise you will no longer be considered in “good standing” as a condition of employment. “Good Standing” means you are within the authorized two years to complete a certification, have completed a certification (and if an alternative, it is current), and are current with your current continuing education and training requirements.
9. What if my Position Description has not been updated and I want to use a Professional Certification?
 - The signed policy memorandum allows you to use the “Alternative Professional Certification” process to meet the certification requirement. Time allotted and reimbursement will only be authorized upon assignment to a new position requiring a higher level FM certification.
10. If I use a professional certification to meet my requirement, can I use DFMCP1, DFMCP2, or DFMCP3 in my signature block?
 - No, you are not certified in the DoD FM Certification Program, you have chosen to use an alternative certification program to meet your FM certification as a condition of employment.
11. Am I allowed to record more than 1 professional certification in the LMS?
 - No, you are not allowed to record more than one professional certification in the LMS.