

Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association

A PROGRAM FOR PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION OF FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS

The OFMA CFM Program Vision Statement

“Every community has a professional certified floodplain manager who can provide community specific assistance and guidance to the community to ensure effective floodplain management.”

This revision of the OFMA CFM Charter contains changes as recommended by the ASFPM, Inc. Certification Board of Regents. This revised Charter was approved at the OFMA Board in July 2003, via email and telephone voting.

**OKLAHOMA FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS ASSOCIATION
CHARTER FOR
PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION OF
FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS**

The Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association (OFMA) hereby establishes and intends to operate a statewide program for certifying floodplain managers recognizing the floodplain management and hazard mitigation requirements of local, state and federal programs dealing with the National Flood Insurance Program.

I. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Certified Floodplain Manager Program (CFMP) is hereby created by OFMA to raise and maintain the professional standards of those individuals who manage floodplains, wetlands and watersheds within the State of Oklahoma. The program is designed to certify competency with the basic principals of sound floodplain management as mandated by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

II. PROGRAM GOALS

The primary goal of the CFMP is improving the knowledge and abilities of floodplain managers in the State of Oklahoma. Improving NFIP knowledge and capabilities within local governments will contribute substantially toward reducing the state's flood losses and ensure the protection and enhancement of natural floodplain values. This primary goal will be achieved over time through:

- A. Encouraging self-study and attendance at training sessions by requiring testing to obtain certification;
- B. Requiring continuing education as a condition for certification renewal;
- C. Encouraging city and county governments to require training and professional certification of local floodplain managers.

On a larger scale and in a longer time frame, a second major goal of the CFMP is increasing the prominence of floodplain management and hazard mitigation in decision-making by local and state officials and the general public. This goal will be achieved over time through:

- D. Improving the recognition of floodplain management and hazard mitigation as a specific discipline;
- E. Increasing the status of floodplain managers as knowledgeable professionals in a complex and important field;
- F. Promoting certification to provide greater visibility of the profession.

III. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE

The Professional Development Certification Committee (PDCC) is hereby established as an ongoing operating committee of OFMA.

A. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE

Membership of the PDCC shall include, but is not be limited to the following:

1. Four Elected Board Members of OFMA; (Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Past Chairman, One Regional Rep)
2. Two at-large members of OFMA
3. The State NFIP Coordinator or his duly appointed representative

B. ORGANIZATION, MEETINGS AND TERMS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Members of the PDCC will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary from within its membership.
 - a. The Chair of the PDCC shall preside at all committee meetings at which he or she is in attendance and perform all duties prescribed by OFMA Board of Directors and/or the PDCC.
 - b. The Vice-Chair of the PDCC shall perform the duties of the Chairman in the absence of the Chairman. In case the office of Chairman becomes vacant for any reason, the Vice-Chair will assume all duties until a successor is named.
 - c. The Secretary of the PDCC shall be responsible for taking minutes of all committee meetings and recording all decisions made by committee members. The Secretary shall write a congratulatory letter to the supervisor of each successful applicant, and if the applicant is employed by a government entity, to the chief elected official or manager thereof. The OFMA Chair shall sign these letters.
2. The PDCC shall meet at least once every year, usually during OFMA's annual conference. The Chair may call additional meetings when deemed necessary to carry out the responsibilities of the committee.
3. By their nature, the four members of the Committee representing the OFMA Board will change when their terms of office end and new OFMA members are elected to the Board. The OFMA Board of Directors, if required, shall determine term limits for the remaining members of the PDCC.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

The PDCC shall be responsible for the following activities, subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

1. Report to the OFMA Board of Directors on meetings and decisions made by the PDCC.
2. Develop rules and regulations for operating the OFMA CFMP.
3. Develop Program Application Forms and Credentials required for professional certification.
4. Review and develop professional standards as basis for certification.
5. Develop renewal requirements.
6. Develop closed book testing procedures and exam to evaluate the applicant's knowledge of the National Flood Insurance Program, floodplain management and hazard mitigation.
7. Develop and evaluate opportunities to offer application and testing for the CFMP.
8. Establish and collect fees for the CFMP.
9. Review and approve or reject applications for professional certification.
10. Grade closed book exams and evaluate testing requirements.
11. Issue certificates to all applicants passing the closed book exam and meeting all other requirements for professional certification.
12. Establish continuing education requirements.
13. Review educational programs and defines continuing education credits (CEC's).
14. Evaluate non-OFMA programs, conferences and training sessions for credit under the Continuing Education requirements.
15. Other duties as assigned by the OFMA Board of Directors.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The OFMA Board of Directors shall have the responsibility for, but not be limited to the following activities:

- A. Overall responsibility for the CFMP.
- B. Appoint/remove members of the PDCC.
- C. Promote and facilitate professional certification under the CFMP.
- D. Offer at least one opportunity per calendar year for OFMA members to make application and undergo testing under the CFMP.
- E. Offer at least one opportunity per calendar year for CFM(s) to meet the continuing education requirements; (Please note 16 CECs can be earned annually by attendance at the OFMA Annual Conference).
- F. Develop additional opportunities for application and testing under the CFMP.
- G. Promote and facilitate the offering of FEMA's Floodplain Administrator Training

- Course.
- H. Promote and develop training opportunities for new floodplain managers.
 - I. Promote and develop more training opportunities to include special topics such as flood hazard mitigation, community rating system, multi-objective management and other related disciplines.
 - J. Share all current information with the Association of State Floodplain Managers, Inc. Executive Office and cooperate with the ASFPM in the implementation of this program.
 - K. Maintain and publish a list or directory of all OFMA members participating in the CFMP.
 - L. Promote the Code of Ethics for CFM(s).

V. DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

Professional Certification is a peer review process administered through OFMA. Participation in the CFMP is strictly voluntary. OFMA is not establishing standards governing the conduct of any floodplain manager or other qualified applicant, nor is it establishing any set procedures for work performance. The CFMP is designed to establish educational, training and experience criteria related to floodplain management, hazard mitigation and the National Flood Insurance Program and to certify each applicant has met these criteria.

OFMA assumes no liability for any action or decision made by an individual CFM during the normal course of performing his prescribed duties and responsibilities of managing development within the identified floodplain as established by criteria of the NFIP and mandated by their respective employer or local governmental agency.

If the ASFPM, Inc. accredits the OFMA CFMP, then the ASFPM, Inc. assumes no liability for any action or decision made by an individual CFM during the normal course of performing his prescribed duties and responsibilities of managing development within the identified floodplain as mentioned in the paragraph above.

VI. RULES AND POLICIES OF THE CFMP

The purpose of this section is to establish the application procedures and criteria for registration as a CFM and to establish basic operating rules and procedures for implementing the CFMP.

A. ELIGIBILITY

Any person involved with the management of the state's floodplains, wetlands and watersheds and who meets the credentials and requirements as established by the PDCC is welcome to apply for professional certification under OFMA's CFMP. It is anticipated most applicants will be local floodplain managers, however the program is open to individuals in the private sector, state and federal government and other

agencies or organizations dealing with floodplain and other related disciplines. It is mandatory applicants are paid, full time members of OFMA.

B. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The initial CFM designation will be granted upon successful completion of three areas:

1. APPLICATION
2. CREDENTIALS OF APPLICANT
3. TEST

VII. CFMP APPLICATION

All applicants for certification must obtain an application packet, complete the official CFMP application and return to OFMA with the appropriate fee prior to being allowed to take the closed book exam.

VIII. APPLICANT CREDENTIALS

A successful applicant for the CFMP must meet the following minimum credentials:

A. Education

All applicants must, at a minimum, be a high school graduate or have completed a GED. If applicant has completed a college degree program with appropriate areas of study, he/she may submit documentation to the committee and request waiver of one year of the required experience. A copy of GED, high school, or college diploma or transcript will be required. The PDCC may waive the high school graduate/GED requirement after considering an applicant's other qualifications/experience/training.

B. References

A reference from the applicant's current supervisor will be required as part of the application process. If self employed, a professional reference would suffice here.

C. Professional Association Membership

All applicants for the CFMP must be a member in good standing of OFMA.

D. Training

As an interim process, those applicants applying for certification between the years 1997-2000 will be awarded the title of CFM upon completion of the above mentioned criteria.

Beginning in the year 2001, all applicants must meet the above criteria and must also complete the FEMA Managing Floodplain Development Course (or approved equivalent) prior to certification.

A listing of training courses to prepare individuals for testing and continuing education related to certification will be developed by OFMA's Professional Development Committee. Also, the PDCC will develop criteria to determine the exact number of CECs that can be obtained by attending workshops; conferences and other training opportunities directly related to floodplain management or indirectly related disciplines. This CEC evaluation document will become an addendum to this charter.

IX. The Test

All applicants, regardless of experience, must score 75% on the CFMP closed book test, which measures basic management skills and comprehension of the principals of sound floodplain management as established by criteria of the National Flood Insurance Program. All test results will be held in strict confidence. Each applicant must first be pre-approved to take the exam to protect the confidentiality of the exam and simplify the record keeping process. A photo ID will be required for pre-approved applicants to take the proctored exam.

The tests required for various types and levels of certification will be prepared by OFMA's PDCC. The pool of questions from which test questions for a specific level of certification are drawn will be assembled by the PDCC. The level of difficulty and specific questions incorporated into a test will be decided by the PDCC. The Professional Development Committee will also set the time limits for the tests, what constitutes a passing score, and other arrangements for testing. Tests will be revised as deemed necessary by the PDCC.

If an applicant fails the exam the first time and wishes to retest, there is a \$25.00 retesting fee for each time the applicant wishes to retest. Additionally, this retest applicant will be required to ensure by letter and signature to the PDCC there has been no change to his/her original application credentials, employment status, etc. If there has been a change, this applicant will be required to submit a new application.

X. CERTIFICATION AND RENEWAL

The following requirements pertain to the certification and renewal of floodplain managers under OFMA's CFMP:

- A. Upon completion of the above requirements, and payment of appropriate fee, applicants will be awarded a certificate and designated a CFM. The certificate will remain in effect for one full year from the date of issuance. The certification year shall be from October 1 to September 30.
- B. At the end of the one-year period, each CFM must submit an application to OFMA for renewal. The application will be utilized to update the CFM's credentials and to

document completion of the required continuing education credits. A renewal fee must be included with the application and the CFM must be a member of OFMA. When these conditions are met, a renewal card for a time period of one-year will be issued to the CFM.

- C. In the event an application for certification or renewal is denied, the applicant has the right to appeal the decision of the PDCC. Such appeals must follow the guidelines specified in later sections of this program document.
- D. Thirty days after the CFM expires, the PDCC will send a letter officially decertifying the CFM. This PDCC notice will inform the CFM they have thirty (30) more days to submit any training or course work they completed during the last training year. If the CFM submits the required CECs within the 30-day period, their CFM will be renewed.
- E. If a CFM fails to make an application for renewal within three months of the required renewal date, he/she shall be required to complete a new application package, pay the appropriate fee and take another test. If special circumstances prevent timely renewal, the PDCC will consider a waiver of these requirements.

XI. CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

As stated in the above section, the CFM must meet the continuing education requirement for renewal. The PDCC has determined how many credits of continuing education will be required. During the first two years of this program and thereafter, unless changed by the PDCC, the required number of continuing education credits shall be thirty two (32) during two consecutive years, of which no more than twenty four (24) and no less than eight (8) may be obtained in either year. The PDCC defines continuing education credits as one credit per hour of instruction of directly related floodplain management subject as defined in the CEC document.

The continuing education requirement can be met by attending the OFMA annual conference or other training programs offered by the state, FEMA, or other agencies and organizations approved by the PDCC. If the required CEC's are not obtained, re-examination is required.

XII. RECIPROCITY

Any ASFPM accredited state certified floodplain managers may become OFMA certified managers if they become members, pay the application fee, submit completed application and score 75% or better on a supplemental exam. Certified floodplain managers not nationally recognized from other states are required to meet the requirements outlined in Section VII, VIII, and IX of this charter.

XIII. NATIONAL ACCREDITATION & DISCLAIMER

The OFMA has met criteria in its certification program developed by the Association of State Floodplain Managers, Inc. and now all floodplain managers passing these criteria are nationally accredited floodplain managers. OFMA will notify all CFM(s) about the opportunity to obtain national accreditation. If an applicant seeks national certification, the applicant must maintain his/her original CFM designation through the normal certification and renewal process of the OFMA certification program. The OFMA CFMP previously certified will be required to take the revised exam if he/she wishes to gain the national accreditation. Furthermore, ASFPM, Inc. is released from any liability of any OFMA CFM, as this program is strictly voluntary and not required by any law in Oklahoma or by the United States of America government. If the OFMA CFMP program would cease to exist, all Oklahoma CFMs would relinquish their state and national accreditation and not hold ASFPM, Inc. or any other organization or agency responsible for such program termination. If such certification could become required by a local, state or federal law this disclaimer would need to be revisited.

XIV. APPEALS PROCEDURE

An appeal is a request for the OFMA Board of Directors to review a decision to grant or deny certification or renewal by the PDCC. The act of requesting an appeal is an acknowledgement that the findings of the Board of Directors, as modified herein, the appeal process is final and binding for all parties. An appeal may be made on the grounds the decision was in conflict with the approval procedures or on other grounds to include, but not limited to:

- A. Substantial errors were made in processing the material.
- B. Committee's guidelines were not followed.
- C. Candidate disagrees with evaluation and files an appeal
 1. Procedure for Initiating an Appeal

If an applicant wishes to appeal the decision of the PDCC, the applicant must request an appeal in writing within 60 calendar days of being notified of the PDCC's actions. The appeal and accompanying documentation should be sent to the attention of the Chair, OFMA Board of Directors. The following materials are to be enclosed with the letter requesting an appeal:

- a. A copy of the PDCC's decision and any other pertinent documentation.
- b. A statement clearly identifying the reasons for the appeal.
- c. A check or money order for the appeal fee.

2. Procedure for Reviewing an Appeal

Upon the receipt of a request for an appeal, the following actions will be taken:

- a. The OFMA Board of Directors will acknowledge receipt of the materials and indicate if additional materials are needed from the appellant. Such acknowledgment will occur within 60 days of the date of postmark of the appeal request.
- b. The OFMA Board of Directors less those Board members that also serve on the PDCC will investigate the appeal. Those excluded will include the Vice-Chair, the Treasurer, the Past Chair, the Ex Officio, and One Regional Rep.
- c. The OFMA Board of Directors (as modified above) will make its decision based on review of the materials as well as the requesting an interview with the appellant, if warranted. This may be done by teleconference or in person. All expenses involved in facilitating such an interview will be borne by the appellant regardless of the outcome of the appeal process.
- d. After the OFMA Board of Directors (as modified) reviews the materials and completes any interviews, it shall render a decision to uphold or deny the appeal. In the event the appeal is upheld, i.e. the PDCC action is reversed; the appeal fee is refunded to the appellant. If the appeal is denied, i.e. the PDCC action stands and the appeal fee will not be returned.
- e. The OFMA Board of Directors (as modified) will prepare a summary report of its findings and within ten days following the rendering of the decision, the PDCC and the appellant will be notified.

- f. The decision of the OFMA Board of Directors (as modified) is binding.

XV. RECORD KEEPING

The Secretary of the PDCC shall keep a record of all meetings, applications, certifications granted, certifications denied and appeals.

A biannual report shall be made to the OFMA Board of Directors and a listing of successful applicants shall be displayed at the OFMA annual conference and other meetings as directed by the Board. Individual test results and application materials will be kept confidential.

XVI. SCHEDULE OF FEES

In order to cover the costs of administering the CFMP, fees will be collected for specific actions. All checks shall be made out to OFMA and shall be deposited in the OFMA account. The PDCC has established the following fees:

A.	Certification, Application, and Exam	\$50.00
B.	Annual Renewal	\$25.00
C.	Appeal Fee	\$50.00
D.	Retest Fee	\$25.00
E.	Late Renewal Fee	\$25.00

Additional fees may be established as the CFMP progresses.

The revisions in this Charter of the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association Certified Floodplain Manager Program were handled during an emergency email meeting prior to CFM renewal mailout during **July 2003**.

The OFMA Board of Directors approved the changes the PDCC recommended in July 2003.

Janet K. Meshuk *Lynne Stevenson*
 OFMA Chair Signature OFMA Secretary Signature

Notarized by *Jeff Morris* *JM* on *9/21/2003*
 Name & signature Date

SEAL

