



Certified Paralegal and Advanced Certified Paralegal Scholarship Criteria

To promote the Certified Paralegal (CP) and Advanced Certified Paralegal (ACP) designations, each fiscal year MALA will award the following:

- Five scholarships of up to \$475.00 to be used exclusively for obtaining the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) CP credential; and
- Five scholarships of up to \$300.00 to be used exclusively for obtaining the NALA ACP credential.

The Professional Development Committee will review CP and ACP scholarship applications, and award these scholarships on a first-come, first-serve basis throughout MALA's fiscal year (April 1 to March 31). Scholarships will be presented at MALA's quarterly telephonic business meetings and at the Annual Meeting. Scholarship recipients will be notified of the date and time when their scholarship will be awarded and must either be present at the meeting to accept the scholarship or write a letter of acceptance to be read at the meeting.

The scholarships may be used to cover **only** the following approved expenses, **up to** the amount of the available scholarship:

- Costs associated with the NALA CP exam, including:
 - *NALA Manual for Paralegals*;
 - *Certified Paralegal Review Manual: A Practical Guide to CP Exam Preparation* (currently authored by Virginia Koerselman Newman);
 - *CP Study Guide and Mock Examination* (currently authored by NALA members and material contributed);
 - *The Elements of Style, Strunk & White*;
 - NALA CP Practice Tests;
 - NALA CP Testing Fees; and
 - NALA CP Testing Center Fees.
 - NALA ACP courses.

Payment of the scholarship award may be made directly to the course of study, the study course materials, or NALA for payment toward the application fees for sitting for the CP exam/ACP course **OR** directly to the scholarship recipient with proper verification of expenses (original receipts will be required). When possible, the scholarship recipient should hold all reimbursement requests for a one-time formal submission to the Professional Development Committee Chair (the Chair), using the approved reimbursement form, which can be obtained from the Chair or the MALA website.

In the event a recipient is unable to accept the CP or ACP scholarship award, said scholarship award shall go to the next highest finalist. If there is none, then the funds shall be returned to the MALA treasury.

In the event a recipient does not achieve a passing score on the NALA CP exam, the recipient shall not be required to return to scholarship money but will not qualify for any future scholarship awards.

The Chair shall maintain personal contact with each scholarship recipient and monitor the status of their CP/ACP certification. The Chair will present periodic reports on the progress of each CP and ACP scholarship recipient to MALA's Board of Directors.

Applicants must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the CP or ACP scholarships.

CP Application Criteria:

1. Scholarship applicants must provide proof of compliance with at least one of the following NALA Eligibility Requirements:
 - A. Graduation from a paralegal program that is:
 - a) Approved by the American Bar Association; or
 - b) An associate degree program; or
 - c) A post-baccalaureate certificate program in paralegal studies; or
 - d) A bachelor's degree program in paralegal studies; or
 - e) A paralegal program which consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours (900 clock hours or 90 quarter hours) of which at least 15 semester hours (225 clock hours or 22.5 quarter hours) are substantive legal courses.
Note: An applicant may combine college hours from more than one institution. The applicant must have graduated from a paralegal program consisting of a minimum of 15 semester hours (or 225 clock hours or 22.5 quarter hours.) Evidence of the minimum hours required under Category A(e) must be provided with the application form.
 - B. A bachelor's degree in any field plus one (1) year experience as a paralegal. Successful completion of at least 15 semester hours (or 22.5 quarter hours or 225 clock hours or equivalent CEU hours) of substantive paralegal courses will be considered equivalent to one year's experience as a paralegal.
 - C. A high school diploma or equivalent plus seven (7) years experience as a

paralegal under the supervision of a member of the Bar, plus evidence of a minimum of twenty (20) hours of continuing legal education credit to have been completed within a two (2) year period prior to the examination date.

2. Applicants must be a current MALA member in good standing for one (1) full year before applying for a CP award
3. The applicant must indicate whether he/she would prefer to have payment of the scholarship award made directly to the course of study, the study course materials, or NALA for payment toward the application fees for sitting for the CP exam **OR** directly to the scholarship recipient with proper verification of expenses (original receipts will be required).
4. Applicants must provide MALA with a NALA certificate confirming successful completion of the examination and award of the CP credential.
5. Applicants must submit a 500-word typed essay with a copy of the MALA CP Exam Award Application. The topic of the essay, to be determined by MALA's Professional Development Committee, is identified on the CP Exam Award Application.

ACP Application Criteria:

1. Scholarship applicants must provide proof of compliance with the following NALA Eligibility Requirement for the ACP examination:

Advanced Paralegal Certification is available to those with a current CP certification. The certification program is written with the understanding the person seeking advanced certification has already mastered and passed the CP Knowledge and Skills Examinations.
2. Applicant must be a current MALA member in good standing for one (1) full year before applying -for an ACP scholarship.
3. The applicant must indicate whether he/she would prefer to have payment of the scholarship award made directly to NALA for the ACP course of study **OR** directly to the applicant with proper verification of expenses (original receipts will be required).
4. Applicants must provide MALA with a NALA certificate confirming successful completion of the examination and award of the ACP credential.
5. Applicants must submit a 500-word typed essay with the MALA ACP Exam Award Application. The topic of the essay, to be determined by MALA's Professional Development Committee, is identified on the ACP Exam Award Application.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION FOR CP and ACP AWARD

CP Exam Award Application or ACP Exam Award Application
Proof of Compliance with NALA Eligibility Requirements
Proof of Receipt of Payment for NALA CP Exam or Approved Study Materials Associated with
the CP Exam or the ACP Course
Proof of Completion of CP Exam or ACP Course (copy of NALA CP Certificate or ACP
Certificate)
Confirmation of Current MALA membership by MALA Secretary
Applicant Essay
Professional Development Committee Recommendations

Submit this information to:
MALA – Professional Development Committee
mala@malanet.org

**Please note: MALA is accepting applications in electronic form only