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Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM)

In the U.S., a significant portion of the federal budget is devoted to the defense sector. As a result, the field of defense financial management is both demanding and complex, covering a multitude of interrelated disciplines and intertwined with a highly-developed body of codified fiscal law. The American Society of Military Comptrollers offers the Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM) Program to those persons desiring to demonstrate proficiency in the core aspects of defense financial management.

The Certified Defense Financial Manager Program is open to all candidates who have the qualifications shown below. ASMC anticipates that most candidates will be civilian or military members of the Department of Defense, U.S. Coast Guard, or employees of defense contractors and suppliers.

The candidate must:

- Adhere to the ASMC Pledge of Professionalism.
- Have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Successfully complete the required examinations.
- Have completed the required years of financial management experience as follows:
 - Complete three years of defense-related financial management experience (without degree), OR
 - Complete two years of defense-related financial management experience (with an associate degree or higher), OR
 - If no defense related financial management experience, then complete four years of federal government-related financial management experience (with an associate degree or higher).

Candidates may take examinations before completing the required experience; however, certification will not be awarded until all requirements have been satisfied.

ASMC Pledge of Professionalism

As a CDFM, I will:

- Be guided in all activities by loyalty to the highest principles always remembering that public office is a public trust.
- Refrain from activities which are in conflict with the public interest or are discreditable to the Society, and avoid activities which create the appearance of such conflict.
- Exercise diligence, objectivity and integrity in professional activities, ever aware of the responsibility to eliminate improprieties.
- Refrain from the transmission or usage, for personal gain or advantage, of information obtained in the professional environment.
- Carefully earn and continuously protect my reputation for good moral character in comptrollership.
- Recognize that professional example will influence associates and efficiency.
- Recommend and initiate methods to enhance productivity and efficiency.
- Continuously strive to increase my professional knowledge and skills to improve service and value to associates and the Society.
- Extend the same consideration to the rights and interests of others that I seek for myself.
- Respect the professionalism of fellow-members and work with them to promote the goals and programs of the Society.



“The CDFM and CDFM-A are indicative of the breadth of knowledge and experience that many in the financial management community bring to our government... in contributing to the effective management of defense resources and programs. Within the DoD FM Certification Program, the CDFM is recommended at Level 2 and strongly recommended at Level 3. It is the only certification that is focused totally on defense financial management.”

— Al Runnels, CDFM
ASMC Executive Director

Maintaining Professional Certification

The names of active CDFMs are listed on the ASMC website, and only active CDFMs may use the designation after their name. All CDFMs must adhere to the ASMC Pledge of Professionalism and meet all renewal requirements to retain the CDFM certification.

CDFMs must renew their certification every 24 months by paying the renewal fee and certifying that they have completed 80 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) in defense financial management topics or related technical subjects (two of the 80 CPEs must be in ethics training), with a minimum of 20 CPEs earned each year. One unit of CPE is awarded for each 50 minutes of contact time engaged in authorized activities. See the ASMC website for detailed guidance on the CPE and CDFM renewal policies.

Certificants are responsible for documenting their own CPE in a log that is readily accessible to the certification holder. A small percentage of certification renewals are randomly selected for CPE audit. ASMC Headquarters will contact those being audited and request the certificant’s CPE log and supporting documentation.

CDFMs who are one to 90 days past due for renewal will remain in “active” status with their names appearing on the ASMC website. Individuals over 90 days past the renewal deadline will be placed on “inactive” status and will no longer be shown on the ASMC website as certified. Inactive CDFMs may not display the CDFM certificate or present themselves as CDFMs either in writing or orally.

Reinstatement of Inactive CDFMs

Inactive CDFMs who qualify for reinstatement must pay the reactivation fee plus the regular renewal fee. See the ASMC website for the full reinstatement policy.

Methods of Obtaining CPE

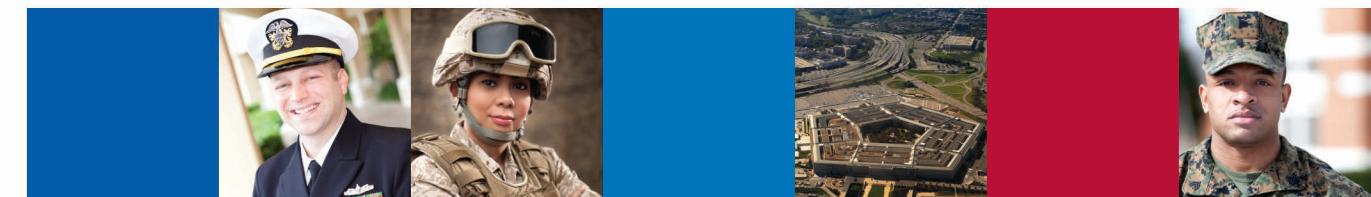
- Completion of relevant formal training courses
- Completion of relevant college courses
- Attendance at lectures on relevant subjects
- Attendance at professional conferences
- Teaching and course preparation for relevant subject matters
- Preparation and delivery of briefing and work-related documents outside the scope of routine business
- Preparation and publishing of articles in professional journals, such as the *Armed Forces Comptroller*
- ASMC’s Audio Education
- ASMC’s Journal Tests
- ASMC’s Virtual PDI Online



The Sign of Distinction in Defense Financial Management



The Certified Defense Financial Manager



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"ASMC certification provides a solid foundation to support the Department of Defense and Coast Guard financial management communities, and the CDFM and CDFM-A designations signal an advanced level of knowledge, training, and experience. Financial managers who pursue, earn and maintain this credential demonstrate a professional commitment to the highest standards of practice in military comptrollership and must be commended!"

— James E. Short, CDFM, CPA, CGFM, CGMA
Director, Acuity Consulting, Inc.
Chair, CDFM Committee

Examination Format

The CDFM examination series contains four separate modules. Examinations are administered by computer at on-base military education or learning centers and selected commercial testing locations worldwide. Each examination module contains a minimum of 80 multiple-choice questions and candidates are allotted two hours to complete each module.

To achieve CDFM certification, a candidate must successfully complete modules 1-3. The fourth module, Acquisition, is optional. Completion of all four modules will result in the award of the "CDFM-A" (Certified Defense Financial Manager with Acquisition Specialty). Modules may be taken one at a time or all in one sitting and may be completed in any order.

Competencies Covered

MODULE 1: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ENVIRONMENT

- Government Resource Management Environment
- Manpower Management
- Personnel Management
- Management's Responsibility for Internal Control
- Fiscal Law

MODULE 2: BUDGET AND COST ANALYSIS

- Defense Budget Process
- Cost and Economic Analysis
- Business Management Process Improvement
- Fiscal Law

MODULE 3: ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

- Fiscal Law
- Finance
- Accounting
- Auditing

MODULE 4: ACQUISITION (optional)

- Goals, Strategy and the three Major DoD Decision Support Systems
- Systems Engineering
- Resource Management
- Life Cycle Logistics
- Human Systems Integration
- Acquiring Information Technology
- Technology Protection
- Test and Evaluation
- Decisions, Assessments and Reports
- Special Management Activities (Emphasis on Earned Value Management)



"While the mission of the DoD Financial Management team in supporting the warfighter remains constant, our DoD business model is changing. It will increasingly require broad knowledge and analytical skills across a range of disciplines. The CDFM designation provides the type of recognized credential that will become increasingly important. For experienced FMs, it reinforces the breadth of our business. For those at the journeyman level, it provides an initial foundation supporting future professional development. I strongly recommend that our financial managers pursue the CDFM, or other relevant professional credentials, in the years ahead."

— Mark Easton, CDFM
Deputy Chief
Financial Officer,
Department of Defense

Suggested Methods of Preparation

ASMC's Enhanced Defense Financial Management Training Course
The Department of Defense makes available a one-week Enhanced Defense Financial Management Training Course (EDFMTC) presented by ASMC-approved instructors. The primary purpose of this course is to broaden the students' overall understanding of defense financial management. "Open enrollment" sessions are also available from ASMC licensed providers. Check the ASMC website for course availability.

ASMC's Module 4 Acquisition Business Management Course

ASMC provides a two-day training course emphasizing the Defense Department's approach to acquisition of major systems. The course provides an overview of the defense acquisition system, review and approval procedures, milestones and program management terms. This course may be helpful in preparing to take the Module 4 examination. Check the ASMC website for course availability.

DoD's Resource Management Universities and Schools

Selected elements of the curriculum at these educational institutions, such as the Defense Financial Management and Comptroller School at Maxwell AFB, the Syracuse University Defense Comptrollership Program, the Defense Resource Management Institute and the Naval Postgraduate School, will contribute to preparation for the examinations.

Group Study at Local ASMC Chapters

Contact your local chapter president or program committee chair for details.

Enrollment

ASMC members receive a substantial discount on initial enrollment in the CDFM Program. Visit the ASMC website and enroll online. Next steps will be sent via email. Candidates enrolling in the Program have two years to complete their CDFM examination requirements. The candidate can extend the enrollment by submitting an enrollment extension form and paying the appropriate fee.

Due to the changing nature of defense financial management and the need for candidates to demonstrate a full spectrum of knowledge in the field, a reasonable "life of examination" has been established for candidates in the Program. See the ASMC website for the full examination life policy.

Testing

Computer-based testing is conducted at authorized testing locations worldwide through Pearson VUE's Testing Network or through special arrangement testing.



"This certification, uniquely designed for those involved in the resourcing of our Nation's security, is fundamental to establishing a broad set of financial management skills. The demands of the times require broad and deep knowledge, skills and demonstrable ability of the array of statutes, policies and procedures from which the complex planning, programming, budgeting, execution and—dare I say—financial reporting and auditing processes are derived. Acquiring CDFM/CDFM-A recognition can play an important part of a fruitful career in defense financial management."

— Charlie Cook, CDFM-A
Assistant Secretary of the
Navy (Financial
Management
& Comptroller) (Acting)

Americans with Disabilities Act Procedures

The testing centers located in the U.S. are required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide special accommodations. All testing centers are wheelchair accessible, have adjustable height desks, can accommodate requests for readers, and can be adapted to accept special peripheral equipment.

Candidates must identify their need for special accommodations at least five weeks before the desired testing date. ASMC and the candidate will work together to schedule the examination.

Notification of Examination Results and Issuance of Certificate

For computer-based examinations, a message will be displayed on the screen immediately upon completion of your examination showing if you were successful. Once you successfully complete all your exams and meet all eligibility requirements, ASMC will issue you an *award letter* and a CDFM pin. The *award letter* is the official documentation of the CDFM designation. A personalized CDFM certificate will follow within 8-10 weeks of completion of meeting all the CDFM requirements unless you notify ASMC that you intend to also take the fourth module. In that case, the certificate will be held pending completion of all four modules. The Module 4 examination can be taken at any time.

Retaking an Examination

If you are not successful on an examination, there is no limit on the number of times you may retake that examination. However, there is a mandatory waiting period before each re-examination. The retake fee is the same as the initial fee. See the ASMC website for the current fee structure and examination waiting periods.

Rescheduling an Examination

If an examination must be rescheduled for any reason, arrangements must be coordinated through the testing service provider. Please visit the ASMC website for current rescheduling and cancellation policies.

