

CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER  
BOARD OF STANDARDS, INC.

PURPOSE, PARAMETERS AND POLICIES OF CFP BOARD



CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

CFP®

Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards Inc. owns these certification marks in the U.S., which it awards to individuals who successfully complete CFP Board's initial and ongoing certification requirements.

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### Introduction

The CFP® certification has become the recognized standard of excellence for personal financial planning. Consumers increasingly seek out professional financial planners who have invested the time and dedication to achieve the CFP® certification. Attaining CFP® certification is a highly respected professional achievement for those who work within the financial services industry and an achievement with meaningful benefits for a CFP® certificant's practice and clients.

At the same time, many know little about Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (CFP Board), the organization that owns the CFP® certification marks in the U.S. and awards CFP® certification to individuals who meet its initial and ongoing certification requirements. Most people know CFP Board as the organization they communicated with as they went through the CFP® certification process, or they know CFP Board as a resource for learning about financial planning and locating CFP® professionals in their area. Many who have achieved CFP® certification may not think much at all about CFP Board until the time comes to complete CFP Board's renewal requirements.

As a non-profit organization whose mission is to benefit the public by granting the CFP® certification and upholding it as the recognized standard of excellence for personal financial planning, CFP Board does more than administer the CFP® certification process. While our focus is on the public, our work plays an important role in building the financial planning profession. We work with many educational institutions that help individuals obtain the body of professional knowledge required to practice financial planning, and we work alongside membership organizations that provide support to professionals who provide financial planning services to the public.

As with most organizations, CFP Board has seen changes in policy and structure over time. This document was assembled to help provide CFP Board's stakeholders with a clear understanding of CFP Board's purpose and how its organizational structure and strategic plan helps it achieve that purpose.

As CFP Board celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010 and looks forward to the future, we hope that the many individuals who have made great contributions to CFP Board's work will be pleased to see that the organization has evolved in line with the purposes for which it was originally established. For those of you who have not yet had opportunity to become involved with CFP Board, we hope you find areas where you might make meaningful contributions to CFP Board's future.

### History

Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (CFP Board) is a non-profit organization acting in the public interest by fostering professional standards in personal financial planning through its setting and enforcement of the education, examination, experience, ethics and other requirements for CFP® certification. CFP Board awards individuals who successfully complete initial and ongoing certification requirements the right to use of the following certification marks:

**CFP®**

**CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™**



CFP Board's formation took place relatively early in the development of the movement that became known as the financial planning profession. The idea that people could benefit from professional assistance from a profession that integrated knowledge and practices from the many often-fragmented areas of the financial services industry developed soon after World War II, as new financial products and services evolved to meet the needs of Americans.

This movement experienced a watershed event on December 12, 1969, when thirteen men met in Chicago and outlined the first steps needed to establish these integrated practices as a new profession called financial planning. At the meeting, resolutions were made to create a membership organization named the International Association for Financial Planners (IAFP) and a new educational institution that would be named the College for Financial Planning.

Those resolutions took concrete form in 1972, when IAFP enrolled its very first group of students for the Certified Financial Planners (CFP) course offered by the newly-established College. The 35 members of the first graduating class formed a new membership organization, the Institute of Certified Financial Planners (ICFP), upon their graduation in October 1973.

More than a decade after the introduction of the educational program that led to CFP® certification, it became clear that while the College had made great strides in developing the body of knowledge that was a vital component of developing financial planning professionals, an educational institution was not the proper entity to enforce the ethical standards that were also an integral part of the developing profession. The College entered an agreement that established an independent, non-profit certifying and standards-setting organization to which it would transfer ownership of the CFP® marks and responsibility for administering and enforcing the standards required to attain the right to use those marks.

In July 1985 came the announcement of the formation of the new non-profit certifying body, the International Board of Standards and Practices for Certified Financial Planners, Inc. (IBCFP), which was renamed Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards Inc. in 1994. While the wording of CFP Board's mission and objectives have changed over the years, CFP Board's paramount objective is to benefit the consumer public by promoting the value of professional, competent and ethical financial planning services, as represented by those who have attained CFP® certification. CFP Board's current mission, approved by the Board of Directors in January 2008, is to benefit the public by granting the CFP® certification and upholding it as the recognized standard of excellence for personal financial planning.

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In April 1995, CFP Board's certification program received accreditation from the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (now the Institute for Credentialing Excellence), the first such accreditation for a non-health related certification in the U.S. CFP Board earned NCCA accreditation because it showed that its certification program is grounded in, and continues to meet, legal testing requirements and generally accepted certification standards.

In December 2007, after more than 20 years of operations in Denver, Colo., CFP Board moved its office to Washington, DC. The decision to relocate the organization was based upon an ongoing review of how CFP Board can best respond to America's increasing need for CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professionals. After careful study, the Board concluded that the future success of the organization was dependent upon its close proximity to regulators, policymakers, and other industry and credentialing organizations that influence debates within the industry. As a non-profit organization that has been granted 501(c)(3) status by the Internal Revenue Service, CFP Board operates within limitations that prevent it from engaging in aggressive lobbying activities; however, thanks to the high standards CFP Board maintains for those who hold CFP® certification and to the competent and ethical services that tens of thousands of CFP® professionals provide to the American public on an ongoing basis, CFP Board is a well-respected organization in a unique position to advocate the value of personal financial planning, for the public interest.

### **CFP® Certification Around the Globe**

Following widespread interest in the CFP® certification program from individuals and organizations around the globe in 1990, CFP Board facilitated the establishment of the International CFP Council to promote the professionalism of individuals and organizations offering financial planning services and to ensure that such services are offered in an ethical and competent manner throughout the world.

In 2004, responsibility for administering the CFP certification program outside the U.S. was transferred from CFP Board and the International CFP Council to an independent organization, Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB), established to further foster the internationalization of the CFP marks. A nonprofit, international standards-setting body, FPSB is a nonprofit association that manages, develops and operates certification, education and related programs for financial planning organizations to benefit the global community by establishing, upholding and promoting worldwide professional standards in financial planning. FPSB's commitment to excellence is represented by the CFP and CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER and CFP (with flame logo) trademarks, which FPSB owns outside the U.S. FPSB works in conjunction with its members to develop and promote rigorous international competency, ethics and professional practice standards for CFP professionals in member countries/regions to ensure that consumers looking for qualified personal financial planners understand and value CFP certification.

As of December 2010, FPSB has members and associate members from 24 territories around the world, including CFP Board, which joined FPSB in 2008. Collectively, FPSB members have authorized more than 126,000 individuals to use the CFP® marks in their respective countries and regions. More information on FPSB is available at [www.fpsb.org](http://www.fpsb.org).

### Mission and Purpose

The 1985 document that led to the establishment of CFP Board included a description of the organization's primary objectives:

- 1) To develop, promulgate, improve, and maintain a uniform code of ethics and uniform practice and product standards for Certified Financial Planners for the benefit and protection of the general public;
- 2) To develop, promulgate, improve and maintain educational, testing and certification standards and procedures for financial planners;
- 3) To grant to financial planners who have met the corporation's educational, testing, experience and the standards and criteria the right to use the certification marks "Certified Financial Planner" and "CFP";
- 4) To promote and maintain the highest professional standards of practice and conduct among financial planners;
- 5) To establish, conduct and enforce investigatory and disciplinary procedures to regulate the professional conduct of Certified Financial Planners for the protection of the general public;
- 6) To promote public awareness and understanding of the professional preparation, role, competency and limitations of Certified Financial Planners; and
- 7) To lessen the burdens of government by cooperating with and assisting state and federal regulatory agencies to appropriately, effectively and uniformly regulate professional financial planners.

In January 2008, in alignment with the founding principles upon which CFP Board was established, CFP Board's Board of Directors adopted a renewed mission statement: *to benefit the public by granting the CFP® certification and upholding it as the recognized standard of excellence for personal financial planning.*

CFP Board works toward reaching its mission through six core objectives:

- 1) **Credentialing:** Provide the most rigorous financial planning credentialing process that is valid, reliable and legally defensible.
- 2) **Education:** Establish and enforce educational standards for enhancing the knowledge, skills and abilities of current and potential CFP® certificants.
- 3) **Enforcement:** Protect the public's interest through rigorous, ongoing enforcement of CFP Board's *Standards of Professional Conduct*.
- 4) **Communication:** Build the CFP® certification brand as the recognized standard of excellence in financial planning; Promote its understanding and acceptance among the public and other stakeholders.
- 5) **Advocacy:** Influence policy to benefit the public and increase access for all to competent and ethical financial planning.
- 6) **Sustainability:** Strengthen CFP Board's capacity to achieve its mission and serve all stakeholders in a timely, accurate and professional manner.

### Organizational Structure

As an organization that has been granted 501(c)(3) status by the Internal Revenue Service, CFP Board's paramount obligation is to benefit the public. The public benefits from the high standards for the practice of financial planning that are represented by the CFP® certification. To retain its favored tax status and the assets it has acquired while enjoying that status (including the CFP® certification marks), CFP Board's activities must be designed to benefit the public above all else.

While CFP Board administers the standards for CFP® certification and promotes their value for the public, the public benefits from those activities primarily through the work of the tens of thousands of individuals across the country who hold CFP® certification, as well as through the work of other individuals and organizations that provide support to the CFP® certification process. CFP Board refers to all these valued individuals and groups with the broad term of "stakeholders." Like many non-profit certification bodies, CFP Board has no "owners" or "members"; rather, CFP Board has stakeholders that contribute to and benefit from the organization's activities.

CFP Board's activities are directed and accomplished through the collaborative work of its Board of Directors, staff and volunteers, who work together within a defined organizational structure:

The **Board of Directors** governs the activities of CFP Board by setting policy and direction for organization and by monitoring the accomplishments of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The **Chief Executive Officer** is accountable to the Board of Directors for accomplishing activities aligned with the policy and direction established by the Board of Directors. The CEO has oversight over CFP Board's staff and its day-to-day operations and reports to the Board on a regular basis.

**Volunteers** provide support at all levels of CFP Board's activities, ranging from several-year commitments to Councils and Commissions to shorter-term participation on Task Forces and working groups. Volunteer activities related to the governance of CFP Board are under the oversight of the Board of Directors; volunteer activities related to the operations are under the oversight of the CEO.

This organizational structure establishes clear roles and responsibilities for all involved with CFP Board, and it provides checks and balances for ensuring CFP Board's progress in accomplishing its mission and objectives.

### Governance

CFP Board's Board of Directors (Board) is accountable for CFP Board's success and responsible for its governance. The Board is composed of individuals with varied backgrounds relevant to CFP Board's mission and diverse stakeholder interests, with a majority of Board members required to hold CFP® certification. As with many certification bodies, election to the Board is decided by an annual vote of the Board, with candidates selected by the Board's Nominating Committee from applicants who indicate interest in serving. Board members are volunteers who serve four-year terms, and each year the Board assigns leadership to an individual who is appointed Chair.

The Board establishes policies through CFP Board's Bylaws, Mission and Objectives, and it charges CFP Board's staff to conduct activities within the parameters set by those policies. The Board has responsibility for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the organization's activities and the performance of the Chief Executive Officer, who is accountable for ensuring the business plan is implemented within prudent and ethical limitations set by the Board.

CFP Board has adopted the widely-used Policy Governance® model of governance, which outlines the dynamics of the Board's relationship to staff and the Board's delegation and monitoring responsibilities. Policy Governance® requires the Board to determine what authority it will hold and what authority it will delegate. The model suggests there are three duties the Board of Directors cannot delegate: 1) being the contact and connection between the stakeholders and the organization, 2) developing guiding policy to direct the organization, and 3) assuring the actual performance of those directions by the CEO.

The method of delegation is a formal, circular process that includes clear roles and accountabilities. First, the Board defines outcomes to be achieved in policy. Next, the Board defines the boundaries of ethical and prudent operational behaviors and conditions in policy. Then the Board assigns these expectations (outcomes and boundaries as defined in policy) to the CEO and formally and rigorously monitors the CEO's performance against those expectations.

It is important to note that the Board is proactive in defining its expectations prior to delegating matters to the CEO. This enables both the clear direction to and the protection of the organization, and it avoids the dangers of dealing with issues when they arise or as they reach the level of crisis. By delegating and monitoring performance against both the outcomes and parameters, the Board gives specific guidance but opens the door for innovation and creativity in the implementation, while assuring the protection and long term viability of the organization.

The CEO is seen as the Board's only employee and its direct point of contact with the operational side of the organization. Because the Board wants the CEO to be fully accountable for all operational performance, it typically delegates authority for all operational decisions to the CEO, so long as those decisions accomplish the ends stated in the Board's policies and stay within the safe boundaries established by Executive Limitations.

The Board makes its decisions after careful deliberation at its meetings, which typically take place in person three times a year and by telephone as needed. While the Board has authority and responsibility to make a broad range of decisions on its own, the Board of Directors, in furthering CFP Board's mission, acts on behalf of the public, CFP® certificants and other

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stakeholders, and its decision-making is always guided by input from a wide range of stakeholders and experts. Board members are expected to remain active in the financial planning community and to maintain strong working relationships with representatives of CFP Board's varied stakeholder groups.

In addition to the ongoing input the Board members receive from stakeholders on an ongoing basis, established policies require that certain decisions be made only after public comment periods, such as changes to CFP Board's *Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility* and *Financial Planning Practice Standards*. While the Board of Directors deals with some issues that require confidentiality, it seeks to operate transparently, with accountability to all of CFP Board's stakeholders.

### Operations

CFP Board's Chief Executive Officer is charged with managing operations that follow the policy and direction established by the Board. The Board communicates the organization's policy and direction through the CEO, who is considered an employee of the Board. The CEO holds responsibility for hiring qualified employees to conduct the operations required by the Board's policies, and the CEO is responsible for reporting the status of operations to the Board on a regular basis.

CFP Board's primary operational areas are administration of the "four E's" of Education, Examination, Experience and Ethics. Its Enforcement, Advocacy and Communication activities support and enhance the primary operational areas.

#### **Education:**

CFP Board's education requirement for initial certification is comprised of two parts: 1) educational coursework and 2) attainment of an acceptable bachelor's degree (or higher). Those who have attained CFP® certification must also complete ongoing continuing education requirements in order to retain certification.

CFP Board's administration of these requirements includes working with financial planning education programs to ensure that current and potential CFP® certificants have access to quality educational programs that cover all aspects of financial planning. CFP Board does not provide educational programs directly; rather, CFP Board registers educational bodies to provide that education.

Beginning in 2012, the education requirement will include a third part: completion of a CFP Board-registered Financial Plan Development Course – a capstone course designed to demonstrate and assess an individual's ability to integrate, apply and communicate one's knowledge of financial planning topics to clients.

#### **Examination:**

Individuals seeking to obtain CFP® certification must pass the CFP® Certification Examination, which is a ten-hour, two-day test. The exam is created by CFP Board with the assistance of volunteer CFP® certificants and educators who serve on the Council on Examinations. It is designed to assess one's ability to apply financial planning knowledge to real-life financial planning situations, based on a list of financial planning topics that reflect skills needed to perform comprehensive financial planning, as determined by periodic surveys of practicing CFP® certificants. The exam is a pass or fail exam offered three times a year at multiple sites across the U.S.

#### **Experience:**

Individuals seeking to obtain CFP® certification must complete three years of financial planning work experience, including the supervision, direct support, teaching or personal delivery of all or part of the personal financial planning process to a client. The required work experience can be completed up to 10 years before or 5 years after passing the CFP® Certification Examination, with at least 6 months of that experience being current, to be gained within the 12 months prior to certification.

### **Ethics:**

Individuals seeking to obtain CFP® certification must agree to abide by CFP Board's ethical standards, as described in the *Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility* and *Financial Planning Practice Standards*. These Standards require CFP® certificants to put the interest of their clients ahead of their own at all times. When CFP® certificants provide financial planning, they are required to do so with the duty of care of a fiduciary, defined by CFP Board as one who acts in utmost good faith, in a manner one reasonably believes to be in the best interest of the client. Individuals must also pass CFP Board's *Candidate Fitness Standards*, which lists certain types of conduct that will or may prevent an individual from attaining CFP® certification.

As part of the certification application process, individuals are required to acknowledge CFP Board's right to investigate and discipline infractions of those standards pursuant to its *Disciplinary Rules and Procedures*. A background check is conducted for each applicant for CFP® certification, and CFP Board's professional standards department investigates ethics-related disclosures and background check discoveries.

### **Enforcement:**

CFP Board enforces its ethical standards by investigating incidents of allegedly unethical behavior, following the procedures established in CFP Board's *Disciplinary Rules and Procedures*. In cases where violations are found, CFP Board may impose discipline ranging from a private letter of censure or public admonition to suspension or revocation of the right to use the CFP® marks. The *Disciplinary Rules and Procedures* sets forth a fair process for investigating matters and imposing discipline where necessary.

CFP Board's enforcement process includes written notice to individuals under investigation, an opportunity to respond to the matters under investigation and any related allegations of misconduct, the opportunity to appear at any hearing that may be conducted with regard to allegations of misconduct (including opportunities to be represented by legal counsel and to introduce witnesses and evidence), and the right to appeal decisions involving discipline. CFP Board's enforcement process is conducted by its professional standards department and the Disciplinary and Ethics Commission.

### **Advocacy:**

As an organization that has been granted 501(c)(3) status by the Internal Revenue Service, CFP Board's paramount obligation is to benefit the public. The public benefits from the high standards for the practice of financial planning that are represented by the CFP® certification, and it is CFP Board's obligation to ensure that those involved in crafting and debating public policy understand the public benefits of CFP® certification. CFP Board works within established limits on the "lobbying" activities a 501(c)(3) organization may conduct, including limits on the amount of resources that may be devoted to such activities, by establishing relationships and communications with regulators and policy-makers to ensure that they understand the public value of CFP® certification and the competent and ethical financial planning services it represents.

### **Communications:**

CFP Board communicates with its stakeholders – including the public, current and potential CFP® certificants, financial planning educators, and employers of CFP® certificants – and establishes relationships with allied organizations and the media to ensure the continued recognition of the CFP® certification as the standard of excellence for personal financial planning.

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In 2011, CFP Board will launch a national public awareness campaign to increase awareness of the CFP® certification among the general public, based on extensive qualitative and quantitative research with CFP® professionals and consumers. CFP Board believes this coordinated, targeted and appropriately funded campaign has the potential to make a real impact on public awareness of the CFP® certification – something that stands to provide value for all CFP® professionals and real benefits for the many Americans who can improve their lives with the assistance of competent, ethical and professional financial planning.

## Strategic Plan

In 2008, in addition to announcing a renewed mission statement, CFP Board's Board of Directors and executive leadership team, with the benefit of input from CFP® certificants and other stakeholders, developed a multi-year strategic plan for the organization's operations. The collaborative development of the plan aligns CFP Board's governance and policies with the operations of CFP Board.



The plan is structured under six core objectives that function as pillars supporting CFP Board's mission. Those objectives are listed below, with a summary of key activities related to each objective:

**Credentialing:** *Provide the most rigorous financial planning credentialing process that is valid, reliable and legally defensible.*

In addition to upholding the high credentialing standards represented by the CFP® certification process, CFP Board's strategy for furthering its credentialing objective include upholding the high standards of the CFP® Certification Examination and reviewing the experience requirement, with the goal of more clearly defining that requirement.

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**Education:** *Establish and enforce educational standards for enhancing the knowledge, skills and abilities of current and potential CFP® certificants.*

CFP Board will continue its work to ensure delivery of quality education for financial planning students through CFP Board-Registered Programs and the delivery of quality continuing education programs to those who hold CFP® certification.

**Enforcement:** *Protect the public's interest through rigorous, ongoing enforcement of CFP Board's Standards of Professional Conduct.*

CFP Board will ensure an accessible, fair and effective disciplinary process and work to communicate the ethical standards for CFP® certification to the public and to CFP Board's other stakeholders. Enforcement activities also include protecting CFP Board's intellectual property and collaborating with Financial Planning Standards Board, Ltd. (FPSB), the international association for organizations that administer CFP® certification programs around the globe, to achieve a common set of standards for certificant conduct.

**Communication:** *Build the CFP® certification brand as the recognized standard of excellence in financial planning; Promote its understanding and acceptance among the public and other stakeholders.*

In addition to CFP Board's ongoing communications to stakeholders, its communications strategy includes enhancing the recognition and prestige of the CFP® certification marks and positioning CFP® certificants as the most competent and ethical professionals within the financial services industry. CFP Board will also work to increase consumer demand for financial planning services and information and work to increase the number of CFP® certificants, new and retained, to meet the growing consumer demand for competent and ethical financial planning services.

**Advocacy:** *Influence policy to benefit the public and increase access for all to competent and ethical financial planning.*

CFP Board will work to positively influence policymakers on financial planning issues, with the goal of becoming the recognized authority on financial planning.

**Sustainability:** *Strengthen CFP Board's capacity to achieve its mission and serve all stakeholders in a timely, accurate and professional manner.*

In support of all its other activities, CFP Board will work to ensure the financial stability of the organization, maintain a competent and committed staff, upgrade and maintain its technological infrastructure and implement call center best practices.

### Stakeholder Involvement

The work of CFP Board benefits greatly from the contributions of its stakeholders, and there are many opportunities for CFP® certificants and others to become involved with CFP Board in meaningful and rewarding ways.

#### **Board of Directors:**

CFP Board's Board of Directors sets the policy and direction of the organization. The Board consists of individuals with various experiences and backgrounds that represent stakeholder groups working in the public interest. Except for ex officio positions, each member of the Board serves a four-year term. A majority of Board members must be CFP® certificants.

Nominations to serve on the Board are accepted year-round through CFP Board's Web site. In late spring, the Board's Nominating Committee begins its work to interview eligible candidates, and the full Board votes on potential new members in late summer.

#### **Councils and Commission:**

CFP Board's four established working groups – the Council on Education, Council on Examinations, Disciplinary and Ethics Commission and Public Policy Council – provide vital services to CFP Board's operations. The Council on Education plays an advisory role with regard to the myriad of education-related components of the CFP® certification process. The Council on Examinations works to ensure that the questions included in each CFP® Certification Examination test in a rigorous and meaningful way all of the financial planning subject areas needed to practice as a competent financial planner. The Disciplinary and Ethics Commission holds the imposing responsibility of holding disciplinary hearings and sitting in judgment of CFP® certificants whose behavior has allegedly strayed from the ethical standards of CFP Board's *Standards of Professional Conduct*. The Public Policy Council serves an advisory role on public policy issues affecting CFP Board, its certificants and members of the public. Involvement with each of these groups requires a several-year commitment and many hours dedicated to preparation and meeting participation.

Nominations to serve on CFP Board's Councils and Commission are accepted year-round through CFP Board's Web site. In the fall, CFP Board's staff reviews eligible candidates, in collaboration with the input of current Council and Commission members, and makes appointments as needed.

#### **Additional Opportunities:**

There are many opportunities for stakeholders to become involved with CFP Board without making a several-year commitment to serve on its Board, Councils or Commission.

#### *Exam Development*

CFP Board relies on CFP® professionals engaged in the practice of financial planning to ensure that the questions on each exam are relevant to current practices, and the preparation of the CFP® Certification Examination involves many stakeholders in addition to the members of the Council on Examinations. **Exam Content Specialist volunteers** work alongside current Council on Examinations members to review all the questions and cases proposed for the current exam to be given during the next test cycle. **Case Review Committee volunteers** are selected to serve on an ad hoc committee to review newly written cases submitted for purchase by CFP Board, working with at least one Council on Examinations member who interprets the

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committee's comments to the author. **Item Writer volunteers** are selected to serve on an ad hoc committee and are trained to create multiple-choice questions to be submitted for use on future CFP® Certification Examinations. **Paired Review volunteers** are paired with a member of the Council on Examinations to evaluate test questions for future use, usually completed via conference call, or to edit or retire exam questions usually via conference call. And **Field Test volunteers** take a mock exam to test and critique newly written or revised test questions.

Those interested in exam development volunteer opportunities may submit a volunteer registration form through CFP Board's Web site.

### *Financial Planning Clinics*

CFP Board organizes Financial Planning Clinics around the country to provide the public with pro-bono, no-strings-attached opportunities to meet face-to-face with CFP® professionals. At these Clinics, volunteer CFP® professionals meet with one individual, couple or family to answer their financial questions. These Clinics are one-day events that demonstrate directly how CFP® certificants benefit the public. For many attendees, the Clinics represent their first exposure to CFP® certification, and the marketing efforts behind each Clinic help increase public awareness of the CFP® certification in a meaningful way.

CFP® certificants interested in participating in CFP Board's Financial Planning Clinics may learn more about current opportunities at [www.CFP.net/clinic](http://www.CFP.net/clinic).

### *Task Force Participation*

The Board of Directors assembles task forces to conduct research and provide recommendations to the Board on topical issues. Task forces are assembled as needed and in recent years have included an Education Task Force, a Task Force on Competency and Continuing Education and an Experience Task Force.

Those interested in being considered for task force participation on a specific issue are encouraged to contact the Board of Directors with an indication of interest at [BOD@CFPBoard.org](mailto:BOD@CFPBoard.org).

### **Communication with Board of Directors:**

CFP Board's Board of Directors is accountable to CFP Board's stakeholders, and the Board appreciates and listens carefully to stakeholder input. Board members frequently attend and/or make presentations at meetings of various groups and organizations associated with the financial planning profession, and CFP Board organizes occasional events at which CFP® certificants may interact with and communicate directly to the Board of Directors. CFP® certificants and other stakeholders can contact the Board with comments at [BOD@CFPBoard.org](mailto:BOD@CFPBoard.org).

### The CFP® Marks

The CFP® certification marks are the recognized standard of excellence for personal financial planning. As trademarks owned in the U.S. by CFP Board, the CFP® certification marks must be displayed following strict usage guidelines, or their value as trademarks could be lost. CFP Board's *Guide to Use of the CFP® Certification Marks* contains full information about the proper use of the CFP® certification marks. The following guidelines provide the most basic requirements for using the CFP® certification marks:

#### CFP®

- Always use capital letters
- Never use periods
- Always use the ® symbol
- Always use with one of CFP Board's approved nouns: "certificant," "professional," "practitioner," "certification," "mark" or "exam"
- Always associate with the individual(s) certified by CFP Board

#### CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

- Always use capital letters or small cap font
- Always use the ™ symbol
- Always use with one of CFP Board's approved nouns: "certificant," "professional," "practitioner," "certification," "mark" or "exam"
- Always associate with the individual(s) certified by CFP Board



- Always use the three components of the flame design (flame, "CFP" and ®)
- Always reproduce the flame design from original artwork
- Never alter or modify the flame design
- Always associate with the individual(s) certified by CFP Board

Today, more than 62,000 CFP® professionals across the country who improve the lives of their clients and exemplify the high standards represented by CFP® certification have earned the right to use these marks.

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BOARD OF STANDARDS, INC.

1425 K Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005

**P: 800-487-1497**

**F: 202-379-2299**

**E: [mail@CFPBoard.org](mailto:mail@CFPBoard.org)**

**W: [www.CFP.net](http://www.CFP.net)**



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