

CFP BOARD

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW COMPETENCY STANDARDS: A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW



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Agenda



**Why the Competency Standards
Were Reviewed**



How the Review Process Worked



What the Board Approved



What This Means for You



Looking Ahead

Key Milestones: Commission to Board Approval to Implementation



Competency Standards Commission Members

Jack Brod, CFP[®], Commission Chair

Past Chair of CFP Board (2020),
Savant Wealth Management

Archie Hoxton, MS, CFP[®]

Hoxton Planning and Management

Khiara Cureton

Abeona Wealth (candidate for
CFP[®] certification)

Nandita Das, Ph.D., CFP[®], CFA, RICP[®], EA

Das Financial Health,
Delaware State University

Kamila Elliott, CFP[®]

Past Chair of CFP Board (2022),
Collective Wealth Partners

H. Amos Goodall, Jr, Esq., CELA, LLM

Steinbacher, Goodall, Yurchak and
National Elder Law Association
(public member)

Jake Greenberg, CFP[®], ChFC[®], AIF[®]

Pure Financial Advisors, LLC

Susan John, CFP[®]

Past Chair of CFP Board (2019),
F.L. Putnam Investment
Management Co.

Sonya Lutter, Ph.D., CFP[®]

Texas Tech University and Enlite

Peter Richardson, CFP[®], J.D., CFA

Northwestern Mutual

Joshua Schneider, CFP[®]

The Bethesda Group at
Morgan Stanley

Joyce Schnur, MBA, CFP[®]

Kaplan

Neal Solomon, CFP[®], CLU[®], ChFC[®], CASL[®]

WealthPro, LLC and The
Strategic Financial Alliance, Inc.

Roy Swift, Ph.D., COL, Retired

WorkCred (public member)

Grace Yung, CFP[®]

Midtown Financial Group, LLC





Competency Standards Commission Demographics

15 | 7 Women
8 Men

12 | CFP®
Professionals

4 | Former
Board Members

3 | Former
Board Chairs

3 | Public
Members

1 | Candidate

8 | RIA
Firms

1 | Broker
Dealer

1 | Lawyer

1 | Insurance
Company

2 | Higher
Education

1 | Credentialing
Professional

4 | Sub
Groups

5 | In-Person
Meetings

26 | Zoom
Meetings

12 | Expert
Speakers

64 | Data
Requests

13+ | CFP Board
Staff

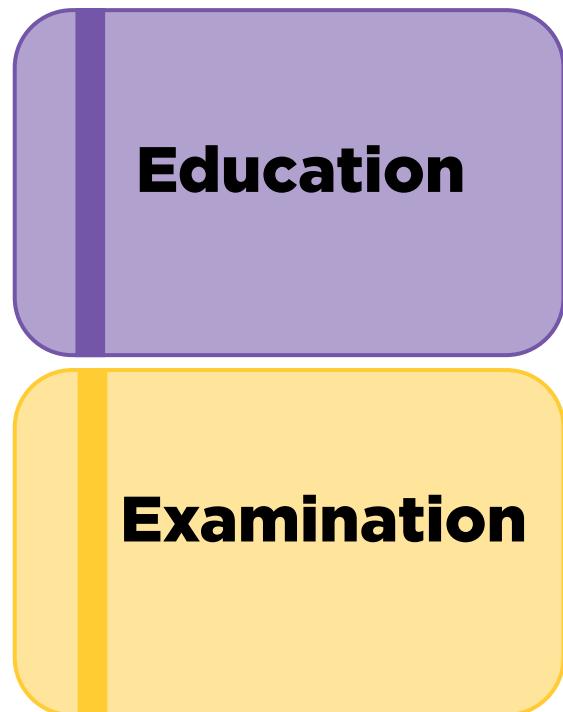
The Competency Standards Commission Vision



- **Ensure that CFP® certification standards remain modern, relevant, and practical**
- **Reflect CFP Board's broader commitment to elevating the profession**
- **Align our standards with those of the most respected professional and credentialing bodies**
- **Demonstrate leadership, promote innovation, and uphold public trust in the profession**

Process for Recommendations to the Board

4 Sub-Groups Competency Recommendations



Impact Analysis



Impact Analysis Overview

The CFP Board Research team produced the Impact Analysis, drawing from three resources:



McKinley Advisors' analysis based on a combination of a **market scan and data analysis** and a series of key stakeholder and external expert interviews.



Results from two July 2024 surveys conducted by McKinley Advisors of **CFP® professionals** and **candidates**.¹



July 2024, convened a cross-functional internal working session with 21 CFP Board staff members representing diverse functions across the organization.

¹ The two surveys were of:

- Current CFP® professionals, producing 532 responses, the results from which are subject to a margin of error (at a 95-percent level of confidence) of +/- 4.2%.
- Candidates for CFP® certification, producing 317 responses, the results from which are subject to a margin of error (at a 95-percent level of confidence) of +/- 5.5%.

Public Comment Process



2,500 Commenters



9,022 Individual Comments



40+ Letters

Certification Status

- **80%** of commenters are CFP® professionals
- **17%** are candidates
- **3%** are neither a CFP® professional nor a candidate

Gender

- **68%** Male
- **25%** Female
- <1% Nonbinary
- 7% Preferred not to answer

Race/Ethnicity

- **76%** White
- **4%** Hispanic/Latino
- **3%** Black/African American
- **3%** Asian
- **16%** Preferred not to answer

Age

- Median Age – Approximately **44 years old**

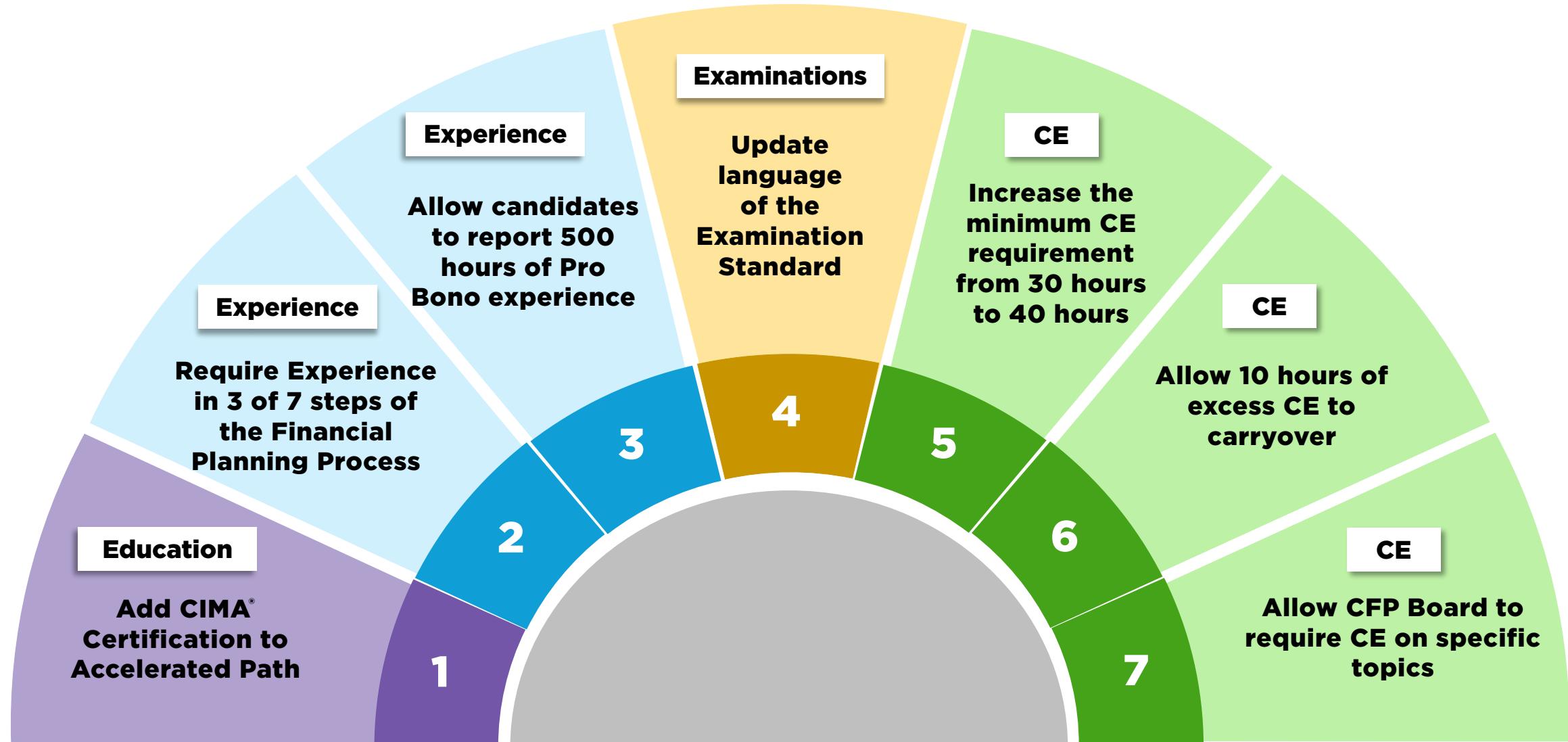
Top Business Models

- **36%** RIA
- **29%** Broker-dealers
- **10%** Independent broker-dealers


 FINANCIAL
PLANNING
ASSOCIATION




Revised Competency Standards



What This Means For You Today

1

No immediate changes to your requirements

2

A measured, transparent rollout

3

Significant implementation work underway

4

Support through the transition

Current Standard

Language from the current Competency Standard will be listed here.

What Will Change

The changes to the Competency Standards developed by the Competency Standard Commission and approved by the Board of Directors will be listed here.

Rationale

- Reasoning for the development and approval for the revised standard.

Recommendation Details

- Important details and definitions regarding the requirements and components for the revised standard.

Who it Affects

- Specifies what groups would be affected by the revised standard, including candidates, certificants, stakeholders, and the public.

Effective Period

- The target effective date for implementation for the revised standard.

Current Standard

Accelerated Path*: Candidates for initial CFP® certification may satisfy the Coursework Requirement through an Accelerated Path that allows individuals with certain degrees, credentials or licenses to satisfy the Coursework Requirement by completing a single Capstone Course.

What Will Change

Add the Certified Investment Management Analyst® (CIMA®) certification to the list* of approved Accelerated Path academic degrees and professional credentials that allow individuals to fulfill the Coursework Requirement (excluding the Capstone Course).

*CPA, CFA®, CLU®, ChFC®, PhD, JD and International CFP

Rationale

- The Board re-evaluated the existing Accelerated Pathway credentials and found the CIMA® certification exhibited the rigor, education, and preparedness required for CFP® certification.

Recommendation Details

- Individuals with CIMA® certification would still need to complete a obtain a bachelor's degree, satisfy the experience requirement, complete the Capstone course, pass the CFP® exam, and pass a background check.

Who it Affects

- This revised standard would provide an opportunity for qualified candidates holding the CIMA® certification to be added to the Accelerated Path.
- The current list includes Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA®), Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC®), Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU®), Licensed Attorney, Doctor of Business Administration, Ph.D. in Financial Planning, Finance, Business Administration, or Economics, and CFP Certification from Outside the U.S. [from the Financial Planning Standards Board Ltd. (FPSB) affiliate located in your territory of residence] to be certified.

Effective Period

- The change will be effective Q2 2026, following advance notice, guidelines and implementation support.

Current Standard

CFP Board requires initial certificants to have some professional experience in the personal financial planning process. This demonstrates to the public the CFP® professional's ability to provide unsupervised financial planning.

What Will Change

Modify the Standard Pathway to require experience that addresses at least three of the seven steps of the financial planning process.

Rationale

- The revised standard ensures that all candidates gain practical, holistic exposure to financial planning as a profession rather than limited functional tasks.
- The intended outcome is to strengthen the candidate pipeline by emphasizing experience that reflects the profession's full scope.

Recommendation Details

- Candidates must have experience in three out of the seven steps of Financial Planning*, which is an increase from the current requirement of one step.
- Experience across the Principal Knowledge Domains is a new addition to the standard, where candidates gain experience in at least four of the eight Domains.

Who it Affects

- This change affects candidates pursuing the Standard Pathway and employers or supervisors verifying candidate experience.
- The revised standard benefits the public by ensuring certificants are better prepared to deliver comprehensive, fiduciary financial planning services.
- There is no change to the Apprenticeship Pathway.

Effective Period

- The change will be effective Q1 2027, following advance notice, guidelines and implementation support.

*The Seven Steps to the Financial Planning Process include: (1) Understanding the Client's Personal and Financial Circumstances; (2) Identifying and Selecting Goals; (3) Analyzing the Client's Current Course of Action and Potential Alternative Course(s) of Action; (4) Developing the Financial Planning Recommendation(s); (5) Presenting the Financial Planning Recommendation(s); (6) Implementing the Financial Planning Recommendation(s); (7) Monitoring Progress and Updating

Current Standard

CFP Board requires initial certificants to have some professional experience in the personal financial planning process. This demonstrates to the public the CFP® professional's ability to provide unsupervised financial planning.

What Will Change

Allow candidates to report and accumulate a maximum of 500 hours of Pro Bono experience toward the 6,000-hour Standard Pathway.

Rationale

- The revised standard would formally allow candidates to diversify their experience through pro bono work.
- The public would benefit from expanded access to free, qualified financial guidance.

Recommendation Details

- Standard Pathway, pro bono experience above the standard 40 hours per week would count toward the 6,000-hour requirement.
- Pro bono experience would need to be completed through an approved organization that provides pro bono training and supervision.
- Candidates on the Apprenticeship Pathway would have the same opportunity with required supervision from a CFP® professional.

Who it Affects

- This change affects candidates pursuing the Standard Pathway and employers or supervisors verifying candidate experience.

Effective Period

- The change will be effective Q2 2027, following advance notice, guidelines and implementation support.

Current Standard

The CFP® certification examination is designed to assess a candidate's ability to integrate and apply a broad base of financial planning knowledge in the context of real-life financial planning situations. By passing the exam, professionals demonstrate to the public that they have attained a competency necessary to practice independently as a financial planner.

What Will Change

Update the language of the Examination standard to reflect that competency to practice independently as a financial planner is demonstrated by completing the education, exam, experience and ethics requirements for CFP® certification.

Rationale

- The new recommendation emphasizes that competency to practice independently as a CFP® professional is predicated on completing all four certification requirements, or what we call the four E's: education, experience, examination, and ethics.

Recommendation Details

- The revised standard reflects an update to the original language of the Examination Competency Standard.

Who it Affects

- The revised standard clarifies to candidates, certificants, stakeholders, and the public that competency to practice independently requires completion of all four certification requirements.

Effective Period

- The change will be effective Q2 2026, following advance notice, guidelines and implementation support.

Current Standard

To maintain CFP® certification, CFP® professionals are required to complete 30 hours of continuing education (CE) during each two-year certification period.

What Will Change

Increase the minimum CE requirement to 40 hours every two years. 5 of the 40 hours can be dedicated to Practice Management. Ethics CE is not included in this standard.

Rationale

- This enhancement aligns with the expanding complexity of the financial planning landscape, ensuring ongoing competence and deeper engagement with emerging topics such as technology, behavioral finance, and evolving regulations.
- Allowing limited Practice Management CE recognizes the value of professional development in enhancing client service quality and business integrity.

Recommendation Details

- This change would apply uniformly to all certificants—both new and existing—and would represent a pure hour increase while maintaining the current CE structure of 38 hours of General CE and 2 hours of CFP Board Approved Ethics CE.
- The definition of CE would remain focused on maintaining continued competency in financial planning, serving as the essential mechanism for CFP® professionals to stay current in the knowledge and skills necessary to deliver competent financial planning services.

Who it Affects

- The revised standard applies to all CFP® professionals (certificants) and affects CE Sponsors.
- The public benefits from higher professional competency standards.

Effective Period

- The change will be effective Q1 2027, following advance notice, guidelines and implementation support.

Current Standard

To maintain CFP® certification, CFP® professionals are required to complete 30 hours of continuing education (CE) during each two-year certification period.

What Will Change

Allow up to 10 hours of excess CE hours to carry over to the next two-year certification period.

Rationale

- This standard rewards proactive learning and supports flexibility in professional development scheduling.
- It encourages certificants to continue their education throughout the year without penalty for exceeding requirements.

Recommendation Details

- Certificants may carry over up to 10 hours of CE credit earned beyond the 40-hour requirement into their next two-year certification cycle.
- The 2-hour CFP Board approved Ethics CE will remain a requirement for every CE cycle.

Who it Affects

- The standard affects all CFP® professionals.
- It benefits the public by reinforcing a culture of continuous learning among certificants.

Effective Period

- The change will be effective Q1 2027, following advance notice, guidelines and implementation support.

Current Standard

CFP® professionals must complete CE related to personal financial planning topics to demonstrate continued competency in financial planning.

What Will Change

Allow CFP Board to require CE on specific topics when new laws, taxes or regulations impact the profession, as determined by the Board of Directors.

Rationale

- The revised standard ensures that certificants remain up-to-date and competent in critical, time-sensitive subject areas.
- It enhances consumer protection and maintains the credibility of the CFP® mark in a rapidly evolving regulatory environment.

Recommendation Details

- The core elements of this revised standard include issuing topic-specific CE when a high-impact regulatory or legislative change occurs, publishing clear learning objectives for that topic, and providing CE sponsors with an opportunity to develop and submit eligible programs for review and approval.
- Under this framework, CFP® professionals would be required to complete one or more hours of CE on a designated topic within a defined period.

Who it Affects

- The requirement would apply universally to all active CFP® professionals, regardless of certification pathway or tenure, and would be enforced as part of the CE compliance requirement during the certification renewal cycle.
- The public benefits from timely and informed advice from CFP® professionals.

Effective Period

- The change will be effective Q1 2027, following advance notice, guidelines and implementation support.

Key Dates for the Revised Competency Standards



CFP.net: Key Dates and Information

Revised Competency Standard

Effective Period

Add CIMA® Certification to Accelerated Path	Q2 2026
Require Experience in 3 of 7 steps of the Financial Planning Process	Q1 2027
Allow candidates to report 500 hours of Pro Bono experience	Q2 2027
Update language of the Examination Standard	Q2 2026
Increase the minimum CE requirement from 30 hours to 40 hours	Q1 2027
Allow 10 hours of excess CE to carryover	Q1 2027
Allow CFP Board to require CE on specific topics	Q1 2027

Our Commitment to a Thoughtful Transition and Implementation



CFP.net: Key Dates and Information



QUESTIONS

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW COMPETENCY STANDARDS:

A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW



CFP.net: Key Dates and Information

CFP BOARD

THANK YOU



K. DANE SNOWDEN

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2026 Board Chair-Elect



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Managing Director, Research



CFP.net: Key Dates and Information