

Glossary

Administrative Order of Revocation: An order issued by DEC Counsel permanently revoking a CFP® professional's certification due to a Default (e.g., failure to cooperate, failure to timely file an Answer, failure to satisfy requirements of an order).

Administrative Order of Suspension: An order issued by DEC Counsel suspending a CFP® professional's certification due to a Default (e.g., failure to cooperate, failure to timely file an Answer, failure to satisfy requirements of an order).

Administrative Order of Temporary Bar: An order issued by DEC Counsel temporarily barring an individual from CFP® certification due to a Default (e.g., failure to cooperate, failure to timely file an Answer, failure to satisfy requirements of an order).

Administrative Relinquishment: Voluntary surrender of CFP® certification.

Answer: A formal written response to a filing with the DEC.

Appeal: A request for review of a Final Order made by the DEC or DEC Counsel.

Applicant: Candidate for CFP® certification and a former CFP® professional seeking reinstatement whose certification CFP Board has not suspended or temporarily barred.

Automatic Interim Suspension Order (Automatic ISO): An order issued by DEC Counsel that suspends the recipient's CFP® certification pending further enforcement proceedings.

Background Check: Review of an individual's criminal, civil and professional history.

Bar: Prohibition from obtaining or holding CFP® certification.

Candidate: An individual applying for CFP® certification for the first time or reapplying after their CFP® certification has lapsed or been relinquished for reasons other than a Suspension by CFP Board.

Case History Database: Written decisions in past disciplinary actions published by CFP Board.

Certification Renewal: Process of maintaining certification by reporting completed Continuing Education (CE), submitting Ethics Declarations and paying fees.

CFP Board Certification Marks: Trademarks owned by CFP Board, including CFP® and CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER®.

CFP® Professional: An individual who holds CFP® certification.

Civil Findings: A term defined in Article 7.3 of the [Procedural Rules](#) stating that a record from any court of civil jurisdiction containing a Finding (as defined in the [Code and Standards](#)) against Respondent in that court that Respondent violated a law, rule or regulation governing Professional Services, or engaged in conduct involving fraud, theft, misrepresentation or other dishonest conduct is conclusive proof of the existence of such Finding and that Respondent engaged in the conduct that led to the Finding.

Code and Standards: The [Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct](#) or, where applicable, its predecessors, including the *Standards of Professional Conduct*.

Complaint: A formal document filed by Enforcement Counsel with CFP Board's DEC that asserts grounds for a sanction due to an alleged violation of the [Code and Standards](#).

Criminal Conviction: A term defined in Article 7.1 of the [Procedural Rules](#) that states a record from any court of criminal jurisdiction indicating that Respondent has been convicted of a crime in that court or admitted into a program that defers or withholds entry of a judgment of conviction is conclusive proof of the commission of the crime and that Respondent engaged in the criminal conduct that led to the Criminal Conviction.

DEC: Disciplinary and Ethics Commission

DEC Counsel: CFP Board attorneys who advise the Disciplinary and Ethics Commission, Hearing Panels and Settlement Review Panels in connection with disciplinary proceedings.

DEC Review Fee: A fee billed to a Respondent for the Disciplinary and Ethics Commission's review of a disciplinary matter, with or without a hearing.

Default: A Respondent's failure to meet specified requirements under CFP Board's [Procedural Rules](#) or an order (e.g., failure to cooperate, failure to timely file an Answer, failure to satisfy requirements of an order).

Detection: The process by which CFP Board identifies potential violations of its [Code and Standards](#).

Disciplinary and Ethics Commission (DEC): A peer-review body made up of CFP® professionals and public members with authority to issue final orders, determine whether violations have occurred and impose sanctions when appropriate.

Discretionary Interim Suspension Order (Discretionary ISO): An order issued by a Hearing Panel of the DEC that suspends the recipient's CFP® certification pending further enforcement proceedings.

Dismissal: Closure of a case without disciplinary action.

Duty to Cooperate: A Respondent's obligation to fully cooperate with CFP Board investigations and proceedings.

Enforcement Counsel: Individuals at CFP Board authorized to investigate and file disciplinary cases for alleged violations of CFP Board's [Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct](#), its predecessor *Rules of Conduct*, the [Pathway to CFP® Certification Agreement](#), and its *Terms and Conditions of Certification and Trademark License*.

Enforcement Staff: Individuals working in CFP Board's Enforcement department.

Ethics Declaration: A form required to be completed by Candidates for CFP® certification and periodically by CFP® professionals that affirms their compliance with CFP Board's ethical standards.

Failure to Cooperate: According to Article 1.3.d. of the [Procedural Rules](#), if Enforcement Counsel contends that a Request Recipient failed to satisfy the Duty of Cooperation, then Enforcement Counsel may deliver a Notice of Failure to Cooperate that identifies the failure to cooperate and provides Request Recipient 14 calendar days to cure the failure.

Fee Waiver: A formal request to waive fees due to qualifying circumstances, typically financial hardship.

Final Order: The Disciplinary and Ethics Commission's final written decision in a disciplinary case.

Fitness Evaluation: A review of an individual's background conducted by Enforcement Counsel to determine eligibility for CFP® certification.

Fitness Notice: Notification sent to a Candidate or CFP® professional regarding concerns about their fitness for certification.

[Fitness Standards:](#) The standards against which CFP Board will evaluate the ethical fitness of Applicants.

[Handbook for Respondents:](#) A guide provided by CFP Board to help Respondents understand the disciplinary process.

Hearing Panel: A panel including members of the DEC that evaluates Discretionary ISOs, Petitions and Complaints.

Hearing: A proceeding where evidence is presented by the parties to a Hearing Panel.

Ineligible for Certification: Status assigned to individuals who do not meet the requirements for CFP® certification.

Informal Inquiry: A preliminary step in the enforcement process during which Enforcement staff seeks additional information before initiating a formal investigation.

Informal Request: A request for clarification or additional information from a CFP® professional or Candidate.

Initial Certification Fee: The fee required to obtain CFP® certification for the first time.

Intent to Reinstate Form: A form submitted by individuals who wish to regain their CFP® certification.

Interim Suspension Order (ISO): An order suspending the recipient's CFP® certification pending the outcome of an investigation or enforcement proceeding.

Investigation: The formal process by which Enforcement staff examines potential violations of the **Code and Standards**.

Letter of Caution: A non-public letter issued by CFP Board warning a CFP® professional or Candidate that their conduct may have violated CFP Board's **Code and Standards** or *Rules of Conduct* and that the letter may be considered in a future disciplinary proceeding.

Motion for Reinstatement Eligibility: A request submitted to CFP Board to be considered eligible for reinstatement after a suspension or temporary bar.

Motion: A formal request made in a disciplinary proceeding that is decided by the DEC or DEC Counsel.

Notice of Investigation (NOI): A letter sent to a CFP® professional or to an Applicant for certification informing them that Enforcement staff has initiated an investigation.

Order: A formal directive issued by CFP Board, the Disciplinary and Ethics Commission, or DEC Counsel.

Pathway to CFP® Certification Agreement: A document outlining the terms and conditions for obtaining CFP® certification.

Permanent Bar: A lifetime prohibition from obtaining CFP® certification.

Petition for Fitness Determination: A petition filed with CFP Board's Disciplinary and Ethics Commission requesting a determination that the Applicant is fit for CFP® certification.

Petition for ISO: A request that a Hearing Panel issue an Interim Suspension Order.

Petition for Reinstatement Eligibility: A request submitted to CFP Board seeking a determination of eligibility for reinstatement following a temporary bar, a suspension of more than one year, or a previously denied motion or request for reinstatement eligibility.

Petition to Vacate: A request to nullify previously issued order.

Petition: A formal written request submitted to the DEC that typically seeks reinstatement or a fitness determination.

Post-Sanction Requirements: Conditions that must be fulfilled after a sanction is imposed, such as continuing education or ethics training.

Procedural Rules: The rules governing how CFP Board enforces its **Code and Standards**.

Proposed Consent Order: An agreement between CFP Board and a Respondent reflecting the terms under which they would like to resolve a disciplinary matter.

Public Sanction: Evidence Required by Respondent: A disciplinary action that is publicly disclosed by CFP Board, often through press releases or its website. CFP Board publishes orders imposing public sanctions and/or a summary of the contents of the order in a press release, on CFP Board's website, and any other form of public disclosure that CFP Board determines is appropriate.

Rehabilitation and Fitness: Evidence that reflects the Respondent's present suitability for certification. Factors relevant to rehabilitation and fitness include those in Article 11.8 of the [Procedural Rules](#).

Reinstatement Criteria: The specific requirements that must be met to regain certification, such as completing CE or passing background checks.

Reinstatement Eligibility: A status indicating that an individual may apply for reinstatement, subject to meeting certain conditions.

Reinstatement Fee: A fee required to process a reinstatement application.

Reinstatement: The process of restoring CFP® certification after a suspension, administrative relinquishment, or temporary bar.

Renewals/Stakeholder Services: The CFP Board department that handles certification renewals and stakeholder inquiries. Email: renewal@cfpboard.org; Phone: 800-487-1497 or 202-379-2200.

Renewed Petition: A revised or updated petition for reinstatement eligibility after suspension or temporary bar that is submitted after an initial one was denied with the right to reapply.

Request for Reinstatement Eligibility: A formal application to be considered eligible for reinstatement.

Request Recipient: A Respondent, including a Respondent under investigation or a Respondent who has information about a Respondent under investigation, who has a Duty of Cooperation.

Respondent: The individual who is the subject of a disciplinary proceeding.

Response to Petition: A formal reply to a petition.

Review on the Filings: A review by the DEC based solely on submitted documents without a hearing.

Revocation: Permanent termination of CFP® certification and permanent bar from applying for or obtaining CFP® certification.

Sanction: A disciplinary action imposed by CFP Board.

Sanction Compliance: The process of fulfilling all conditions imposed by a Sanction.

Sanction Determination: The decision made by the Disciplinary and Ethics Commission regarding what disciplinary action to impose.

[Sanction Guidelines](#): A framework used by the DEC to provide transparency and promote consistent imposition of sanctions for similar offenses, considering the unique facts of each case.

Scheduling Order: A formal document that sets initial deadlines and projected hearing or review dates.

Settlement: An agreement that would resolve a disciplinary matter, submitted as a Proposed Consent Order for review by the Disciplinary and Ethics Commission.

Trademark Compliance: Adherence to CFP Board's rules for using its trademarks and certification marks.

Vacate a Discretionary ISO: A request to nullify a Discretionary Interim Suspension Order.

Vacate an Automatic ISO: A request to nullify an Automatic Interim Suspension Order.

Voluntary Surrender: The willing forfeit of a professional license or certification — including CFP® certification — in response to a regulatory action or investigation.

Withdraw or Withdrawal: When a Candidate withdraws their application for CFP® certification.