



Foundation for the Advancement of the Paralegal Profession *Empowering and Promoting Paralegals™*

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POLICY REGARDING VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION FOR THE PARALEGAL PROFESSION

The current Board of Directors held many discussions regarding the development of action steps to fulfill the Foundation’s mission and to carry out its purpose of *“Empowering and Promoting Paralegals™”* and voted to adopt the following policy:

WHEREAS, the Foundation for the Advancement of the Paralegal Profession (the Foundation or FAPP) resulted from the desires of the member Associations of the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA®) to create a repository for the proceeds from the Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam (PACE®), a voluntary certification exam, to be administered by an independent organization; and

WHEREAS, PACE is offered by the NFPA to test the competency level of experienced paralegals; and

WHEREAS, NFPA has determined that “paralegals receive two major benefits by taking PACE

- The exam provides a fair evaluation of the competencies of paralegals across practice areas; and
- creates a professional level of expertise by which all paralegals can be evaluated.”

[<http://www.paralegals.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=819>.]

WHEREAS, NALS. . . the association for legal professionals identify its certification programs as a means for a “paralegal to advance [his/her] career with a certification, whether [he or she] is beginning a career in the legal industry or is a veteran paralegal.” [http://www.nals.org/?page_id=55.]

WHEREAS, the American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc. considers certification to be an “official recognition by an organization of the paralegal's abilities acquired through education and work experience for the needs of a specific occupation. As such, it sets aside the individual as one who has verifiable expertise in his or her profession.”
[<http://www.aapipara.org/Certification.htm>.]

WHEREAS, there are several voluntary certification programs available to the paralegal profession, such as the following:

- ALS – person who has obtained the NALS. . .the association for legal professionals’ certification as an Accredited Legal Secretary...the basic certification for legal professionals.
- CLA/CP – person who has obtained the National Association of Legal Assistant’s certification as a Certified Legal Assistant/Paralegal.
- CLAS – person who has obtained the National Association of Legal Assistant’s certification as a Certified Legal Assistant Specialty exam (replaced by the Advanced Certification Program-ACP).
- CRP – person who has obtained the National Federation of Paralegals’ certificated as a CORE Registered Paralegal or CRP
- FRP – person who is registered with the state of Florida as a Florida Registered Paralegal.
- NCCP – person certified by the North Carolina State Bar.
- OSBA Certified Paralegal – person certified by the Ohio State Bar Association.
- Pa.C.P. – person who has been certified as a Pennsylvania Certified Paralegal.
- PLS – person who has obtained the NALS. . .the association for legal professionals’ certification as a Professional Legal Secretary...the advanced certification for legal professionals.
- PP - person who has obtained the NALS. . .the association for legal professionals’ certification as a Professional Paralegal.
- RP – person who has obtained the National Federation of Paralegals’ certification as a PACE Registered Paralegal or RP.
- TBLS – person who has been certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization in a specific legal specialty.

WHEREAS, the Foundation recognizes the marketing of and promotion of the voluntary certification programs described above can be costly, the Foundation desires to support and endorse voluntary certification programs and to provide financial and other assistance to paralegals, paralegal associations, national groups, and non-profit type organizations in the promotion of voluntary certification programs;

WHEREAS, voluntary certification for the paralegal profession has become to be recognized throughout the profession as a means to promote and advance the paralegal profession; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation's mission is to promote and advance the professional and educational standards of paralegal professionals;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the FOUNDATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE PARALEGAL PROFESSION (the Foundation) hereby adopts a policy to support and endorse voluntary certification programs as a means of *Empowering and Promoting Paralegals™*.