



Shareholder Services Professional Certificate Program Manual & Applicant Guidebook



**Shareholder
Services
Professional
Certificate**

Shareholder Services Association (SSA)

About the SSA

The SSA is a nationwide network of shareholder services industry professionals. Our diverse membership includes corporations of all sizes, transfer agents and a wide variety of specialized service providers. Whether you are new to the industry, a seasoned professional or someone who has multiple responsibilities, the SSA offers education and networking opportunities to help you succeed.

Shareholder Services Professional Certificate Program

Purpose

A Shareholder Services Certification/Certificate Program will provide a professional advantage for individuals employed within the shareholder services industry. It will also distinguish those who have obtained the certification as having a higher standard among their peers.

Commission

The Shareholder Services Certification Program Commission was created by the SSA Board of Directors and consists of SSA members.

Code of Conduct

Professionals shall strive to protect the integrity of the SSPC credentials and the process by which these credentials are earned.

- Be honest and forthright about your industry experience provided in the exam application. Do not stretch or embellish your work experience in order to qualify for the exam.
- Prepare diligently for the exam using the materials provided and other resources that are generally available to industry professionals. Do not seek after exam specific or other insider information to give you an advantage over others.

- Do your best on the exam following the rules provided at the exam location. As an adult and a professional, do not cheat, attempt to cheat or give the impression that you are cheating.
- Maintain the confidentiality of the exam process and materials. Do not copy and distribute exam materials, either by using your smartphone or by discussing questions from memory with other individuals who have not taken the exam.
- After the exam, continue to increase your knowledge of the industry and the reputation of shareholder services professionals everywhere through your own commitment to honesty, integrity and service at your companies and in all aspects of your life.

Request for Special Needs & Services

The SSA, SSA Board of Directors, Executive Director and SSPC Program Commission complies with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will make reasonable accommodations for the administration of the examination for eligible applicants with provided documents of their disability. If an applicant requires special arrangements, the applicant is responsible for notifying the SSA on the SSPC individual application.

Application Information

Application

The SSPC application is available on SSA's website. Applications must be submitted to the SSA office by email or via U.S. regular mail. Any applications not completed in their entirety or not submitted with the required supporting documents will be returned to the applicant. All applications and submitted supporting documents will be reviewed upon submission. Applicants will receive a confirmation by email.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the SSPC examination, applicants are required to meet at least one of the following requirements:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited American college or university,

OR

- Work in a shareholder services role or a related field which includes shareholder services' functions for at least two years.

Application Fees

SSA Members \$750.00

Non-SSA Members \$1,395.00

The application fee for Non-SSA members includes a one-year individual SSA membership for the individual names on the application. The one-year membership cannot be transferred to another person. The membership is effective the date of the application and expires one-year from the date on the application.

Required Prerequisite Courses

Prior to registering for an examination, an applicant is required to successfully complete three pre-requisite courses available on the SSA website.

The required courses are:

- Introduction to Shareholder Services
- Preparing for an Annual Meeting
- Unclaimed Property & Escheatment

The courses are available to SSA members at no charge.

Non-SSA members are required to pay for the courses. For more information, please contact the SSA office at info@shareholderservices.org.

S.S.P.C. Examination

Reference Materials

A study guide will be provided as a study material for the exam at no additional cost. Each chapter represents general accepted knowledge of a shareholder services professional. Additional books and reference materials will be notated within the study guide. It will be helpful for all applicants to refer to these references while preparing for the SSPC examination.

Content & Domains

Domain 1: Introduction to Shareholder Services

Course available on the SSA website.

Domain 2: Preparing for an Annual Meeting

Course available on the SSA website.

Domain 3: Unclaimed Property & Escheatment

Course available on the SSA website.

Domain 4: Regulatory Environment

Areas of Concentration are: STA Guidelines, STA DRS Processing Guidelines, STA Cost Basis Reporting Guidelines, Securities Act of 1933, Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, NYSE Rules & Listing Requirements and Nasdaq Rules & Listing Requirements

Domain 5: Corporate Action Processing

Areas of Concentration are: Corporate Action Overview, Types of corporate actions, Timeline of a corporate action

Domain 6: Operations

Areas of Concentration are: Plans, DRIPS, Dividends, Tax reporting, Cost Basis, Medallion Signature Guarantee, Check reconciliation, Basic knowledge of equity accounting in a corporation, Federal tax reporting, Record keeping-record retention, Share issuance

Domain 7: Administration, Contracts, Preparation & Execution of an RFP

Areas of Concentration are: Functions of a Transfer Agent, Functions of a Service Provider, RFP Process, What to include in an RFP?

Domain 8: Effective Communications & Best Practices

Areas of Concentration are: Communications with Shareholders, Communications with Beneficial Shareholders, Communications with Employee Shareholders, Communications with Board of Directors and Executive Leadership, Communications with Transfer Agent, What is the communication function of a Relationship Manager?, What makes a good Relationship Manager?, What makes a good client?

Domain 9: Stock Plan Administration

Areas of Concentration are: Restricted Stock (RSA, RSU, Performance), Stock Options, Employee Stock Purchase Plans

Examination Outline

An adequate amount of questions from each Domain will be represented on the examination.

Domain	Number of Questions
Domain 1: Introduction to Shareholder Services	11
Domain 2: Preparing for an Annual Meeting	12
Domain 3: Unclaimed Property & Escheatment	11
Domain 4: Regulatory Environment	20
Domain 5: Corporate Actions	21
Domain 6: Operations	20
Domain 7: Administration, Contracts, Preparation & Execution of an RFP	18
Domain 8: Effective Communications & Best Practices	19
Domain 9: Stock Plan Administration	18
Total Examination Questions	150

Examination Format & Time

The examination questions are presented in a multiple-choice format and consists of 150 questions. The examination is only offered in English. Each examination session will allow applicants three (3) hours to complete the exam.

Examination Location

The examination will be offered at least three (3) times per year. The location of the examinations will be finalized within three months prior to the in-person proctored exam.

The exam will always be offered at the SSA Annual Conference.

Other possible locations: (subject to change)

- Chicago, Illinois
- New York, New York
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Denver, Colorado
- San Francisco, California
- Atlanta, Georgia

Examination Results

A participant must score a minimum grade of 75% to successfully obtain a Shareholder Services Professional Certificate. If a participant does not score a minimum grade of 75, he/she will be allowed to retake the exam at the next scheduled offering at no additional charge. After two unsuccessful attempts at the exam, additional testing will be discussed by the participant and the Certification Committee.

Maintaining S.S.P.C. Designation

Continuing Education Credits (CEs)

Continuing Education Credits are called “CEs” and are measured on an annual basis. To retain certification, each participant will be required to obtain:

- 10 CEs annually or 30 CEs in a 3-year period.
- Participants can receive CEs by attending the following events:
 - 1 CE per SSA webinar
 - 2 CEs per SSA luncheon/seminar

- 2 CEs per SSA Annual Conference session. A max of 10 CEs will be allowed per day. To receive credit for attending the SSA Annual Conference, each participant must sign in at each session.
- 1 CE per SSA membership renewal
- 4 CEs for attending the approved industry events as detailed below. Event must have 4 or more hours of industry related content. Approved industry events include: STA Annual Conference, UPPO Annual Conference, client conferences of Transfer Agents or educational conferences offered by industry service providers. Required documentation can be accessed by contacting the SSA office. It is the responsibility of the attendee to receive the necessary forms.

Renewal Period

Each participant will be required to renew their certification every 3 years. To renew their certification, a cost of \$150.00 will be charged.

If an SSPC designee does not renew their certification, they will forfeit their ability to use the credential "SSPC" and will be required to retake the examination after full payment is received.

Contact Information

Shareholder Services Association
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Midland, Georgia 31820

info@shareholderservices.org

Toll Free: 1-888-574-3288