

# Montana Board News

## Board of Accountancy

■ June 2020

The Honorable Steve Bullock  
Governor of Montana

#### Board Members

Ranetta Jones, CPA, Chair  
John Jacobsen, CPA, Secretary  
Linda Harris, CPA  
Kathleen VanDyke, Public Member  
Dan Vuckovich, CPA  
Mike Huotte, CPA  
Lucinda "Cindy" Willis, Public Member

#### Executive Officer

Grace Berger

#### Contact Information

#### Current Licensee & Renewal Inquires

Email: [dlibsdpac@mt.gov](mailto:dlibsdpac@mt.gov)  
Phone 406-841-2300

#### Applying for a MT CPA license

Email: [licensing@nasba.org](mailto:licensing@nasba.org)  
Website: [nasba.org](http://nasba.org)  
Phone: 866-350-0017

#### General Inquires

Email: [dlibsdpac@mt.gov](mailto:dlibsdpac@mt.gov)  
Website: [publicaccountant.mt.gov](http://publicaccountant.mt.gov)

#### CPE Audit

Email: [cpeauditservice@nasba.org](mailto:cpeauditservice@nasba.org)  
Website: [cpeauditservice.nasba.org](http://cpeauditservice.nasba.org)  
Phone 844-273-8722

#### Peer Review Inquires

Email: [karnold@nevadacpa.org](mailto:karnold@nevadacpa.org)  
Website: [nevadacpa.org/peer-review](http://nevadacpa.org/peer-review)  
Phone: 775-826-6800



## CPE Audit & CPE Audit Service

### 2017-2019 CPE Audits Begins Early July

NASBA will begin the 2017-2019 CPE audit on behalf of the Board of Public Accountants in early July. Any active licensee who was initially licensed prior to January 1, 2017 is eligible to be selected for audit. The Board rules require that all licensees selected for CPE audit must submit the CPE documentation via the NASBA CPE Audit Service system.

One of the primary reasons why CPE fails an audit is unacceptable documentation. Make sure you are familiar with the documentation and other CPE requirements outlined in this newsletter. You should check your CPE documentation when you receive it to ensure it meets the requirements. It is much easier to resolve improper documentation issues right after completing the course than it is several years later.

All active permit holders, if you have not yet accessed the new CPE Audit Service system for the first time and need your login information resent, please send an email to [dlibsdpac@mt.gov](mailto:dlibsdpac@mt.gov) and your information will be emailed to you. If you have already accessed the tracking system and don't remember your password, you can select "forgot your password" and a password reset will be sent to your email address on file. Make sure your email address is correct with the board office by logging into the [citizen portal](#) and go to the "Account Management" area to update your email and other contact information. You will need to contact [cpeauditservice@nasba.org](mailto:cpeauditservice@nasba.org) for technical help with the CPE Audit Service system.

Inactive and retired permit holders, you are not required to take CPE while your license is on inactive or retired status. In the future if you want to reactivate your permit, you will need to provide the CPE documentation through the [CPE Audit Service](#) system to reactivate your license. All licensees originally licensed with the Montana Board of Public Accountants in 2020 will receive the CPE Audit Service system login information but note that your first CPE reporting period is 2021-2023.

A link to the CPE Audit Service system can be found on the [Board website](#).

The MSCPA directly loads course information for all CPE completed through the State Society. You will not be required to provide any additional information for those CPE courses. Any course that was not completed through the MSCPA will require

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## Public Comments on Model Rules Requested

The National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) today announces the start of a 90-day comment period for proposed revisions to the Uniform Accountancy Act (UAA) Model Rules. Comments will be accepted through August 31, 2020.

Developed by the AICPA/NASBA CPA Evolution Initiative, the proposed revisions were reviewed by NASBA's Uniform Accountancy Act (UAA) Committee and recommended to the NASBA Board of Directors for exposure for public comment.

The proposed changes pertain to educational requirements for individuals wishing to enter the CPA profession, and are aligned to encourage uniformity among the 55 U.S. Jurisdictions.

UAA Model Rules, which serve as the baseline standard for use by Boards of Accountancy in state rules and laws, were updated in 2018. To review the proposed revision, visit <https://nasba.org/app/uploads/2020/05/UAA-May-Draft-Web.pdf>. Comments should be submitted to [uaacomment@nasba.org](mailto:uaacomment@nasba.org).

## Do We Have Your Current Information?

It is important that the Board office has your current contact information. Log on to the Department of Labor & Industry [citizen portal](#) (where you renew your license) and go to the "Account Management" area. You can update your mailing address, email, and any other login information. To continue to receive important notices from the Board such as renewal notices, CPE audit notification, and newsletters, it is essential that you maintain this information.

## From the Chair



Ranetta Jones

Hello. I sincerely hope all of you are doing well and staying safe. I have been reflecting on what to write in this, my last message as the chair of the Montana Board of Public Accountants. Well, reflecting may not be the appropriate word, but procrastinating just seems so negative. As I sit here in my rather chilly, basement home office, which has become the "new normal", I have been reflecting on some of the positives that have come from these odd times we are all finding ourselves in. For me it has been extra time with family, reconnecting with my love of baking bread and not feeling a little guilty for getting out and taking a walk in the sunshine in the middle of a work day. The cons include extra time with family, wearing a blanket because I am in a chilly basement office (which I share with my hubby who is always too warm) and not being able to ignore household cleaning projects.

I have also decided that Microsoft Teams and Zoom belong on both lists. It is too easy to just hop on a Teams Meeting and it is still a bit unnerving to have my computer ring like a telephone, sometimes while I am on the actual telephone. When I do venture to my pre-COVID office it involves putting on a mask, stopping at a tent to answer questions and getting my temperature checked. These new routines will be with us for a while, so I have to just buck up.

I have enjoyed my term as chair and continue to have the opportunity to work with a great group of individuals that serve as your Board and Staff. They are a great, hard-working group of individuals who volunteer their time and talents to keep our profession great. Thank you!

## CPE Audit & CPE Audit Service (Continued)

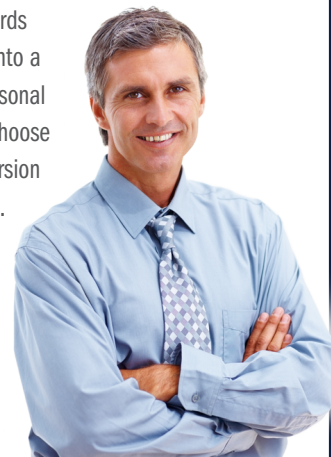
you to add the documentation to the CPE Audit Service system to be complete.

The [CPE Audit Service](#) system will be required if you are selected for a CPE audit. If audited, you will be required to report all your CPE using the CPE Audit Service system. Because CPE is a 3-year requirement, if you are selected for audit, you will be required to have the past 3 years (2017-2019) of CPE on the CPE Audit Service system. It is a good idea to add courses as you complete them to eliminate the mad scramble after receiving a notification of audit.

Remember, the system is not just available to those licensees selected for CPE audit. All permit holders have been provided an account. This system is a great tool in managing your CPE and is available 24/7. At any time you can add courses as you complete them, upload course completion documentation, and track your compliance with meeting the mandatory 120 hours of CPE, with a subset of 2 hours of ethics, in a 3-year period. We suggest that even if you aren't selected for CPE audit this year, and if you haven't already, that you begin tracking your CPE on the system. If you are selected for audit in the future, you will already have the courses and documentation loaded and ready to submit.

### Permit Holder Benefits

- » Records are submitted and stored online, reducing the need for paper filing.
- » Credits are entered using the basic online form and completion documentation can be attached.
- » Accounts are available online for all permit holders to access and add/edit records until they are required to submit their records to the Board for audit.
- » Permit holders can download and export the records they have entered into a spreadsheet for personal record keeping or choose a printer-friendly version of their CPE records.
- » CPE credits are submitted to the Board at the click of a button.



# CPE REQUIREMENTS

CPE is required for all active licensees to maintain active status. You are required to complete 120 hours of CPE, including 2 hours of ethics, in a rolling 3-year period. A program qualifies as acceptable CPE if it contributes directly to the licensee's knowledge, ability, and/or competence to perform the licensee's professional responsibilities.

## Types of Programs

Methods of obtaining CPE, including:

- » Group live or internet based,
- » Self-study, (full credit if from a NASBA QAS sponsor, ½ credit from a non-QAS sponsor)
- » Serving as an instructor (limited to 50%, or 60 hours per 3-year reporting period)
- » Publishing articles or book, (limited to 25%, or 30 hours per 3-year reporting period)
- » Blended learning,
- » Nano-learning, (must be from a NASBA QAS sponsor)
- » Technical committee work, and
- » Technical reviewer of qualified CPE programs

You can find the definition of each delivery method in ARM, [24.201.301](#).

## Topic Requirements

Beginning January 1, 2018, active licensees must complete at least 50% (60 hours) in technical fields of study in a rolling 3-year period. Two hours of the technical study must be in ethics. The first reporting period with this 50% technical subject requirement is 2018-2020. Technical subjects are:

- » Accounting, including governmental accounting,
- » Auditing, including governmental auditing,
- » Taxation,
- » Management services,
- » Information technology,
- » Statistics,
- » Economics,
- » Business law,
- » Finance,
- » Specialized knowledge, and
- » Ethics – must include 2 hours in either regulator or behavioral ethics

## Documentation Requirements

All claimed CPE must have acceptable documentation. Acceptable documentation for group, self-study, nano-learning, or blended learning is a certificate of completion or transcript issued by the program sponsor. The following information MUST be included:

- » Participant's name,
- » Course sponsor,
- » Course title and/or description,
- » Dates,
- » Location,
- » Number of CPE credit hours, and
- » NASBA National Registry of Sponsor ID for nano-learning, and self-study if applicable

Acceptable documentation for technical committee sessions must include a written certificate, including:

- » The nature of the activity (topic or specific new competency acquired), the items discussed, and the source/material considered,
- » Dates of the learning activity, and
- » The number of CPE credits attributed to the learning activity

Acceptable evidence for credit for publishing is a copy of the publication that names the licensee as author or contributor, a statement from the licensee supporting the number of CPE hours claimed, and the name and contact information of the independent reviewer(s) or publisher.

## Types of Programs

Group programs and blended learning programs must be a minimum of one hour, but credit may be earned in one-fifth or one-half hour increments after the first full credit hour is earned.

Blended learning hours must equal the sum of the credit determination for the various completed components of the program. Pre-program, post-program, and homework assignments cannot be more than 25% of the total blended learning CPE credit for that class.

Self-study programs must be a minimum of one-half credit hour, but credit may be earned in one-fifth or one-half increments after the first one-half hour credit is earned. NOTE: A self-study course that is offered by a sponsor that IS NOT a NASBA Registry sponsor (QAS sponsor) receives half credit. Those courses must be at least 50 minutes to receive any credit.

Nano-learning is earned at one-fifth credit hour. Nano-learning courses must be offered by a NASBA National Registry of CPE Sponsor (QAS sponsor) to receive any CPE credit.

## CPE Audit

The Board would like to remind you that if you are selected for CPE audit, you MUST report your CPE and provide documentation through the CPE Audit Service system. Keeping the system up to date will allow you to see at a glance if you are compliant with requirements, and will simplify submitting for an audit.

## New Officers Elected



**John Jacobsen**

At their May meeting, the Board of Public Accountants elected John Jacobsen, CPA, as Chair for the upcoming year. John will take over July 1.

John was born and raised in Great Falls. He holds a BS in Business Administration and Accounting from the University of Montana, graduating with honors in 1981 and received his CPA license in 1983. He worked at McGladrey, Hendrickson & Company CPAs in Billings,

which eventually became an office of Eide Bailly LLP. He became a partner in 1997 and is still in active practice.

John is a member of MSCPA, AICPA, and the Billings Chapter of Certified Public Accountants. He has held a number of leadership positions, including serving on the board of directors and chair of the board of Eide Bailly LLP. He also served on the Montana Board of Public Accountants profession monitoring program, Eide Bailly LLP audit and accounting committees, and MSCPA peer review committee.



**Dan Vuckovich**

Dan Vuckovich, CPA, was elected Secretary for the coming year. Dan was born and raised in Anaconda. He is a graduate from the University of Montana with a BS in Business Administration and received his CPA in 1983. He is a shareholder at Anderson ZurMuehlen in their Great Falls office.

Dan has served in a number of leadership roles associated with the profession, including as an AICPA Council Member and a current member and past President of MSCPA. Dan has served on numerous professional committees, including currently sitting on the NASBA-AICPA Joint Uniform Accountancy Act (UAA) Committee. In addition to his work for the CPA profession, Dan has served his community in a variety of capacities including the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce, University of Great Falls, Leadership Great Falls, Great Falls Soccer Foundation, and coach for youth sporting programs.

We congratulate both John and Dan.

## Continuous Testing Launching July 1

In response to numerous candidate requests, we are pleased to announce Continuous Testing for CPA Exam candidates will begin July 1, 2020. Under the new Continuous Testing model, candidates will have the ability to take the Exam year-round, without restriction, other than waiting to receive scores from prior attempts of the same section or when there is a major change to the Exam. Continuous Testing will replace the existing CPA Exam Testing Window model, which only permits candidates to test during designated time frames each calendar quarter.

The 55 U.S. Boards of Accountancy enthusiastically support the move to Continuous Testing, as it positions candidates to re-take sections while information is top of mind and may shorten the time needed to complete the

four-section Exam. The National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) will continue to serve as a resource to the boards as they work to make the necessary changes to legislation in order to make the transition.

This shift to a Continuous Testing model signifies the power of alignment among state boards, NASBA, AICPA and Prometric, as these organizations continue to support Exam candidates on their journey to CPA.

Candidates wishing to learn more about continuous testing should follow NASBA via social media by clicking on the social media icons above and visit this page ([nasba.org/exams/continuous-testing/](https://nasba.org/exams/continuous-testing/)) frequently for important messages and continued updates.

### Great News!

Continuous  
Testing Begins July 1.

Scheduling  
Now Available.



## AICPA Peer Review Board Extends Due Dates



On May 7, 2020, the AICPA Peer Review board approved an automatic 6-month extension for all firms with reviews, corrective actions, and implementation plans originally due January 1 - September 30, 2020. This automatic extension will be viewable in PRIMA by May 22, 2020. Communication regarding this plan will be coming from the AICPA, however as your Administering Entity (AE), we wanted to provide some additional clarification.

- » There is no requirement to use the automatic extension and we encourage all firms to have their review done by the original due date. The AICPA is allowing off-site system reviews where appropriate without the approval of the AE for the foreseeable future.
- » If you have not scheduled your upcoming review, please do so immediately as there is a possibility of a reviewer shortage due to the compressed workload the extensions may cause.
- » The Peer Review Information (PRI) will be issued to all firms based on the original due date. Please complete ASAP to keep the process moving forward.
- » WE encourage firms to complete their corrective action (COA) and implementation plans (IMP) by the original due date. Several COA and IMP items such as CPE, proof of practice aide purchase, license information, etc. can be done without the need of engagement completion or contact with other professionals. Completing the COA and IMP plans will allow for the peer review process to continue, up to final acceptance.

We understand the impact the coronavirus pandemic has had on many firms and are available to answer any questions you may have regarding Peer Review.

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### Automatic Extension Examples

#### Example 1:

Firm with Upcoming Peer Review

Original due date: 5/31/20

New Extended due date: 11/30/20

#### Example 2:

Firm with Previous Approved Review Due Date Extension

Original due date: 3/31/20

Extended due date: 5/31/20

New Extended due date: 9/30/20\*

(\*six months from original due date)

#### Example 3:

Firm with Previous Approved Extension from 2019

Original due date: 11/30/19

Extended due date: 2/29/20

New Extended due date: 2/29/20\*

(\*no change as firm's original due date was from 2019)

#### Example 4:

Firm with Upcoming COA / IMP

Original due date: 5/31/20

New Extended due date: 11/30/20

#### Example 5:

COA or IMP with Previous Approved Extension

Original due date: 2/29/20

Extended due date: 4/30/20

New Extended due date: 8/30/20\*

(\*six months from original due date)

#### Example 6:

Complete COA or IMP as directed by a RAB 6/1/20 and Later

Original due date: 9/30/20

Extended due date: To be determined\*

(\*A due date given by a RAB after the due date extension granted by the Peer Review Board will be at the discretion of the RAB.

There will not be automatic extensions granted for RAB decisions after 6/1/20.)