



The Certified in Volunteer Administration CVA Credential

Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA) is an international professional certification in the field of volunteer resources management. Sponsored by the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration (CCVA), this credential recognizes practitioners who meet specified standards as measured through an examination developed by their peers. Successful candidates who earn the credential may use the designation “CVA.” An international CVA registry is maintained and publicly available on the CCVA web site:

<https://cvacert.org/cva-registry/>

Unlike *certificate* programs that involve classes or courses, the CVA is a competency-based professional certification program. Intended for those with a strong foundation in volunteer administration, it is a self-study program that measures an individual’s “knowledge-in-use” — the application of knowledge and skills as documented by a current competency framework. The certification exam assesses a candidate’s ability to structure tasks, process ideas, and solve problems related to volunteer engagement.

The CVA certification is:

- open to paid and non-paid individuals from all types of organizations
- grounded in a current body of knowledge, identified and validated by a Job Analysis process
- a defining standard of excellence and professionalism in the leadership and engagement of volunteers
- internationally recognized, and open to anyone who is comfortable reading and testing in English
- renewable every five years by earning Professional Development Units (PDUs) via a wide variety of activities.
 - more details on renewals at: <https://cvacert.org/certification/#recertification-process>

Core Competencies

Individuals pursuing the CVA credential are expected to demonstrate successfully the knowledge needed to effectively lead and manage volunteer engagement. Seven core competencies serve as a foundation for this profession, regardless of the setting or type of organization where volunteers are engaged.

Seven Competencies of Volunteer Administration

- Plan for Strategic Volunteer Engagement
- Advocate for Volunteer Involvement
- Attract and Onboard a Volunteer Workforce
- Prepare Volunteers for their Roles
- Document Volunteer Involvement
- Manage Volunteer Performance and Impact
- Acknowledge, Celebrate and Sustain Volunteer Involvement

“After being hired in my current position I was told that my CVA designation automatically put my resume at the top of the pile of candidates. Having the CVA behind my name did not get me the job, but it certainly put me ahead of the rest.”

Nadine Gamble, CVA
Cleveland, OH

The Value of CVA Certification

Benefits for the individual practitioner:

- clarifies and articulates personal values and professional ethics
- identifies areas of skill or knowledge you would like to strengthen
- assesses personal expertise against standards of performance
- enhances self-esteem through peer recognition
- increases confidence in problem-solving skills
- increases personal and professional credibility
- demonstrates the transferability of your knowledge, skills, and abilities
- reinforces your commitment to professional excellence
- may enhance your employability and/or your position in the organization

Benefits to organizations/agencies/employers:

- demonstrates a commitment to excellence in the management of volunteer resources
- improves credibility and community image
- increases organization’s understanding of volunteer resources management
- assesses employee’s application of core competencies
- identifies and documents leadership potential

The CVA Exam

The CVA exam will be administered by computer by CCVA's testing vendor, YouTestMe. Candidates for the CVA exam will have up to 2 hours to answer a total of 100 multiple-choice questions.

The CVA Exam is based on the CCVA Body of Knowledge and Competency, and contains two types of questions:

- **Knowledge:** Knowledge questions recognize specific information and facts that do not vary by situation.
- **Application:** Application questions require comprehension, interpretation, or manipulation of concepts or data. Questions may require recognition of more than one element or concept and the ability to apply knowledge to a specific situation.
- There are two 2-week exam windows during the year when the CVA exam is offered. Applications are accepted anytime during the year, however there is a deadline for each exam window.

April Exam Window: April 1-14, 2023
Application Deadline: March 1, 2023

October Exam Window: October 1-14, 2023
Application Deadline: September 1, 2023

2023 Fees

- Regular Application Fee: \$400 USD
Member Discount Application Fee: \$350 USD (*Available for members, staff and clients of ALIVE, American Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Better Impact, Engage, Habitat for Humanity International, Volunteer Canada, VolunteerMatch, VolunteerPro & United Way Worldwide*)

Candidate Support

CCVA offers a number of resources to support CVA candidates while they pursue certification. Current candidates are encouraged to visit the [CVA Candidates](#) section of the website to find information about these and other resources.

- *Self-assessment* tool to evaluate one's own level of knowledge and experience with each core competency
- *Individual informal support* from CVA certificants
- *Suggested references* for reading and self-study
- *Sample exam questions*

Exam Eligibility

In order to be eligible to sit for the CVA exam, individuals must document activity related to education, professional experience, and examples of their activity related to at least five of the core competencies.

Applicants must document the equivalent of at least three years of full-time volunteer resources management experience. A minimum of 30% of an applicant's current position must be related to volunteer resources management.

In addition to the application form, applicants must also submit a resume and one letter of professional recommendation from a supervisor, colleague, or current CVA certificant who is familiar with the applicant's recent work with volunteers.

"CCVA has provided opportunities for me to be active in the CVA community through engagement in peer review and opportunities to connect with other CVAs. The organization has adapted to the needs of members throughout the years, creating a smoother process and remote exam option, and expanding opportunity to practitioners outside of the US and Canada. The CVA designation carries with it designation of professional achievement, and the team currently working to make this happen for CCVA is very dedicated and intentional."

Allyson Drinnon, CVA
Habitat for Humanity International

How to Begin

Attend an Information Session. They are free and listed at cvacert.org/info

Questions? Contact CCVA at info@cvacert.org