

Rule 19. Certification and Education of Designated Election Officials

19.1 Purpose and Definitions

19.1.1 The Secretary of State recognizes that the oversight of elections is a profession that requires thorough knowledge of complex state and federal election law and election procedures. Considering the complexity of state and federal law, voting equipment, and election procedures, extensive training is necessary. The certification program standardizes election procedures and education. The program also promotes Colorado voters' confidence in their election officials and the election process.

19.1.2 "Local election official" means a county clerk. (Section 1-1-301(1), C.R.S.)

19.1.3 "Persons required to complete certification" means:

- (a) The county clerk;
- (b) Employees in the county clerk's office who are directly responsible for overseeing election activities, including but not limited to: voter registration, candidate qualifications and ballot certification, poll worker training, ballot design and setup, ballot counting, and canvassing;
- (c) Other employees in the county clerk and recorder's office at the discretion of the clerk;
- (d) A designated election official for a county and a coordinated election official for a county; and
- (e) Employees in the Elections Division of the Department of State at the discretion of the Secretary of State.

19.2 Advisory Board

19.2.1 The advisory board meets either in person or through electronic means at least twice each calendar year to approve the curriculum and make necessary changes.

19.2.2 The advisory board must recommend changes to the certification program or additional classes after reviewing evaluations, attendance numbers, and online trainings.

19.2.3 The Secretary of State will appoint the following as board members:

- (a) Four county clerks or designated staff members;
- (b) Two Secretary of State Office representatives; and
- (c) Any individual whom the Secretary of State believes could make a valuable contribution to the board.

19.2.4 Board members serve at least a two-year term.

19.2.5 The Secretary of State may terminate board members without cause. Failure to attend meetings or meaningfully contribute may result in termination.

19.3 Curriculum

19.3.1 The Secretary of State will develop the core and elective curriculum offered for certification and continuing elections education. The Secretary will post curriculum information on the Secretary of State's website.

19.3.2 The Secretary of State will develop and administer all training outlined in this Rule 19.

19.3.3 To obtain Colorado certification, a person must complete the following minimum curriculum prescribed by the Secretary of State:

- (a) Seven basic core courses;
- (b) One core course relevant to primary job duty; and
- (c) Six electives.

19.3.4 To maintain Colorado certification, a person must complete at least four Continuing Elections Education courses by July 31 of every year and complete at least one in-person class every two years.

19.4 Training Format

19.4.1 Web-based training may be conducted live or by reviewing material previously presented by the Secretary of State. In either case, participants must achieve a satisfactory score on assessments before receiving credit for the course.

19.4.2 The Secretary of State will provide classroom training. For certification, a person must complete at least one course in-person.

19.5 Credit

19.5.1 Individuals applying for certification must successfully complete the curriculum prescribed by the Secretary of State. If an applicant submits duplicate coursework, the Secretary of State may reject the application for certification.

19.5.2 Training assessment

- (a) To receive certification credit for any course presented by the Secretary of State under this Rule, a participant must successfully complete a training assessment with a minimum score of 85%.
- (b) A participant who fails to achieve a score of at least 85% may retake the assessment.
- (c) The Secretary of State may administer either paper or electronic assessments.

19.5.3 Credit for Teaching Classes. A person who teaches or substantially assists with preparation of a class offered for certification is excused from the assessment requirement outlined in Rule 19.5.2 and will receive credit for the course.

19.5.4 No election official may receive credit toward his or her Colorado certification for training offered by other agencies or organizations.

19.6 Application Review, Certification, and Maintenance of Records

19.6.1 When a person completes the required coursework, he or she must promptly submit an application for certification to the Secretary of State's office on the form approved by the Secretary of State.

19.6.2 The Secretary of State must review the application with reference to the Secretary of State records. If the application is complete and accurate, the Secretary of State must issue a certificate that the person is a Certified Colorado Election Official.

19.6.3 The Secretary of State must track attendance at all classes and keep records of attendance, continuing elections education, and records of those persons who are certified and persons who are in the certification process.

19.6.4 A person is recertified when they complete the classes required under Rule 19.3.4.

19.7 Decertification

19.7.1 A person who fails to satisfy continuing education requirements, or who the Secretary of State discovers failed to satisfy the requirements for initial certification will lose certification.

19.7.2 The Secretary of State will notify a person in writing via email or mail if the Secretary believes that person should be decertified because they failed to satisfy the requirements for initial certification under this Rule.

19.7.3 A person who is notified in writing that they will be decertified because they failed to satisfy the requirements for initial certification under this Rule has 15 business days to provide a response to the Secretary describing why they should not be decertified.

19.7.4 After receiving a response, or upon a person's failure to timely respond, the Secretary will make a final determination regarding decertification. The Secretary may request additional information as necessary to make that determination.