Tax-Exempt and Government Plan Consultant TGPC™
Candidate Handbook
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Introduction

About the TGPC Credential
NTSA’s Tax Exempt and Government Plans (TGPC) credential is the only one of its kind in the retirement industry that specifically focuses on the niche but large market of 403(b) and 457(b) plans. Developed by industry experts with insights and techniques every professional should know. Earning the TGPC credential will prove to your clients and your colleagues that you understand the specific rules and requirements for the 403(b) and 457(b) plan market.

About the National Tax-Deferred Savings Association (NTSA)
The National Tax-Deferred Savings Association (NTSA) is the nation’s only independent, non-profit association dedicated to the 403(b) and 457(b) marketplace. The NTSA was formed in 1989 and has grown to include practitioners, agencies, corporate and employer members. NTSA’s mission is to provide high-quality professional education, technical support, and networking forums for all professionals in the 403(b) and 457(b) marketplace.

In pursuit of these goals, NTSA offers its growing membership extensive educational opportunities, paired with a strong advocacy operation that puts us at the center of any legislative debates that could affect what you do for a living. Our educational opportunities include robust credentialing, certificate and continuing education programs, along with the best lineup of conferences and networking opportunities in the industry.

About the American Retirement Association (ARA)
The American Retirement Association (ARA) is a non-profit organization that aims to educate retirement plan professionals and create a framework of policy that gives every working American the ability to have a comfortable retirement.

As part of that mission, for more than half a century, the ARA has developed and distributed education programs, information resources, and professional credentials that have become the gold standard for retirement plan professionals in every field of endeavor.

More than 26,000 members strong, today the American Retirement Association is comprised of five premier retirement industry associations; the American Society of Pension Professionals & Actuaries (ASPPA), the American Society of Enrolled Actuaries (ASEA), the National Association of Plan Advisors (NAPA), the National Tax-deferred Savings Association (NTSA), and Plan Sponsor Council of America (PSCA).
Section 1: How to Apply for Certification

Eligibility
NTSA has developed requirements for eligibility to ensure that the application process is fair and impartial for all applicants. Each eligibility requirement has been established to ensure that individuals certified by NTSA have an acceptable level of knowledge and proficiency necessary to work with 403(b) and 457(b) retirement plans.

Exam Requirement
To earn the TGPC credential candidates must successfully pass the TGPC Credential exam. The TGPC exam has been updated in 2020 to reflect the latest trends and updates in the field. The credential exam is available online year-round and candidates who purchase the exam have 180 days to complete.

Experience and Education Requirement
The TGPC credential is designed for individuals with 5 or more years’ experience in the retirement industry with 2 years being specific to the 403(b) and 457(b) markets.

Application Requirements
Complete the NTSA Credentialed Member Application. The application requirements include:

- Agreement to abide by the ARA Code of Conduct
- Acknowledging receipt of the NTSA continuing education policy
- Pay the NTSA credentialed membership fee

Section 2: Exam Administration

Exam Format Policy Change
Due to the current social distancing guidelines, the TGPC exam will be offered exclusively online with a self-attestation of compliance with the code of conduct and exam policies. You do not need an approved proctor present to take the exams. Please know that this change is temporary, and you will be given ample notice before the policy resumes as normal.

Exam Formats
The TGPC credentialing exam is delivered by computer either through Prometric test centers located throughout the United States or online through the ARA Learning Management System. Online certification exams must be taken with a pre-approved proctor present. Proctor guidelines and exam administration guidelines are outlined in the Appendix below and must be verified by the proctor before submitting the exam.
The TGPC exam consists of 75 multiple-choice questions. Candidates have 2.5 hours to complete each exam.

----- Detailed information about each exam’s topics are provided in the Appendix. -----

Exam Window
Exams must be taken during the exam window. The exam window is 180 days from the date the exam is purchased. Candidates will forfeit their exam fee if they do not complete the TGPC exam during the exam window.

Language
The TGPC exam is offered in English.

Test Administration Modification
Special accommodations to test administration shall be provided to candidates with a disability (as defined by Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act) who submit a Special Accommodation Request form. Requests must be submitted no less than 30 days prior to test date in order to allow sufficient time for arrangements to be made on behalf of the test candidate. Application forms for these accommodations are provided in this handbook and online at www.NTSA.org.

Audit of Results
NTSA may audit a portion of the applications that are submitted for compliance with the credential program requirements. It is the candidate’s responsibility to retain all documentation necessary to support program compliance.

Exam Irregularities
Any problems, suspected instances of cheating, alleged inappropriate examination administration, environmental testing conditions severe enough to cause disruption of the process or any other irregularities related to test administration should be brought to the attention of the onsite proctor, if a proctor is assigned to the exam session, and brought to the attention of NTSA at customercare@ntsa.org. All such matters will be reported, investigated and subject to further action based on policies and procedures adopted by NTSA.

Cheating or other violations of the ARA Code of Conduct, or matters that may constitute grounds for disciplinary action, will be handled under the disciplinary procedures adopted by NTSA, but other issues in the nature of examination irregularities are not subject to appeal.

Violation of Code of Conduct
If it is determined that a candidate has violated the ARA Code of Conduct, the candidate may be barred from taking the exam for a timeframe determined by ARA.
Exam Passing Score
TGPC Exam = 70%

Because each examination has different topic weightings, it is possible for a candidate to get “needs work” in a number of areas and still pass the examination. Conversely, the candidate could receive “needs work” in only a few areas and still fail the examination.

Statement of Non-Discrimination
NTSA endorses the principles of equal opportunity. Eligibility criteria for examination and credentialing as a TGPC are applied equally to all individuals regardless of age, race, religion, gender, national origin, veteran status, or disability.

Confidentiality
NTSA recognizes candidates’ rights to control personal information. NTSA policy is designed to safeguard this information from unauthorized disclosure. Candidates can change preferences to be contacted by updating personal preferences in their profiles. To protect the rights to control score distribution, exam scores are released only to the candidate and authorized NTSA or ARA staff.

NTSA does not release individual exam scores, except for use in research studies that preserve candidates’ anonymity. Candidates’ scores will always remain confidential unless authorized with the written consent of a candidate. Official statistics regarding the TGPC credentialing exam, including all question performance data, individual data, and demographic data, will be considered confidential; however, NTSA reserves the right to publish aggregated, non-identifying information based on such data.

Notification of Exam Results
Candidates taking the online test are notified immediately of their examination results with an unofficial score report. Official score results will be emailed to candidates once the examination results have been verified. For security reasons, results will not be provided over the phone or sent by fax.

Upon completion of the TGPC exam at a Prometric testing center, a candidate will be notified immediately whether or not he/she passed the exam and a score report will be issued. This report serves as documentation of pass or fail status.
Score Reports
Candidates will be provided a score report upon completion of the TGPC exam. Score reports will indicate how an individual performed in each topic area.

Sharing Exam Results
Candidates who wish to have their grades sent to anyone other than themselves can do so by completing the ARA Certification Examination Score Release Form.

Passing Score
Candidates who successfully complete the examination, and whose credentials and application entitle them to credentialing, will be notified by email and granted a TGPC Credential. The credential remains the property of NTSA, which may withdraw, cancel, revoke, or otherwise annul the credential for cause.

NTSA Credential Candidate Inquiry Policy
Candidates may submit written inquiries about NTSA study materials and credentialing exams. Credential examination inquiries must be submitted within 30 days after the examination date.

Inquiries regarding NTSA credentialing exams must be submitted by the exam candidate. NTSA will not review or respond to inquiries submitted on the candidate’s behalf. Correspondence will be conducted in accordance with NTSA’s privacy policy contained in this handbook.

Appeals
Candidates may appeal the results of program eligibility determination or TGPC credentialing examinations within 30 days of the date of the results.

Re-scoring Exam Results
Candidates may request to have an exam rescoring once at no charge. Candidates will be assessed a $75 rescoring fee after the first exam rescoring.

Retesting
A candidate may take the same exam only two times during a one-year period.

Exam Refund & Transfer Policy
Fees for examinations are not refundable. The right to sit for a NTSA examination belongs exclusively to the person named on the examination registration form. That person may transfer the right to someone else; however, the transfer must be in writing from the original registrant and must be received no later than the final registration date.
Section 3: Preparing for the TGPC Certification Exam

The number of hours of study needed to prepare for the TGPC examination varies from person to person depending on the length and breadth of a person’s experience in the field. Many successful candidates begin studying several months before an examination date in order to allow sufficient time to cover all the material to the proper extent.

NTSA has created a credential package to prepare TGPC candidates for the TGPC credential exam. The package includes:

The TGPC Online Credential Prep Course
The online course includes a full downloadable pdf of the NTSA publication *The Source for 403(b) and 457(b) Plans*. The online course is broken into easier to follow modules following each exam topic area. The course guides the learners through the learning objectives with reading assignments in The Source publication and content summaries. Each content area also includes knowledge checks to check your understanding of the content and provide feedback.

The TGPC Practice Exam
The TGPC Practice Exam is designed as a study tool to help you master material covered in the TGPC Credential Exam and to help you become more familiar with the testing style.

Please note that this practice exam is designed to give you examples of the types of questions that will appear on the actual exam. Your performance on these sample questions should not be taken as an absolute prediction of your performance on the actual TGPC exam. Instead, you should use this experience of taking the practice exam as an opportunity to measure your preparation level in advance of taking the actual exam.

The TGPC Credential Exam
Section 4: Maintaining Your Credential

Continuing Education Requirements
NTSA designation holders must complete forty (40) hours of Continuing Education (“CE”) every two years. The two-year cycle begins on the first calendar day of each odd numbered year and ends on the last calendar day of the subsequent even numbered year.

Continuing Education Requirement for New Designation Holders
For designation holders that are awarded their first NTSA designation in an odd year, the CE requirement for the CE Cycle ending the following calendar year is twenty (20) hours.

For designation holders that are awarded their first NTSA designation in an even year, the CE requirement for the CE Cycle ending that calendar year is zero (0) hours.

Continuing Education Content Standards
Reported CE must meet the following standards to qualify for continuing education credit:

- Content must be developed by person(s) qualified in the subject matter.
- Maximum total amount of CE reported per event must be no more than twenty-five (25) credit hours.
- CE hours reported shall match the actual time on task rounded down to the nearest five (5) minute increment.
  - One (1.0) hour of CE is equivalent to 50 minutes of instruction or study time on task.
  - After the first 50 minutes, CE hours may be accrued 5-minute increments where 5 minutes is equal to one tenth (0.1) CE credits.
  - CE will not be accepted for any event less than 45 minutes time on task. This is equivalent to a nine-tenths (0.9) CE threshold.
- Two (2) hour of ethics related CE must be earned and recorded each cycle.
- CE credits must be earned and reported for the current cycle. CE credits may not be carried over from one cycle to the next.

Acceptable Subject Matter
All continuing education topics that promote an NTSA member’s professional development in the retirement field qualify for NTSA CE (including non-technical topics such as marketing and advanced IT training). Broad categories include topics such as:

- Qualified Plans
- Nonqualified Plans
- Tax-Exempt & Governmental Plans
- IRAs
- Actuarial Issues
- Investments & Insurance
- Participant Issues
• Business Management, Operations & Development
• Personal Development
• Technology

Reporting Requirements

Third Party CE
- Designation holders are responsible for reporting third party CE activity using the NTSA CE reporting system.
- Records of completion of third-party CE must be maintained by the designation holder for a minimum of two (2) calendar years following the calendar year for which the CE credit is reported.
- Third party CE is subject to audit.

NTSA Provided CE
- NTSA will record CE credit for participation in NTSA CE events.
- NTSA will ensure that NTSA provided CE meets both continuing education content standards and addresses retirement plan related acceptable subject matter.

Compliance and Audit
The audit of third-party CE is conducted for the benefit of all NTSA designation holders. The CE audit process demonstrates NTSA’s ongoing commitment to professionalism and the integrity of its program. The CE audit process helps ensure compliance with the CE policy, but more importantly, will help NTSA identify opportunities to continuously improve the CE program.

The Audit Process
NTSA will conduct an audit of reported third party CE. The audit will encompass a randomly selected representative sample of designation holders who reported third party CE the prior cycle.

Designation holders who are randomly selected for the CE audit will be asked to provide suitable documentation to substantiate that the reported Third-Party CE meets the Continuing Education Content Standards. In general, the documentation must demonstrate that:

• The content was developed by a subject matter expert with expertise pertinent to the subject matter
• Time on task for the CE credit awarded
• Successful completion or participation

The designation holder subject to audit will also be asked to provide a description of the CE session for any third-party CE reported to satisfy the ethics or retirement plan related acceptable subject matter.
Suspension of Designation
NTSA designations may be suspended for the following reasons

- Failure to comply with the NTSA Continuing Education Policy
- Failure to renew NTSA membership or NTSA credential maintenance fee as applicable
- Violation of the ARA Code of Professional Conduct

Failure to comply with the NTSA Continuing Education Policy
Designation holders will have until March 1 of each calendar year to report CE for the prior calendar year CE cycle. NTSA provided CE earned prior to March 1st of each calendar year may be applied to the CE reporting cycle for the prior calendar year. In no case will CE be recorded for more than one CE reporting cycle.

If the failure to comply with the NTSA Continuing Education Policy results from the audit of third-party CE, the designation holder will have 60 days from the date of notification to correct the deficiency.

Failure to renew NTSA membership
Designation holders are expected to remain NTSA members in good standing and make timely payment of any designation maintenance fee that may be required by NTSA. Failure to pay any required fees by March 1 of each calendar year will result in suspension of the designation.

Violation of the ARA Code of Professional Conduct
Suspension and or revocation of designations due to actual or reported violation of the ARA Code of Professional Conduct is addressed in the ARA Code of Conduct Disciplinary Procedures.

Revocation of Designation
Designations will be revoked for designation holders who do not correct the deficiency or deficiencies that initiated the suspension of the designation within the parameters outlined in this policy statement and or any communications from NTSA with regard to the suspension of designation.

If the designation is revoked, all NTSA records and reports will be updated to reflect the revocation. This may include updating the NTSA designation holder database available to the public. Individuals for whom designations have been revoked may not apply for reinstatement and may not retake the qualifying designation examination earlier than the calendar year following the year in which the designation was revoked.

Reinstatement
Reinstatement may be granted if the following conditions are met prior to the end of the calendar year following the calendar year a designation is suspended or revoked:

- The reinstatement application and new membership application is submitted
- Required fees including membership, credential maintenance and reinstatement fees are paid in full
  - Documentation is provided demonstrating compliance with the CE policy for the current CE cycle
APPENDIX
TGPC Credential Exam Administered Online

Temporary Exam Format Policy Change
Due to the current social distancing guidelines, the TGPC exam will be offered exclusively online with a self-attestation of compliance with the code of conduct and exam policies. You do not need an approved proctor present to take the exams.

You have a single attempt and will be given 150 minutes to complete the exam. You cannot exit the exam and return again. Once you exit the exam your score will be recorded. Please know that this change is temporary, and you will be given ample notice before the policy resumes as normal.

Candidate Attestation and Disclosure Agreement

☐ I understand that the contents of this exam are the property of ASPPA and its contents are copyrighted under the laws of the United States.

☐ I understand that copying, reproducing, or distributing the contents of this exam in any form is unlawful.

☐ I understand that revealing the contents of the questions of this exam is strictly prohibited.

☐ I certify that I have not and will not retain the exam questions or disclose them in whole or in part to any other person of entity.

☐ I understand that using any prohibited aids in connection with the exam, attempting to give or receive assistance, or otherwise communicate in any form with another person or entity about the exam during the administration is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

☐ I understand that no cell phone usage is allowed and agree to turn my cell phone off while taking the exam.

☐ I understand that no third party is allowed in the room while taking the test.

☐ I have read, understand, and agree that my exam may not be scored, the exam fee may be forfeited, and I may be barred from taking ASPPA examinations for three years from the date of the incident if the Certification committee has reason to believe that I am involved in exam misconduct or any other testing irregularity that could compromise the integrity of the exam. I understand that copying, reproducing, or distributing the contents of this exam in any form is unlawful.

☐ I understand that if I do not agree to these terms and conditions, I will not be permitted to take the exam, and I will forfeit my exam fee.
About the TGPC credential online exam
NTSA permits TGPC candidates to take TGPC credential exam online through the ARA learning management system (LMS). Online certification exams must be taken with a pre-approved proctor present. Proctor guidelines and exam administration guidelines are outlined below and must be verified by the proctor before submitting the exam.

Exam Window
Exams must be taken during the exam window. The exam window is 180 days from the date the exam is purchased. Candidates will forfeit their exam fee if they do not complete the exams during the exam window.

Proctor Qualifications
Online TGPC credential exam proctors must be one of the following:

- An NTSA credentialed member
- Public librarian (offering supervised proctoring services)
- University professor/ or librarian
- Professional testing center staff
- Professional development center staff
- Military base professional development center staff
- ARA or state affiliated staff

Supervisors, co-workers, relatives, or individuals not associated with a professional development career cannot proctor the credential exam without direct approval from the NTSA certification staff.

Proctor Fees & Exam Site Requirements
NTSA allows proctor sites to charge fees for administering the exam though proctors are not required to charge to proctor the exam. TGPC credential candidates are responsible for the proctoring exam fees.

Proctor Guidelines for Exam Administration
Proctoring site requirements are crucial to the success of the exam process and the success of the candidate. The exam proctor should ensure the following conditions are met before, during, and at the conclusion of the exam:

- The testing environment should have adequate space, lighting, and be a comfortable temperature.
- Facility must be ADA accessible.
- Candidates should be seated approximately 3 feet apart.
- Proper ID must be checked for each candidate.
- Candidates are not permitted to use any reference materials while taking the exam.
- Candidates are required to turn their cell phones off and put them away. Cell phone use is not permitted during the exam and use of a cell phone is means for disqualification.
- No third party is allowed in the room during the test session.
- Additional monitors or computers must be turned off.
• Breaks are not allowed during the exam for any reason other than to use the restroom. (Candidates may use the restroom as needed however all exam materials must remain in the testing room with the proctor.) You understand and agree that, if you take a break, your exam score will be invalidated, and you will not be allowed to resume the exam later.
• Inform candidates of the 2.5-hour time limit for the completion of the exam. Exam proctors MUST remain in the testing room for the duration of the exam.
• The proctor cannot answer questions related to exam content.
• Exam proctor should notify candidates of the time every hour and every quarter hour for the last hour of the exam.
• If there is a technical issue during exam delivery, the proctor should first attempt to contact the NTSA certification staff. If no staff is available, the proctor should fill out an incident report and submit it at the conclusion of the exam or via email as soon as possible.

Scoring Exams and Issuing Certificates

A score of 70% is required to pass the TGPC exam.

Upon completing the exams online, the candidate will immediately receive a result and feedback. However, exam results and certificate delivery are not official until the proctor exam codes and incident reports are reviewed. Candidates will be able to access their score report and certificate online through the member account page.
# TGPC Credential Exam Content Outline

## Plan Options for Tax Exempt and Governmental Employers (5%)

1. Identify the types of plans available to public education.
2. Identify the types of plans available to state and local governments.
3. Identify the types of plans available to 501(c)(3) entities.
4. Describe the differences between a 403(b) plan and a 401(k) plan.

## 403(b) Plans - Plan Eligibility (7%)

1. Explain when a 403(b) plan is subject to ERISA.
2. Explain the universal availability rules including a "meaningful opportunity to participate."
3. Identify employees who can participate in a 403(b) plan.
4. Identify employees who can be excluded in a 403(b) plan.
5. Explain whether ERISA 403(b) and non-ERISA 403(b) plan assets are subject to creditors of the employer and the employee.

## 403(b) Employee and Employer Contributions (9%)

1. Identify the types of contributions that can be made to a 403(b) plan.
2. Explain the contribution limits of a 403(b) plan.
3. Define includible compensation in a 403(b) plan.
4. Define types of compensation that can be used in a 403(b) plan.
5. Explain the general rules of salary reduction agreements for elective deferrals into a 403(b) plan during employment and post-employment.
6. Define the timing rules for remitting contributions to ERISA and non-ERISA 403(b) plans.
7. Define the concept of vesting in an 403(b) plan.

## 403(b) Distributions and Rollovers (13%)

1. List the IRC distributable events that allow a participant to withdraw elective deferrals from a 403(b) plan.
2. List the IRC distributable events that allow a participant to withdraw employer contributions from a 403(b) plan.
3. Identify the sources within a 403(b) that have no IRC withdrawal restrictions.
4. Explain how the eligible rollover rules apply to 403(b) plans.
5. Describe the involuntary cash-out procedure that applies to distributions from a 403(b) plan.
6. Explain the in-plan rollover rules for designated Roth accounts in 403(b) plans.
7. Explain the rules regarding RMDs from 403(b) plans.
8. Describe the death benefits available from a 403(b) plan.
10. Identify the specific tax forms that are issued when a participant takes a distribution from a 403(b) plan.
### Contract Exchanges and Plan-to-Plan Transfers

1. Identify what a contract exchange is as it relates to 403(b) plans.
2. Describe the types of tax-free transfers permitted from a 403(b) plan.
3. Explain how and for what reasons a 457(b) or 403(b) participant would purchase service credits in a state’s defined benefit plan.
4. Describe the issues that a participant should consider before moving his or her 403(b) account to another investment vehicle or product provider.
5. Describe the product provider and employer/TPA requirements for tax-free transfers and exchanges.
6. Describe the issues that eligible participants should consider when deciding whether to purchase service credits in a state’s defined benefit plan.

### Participant Loans and Hardships

1. Explain the loan rules as they apply to 403(b) plans.
2. Calculate a participant’s maximum available 403(b) loan amount.
3. Describe the rules for a hardship distribution from a 403(b) plan.

### Plan Document, Annuity and Custodial Account Basics

1. Describe the information sharing process that occurs between an employer and a 403(b) provider or TPA.
2. Explain the differences in the required language that must be included in a 403(b)(7) custodial agreement versus a 403(b)(1) annuity contract.
3. Describe the differences between an individual custodial agreement/annuity contract and a group custodial/annuity.
4. Identify the key documents that must be prepared when implementing a new 403(b) plan.
5. Identify the parties that may be involved in the administration of a 403(b) plan and their responsibilities.
6. Explain the steps that must be taken in order to terminate a 403(b) plan.
7. Explain the differences between a frozen and a terminated 403(b) plan.

### ERISA 403(b) Plan Requirements

1. List the type of disclosure information (SPD, SMM, etc.) that must be provided to ERISA 403(b) participants and when it must be provided.
2. Identify the fiduciary requirements for an ERISA 403(b) plan.
3. Describe the ERISA qualified joint and survivor annuity (QJSA) and qualified pre-retirement survivor annuity (QPSA) requirements in 403(b) plans.
4. Describe the Form 5500 annual reporting requirements applicable to 403(b) plans including required schedules, summary annual report and the filing deadlines.

### Fiduciary Standards and Responsibilities for 403(b) Plan

1. List the parties that are considered fiduciaries under ERISA.
2. Discuss why a plan sponsor would want to satisfy the requirements of ERISA §404(c).
3. Discuss fiduciary standards in non-ERISA plans.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nondiscrimination Requirements</th>
<th>(11%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Describe the nondiscrimination rules (including minimum coverage testing) that are applicable to IRC §501(c)(3) organizations sponsoring ERISA 403(b) plans.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Describe the nondiscrimination rules that are applicable for governmental and non-electing IRC §3121(w)(3)(A)(B) church plans.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. List the correction methods for a failed actual contribution percentage (ACP) test.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. List the types of safe harbors that a 403(b) plan may used to avoid nondiscrimination testing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Compare the nondiscrimination rules applicable to 403(b) and 401(k) plans.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Identify the potential effect of the controlled group rules on tax-exempt organizations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. State the potential consequences of the loss of 403(b) status to the plan sponsor and participants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Describe the IRS and DOL correction programs available to 403(b) plans.</td>
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<tr>
<th>457(b) Plans</th>
<th>(7%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Explain the similarities and differences between a governmental and a tax-exempt 457(b) plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Compare the definition of includible compensation used in a 403(b) plan versus a 457(b) plan.</td>
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<td>3. List the distributable events permitted by the IRC that allow a participant to take a distribution from a 457(b) plan.</td>
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<td>4. Describe the considerations of using a rabbi trust in a nongovernmental tax-exempt 457(b) plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Discuss private letter rulings, government filings and the IRS approval process as it relates to 457(b) plans.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>457(f) Plans</th>
<th>(4%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. List the characteristics of a 457(f) plan.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Discuss when contributions to a 457(f) plan are included as income for federal tax purposes.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Explain what is a substantial risk of forfeiture and its tax consequences in a 457(f) plan.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>401(a) Governmental Plans</th>
<th>(5%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Describe the advantages of a governmental employer for adding a 401(a) plan in addition to a 407(b) and 403(b) plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Describe the characteristics of IRC §414(h) pickup contributions when they are typically used and how they impact contribution and compensation limits.</td>
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<td>3. Describe the purpose a DROP option in a governmental defined benefit plan serves, and list the types of employee groups that are typically offered a DROP.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Describe an Optional Retirement Plan (ORP)/Alternative Retirement Plan (ARP).</td>
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### Religious Organizations (7%)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Define the 3 types of &quot;church&quot; entities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Explain the two catch-up provisions under IRC §415(c) that are specific to churches and QCCOs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Describe distributions for housing allowance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Differentiate between a 403(b)(9) retirement income account and a 403(b)(1) annuity or 403(b)(7) custodial account.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Ethics and Professional Responsibility (3%)

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<td>1</td>
<td>Identify actions that do and do not violate the American Retirement Association Code of Professional Conduct.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Describe the circumstances that may result in an ethical dilemma and the steps that should be taken when confronted with an ethical dilemma.</td>
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**ARA Code of Professional Conduct**
**Purpose**
The purpose of this Code of Professional Conduct (“Code”) is to identify the professional and ethical standards with which a Member must comply, in order to fulfill the Member’s responsibility to the American Retirement Association and its affiliate organizations, other Members, and the public. Members are required to adhere to the high standards of conduct, practice, and qualification set forth in this Code.

**Definitions**
Actuary: an individual who is a Member of the American Retirement Association and holds an MSPA or FSPA from the ASPPA College of Pension Actuaries or an actuarial credential from another organization that is a member of the International Actuarial Association (IAA) or is an enrolled actuary in good standing with the Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries.

Advertising: all communications by whatever medium, including oral communications, which may directly or indirectly influence any person or organization to decide whether there is a need for Professional Services or to select a specific person or firm to perform such services.

Confidential Information: information not in the public domain of which the Member becomes aware during the course of rendering Professional Services to a Principal. It may include information of a proprietary nature, information which is legally restricted from circulation, or information which the Member has reason to believe that the Principal would not wish to be divulged.

Credential: a membership designation (e.g., Certified Pension Consultant; Member, Society of Pension Actuaries; or Associated Professional Member) conferred by American Retirement Association.

Law: statutes, regulations, judicial decisions, and other statements having legally binding authority.

Member: an individual who is a Member of American Retirement Association or any affiliate organization of American Retirement Association.

Principal: any present or prospective client of a Member or the employer of a Member where the Member provides retirement plan services for their employer’s plan.

Professional Communication: a written, electronic or oral communication issued by a Member with respect to Professional Services.

Professional Services: services provided to a Principal by a Member, including the rendering of advice, recommendations, findings, or opinions related to a retirement or other employee benefit plan.

Titles: leadership positions, volunteer experience, awards and other honors conferred by American Retirement Association.

**Advertising**
Member shall not engage in any Advertising with respect to Professional Services that the Member knows or is reasonably expected to know are false.

**Communications**
A Member who issues a Professional Communication shall take appropriate steps to ensure that the Professional Communication is appropriate to the circumstances and its intended audience.
Compliance
A Member shall be knowledgeable about this Code, keep current with Code revisions and abide by its provisions. Laws may impose binding obligations on a Member. This Code is not intended to supplant, contradict or supersede Law (e.g., Circular 230) or other Codes of Conduct that establish professional standards for Members in the rendition of Professional Services and that have been sanctioned by the federal or a state government. Where the requirements of Law or such governmentally-sanctioned Codes conflict with this Code, the requirements of Law or such governmentally-sanctioned Codes take precedence.

Confidentiality
A Member shall not disclose to another party any Confidential Information obtained in rendering Professional Services for a Principal unless authorized to do so by the Principal or required to do so by Law.

Conflicts of Interest
A Member shall not perform Professional Services involving an actual conflict of interest unless:

• The Member’s ability to act fairly is unimpaired; and
• There has been full disclosure of the conflict to the Principal(s); and
• All Principals have expressly agreed to the performance of the services by the Member.

If the Member is aware of any significant conflict between the interests of a Principal and the interests of another party, the Member should advise the Principal of the conflict and include appropriate qualifications or disclosures in any related communication.

Control of Work Product
A Member shall not perform Professional Services when the Member has reason to believe that they may be altered in a material way or may be used to violate or evade the Law. The Member should recognize the risk that materials prepared by the Member could be misquoted, misinterpreted or otherwise misused by another party to influence the actions of a third party and should take reasonable steps to ensure that the material is presented fairly and that the sources of the material are identified.

Courtesy and Cooperation
A Member shall perform Professional Services with courtesy and shall cooperate with others in the Principal’s interest.

A. Principal has an indisputable right to choose a professional advisor. A Member may provide service to any Principal who requests it even though such Principal is being or has been served by another professional in the same manner.

B. When a Principal has given consent for a new or additional professional to consult with a Member with respect to a matter for which the Member is providing or has provided Professional Services, the Member shall cooperate in assembling and transmitting pertinent data and documents, subject to receiving reasonable compensation for the work required to do so. In accordance with Circular 230, the Member shall promptly, at the request of the Principal, return any and all records of the Principal that are necessary for the Principal to comply with federal tax Law, even if the Member is not subject to Circular 230. The existence of a fee dispute generally does not relieve the Member of this responsibility except to the extent permitted by applicable state Law. The Member need not provide any items of a proprietary nature or work product for which the Member has not been compensated.
Disclosure
A Member shall make full and timely disclosure to a present or prospective Principal of all sources of direct or indirect material compensation or other material consideration that the Member or the Member’s firm has received or may receive in relation to an assignment for such Principal. The disclosure of sources of material compensation or consideration that the Member’s firm has received, or may receive, is limited to those sources known to, or reasonably ascertainable by, the Member.

Professional Integrity
A Member shall perform Professional Services, and shall take reasonable steps to ensure that Professional Services rendered under the Member’s supervision are performed, with honesty, integrity, skill and care. A Member has an obligation to observe standards of professional conduct in the course of providing advice, recommendations and other services performed for a Principal. A Member who pleads guilty to or is found guilty of any misdemeanor related to financial matters or any felony shall be presumed to have contravened this Code and shall be subject to American Retirement Association’s counseling and disciplinary procedures.

Qualification Standards
A Member shall render opinions or advice, or perform Professional Services, only when qualified to do so based on education, training and experience.

Titles and Credentials
A Member shall make truthful use of the membership Titles and Credentials of ARA to which the Member is entitled, and only where that use conforms to the practices authorized by American Retirement Association, and its affiliate organizations. A Member who is not an Actuary as defined in section 1 of this Code shall not professionally represent to the public to be an actuary or knowingly allow such misrepresentation by others.

Additional Obligations
A Member whose professional conduct is regulated by another membership organization shall abide by the professional Code of Conduct (or similar rules) of such organization. For example, a Member who is an actuary shall also abide by the Code of Professional Conduct for actuaries.

A Member shall respond promptly in writing to any communication received from a person duly authorized by American Retirement Association to obtain information or assistance regarding a Member’s possible violation of this Code. The Member’s responsibility to respond shall be subject to Section 5 of this Code, “Confidentiality,” and any other confidentiality requirements imposed by Law. In the absence of a full and timely response, American Retirement Association may resolve such possible violations based on available information.

Suspension and or revocation of designations due to actual or reported violation of the ARA Code of Conduct is addressed in the ARA Code of Conduct Disciplinary Procedures.
Request for Online Exam Accommodations

If you have a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, please complete this form and the Documentation of Disability-Related Needs on the reverse side so your accommodations for testing can be processed efficiently. The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and your need for accommodation in testing will be treated with strict confidentiality. Please return this form to NTSA within 30 days of the desired testing date.

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Name (Last, First)

Mailing Address

City  State  Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number  Email Address

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

I request special accommodations for the TGPC Credential exam online exam on ____________________.

(date)

Please provide (check all that apply):

_____ Extended examination time (time and a half)

_____ Please specify below if other special accommodations are needed.

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Signed: ________________________________  Date: ________________________________

Please return this form to araeducation@usaretirement.org or NTSA/ARA Education, 4401 N. Fairfax Dr. | Ste. 600, Arlington, VA 22203
**DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY-RELATED NEEDS**
Please have this section completed by an appropriate professional (education professional, physician, psychologist, psychiatrist) to ensure that NTSA is able to provide the required examination accommodations.

**PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

The candidate discussed with me the nature of the examination to be administered. It is my opinion that, because of this candidate’s disability described below, he/she should be accommodated by providing the special arrangements listed on the reverse side.

Description of Disability:

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Signed: _______________________________________________________
Title: _________________________________________________________
Printed Name: _________________________________________________
Date: _________________________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________
Telephone Number: ____________________________________________
Email Address: _________________________________________________