

Reclamation Manual

Policy

- Subject:** Payment for Professional Credentials
- Purpose:** These instructions set forth Bureau of Reclamation policy and procedures that authorize payment for professional credentials.
- Authority:** Title 5, United States Code, section 5757, enacted by section 1112 of National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002.
- Contact:** Human Resources Policy Management Team, D-7511
-

1. **Objective.** Authorizes use of appropriated funds or funds otherwise available to Reclamation to pay for expenses for employees (in any Federal pay system) to obtain professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certification; and examinations to obtain such credentials.
2. **Definitions.**
 - A. **Licensing** is the process by which an agency of government (Federal, State, or local) grants permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation upon finding that the applicant has attained the minimal degree of competency required to engage in that occupation.
 - B. **Certification** is recognition given to individuals who have met predetermined qualifications set by an agency of government, industry, or a profession.
3. **Responsibilities.**
 - A. **Human Resource Manager.** The Human Resource Manager is responsible for ensuring Reclamation-wide policy and procedures for the payment for professional credentials are in place in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
 - B. **Servicing Human Resource Officers.** Servicing Human Resource Officers will provide guidance and advice to management on the applicability and eligibility of an employee to receive payment for professional credentials. They will also ensure that criteria for payment are applied in a manner consistent with merit system principles as set forth in 5 U.S.C. § 2301.
 - C. **Approving Officials.** Regional and Office Directors and the Chief of Staff are authorized to approve payment for professional credentials. This authority to approve may be further delegated in writing. Approval is discretionary on the part of the official and is not an entitlement or benefit of employment.

Reclamation Manual

Policy

D. **Employees.** Each employee is responsible for completing all requirements of the certification and/or license paid for by Reclamation.

4. Scope

A. **Eligible Employees.** This authority may be used where it is job related and beneficial to the development and enhanced job performance of an employee in support of Reclamation initiatives.

B. **Ineligible Employees.** This authority may not be exercised on behalf of any employee occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position.

C. **Payment.** Payment for licenses and certifications may include fees for preparation for examination, fees for the examination, registration fees and per diem costs. At the discretion of the approving official, this may also include expenses incurred for renewals and from retaking an examination and/or taking continuing education courses required for license or certificate renewal.

D. **Unauthorized Use.** This authority may not be used to obtain licenses or certifications from any organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, parental status or disability.