

**North Carolina Department of Labor  
Occupational Safety and Health Division**

Administrative Information System

Administrative Procedure Notice 3F

***Subject:*** Professional Certification

**A. Purpose.**

Staffing the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Division of the North Carolina Department of Labor with employees who have obtained applicable professional certifications and licenses will better ensure the quality and credibility of our program. This Administrative Procedure Notice (APN) establishes the procedure for authorizing reimbursement for successful completion of exams and administrative leave associated with the pursuit and continuance of the following professional certifications: Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH), Certified Safety Professional (CSP), and Associate Safety Professional (ASP). This procedure provides no allowances for exam reimbursement and/or administrative leave for the other certifications, certificates and licenses elsewhere covered by this procedure. This APN also provides guidance regarding salary adjustment consideration for those employees that successfully obtain and retain identified certifications, licenses, and certificates.

**B. Organizations.**

**American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH)** –The ABIH administers the Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH) credential, which is a means to objectively assess and measure the professional knowledge and understanding of practitioners engaged in the specialty of industrial hygiene. The mission of the ABIH is that the CIH credential is globally recognized as the premier standard of professional competence in Industrial Hygiene/Occupational Health & Safety.

**Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP)** - The BCSP purpose is to certify practitioners in the safety profession. The BCSP is recognized as a world leader in high quality credentialing for safety, health, and environmental practitioners in order to enhance the safety of people, property, and the environment. The BCSP administers the following certifications covered by this procedure: ASP, CSP, CET, and CHST.

**Institute of Hazardous Materials Management (IHMM)** - The IHMM administers the CHMM certification for those that have demonstrated professional competency in the area of hazardous materials.

**Manager of Environmental Safety and Health (MESH)** – The MESH program is offered by North Carolina State University (NCSU), the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina, and the North Carolina Department of Labor (NCDOL) to enhance knowledge associated with occupational safety and health. Several different types of MESH certificates are awarded after those in the environmental, safety and health field have successfully completed 100 credit hours. The MESH certificate program is NOT a certification because it does not certify that an individual is qualified to practice in a particular area. However, since the MESH certificate program is designed for individuals with environmental and/or

safety responsibilities who wish to improve their practical knowledge and it is co-sponsored by NCDOL, it is being included under this procedure. Currently the following types of MESH certificates can be obtained: MESH, Construction MESH (C-MESH), Industrial Hygiene MESH (IH-MESH) and Public Sector MESH (PS-MESH) and Advanced MESH. Each certificate requires 100 class hours and the same hours cannot be applied to different MESH certificates.

**North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors (NCBEES)** - The North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors is charged with the responsibility of administering the provisions of the North Carolina Engineering and Land Surveying Act (N.C.G.S. 89C), which includes promoting the general welfare and protecting the public by safeguarding life, health and property. Upon successful completion of the requirements, NCBEES issues licenses to engineers so they may legally practice in North Carolina.

**North Carolina Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Division (OSH)** –The OSH Division is responsible for administering the Occupational Safety and Health Act of North Carolina. The OSH Construction Safety School (OCSS) designation was established to encourage OSH employees to expand their construction expertise. Training associated with the OCSS designation is tracked by the Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau. Following completion of the requirements, a certificate is presented to the recipients by the commissioner of labor.

C. **Certifications, Licenses and Certificates Covered by this Procedure.**

**Associate Safety Professional (ASP)** is an independent certification awarded by BCSP (prior to the fall of 2014 this certification was previously a temporary designation). This certification denotes that an individual has met academic requirements and has passed the Safety Fundamentals Examination (the first of two examinations leading to the CSP). ASP's must remain up-to-date with changes in professional safety practice by achieving a minimum number of recertification points every five years.

**Certified Environmental, Safety & Health Trainer (CET)** is a certification established by BCSP held by those with experience and expertise in the developing, designing, and delivering safety, health and environmental training. CET's must remain up-to-date with changes in professional safety practice by achieving a minimum of 20 recertification points every five years.

**Certified Hazardous Materials Manager (CHMM)** is a certification established by the Institute of Hazardous Materials Management (IHMM) held by those that have demonstrated professional competency in the area of hazardous materials pertaining to standards, regulations, management, occupational safety and health. The CHMM credentials received accreditation from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) under ANSI/ISO/IEC 17024, the international standard for personnel certification programs.

**Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH)** is a safety and/or health professional who has met education and experience requirements, has demonstrated by examination the knowledge that applies to the professional practice of industrial hygiene, continues to meet recertification requirements established by the American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH), and is authorized by ABIH to use the Certified Industrial Hygienist designation.

CIH certification is considered the highest recognized certification an occupational health professional can achieve. The CIH is nationally accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and internationally accredited by the American National Standards Institute under the ANSI/ISO/IEC 17024. In addition, ABIH is a recognized certification board by the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA). CIH's must remain up-to-date with changes in professional safety and health practice by achieving 40 certification maintenance (CM) points every five years.

**Certified Safety Professional (CSP)** is a safety and/or health professional who has met education and experience requirements, has demonstrated by examination the knowledge that applies to professional safety practice, continues to meet Recertification requirements established by the Board of Certified Safety Professionals, and is authorized by Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP) to use the Certified Safety Professional designation. CSP certification is considered the highest recognized certification an occupational safety professional can achieve. The CSP is nationally accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and internationally accredited by the American National Standards Institute under the ANSI/ISO/IEC 17024 standards for personnel certification programs. CSP's must remain up-to-date with changes in professional safety and health practice by achieving 25 recertification points every five years.

**Construction Health and Safety Technician (CHST)** is a certification awarded to safety practitioners who meet and continue to meet all requirements established by BCSP. BCSP awards CHST certification to individuals who demonstrate competency and work part-time or full-time in health and safety activities devoted to the prevention of construction illness and injuries. CHST's must remain up-to-date with changes in professional safety practice by achieving a minimum of 20 recertification points every five years.

**Manager of Environmental Safety and Health (MESH)** certificates are awarded after those in the environmental, safety and health field have successfully completed 100 credit hours per specific MESH designation. The program is offered by North Carolina State University, the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina, and the North Carolina Department of Labor to enhance knowledge associated with occupational safety and health.

**OSH Construction Safety School (OCSS)** is designation that was established by the North Carolina Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Division to encourage OSH employees to expand their construction expertise. The program consists of 12 advanced construction modules scheduled through ETTA on an on-going basis. By attending OCSS Modules, employees can work toward the OCSS designation while expanding their expertise in the construction field. Employees must complete a minimum of 6 modules, have completed all of the OSH core courses and be a career state employee at the time of completion. Once an employee has completed all requirements, they will receive a certificate recognizing their achievement in completing the program.

**Occupational Health and Safety Technologist (OHST)** is a title awarded to safety practitioners who meet and continue to meet all requirements established for the OHST by BCSP. Some examples of occupational health and safety activities are making worksite assessments to determine risks, potential hazards and controls, evaluating risks and hazard control measures, investigating incidents, maintaining and evaluating incident and loss records, and preparing emergency response plans. OHST's must remain up-to-date with

changes in professional safety practice by achieving a minimum of 20 recertification points every five years.

**Professional Engineer (PE)** is a license that is issued by the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors (NCBEES). To become a licensed professional engineer in North Carolina, engineers must complete a four-year college degree from an accredited engineering institution, apply to NCBEES, work under a Professional Engineer for at least four years, and pass two intensive competency exams. To retain their licenses, PE's must continually maintain and improve their skills throughout their careers by fulfilling continuing education requirements.

**D. Exam and Travel Reimbursement.**

The division encourages staff to attain professional certification in their respective fields. Those employees pursuing their ASP, CSP and CIH certifications may be eligible for exam reimbursement, travel cost reimbursement. In addition, "other management approved" leave may be granted to allow an employee to prepare for an examination. Employee eligibility for fee reimbursement, travel reimbursement and leave requires that the certification being sought must be related to the job and must be approved by the supervisor, bureau chief and director in advance of pursuit. The division supports these efforts through the following:

1. One-time reimbursement of the examination fee for ASP, CSP, and/or CIH for each exam successfully completed which leads to the previously mentioned certificates. Reimbursement must be requested by completing appropriate departmental forms and submitting them for approval through established channels. If reimbursement of exam fees will be requested, supervisor and bureau chief must be notified prior to the exam date. Reimbursement is subject to funding availability.
2. One-time reimbursement of the travel costs at state per diem rates for exams successfully completed. The exam must be taken at the location closest to the employee's duty station. Reimbursement must be requested by completing appropriate departmental forms and submitting them for approval through established channels. If travel reimbursement will be requested, supervisor and bureau chief must be notified prior to the exam date. Reimbursement is subject to funding availability.
3. Upon recommendation of the supervisor and approval of bureau chief, the division will grant "other management approved leave" of up to five (5) working days to staff wishing to review or prepare for exams leading to certification. The five (5) working day allowance includes training days spent in exam preparatory courses sponsored by NCDOL or other provider. This leave period will be deducted from the forty (40) hours per year allowed for continuing education. No comp time will be granted for time spent traveling or taking the exam.

The "other management approved leave" provision may be utilized for a total of five (5) working days during employment with the division. The examination cost provision may be utilized for each level of each certification mentioned in paragraph D above.

E. **In-Range Salary Adjustments.**

In an effort to attract and retain qualified occupational safety and health professionals, the OSH Division may consider in-range salary adjustments for employees obtaining the certifications, licenses and certificates covered by this procedure. The following guidelines shall be utilized for assessing in-range increases:

1. A 1% in-range salary adjustment may be considered for each type of MESH certificate obtained during employment with the NCDOL (MESH, C-MESH, IH-MESH, PS-MESH and Advanced MESH). Each certificate must be reflected in the employee's official training records and shall be verified by the OSH Division's ETTA Bureau.
2. A 2% in-range salary adjustment may be considered for each of the following certifications obtained prior to or during NCDOL employment: OHST, CHST, CHMM, and CET. A copy of each certification must be produced and certifications will be verified with the applicable accredited organization. Each certification must be reflected in the employee's official training records.
3. A 2% in-range salary adjustment may be considered for OCSS certificates obtained during employment with the North Carolina Department of Labor. OCSS certificates must be reflected in the employee's official training records and shall be verified by the OSH Division's ETTA Bureau.
4. A 5% in-range salary adjustment may be considered for ASP certifications obtained prior to or during NCDOL employment. A copy of the certification must be produced and the certification will be verified with the applicable accredited organization. Each certification must be reflected in the employee's official training records.
5. A 10% in-range salary adjustments may be considered for each of the following certifications and/or NC license obtained prior to or during NCDOL employment: CSP, CIH, PE. A copy of each certification must be produced and certifications will be verified with the applicable accredited organization. Each certification must be reflected in the employee's official training records.
6. Employees obtaining both the ASP and CSP will be eligible for a maximum 10% increase. Likewise, employees obtaining an ASP and CIH will be eligible for a maximum 10% increase.
7. Employees obtaining a combination of CSP, CIH and/or PE certifications and licenses may be eligible for a maximum of 15% salary increase over their career with NCDOL. However, per NC state government personnel policy there is a maximum of 10% in range adjustment per 12 month period. Therefore, employees obtaining multiple certifications within the same 12 month period will not be eligible to receive associated salary adjustments exceeding 10%. Additional adjustments may be considered at a later date, if permitted under state requirements.
8. Employees obtaining a combination of any certifications, licenses and certificates covered by this procedure may be eligible for a maximum of 20% salary increase over their career with NCDOL. However, per NC state government personnel

policy there is a maximum of 10% in range adjustment per 12 month period. Therefore, employees obtaining multiple certifications within the same 12 month period will not be eligible to receive associated salary adjustments exceeding 10%. Additional adjustments may be considered at a later date, if permitted under state requirements.

9. Only those within OSH performing training activities as a primary responsibility of their job duties shall be eligible to receive a salary adjustment for obtaining their CET.
10. Only OSH employees whose primary job responsibilities, activities and tasks are directly related to health and safety fall within the criteria established within this APN.
11. Employees receiving an in-range salary increase for certifications, certificates and licenses must maintain the specific certifications for which they received any salary adjustment. Failure to maintain certifications may result in a percentage decrease of salary proportional to the percentage increase received. Employees shall be required to submit proof of recertification per the schedules outlined by the appropriate accredited organizations. Additionally, if an employee fails to retain a certification or license, it shall be reported to their supervisor in timely fashion so that appropriate action may be taken.
12. An employee must be meeting or exceeding all of the performance expectations covered in their work plans to be eligible for consideration of any salary adjustment associated with certifications and certificates covered by this policy.
13. Trainees are not eligible for consideration of any type of salary adjustment associated with certifications and certificates covered by this policy
14. All salary adjustments are dependent on the availability of funding in specific funding codes. Management shall make efforts to obtain the necessary funding to carry out the intent of this procedure. However, this procedure should not be taken as a guarantee of a salary increase. In addition, all increases are subject state policy and legislative mandates. Employees already holding certifications, licenses and/or certificates will receive priority regarding salary adjustments.

F. **Expiration.**

APN 3E is canceled. This APN is effective on the date of signature. It will remain in effect until revised or canceled by the director.

Signed on Original  
Kevin Beauregard  
Assistant Director

Signed on Original  
Allen McNeely  
Director

8/31/2015  
Date of Signature