

For all NALA Affiliated Associations

The NALA Certifying Board has released new specifications for the Certified Paralegal examination effective with the September 2013 examination. What follows may be published in your newsletters, as well as the table from Facts & Findings we have attached. PLEASE help us inform others of this change in the Certified Paralegal examination specifications.

NALA Certifying Board Announces New Examination Specifications

The NALA Certifying Board has announced new specifications for the Certified Paralegal examination effective with the September 2013 testing window. These modifications are based on a careful and detailed analysis of the findings of the 2012 Job Task Analysis study conducted by the Board in consultation with PSI Psychometric Consulting Services.

The new examination specifications call for minor adjustments to the number of points per topic within all sections of the examination. No new topics were introduced in any examination area.

The most significant modification is the elimination of several practice area tests under the Substantive Law section. The Job Task Analysis study demonstrated that, on a nationwide basis, a low percentage of paralegals utilize the knowledge and skills tested by these practice area examination sections on a regular and routine basis in the workplace.

In addition, the option to test in certain specialty practice areas will no longer be available to examinees. All examinees will take the same Substantive Law section of the examination, as is the case with all other sections of the Certified Paralegal examination.

Effective with the September 2013 testing, the Substantive Law section will consist of questions on the following subjects:

- American Legal System
- Civil Litigation
- Business Organizations
- Contracts

With these modifications, the Certifying Board listened to member and nonmember paralegals, and applied findings of the Job Task Analysis study to the exam specifications. The Certifying Board strives to link the Certified Paralegal examination directly to the day to day duties and responsibilities of paralegals in the workplace. The modifications announced for the September 2013 examination are a continued effort to ensure the Certified Paralegal examination remains an accurate and relevant reflection of the duties and responsibilities of today's paralegals.

A detailed list of specifications for the Certified Paralegal examination may be found on the NALA web site under "Certification/Certified Paralegal Exam Description" as well as a more detailed statement of these modifications.

This table presents each examination section, the topics tested within each section, and the percentage of points for each topic.

— These exam specifications are effective with the September 2013 Certified Paralegal examination.

Communications	% of points
Grammar, punctuation, and capitalization	19%
Word usage, spelling, and vocabulary	17%
Written correspondence and composition	17%
Verbal communication	17%
Nonverbal communication	16%
Client and witness interview preparation and techniques	13%
Ethics	% of points
Ethical responsibilities centering on performance of delegated work	21%
Paralegal professional responsibility	21%
Professional relationships	21%
Client and public contact	19%
Attorney code of ethics and discipline	17%
Legal Research	% of points
Sources of law	34%
Research skills	32%
Analysis of research	34%
Substantive Law	% of points
Legal terminology	7%
Court system	6%
Sources and classifications of law	6%
Branches of government	5%
Legal concepts and principles	5%
Remedies and dispute resolution	5%
Jurisdiction and venue	6%
Civil litigation process and rules	6%
Civil discovery	6%
Civil pleadings	6%
Civil trial and appellate process and rules	6%
Corporations	5%
Publicly-held corporations	4%
Partnerships and limited liability companies (LLCs)	4%
Other business entities	5%
Financial structure and management of business entities	5%
Contract classifications	4%
Contract formation	5%
Contract defenses	4%
Contract remedies	5%
Judgment and Analytical Ability	% of points
Identification of relevant facts and main issues	26%
Application of law to facts	24%
Analysis of issues and formation of conclusions	25%
Organization of information and clarity of expression	25%

