**NSLAA**

**Candidate Handbook**

Certified Servant Leader (CSL)

Certified Servant Leader-Trainer (CSL-T)

2024

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**Introduction**

The NSLAA supports leaders, organizations, researchers,and educators by establishing and upholding certification standards for professionals impacting the lives of those they lead, and those who wish to learn leadership. This is supported through leadership education, networking, experience and application. Certified leader course and leadership is an integrative, multidisciplinary field of social science that studies personal and group dynamics and leadership to enhance knowledge and skills concerning the understanding of leadership.

The CSL/CSL-T designation demonstrates to colleagues, clients, employers and the public that certified individuals have the knowledge and proficiency required of the leaders in a professional environment. Professionals earn this distinction through education, experience, ethics and by meeting the highest standards of social science and practice of professionals validated by their performance through examination.

Development and maintenance of the NSLAA CSL/CSL-T examination is based on a job/practice analysis study process that is designed to ascertain, directly from practicing professionals, the frequency with which knowledge and skills are applied in practice, and the importance or criticality of required knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The Certification Council is responsible for crucial decisions related to the development, administration, and ongoing maintenance of the certification programs.

**Mission**

To ensure the highest level of knowledge, skill, and integrity of the personal leadership profession by certifying, connecting, and supporting diverse and inclusive professionals who positively impact the organizations in which they work and for all communities.

**Vision**

NSLAA envisions a future where all people - regardless of income or background – are empowered to achieve lasting impact on their professional life, those they work for and work with through the highest standards of leadership counseling, mentoring, teaching, training, coaching, and education.

**Certified Servant Leader (CSL)/CSL-T**

The Certified Servant Leader designation is a specialty credential targeted to professionals interested in expanding accessibility to, and improving equitability in leadership, service, training, mentoring, coaching and counseling. CSL/CSL-T helps professionals better understand how diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences impact individuals’ mental models, leadership styles, training style and abilities. An accredited certified servant leader has the skills to assist individuals, organizations, communities and families in the complex process of leading teams and others. This includes the ability to:

* Develop others through sound leadership principles and understanding how training management and leadership development occurs.
* Demonstrate servant leadership by developing successful attitudes, habits and understanding of the challenges and obstacles that exist within leadership domains.
* Recognize Transactional Leadership Behaviors, Transformational Leadership Behaviors, attributes and competencies of leaders.
* Demonstrate an understanding of bases of power, crisis leadership, The Great Man Theory and basic leadership styles.
* Categorize Managerial Attributes of Leadership
* Demonstrate grasp of practical usage of Servant leadership and the LCTMCTH Model
* Interpret how someone’s mental model affects their communication process.
* Establish counseling skills and understanding of what can be provided versus what is needed.
* Recognize what training is and what it isn’t.

The CSL/CSL-T designation equips the individual to work within organizations, teams, companies, communities, families and individual clients in various settings to assess and improve leader decision making and education CSL/CSL-T certified professionals work across the World, United States and on military bases around the world as leaders, managers, operations managers, researchers, educators, University Extension staff, private practitioners, and coaches. They work in private firms, consulting agencies, government agencies and many other organizations committed to improving the leadership capability of organizations, individuals and all those they lead and serve with.

**Section 1: How to Apply For Certification**

**Eligibility**

The NSLAA Core values include expanding leadership education accessibility to all. The CSL/CSL-T course and education pathway options recognize that individuals enter the leadership field from a variety of education and experience backgrounds. The NSLAA Certification Council determined that all candidates for certification, regardless of their previous education career field or career cluster and industry they choose should have a basis of leadership knowledge and education as defined by the NSLAA core competencies. The education pathway consisting of over 40 hours of educational offerings recognize the diversity of leadership and those requirements and enable individuals to apply previously-gained knowledge, education, and experiences toward their NSLAA CSL/CSL-T certification goals. Requiring education, rather than qualification by work experience only, ensures that all applicants are exposed to the broad range of knowledge and tools needed to successfully perform in a wide range of financial counseling job settings and meet diverse client needs. Participating in training tied to all of the core competencies, regardless of the source, ensures that applicants have received education related to a wide range of financial counseling methods.

The Certification Council 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 the NSLAA have an acceptable level of education, knowledge, and proficiency necessary to provide leadership based education, mentorship and services for a CSL/CSL-T.

**CSL/CSL-T Eligibility Requirements**

To earn the CSL or the CSL-T credential, all candidates must:

1. Educational Requirement: Meet any ONE of the following educational requirement pathways:

1. Education Challenge- Complete the applicable course work in the Certified Servant Leader Course either in person in the classroom for 40 hours or remotely through a self-paced course or cohort style flipped classroom guided course. This education challenge pathway provides applicants with coursework that encompasses each of the NSLAA core competencies and helps them apply the coursework to experience to prepare for examination. Applicants must have a GED to apply for the course and demonstrate a need via application to demonstrate how they are a current or projected leader inside of an organization. The NSLAA will review all applications and will process the application within 7 business days.
2. Professional Designation Challenge- The professional designation challenge pathway provides applicants who have achieved a professional designation in a related field to apply the knowledge assessed by that designation towards the NSLAA CSL/ CSL-T core competencies. Applying for the CSL-T requires the candidate to have previously completed the CSL program.
3. Online or Self-pace Study-Complete the Certified Servant Leader Course or Certified Servant Leader-Trainer Course Self-Paced accredited course.

2. Examination : Pass the CSL or CSL-T examination.

3. Final Certification Documentation: Complete the NSLAA CSL/CSL-T final certification documentation. Final certification documentation includes

1. Completion of educational course information/proof of course completion certificate
2. Submission of Request for certification signed by the applicant
3. Agreement to adhere to the NSLAA Code of Ethics

**Timeline for Completion**

All requirements for certification must be completed and submitted for review by deadline:

| Educational Requirement Pathway | Deadline |
| --- | --- |
| Classroom | 3 years from date of registration |
| Self-Paced | 3 years from date of registration |
| Cohort Based | 3 years from date of registration |

One six month extension is available with no payment of an extension fee. To request an extension, please complete the Certification Extension Request Form available through email from admin@nslaa.org. The NSLAA will notify you about the status of your extension request within 3 business days of receipt. If approved, an extension of six months from your original deadline will be granted. All program requirements must be met within the six month extension period or re-enrollment in the program will be necessary. No further extensions will be considered or granted.

**Enrollment Requirements**

Taking the certification examination is voluntary. NSLAA strictly adheres to the eligibility requirements for certification.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to comply with all procedures and deadlines to establish eligibility to take the examinations.

**How to Enroll**

To enroll for certification, submit the enrollment form online at [www.nslaa.org](http://www.nslaa.org) or send an email to admin@nslaa. Incomplete or illegible applications may not be processed.

Candidates will receive confirmation that their enrollment has been processed, along with other critical communications, via email, therefore, it is vital to ensure that the correct email address is included on the form.

Candidates are eligible to request the first attempt at the examination at any time after their enrollment, if the educational requirement has been completed and verified. To request an examination appointment, candidates should email their information to [admin@nslass.com](mailto:admin@nslass.com) to submit any applicable testing fees. Within three (3) days of submission, candidates will receive an email from the examination administrator containing instructions for scheduling their preferred examination date if that examination is not already completed with their classroom course.

**Course Fees**

Fee Information

**CSL $1000**

This includes 40 hours of classroom instruction or online self-paced study or cohort style instruction, and all training resources, materials, examination fees and certification requirements.

**CSL-T $1000**

This includes 40 hours of classroom instruction or online self-paced study or cohort style instruction, and all training resources, materials, examination fees and certification requirements.

**Examination Administration**

Examinations are delivered in multiple ways. In classroom candidates will take the examination at the end of their certification training, or at that time opt to wait up to three years to take the examination. If they chose to do so they will take the test via a computer generated exam emailed to them. Self-paced candidates will take a computer generated examination once they have provided proof and verified completion of their course work. Saturday appointments may be scheduled based on availability. Available dates are provided when scheduling an examination. Candidates are scheduled on a first come, first served basis. If special accommodations are being requested, complete the Request for Special Accommodations form provided as Candidate Resource from Admin@nslaa.org and submit at least 45 days before the desired examination date.

You may reschedule your appointment once at no charge by calling (803) 397-9370 or sending an email to [admin@nslaa.org](mailto:admin@nslaa.org). Exceptions can be made if there needs to be a second reschedule.

**Inclement Weather, Power Failure or Emergency**

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, NSLAA will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling, of an examination.

**Section 2: Preparing for the Examination**

**How the Exam is Developed**

Both the Certified Servant Leader (CSL) and Certified Servant Leader-Trainer (CSL-T) exam is designed to assess the knowledge and skills required for certification in leadership, management and operations manager roles.

The NSLAA Certification Council develops the CSL/CSL-T examination in partnership with professional testing consultants and panels of qualified subject matter experts (SMEs) to ensure the examination is developed and maintained in a manner consistent with generally accepted practices for the development of certification examinations. Diverse groups of qualified subject matter experts participate in examination development activities including the development of the examination content outline and the examination items. SMEs are selected based on their demonstrated expertise, experience level, geographic representation, and specialty area.

A national job analysis study was conducted in 2018 to describe, in specific terms, the precise nature of the tasks performed by professionals who work in the field of leadership counseling, coaching, and education. The study included a national survey of occupations and skills the results of which were analyzed with SMEs to develop the content outline for the NSLAA CSL and CSL-T course. From that the development of the course(s) Syllabus, rubrics, materials, occupational skills alignment the exam was developed to ensure understanding. Candidates will be graded throughout their course in ways other than just the examination to ensure understanding of the learning domains and application of course materials.

Teams of SMEs, facilitated by professional testing experts, developed the exam items. All exam items are directly linked to the content outline and undergo multiple reviews before being placed on the CSL/ CSL-T exam. The Certification Council oversees a continual process of item writing, review, and evaluation to ensure that exam content remains up-to-date, accurate, relevant, and aligned with the examination content outline. Case studies are added to the course in the same manner. As real life leadership happens the course is updated.

A criterion-referenced standard setting process is used to establish the passing point for the exam. Each candidate’s performance on the exam is measured against a predetermined standard. Candidates are not graded on a curve and do not compete against each other or a quota.

This passing score for the exam is established using a panel of SMEs who carefully review each exam item to determine the level of knowledge or skill that is expected. The passing score is based on the panel’s established difficulty ratings for each exam item. Under the guidance of our testing consultants, the panel develops and recommends the passing point which is reviewed and approved by the Certification Council.

The passing point for the exam is established to identify individuals with an acceptable level of knowledge and skill. Receiving a higher than passing score is not an indication of more advanced knowledge or a predictor of better job performance. All individuals who pass the exam, regardless of their score, have demonstrated an acceptable level of knowledge.

**Studying for the Exams**

**Preparing for the Exam**

The exam covers the topic areas listed below in the Exam Content Outline. Candidates are encouraged to review these areas and the items listed below in preparation for the exam.

The CSL/CSL-T exam is offered in a single 90 minute session, with 60 questions in a multiple choice style (50 operational and 15 pretest). Each question contains four options, only one of which is the correct answer.

Embedded in the examination are “pretest” questions, which are included in the examination for statistical purposes only. Pretest questions are placed on the exam to evaluate the item’s difficulty level for possible inclusion as a scored question in the future. Candidates’ scores are based upon the number of scored operational items on the exam — pretest items do not affect the candidates’ score. Pretest questions are dispersed throughout the examination and cannot be identified.

Candidates will have 90 minutes to complete and must score 38/50 to receive an automatic go.

Students that don’t receive a go can still graduate based on point totals from other assessments. These assessments are based on their teamwork, participation, presentation skills and other in class assessments, Students who score below a 30/50 will receive zero points and may retake the exam prior to class graduation. Check the syllabus for point breakdown requirements.

**CSL/CSL-T Program Competencies**

LCTMTCH outline

* Listening 20%
* Counseling 15%
* Teaching 15%
* Mentoring 15%
* Training 15%
* Coaching 10%
* Humility 20%

**Exam Outline**

1. Listening (20%)

A. Mental Models, barriers, interpretation

B. Persuasive Communication

C. Active Listening

1. Counseling (15%)

A. Leadership Counseling Skills

B. Empowerment

C. Setting the Stage

1. Teaching (15%)

A. Adult Learning Styles and Domains

B. Bloom’s Taxonomy

C. Andragogy

1. Mentoring (15%)

A. Mentorship Pathways

B. Mentorship/Mentee Relationships

C. Benefits of Mentoring

1. Training (15%)

A. What is Training?

B. Training Design

C. Gap Analysis/Task

1. Coaching (10%)

A. Coaching as a leader

B. Stages of Coaching

C. Goal Setting

1. Humility (20%)

A. Benefits of Humility

B. Humble Leadership

C. Pride vs Humility

**Strategies for Taking the Exam**

Strategies for Taking Multiple Choice Exams

✔ Read each question carefully, including all possible answers, before choosing the single best response.

✔ Pace yourself and remember that you can skip questions and come back to them later; sometimes it helps to answer the easiest questions first.

✔ If you are not sure about an answer, make an educated guess. Your score is based on the total number of correct answers.

✔ Responses are in random order. Looking for patterns will not help you.

**Study Resources**

The NSLAA Certification Council does not require, provide, accredit, or endorse any specific study guides, training or review courses, or other examination preparation products outside of what is provided. The Certification Council, certification staff, certification committee members, and certification subject matter experts do not have involvement in the creation, accreditation, approval, endorsement or delivery of examination review courses, preparatory materials, educational programs, or training programs/products that are not part of the CSL/CSL-T curriculum that prepare candidates for the NSLAA certification examination. Candidates that wish to purchase other training materials that they feel will help them prepare for the examination can do so at their own cost. There is a reading list provided at <https://www.nslaa.org> This list is not exhaustive and candidates are not required to utilize these resources. These books are recommended to enhance their leadership and industry knowledge but not examination questions come directly from these books. Any case studies that questions come from will be provided to candidates as part of their enrollment fee.

**Section 3: Taking the Examination**

**What to Expect on Exam Day**

To provide a fair and consistent exam experience for all candidates, standardized procedures and strict security protocols are followed for the exam delivery. Candidates are required to follow all exam rules at all times. Failure to follow these rules may result in termination of a candidate’s testing session and/or invalidation of the candidate’s exam score. Test security is strict and maintained by NSLAA standards set forth in the NSLAA Test Security Guide.

For in classroom candidates your examination will be given via printed test sheets in variations of versions. There are three test versions. For online/self-paced or cohort based students you will take your exam via an emailed test link that is secured and will lock your other screens out to ensure test viability and security.

During the exam, candidates will have the opportunity to comment on any exam items they feel may be unfair or unclear. This feedback will be reviewed as part of the overall examination review and quality assurance process. Candidates will not receive direct responses regarding specific item feedback.

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of the NSLAA. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject you to severe civil and criminal penalties.

The following security procedures apply during the examination:

Examinations are proprietary. No cameras, notes, tape recorders, pagers, or cellular/smart phones are allowed in the testing room. Possession of a cellular/smartphone or other electronic devices while in the testing room is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the examination. Cell phones will be safely stored for each testing student.

● No guests, visitors, or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.

**Personal Belongings**

No personal items, valuables or weapons should be brought to the assessment. Only wallets and keys are permitted. Large coats and jackets must be left outside or at the front table of the testing room. You will be provided a secure space to store your wallet and/or keys while in the testing room. You will not have access to these items until after the examination is completed.

Please note the following items will not be allowed in the testing room and should be left in the secured space provided.

● watches

● hats

● wallets

● keys

Once you have secured your personal belongings, you will be asked to pull out your pockets to ensure they are empty. If you bring personal items that will not fit in the secure space provided, you will not be able to test. The instructors will not store or be responsible for your personal belongings.

If any personal items are observed or heard (e.g., cellular/smart phones, alarms) in the testing room after the examination is started, you will be dismissed, and the exam and your exam fee will be forfeited.

**Examination Restrictions**

● Pencils will be provided.

● You will be provided with one piece of scratch paper at a time to use during the examination. If you need additional scratch paper, you can exchange a used sheet for a fresh sheet from the proctor. You must return the scratch paper to the proctor at the completion of testing, or you will not receive your score report.

● No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the assessment.

● No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.

● Eating, drinking or smoking is not permitted during the assessment.

● You may take a break whenever you wish, but you will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks.

**Misconduct**

If you engage in any of the following conduct during the examination you may be dismissed, your scores will not be reported, and course and examination fees will not be refunded. Examples of misconduct are when you:

● create a disturbance, are abusive, or otherwise uncooperative;

● display and/or use electronic communications devices such as pagers and/or cellular/smart phones;

● talk or participate in a conversation with other examination candidates;

● give or receive help or are suspected of doing so;

● leave the Assessment during the administration without notifying the proctor;

● attempt to record examination questions or make notes;

● attempt to take the examination for someone else;

● are observed with personal belongings, or

● are observed with unauthorized notes, books, or other aids not listed on the roster.

**Special Accommodations**

The NSLAA does comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with a disability covered by this Act. We strive to ensure that no individual with a disability is deprived of the opportunity to take the examination solely because of that disability.

An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment

The NSLAA will provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with disabilities. Candidates requesting special accommodations must call(803) 397-9370 or email admin@nslaa to schedule their examination.

The information provided by candidates and any documentation regarding such disability and special accommodation will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be shared with any source without the candidate’s express written permission, except for NSLAA and authorized testing consultants.

1. Wheelchair access is available at all established assessments. Candidates must advise the NSLAA at the time of scheduling that wheelchair access is necessary.

2. Candidates with visual, sensory, physical, or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking the examination under standard conditions may request special accommodations and arrangements.

Verification of the disability and a statement of the specific type of assistance needed must be made in writing at least 45 calendar days before your desired examination date by completing the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form from admin@nslaa.org. The test committee will review the submitted forms and will contact you regarding the decision for accommodations.

**Copyright Information**

All proprietary rights to NSLAA exams, including copyright, are held by the NSLAA. To protect the validity of the scores reported, candidates must adhere to strict guidelines regarding proper conduct in handling these copyrighted proprietary materials. The law strictly prohibits any attempt to reproduce all or part of any NSLAA exam. Such attempts may include but are not limited to: removing materials from the testing room; aiding others by any means in reconstructing any portion of the exam; posting content on any discussion forum; and selling, distributing, receiving, or having unauthorized possession of any portion of the exam or practice exams. Alleged copyright violations will be investigated and, if warranted, prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. It should be noted that examination scores may be invalidated in the event of this type of suspected breach. Permanent revocation of certification may occur if allegations are substantiated.

**Section 4: After the Examination**

**Exam Results**

Candidates will receive automatic results/score reports at the examination site immediately following the examination administration. Score reports are released directly to candidates only. Results are not released by phone. Requests for exam results to be released to anyone other than the candidate must be made in writing by the candidate.

Score reports will include a “pass” or “fail” result, scoring information, and general information regarding administrative next steps. Diagnostic information is provided on score reports. Diagnostic breakdowns, calculated per domain, are intended to identify content areas by showing areas of relative strength and weakness. Content area scores are provided for informational purposes only to assist candidates in preparing for a re-examination attempt (failing candidates) or in selecting topic areas for future continuing education (passing candidates).

After completing the examination, you will be asked to complete a short evaluation of your examination experience. Then you will be instructed to report to the examination proctor to receive an examination completion report.

**Understanding Your Scores**

A criterion-referenced standard setting process is used to establish the passing point for each exam. This means that each candidate’s performance on the exam is measured against a predetermined standard. Candidates are not graded on a curve and do not compete against each other or a quota.

This passing point is established using a panel of subject matter experts who carefully reviewed each exam question to determine the basic level of knowledge or skill that is expected. The passing point for the exam is established to identify individuals with an acceptable level of knowledge and skill. Receiving a higher than passing score is not an indication of more advanced knowledge or a predictor of better job performance. All individuals who pass the exam, regardless of their score, have demonstrated an acceptable level of knowledge.

**Re-Examination**

Candidates that do not achieve a passing score on the examination must wait for a minimum of thirty days between administrations before a subsequent reexamination attempt. Candidates may take the examination a maximum of three times as long as they continue to meet the published eligibility criteria.

To retake the examination, the candidate must repeat all registration processes as outlined in the Candidate Handbook, including submitting the application to test and paying the retake fee.

**Exam Appeals**

The Certification Council consistently evaluates the examinations to ensure they accurately measure competency in the required knowledge areas. While taking the exams, candidates have the opportunity to provide comments on any questions. All substantive comments will be reviewed.

Candidates who fail an exam may file an appeal if they believe the exam failure is a result of:

1. Examination scoring/grading errors

2. Inappropriate exam administration procedures that violate NSLAA Certification Council policy

3. Testing conditions severe enough to cause a significant disruption of the examination process (including environmental conditions or disruptions caused by other candidates)

Any serious incident occurring during exam administration should also be reported to the on-site proctor immediately.

Complaints or appeals may be submitted in writing before the exam and up until thirty days after exam administration. Complaints or appeals will not be considered after the thirty days have expired. Written appeals must be submitted via email or mail with supporting documentation or evidence to the Certification Program Director or via the Admin as [admin@nslaa.org](mailto:admin@nslaa.org).

The burden of proof for examination appeals is borne by the applicant. The Certification Program Director will review the appeal request and obtain additional information from the test site proctor or testing agency as needed (irregularity report, etc.). The Council will review the appeal within thirty (30) days and will make a determination within sixty (60) days. The decision of the Certification Council is final. Submission of an appeal has no bearing on the Candidate's deadline. An extension must be filed if the Candidate's deadline falls before appeal results are provided.

Due to the thorough review and analysis of each question during the examination construction procedures, there are no appeal procedures to challenge individual exam questions or answers. Because of the secure nature of these examinations, NSLAA will not disclose examination questions before, or after, the administration of the exam. Candidates' responses to particular test questions (correct or not correct) will not be disclosed.

**Section 5: Maintaining Certification**

The NSLAA supports the ongoing professional development of its certificants. The mandatory renewal process provides certificants with the opportunity to demonstrate the reinforcement and expansion of their knowledge and skills pertaining to the full spectrum of personal finance and counseling. Renewal also provides encouragement to, and acknowledgment for, participation in ongoing professional development activities and lifelong learning. Therefore, the renewal requirements include continuing education and professional activities that enhance ongoing professional development, recognize learning opportunities, promote continuing competence, and provide a process for both obtaining and recording professional development achievements.

Professional development is a career-long process. Over the course of a career, many changes will occur in a field of study or profession requiring an updating of knowledge and skills. These changes include the introduction of new and varied product and service offerings in the leadership and management marketplace, as well as changes in laws and technical knowledge related to personal leadership, training, development, talent management, teaching and counseling. The purpose of requiring certificants to receive continuing education is threefold:

● to enhance the individual professional’s capacity to serve his or her constituents,

● to protect the public interest, and

● to uphold the rigor of the certification programs.

To maintain competence and prevent professional obsolescence, the Certification Council requires that each NSLAA CSL/CSL-T certificant participate periodically in continuing education to refresh existing knowledge and skills, and to acquire knowledge and proficiency pertaining to new advances as well as state of the art information over the full spectrum of personal leadership, leadership theory, leadership lessons learned, applications and interpersonal skill development across all things Servant Leadership.

**Renewal Period**

Certification must be renewed once every two years to maintain use of the AFC credential.

The two year time period established for renewal is based on both the scope of issues that face financial counseling professionals and the Council’s belief that new practices, research, and information are introduced in the field with enough frequency that professional development activities should be conducted routinely so that certificants remain current with best practices and emerging knowledge.

**Renewal Requirements**

Certificants who have received the CSL or CSL-T credential are required to complete twenty continuing education units (CEUs) during a two-year reporting cycle. CEUs earned during one reporting cycle do not carry over to future reporting periods.

Renewal of a credential requires:

1. Current certification (active status)

2. Acquire and submit 20 continuing education units that support the NSLAA core principles.

3. Payment of the Certification Fee if needed.

All courses require certification every 2 years to maintain current levels of your certification. Certification holders are required to complete a recertification application requiring 20 total hours of development. Those hours consist of servant leadership, personal professional development in the workforce that consists of 12 hours of either educational professional, leadership development, mentor development or a mixture of them. These 12 hours must show growth in leadership as a profession. Plus 8 hours of community service that provides for the betterment of their organization or community.

**Acceptable Continuing Education**

All continuing education must be related to leadership or management roles. Often, certificants will meet the CEU requirement by attending programs offered or sponsored by other organizations. To ensure credit for a program offered by organizations other than NSLAA, the certificant may request pre-approval at least 14 business days before registration or attendance. Pre-approval may be requested using the online form available from the NSLAA from [admin@nslaa.org](mailto:admin@nslaa.org). Staff will review each request and respond with acceptance or denial of CEUs via email. It is the responsibility of the certificant to retain a copy of the request and response for his/her personal files, and to submit verification of attendance through their email with their student ID or certificant ID.

The purpose of post certification requirements is to enhance the professional’s ability to serve his or her teams, organizations, employees, families, communities and clients. Programs should be of sufficient depth and breadth to increase the skills and knowledge of the professional and vary in program method and content. Programs unique to a place of employment, operational training programs, or programs within the professional’s job description, or designed for consumer use, are not eligible for CEUs.

**Renewal Application Requirements**

NSLAA strictly adheres to the standards of maintenance requirements for certification. It is the responsibility of the certificant to comply with all procedures and deadlines to maintain their credential. The NSLAA will send email reminders to the email address on file for the certificant; however, it is the certificant’s responsibility to be aware of and comply with renewal requirements and deadlines. Certificants are highly encouraged to keep the email address on their account current.

CSL/ CSL-T graduates are responsible for maintaining records of their continuing education credits and may be required to substantiate these units during random audits. Certificants are encouraged to maintain an electronic portfolio. However, if requested, documentation may be submitted to the NSLAA electronically or in a hard copy format.

**Renewal Expiration/Acceptance**

#### **Timelines**

#### Applications are accepted starting 180 days prior to the current expiration date. Submit the request for recertification to admin@nslaa.org prior to the expiration date and all recertification fees will be waived. If you submit recertification after the expiration date, we will send a reminder email and an invoice for $40 via email for the CSL recertification fee.

#### **Incomplete Renewal Applications**

#### Renewal applications are considered incomplete if any of the requirements are missing, or the appropriate fee is not included.

#### Candidates will be notified via email that the renewal application is incomplete and what must be done to complete the application. These notices will include a deadline for response.

If a certificant fails to resolve noted deficiencies of an incomplete application within the timeframe established by the NSLAA, all fees will be forfeited and certification will lapse. If a certificant fails to resolve noted deficiencies for six-months after lapse, certification will be revoked.

#### **Annual Fee**

For a certificant to ensure that he/she remains in good standing, certification must be renewed annually though no payment or certification fee is due unless the timelines above are not met. Every two years through submission of the required continuing education units. The renewals are due by July 30 of each even year, commencing the year after certification is awarded. If you submit recertification after the expiration date, we will send a reminder email and an invoice for $40 via email for the CSL recertification fee.

**Failure to Renew Certification**

#### Applications are accepted starting 180 days prior to the current expiration date. Submit the request for recertification to admin@nslaa.org prior to the expiration date and all recertification fees will be waived. If you submit recertification after the expiration date, we will send a reminder email and an invoice for $40 via email for the CSL recertification fee.

Certification renewal is the responsibility of each certificant. The NSLAA is not responsible for notices that fail to reach certificants.

**Renewal Extension**

● If an individual does not report CEU requirements by the end of that reporting period, an extension of no longer than six (6) months may be requested to submit the outstanding documentation for the most recent reporting period only. Current penalty extension fees apply. At the end of the 6 month extension (December 31 of new reporting period), if the candidate has not submitted the required CEUs, the candidate’s certification will be revoked.

● An extension will not be granted for certification annual fees. Any renewal fees after an expired free renewal period are due by June 30 each year. Late fees will be incurred for each month that an annual certification fee is not paid. After 6 months of late fees (December 31), if the annual certification fee is not paid, then the candidate’s certification will be revoked.

**Renewal Acceptance**

The NSLAA will issue an updated certificate to the certificant once all renewal requirements have been fulfilled. Renewal applications will not be accepted from individuals whose certification is in a state of suspension or has been revoked. Reinstatement or recertification is required if certification has been suspended or revoked.

**Failure to Renew Certification**

Renewal is mandatory for all certificants. Failure to renew certification by the deadline will result in suspension of the credential (see “Reinstatement” below). Individuals whose certification has expired or been suspended or revoked may not represent him/herself as a certificant and may not use the designation until he/she receives official notice that the renewal requirements have been satisfied or that certification status has been reinstated. The individual’s name will be removed from the list of certificants available to the public on.

**Reinstatement**

To ensure the integrity of all professionals in our field, renewal of certification is required once every two years, beginning one year after your certification has been issued. If CEU requirements are not met, and an extension request has not been submitted and approved, the credential will be revoked, and re-certification will be required.

An individual may request reinstatement of his/her certification after voluntary relinquishment, or failure to renew one time during the life of the credential, by submitting a reinstatement extension request and paying a non-refundable reinstatement fee. To reinstate, individuals will be required to submit documentation of the continuing education they would have been required to submit if certification had been maintained following the required two-year recertification cycle, and pay any outstanding fees. Alternatively, applicants can pass the current exam in lieu of the continuing education requirement. After three years of lapsed credential status, the individual must retake and pass the certification exam but is not required to reapply for the certification in order to reinstate the credential. After five years of lapsed credential status, the individual must reapply (meet all eligibility requirements) and pass the certification exam to reinstate the credential.

A reinstatement application is available at [admin@nslaa.com](mailto:admin@nslaa.com)

Upon receipt of the reinstatement application and fee, The NSLAA will review and inform applicants what steps are required to complete the reinstatement (reporting of required Continuing Education Units, and/or notice of appropriate fees).

Applicants for reinstatement must complete and submit all reinstatement requirements within 90 days of submitting the reinstatement application and receiving approval from The NSLAA. A reinstatement application is valid for 90 days.

**Continuing Education Requirements for Reinstatement**

● If applying for reinstatement within 180 days of the certification expiration date, applicants must complete an extension request, report outstanding continuing education units, and pay any applicable late fees prior to reinstatement.

● If applying for reinstatement more than 180 days, but less than three years, after the certification expiration, applicants must complete a reinstatement application, report outstanding continuing education units, and pay any applicable late fees prior to reinstatement. Alternatively, applicants can pay for and pass the current examination in lieu of the continuing education requirement. Standard exam policies apply; full exam fee charged per exam.

● If applying for reinstatement three to five years after the certification expiration, applicants must complete a reinstatement application, and pay for and pass the current examination as a condition of reinstatement in lieu of the continuing education requirement. Standard exam policies apply; full exam fee charged per exam.

● If applying for reinstatement after five years, applicants must re-enroll in the CSL or CSL-T certification program.

**Audit Process**

The NSLAA reserves the right to verify information supplied by, or on behalf of, a certificant. If requested , the certificant will be asked to submit documentation substantiating eligibility.

The NSLAA reviews and approves or rejects all submitted CEU requests. You are required to submit verifiable documentation for each activity submitted as part of your renewal application (CEUs). It is recommended that certificants retain all records for at least two (2) years following the cycle end date.

If credit for any program or activity (i.e. for which CEUs are reported) is denied, the certificant may attempt to cure by providing the requested documentation where applicable. If the necessary hours are not reported by 1 January of the reporting cycle (every even year), the individual will no longer be certified and will not be authorized to use the NSLAA designation.

**Renewal Appeals**

The certification renewal decision will be based solely on materials submitted by, or on behalf of, the certificant.

Appeals regarding adverse renewal eligibility and status decisions must be submitted in writing to the Certification Program Director within thirty (30) calendar days after the adverse decision or notification. The candidate must submit the appeal in writing (email is acceptable) and explain in detail: 1) The nature of the request and the specific facts and circumstances supporting the request, and 2) all reasons why the action or decision should be changed or modified. The candidate must also provide accurate copies of all supporting documents. The Certification Program Director will review the appeal within fifteen (15) days. If the issue can be resolved at the staff level, the Certification Program Director will make a determination and will notify the Council of the result.

If the issue cannot be resolved by the Certification Program Director, he/she will refer the appeal to the Certification Council. The appeal will also be referred to the Council if the candidate does not accept a determination by the Certification Program Director.

The Council will review the appeal within thirty (30) days and will make a determination within sixty (60) days. The decision of the Certification Council is final.

**Confidentiality**

The Certification Council is committed to protecting confidential and/or proprietary information related to applicants; candidates; certificants; and the examination development, maintenance, and administration process.

The NSLAA will not release information regarding an individual’s application status, personal information or examination results unless release of the information is authorized in writing by the individual or is required by law.

Examination results are released only to the examination candidate unless a signed release is provided in writing by the individual or is required by law. An individual’s application status is considered confidential and will only be released if requested by the individual via a signed release form.

**Verification**

An individual’s certification status is not considered confidential. The NSLAA will provide confirmation of certification status to anyone who requests the information. Verification of certification status will include the individual’s name, current certification status, city/state, expiration date, and credential(s). This information may also be published by The NSLAA.

**Aggregate Data**

Aggregate exam statistics (including the number of exam candidates, pass/fail rates, and a total number of certificants) is published by the NSLAA. Aggregate exam statistics, studies, and reports concerning applicants/certificants will contain no information identifiable with any individual applicant/certificant.

**Complaints**

If you believe that an individual or professional certified by the NSLAA has violated the Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct and would like to report the alleged misconduct, you may submit a complaint form to NSLAA Board’s Enforcement Department. The Board invites complaints from all professionals, other industry professionals, clients of professionals, and anyone else. Please remit all complaints via <https://www.nslaa.org> or [admin@nslaa.org](mailto:admin@nslaa.org).