

IMFOA Certification Process FAQ

Note: Applies to Clerk, Finance, Associate Clerk, and Associate Finance Certifications.

New Certification Requirements:

1. **Membership:** Must be a current IMFOA member for at least 3 years. See bylaws for membership types.
 2. **Experience:**
 - Clerk/Associate Clerk: 3 years of municipal clerk experience.
 - Finance/Associate Finance: 5 years of governmental finance experience.
 3. **Education:**
 - **Basic Curriculum:** 50 hours through Iowa State University's MPI.
 - **Flexible Curriculum:** 25 hours from approved sources (e.g., regional meetings, degrees).
 - **Specialized Curriculum:** 25 hours from approved courses.
 4. **IMFOA Conference Attendance:** At least one in the past 4 years (minimum of 5 hours).
 5. **Associate Certifications:** Include a verification letter from your city.
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Frequently Asked Questions

1. When can I apply for certification?

- **Clerk/Associate Clerk:** After 3 years of IMFOA membership and 3 years of clerk-related experience.
- **Finance/Associate Finance:** After 3 years of membership and 5 years of finance-related experience.
Educational requirements must also be met.

2. Difference between Clerk/Finance and Associate Certifications?

Associate certifications don't require the title of clerk or finance officer.

3. When do education hours count?

Hours must be earned within 8 years of the application date.

- **Basic Credits:** Only from MPI.
- **Flexible and Specialized Credits:** From MPI, Iowa League of Cities, or other approved sources.

4. How do I find eligible courses?

Courses outside the IMFOA-approved Institute/Academy, Iowa League of Cities, or Regional Clerk Meetings must receive prior approval. However, training provided by the Institute, Academy, Iowa League of Cities, or Regional Clerk Meetings is already on the approved list.

5. How do I track completed courses?

- **Option 1:** Use the Certification Dashboard on your IMFOA account.
- **Option 2:** Keep certificates/emails from courses (must include hours). Submit either method as proof when applying.

6. Can college degrees count?

Yes, degrees in relevant fields count as flexible hours:

- **Associate Degree:** 15 hours.
- **Bachelor's Degree or higher:** 25 hours.
Non-listed degrees require pre-approval.

7. What happens if my application is incomplete?

Incomplete applications are returned with a \$35 resubmission fee. Missing documentation must be added for resubmission.

8. What does the \$150 application fee cover?

- Framed certificate and lapel pin.
- Administrative costs for tracking certifications.

9. How do I apply for a second certification?

Submit proof of 25 additional specialized hours. Basic and flexible hours from the first certification can be reused.

Renewal and Expired Certifications

10. How do I renew my certification?

Certifications expire 4 years after approval. Renewal requirements:

- Maintain IMFOA membership.
- Attend 1 IMFOA conference in the past 4 years (5 hours minimum).
- Complete 60 educational hours during the renewal period.
- Submit a \$75 renewal fee.

11. How soon can you submit your application before your expiration date, since it can take 8-12 weeks to review. *Example Certification expires in November of 2025...when should the application be sent in?*

Submit no more than 60 days before or 90 days after. The 8-12 weeks doesn't matter when it comes to expiration. It's the submission timeline that matters. Example: If certification expires in November 2025, we do not want the application before September. It will just get rejected and then there will be a re-submission fee.

12. What if my certification expires?

- **91–365 days expired:** Add 15 hours of education (total 75).
- **366–730 days expired:** Add 30 hours (total 90).
- **Over 2 years expired:** Pay a \$75 penalty and reapply with updated education.

13. Can I reuse classes for renewal or second certifications?

No. Each certification requires unique hours.

14. What if my job title changes?

Your renewal will reflect your current title. For example:

- A clerk becoming an assistant manager renews as an associate clerk.
- A clerk becoming a city administrator renews as a certified clerk/administrator.