

ALOA Certification Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Are certification and licensure the same thing?

Certifications and licenses are NOT the same. A license is issued by a government and allows one to practice a profession. In fact, in some states, it may be a criminal act to practice without a license. Though typically not required by law, certification lets the public know that a locksmith has been professionally recognized by a credentialing agency. It is also a sign of support for the profession and the standards set by the credentialing organization.

I have a great deal of experience in locksmithing and physical security. Why do I have to take an examination, when this should be proof enough of my competence?

The ALOA Board through the ALOA Education Department (AED) feels strongly that examination is an essential component of our certifications. The PRP exams were designed by qualified test development professionals and according to internationally accepted procedures. Just as important, locksmiths, safe technicians, and physical security professionals determined the questions and content of the exams, so that the tests accurately reflect the knowledge and skills required in the security industry.

The practice of awarding certifications through experience alone is not accepted by accrediting organizations in the certification field, and ALOA wishes to maintain the highest possible credibility for its certification programs.

Do I have to take a test to maintain my ALOA membership?

Article III, Section 3 of the ALOA Bylaws specifies that you must hold and maintain an ALOA approved designation. ALOA approved designations include the **RL** designation which does not require testing. See description below.

The Registered Locksmith (RL) designation does not require testing. Is this designation a certification?

The Registered Locksmith (RL) designation is recognition of experience or training but because there is not an examination it is not a certification. It has been awarded for various accomplishments such as 10 years of ALOA membership which provided for grandfathering when the program was first initiated in 1985, the taking of 12 ALOA Continuing Education (ACE) classes (since 1992) or equivalent and successfully completing the ALOA Basic Locksmithing Course. It is not a path towards certification. It is an ALOA recognized designation and thus meets the requirements of achieving an ALOA recognized designation for ALOA membership.

Does the fact that more individuals are obtaining ALOA certifications dilute their value?

The value of our certifications will not be diluted as long as the knowledge measured and the scoring parameters are consistent from year to year. The most likely effect of more individuals holding the designations is a greater public awareness of the meaning of the designation and the recognition of its value by security professionals like you.

Does ALOA plan to introduce any other certifications in the near future?

At present, the ALOA Education Department is concentrating on promoting and supporting the CRL, CPL and CML designations. Preparing new certifications takes an enormous amount of time and effort to develop the areas for testing, identify references, create and validate questions, etc. A large number of potential exam candidates is also a requirement, of course.

Many people have suggested that ALOA should offer certifications in specialized disciplines such as automotive, lock hardware installation and electronic security. These suggestions are now under review and research is being done to determine whether these additional certifications should be developed.

Applying for the Exams

I don't feel comfortable submitting my social security number with the application. Is it really required?

A social security number is required to verify continuity of records and to prevent duplicate records.

I didn't receive a confirmation email from ALOA after I submitted my certification application. Did it go through?

After receiving your application for the CRL, CPL, CML, CPS or CMST examinations, you should receive a confirmation by the same medium that your application was submitted. If you do not receive a confirmation, please contact the certification program office.

Preparing for and Taking the Examination

Does ALOA or my local chapter offer any resources to help me prepare for the CRL, CPL or CML examination?

Many local ALOA chapters and affiliates offer organized study programs, a lending library of reference materials, or other resources that can help a certification exam candidate prepare for the CRL, CPL or CML tests. See [this page](#) (pdf) for your local chapter or affiliate. If nothing is available, you may consider starting your own program.

What is contained in the PRP Resource Guide?

The PRP Resource Guide contains 85 pages covering the following:

Mechanics – a description of the different levels and what is involved in achieving each level. Registration Procedures, Requirements for Sponsoring an Evaluation - An article “How to Study for the PRP”, by Clair Cohen, CML, a PRP Category List, Sample Questions with answers on the following page, Types of Resources for Study Material, A listing of each category with a paragraph describing what is being tested and listing Study Resources, Bibliography, which includes contact info for the various associations, publications and other resources that are referenced in the guide, PRP Committee Suggestions included in the article “Meeting The Challenge”, a sample PRP Registration Form, a sample Answer Book Front Page, a Sample Answer Book Page, a Personal Log of Classes, a Personal Log of PRP Exams, an explanation of Combining Categories, an explanation of the PRP Re-certification program and a PRP Recertification credit reporting form. Also included is a 100 page Professional Locksmith Glossary of Terms.

Although the website and other official ALOA publications state that the CRL exam has 300 questions, I have heard that the examination actually contains 325 questions. Is this true?

Yes, from time to time we insert beta questions for evaluation, however only 300 of the total number of questions are scored. Un-scored "prototype" questions are randomly dispersed throughout the exam. We use the data from these questions to determine whether they are suitable to use as real, scored questions on later forms of the test.

Recertification

Does education have to come from ALOA?

Any locksmith related education will be recognized. There are some verification requirements (i.e. submission of a class descriptions with the number hours of instructions, either issue certificates or maintain a roster of students who completed the instruction, etc.) the sponsor of the instruction should contact the ALOA Education Department for those requirements.

Who are "recognized" security organizations?

Recognized security organizations are national, regional and local locksmith/security associations, locksmith/security equipment manufacturers and distributors.

Who is an accredited or otherwise "recognized" self study program?

Self Study programs that are accredited by the various nationally recognized accrediting bodies would qualify. Although Foley-Belsaw is not accredited, it is a nationally recognized locksmith distance learning program.

What constitutes a locksmith/security-related exhibition

Any exhibition whose main purpose is to exhibit locksmith/security products qualifies. Including but not limited to international shows, national shows, regional shows, local shows and distributor shows.

Who are the "recognized" periodicals?

There are too many locksmith/security periodicals to list. Generally speaking, any periodical whose scope encompasses the security industry and who has a subscription or membership base of locksmiths/security professionals would qualify. However, if a security related article is published in a non security periodical, it may also qualify.

Define a "chartered" security organization?

For ALOA's purposes, chartered security organizations are non profit organizations who have published bylaws which include membership requirements, whose officers are elected by their membership and are incorporated or registered. Most national and local locksmith/security associations would qualify. Subscription based magazines or websites would not qualify.

Are my certifications from other security associations "an ALOA recognized program designation" as defined in the ALOA bylaws?

ALOA currently recognizes the following security association's designations: **ASIS** (CPP, PSP); **DHI** (AHC, CDC, EHC & AOC); **IAIL** (CFL); **ILA** (CIL); **NBFAA** (CAT1, AAT); **SAVTA** (CPS, CMST).

What is the time frame in which the AED is required to determine points awarded for Public Service and "other accomplishments?"

All items submitted for points must be performed within the time for which recertification is required. The recertification requirement became effective on 1/1/2006 therefore all items submitted for points must be performed after 1/1/2006 and before the recertification expiration date.

What criteria will be used to insure "At the discretion of AED" is consistently applied? Any process of appeal?

This will be an ongoing process using common sense and established criteria and procedures. Although we haven't established an appeal process, any matter regarding ALOA can be appealed to the Executive Director and if necessary to the ALOA Board.

Explain and clarify note # 3 on page 23 of the Dec 2005 Keynotes where it states, "Activities submitted for re-certification must not be within the scope of employment and/or performed as a requirement of employment."

It has been decided that the scope of this note is not practical and it has been deleted from the requirements.

What is a "recertification term?"

The recertification term is the period of time between passing the CRL, CPL or CML examination, and the deadline for submitting sufficient credits to recertify. This term is three years. Please also keep in mind that recertification terms always expire at the end of the year. For example, a CPL who passed the exam in April of 2006 would have until December 31, 2009 to submit the full number of credits.

How often should I report my recertification activities?

At the very least, you must report your activities by the end of your recertification period. We recommend, however, that you report your activities with your dues renewal each year.

I've let my membership lapse. What can I do now?

If it has been less than one year since the deadline for recertification, you may take advantage of the grace period.

Between January 1st and June 30th of the year following the recertification term, a total of seventeen credits and a \$75.00 fee is required to reinstate the CRL, CPL or CML designation (one additional credit and a \$15.00 late fee); a total of eighteen credits and a \$90.00 fee is required (two additional credits and a \$30.00 late fee) between July 1st and December 31st. (Non-member late fee is \$110.00.) Recertification after a lapse of twelve months or more will require completing the full examination process.

Are ALOA-related activities automatically reported?

All activities related to ALOA's international headquarters are automatically reported. This includes the credits you receive for membership in ALOA & SAVTA, attendance at ACE classes throughout the year and at the ALOA and SAVTA annual convention & security expo, volunteer positions, and so on. Activities at the chapter-level of ALOA may not be automatically reported, however.

Please note that ALOA-related activities have only been automatically reported since 2006.

Can I submit my activities online?

You can download a credit submission form and submit it via email, fax, or mail. All of these resources are available in the recertification section of the website.

Do I need to submit a separate recertification form for my PRP and my STPRP recertification?

Yes. If you hold an ALOA certification and a SAVTA certification, you will need to submit recertification credits separately for each certification. This is true even if some or all of your activities qualify for credit under more than one certification.