



National Association of *Estate Planners & Councils*

1120 Chester Avenue – Suite 470 – Cleveland, Ohio 44114

Accredited Estate Planner® Designation

The Accredited Estate Planner® (AEP®) designation is a graduate level specialization in estate planning designation, obtained in addition to already recognized professional credentials within the various disciplines of estate planning. It is awarded by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils (NAEPC) to recognize estate planning professionals who meet stringent requirements of experience, knowledge, education, and professional reputation and character. As part of NAEPC's advocacy program, active designation holders will be given priority in requests for referrals within each professional discipline that result from NAEPC promotion and advertising campaigns. In addition, NAEPC promotion and advertising will prominently feature the AEP® designation and the advantages of working with a professional who holds this special accreditation.

QUALIFICATIONS & REQUIREMENTS FOR COUNCIL-NOMINATED APPLICANTS

An **ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER®** applicant must meet **ALL** of the following requirements as established by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils:

1. **Credential requirement.** To be eligible to be considered for the AEP® designation, the applicant must provide documentation of being licensed to practice law as an Attorney (Atty) or to practice as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), or of being currently designated as a Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU), Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC), Certified Financial Planner (CFP®), or Certified Trust & Financial Advisor (CTFA), in any jurisdiction of the United States of America.
2. **Professional discipline engaged in estate planning requirement.** The applicant must be presently and significantly engaged in “estate planning activities” as an attorney, an accountant, an insurance professional and financial planner, or a trust officer.

Estate planning encompasses the accumulation, conservation, preservation, and transfer of an estate through planning and implementation of an estate plan. The overall purpose of the estate planning process is to develop a plan that will maintain the financial security of individuals and their families. Estate planning has come to include lifetime planning that leads to conservation and transfer of assets. Estate planning should also facilitate the intended

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Telephone (866) 226-2224 – www.naepc.org – admin@naepc.org – Facsimile (216) 696-2582

The Association of Choice for Estate Planning Professionals

AEP Application COMPLETE COUNCIL-NOMINATED ONLY 12.2009



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and orderly transfer of property at death, taking into consideration the family unit and the potential costs of different methods.

Estate planning activities could include the following functions appropriate to the applicant's respective discipline(s):

- Administering estates and trusts
- Analyzing existing life insurance coverage for continuing relevance
- Analyzing proposed transactions for estate and gift tax implications
- Attending Estate Planning Council Meetings and Other Estate Planning Educational Events
- Business Succession Planning
- Charitable/gifting planning
- Designing estate plans
- Designing Qualified and Non-Qualified Retirement Plans
- Developing strategies to minimize potential estate and gift taxes
- Developing programs to conserve assets during lifetime and at death
- Drafting estate planning documents
- Life Settlements of Life Insurance Policies
- Preparing estate and gift tax returns
- Preparing fiduciary accountings
- Preparing fiduciary income tax returns
- Probating wills & administering estates
- Proposing life insurance solutions consistent with estate plans
- Retirement distribution planning
- Succession planning

Note: A full time professor at a college, university, or school of law who teaches courses in estate planning, estate tax, or business continuation planning will be considered engaged in estate planning activities.

3. **Experience requirement.** A minimum of fifteen (15) years of experience engaged in estate planning and estate planning activities is required in one or more of the professional disciplines described above to be eligible for a council nomination.
4. **Commitment to NAEPC Code of Ethics requirement.** The applicant must sign a declaration statement to continuously abide by the NAEPC Code of Ethics.
5. **Dedicated to team concept requirement.** The applicant must acknowledge a commitment to the team concept of estate planning by signing a declaration statement.
6. **Continuing education requirement.** The applicant must satisfy a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing education during the previous two calendar years, of which at least fifteen (15) hours MUST have been in estate planning. Applicants may be requested to produce documentation to substantiate any activity claimed.



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7. **Annual dues and re-certification requirement.** Active designation holders are required to continuously maintain annual membership in order to use the AEP® designation. (Annual AEP® membership dues are currently \$100.00.) Failure to maintain annual membership or failure to meet or comply with the re-certification requirements described below will result in the revocation of the AEP® designation, until such time as the requirements are met.

On an annual basis, active designation holders must certify or re-certify that:

- (1) They are continuously engaged in estate planning activities in their professional discipline;
 - (2) They are in good standing with their respective professional organizations and/or license authorities and are not subject to any disciplinary misconduct or investigation;
 - (3) They maintain active membership in an affiliated local or regional estate planning council where such membership is available; otherwise they must be an individual At-Large member of the NAEPC and maintain that membership;
 - (4) They have abided by and will continue to abide by the NAEPC Code of Ethics;
 - (5) They are dedicated to the team concept of estate planning; and
 - (6) They have currently satisfied the continuing education requirements of their designated professional discipline and have maintained a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing education during the previous twenty-four (24) months, of which at least fifteen (15) hours were in estate planning.
8. **Annual audit of certification requirements.** On an annual basis, the AEP® Committee will determine, with the approval of the NAEPC Board of Directors, the percentage of active designation holders to be audited. If an AEP® is chosen for audit, a letter from the Chairperson of the Audit Committee will be sent via Certified Mail asking for verification that the designation holder is in good standing with his or her respective professional organization and/or licensing authority; current with the continuing education requirements of thirty (30) hours, fifteen (15) of which must be in estate planning, for the prior twenty four (24) months; and verification of membership from the appropriate affiliated local estate planning council of which the AEP® is a member. If the audited AEP® is not a member of an affiliated local estate planning council, a reason for this must be provided. Failure to comply with the audit request results in a “cease and desist” letter sent to the AEP® via Certified US Mail with a delivery confirmation stating that the designation is considered inactive and the designation holder is ineligible to use the designation or promote oneself as an AEP® until such time as the audit information has been submitted to and approved by the NAEPC national office.



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CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

The National Association of Estate Planners and Councils (NAEPC) is dedicated to setting and promoting standards of excellence for professionals in estate planning.

Membership in the Association comes from one of three sources. The first source of member is one who joins the NAEPC through membership in an affiliated local council. The second source of member is an at-large member who joins the NAEPC as an individual due to the local council being unaffiliated. The third source of member is an at-large member, one who is unaffiliated with a local council, whether or not the local group is not an affiliated member of the NAEPC.

To those who meet its stringent admission standards, which include, among other things, significant prior experience in estate planning activities and material formal education in the subject matter, the NAEPC confers the Accredited Estate Planner (AEP) designation.

The NAEPC recognizes the importance of promulgating a code of behavior for members that emphasizes a team approach to estate planning, and relies upon the competency, knowledge, professionalism, integrity, objectivity, and responsibility of each person qualifying as a candidate for certification.

In fulfillment of this mission, the Association's Board of Directors has adopted this Code of Professional Responsibility, which embodies the professional behavior expected of all NAEPC members, and which is consistent with the Codes of Ethics of the other gateway professional designations under which a member must conduct himself/herself.

That is, the NAEPC recognizes that those who attain the AEP designation already possess other professional designations, such as Attorney at Law, Certified Public Accountant, Chartered Life Underwriter, Chartered Financial Consultant, Certified Financial Planner, and Certified Trust and Financial Advisor. Each of those gateway designations imposes a Code of Ethics on its members. The NAEPC intends that its Code of Ethics be consistent with those Codes already imposed on its members when the AEP title is conferred.



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Professional Responsibilities

A member of the NAEPC is required to conduct himself/herself at all times in the following manner:

1. To uphold the integrity and honor of the profession and to encourage respect for it. This involves promoting the continual development of the estate planning industry, as well as the member's respective specialization.
2. To be fair. This requires that a professional treat others as he/she would wish to be treated if in the other's position. It also means that a member shall disclose conflicts of interest in providing estate planning services.
3. A member shall continually improve his/her knowledge, skill, and competence throughout his/her working life.
4. To do the utmost to attain a distinguished record of professional service based upon diligence. This means that a professional must act with patience, timeliness, and consistency, and do so in a prompt and thorough manner in the service of others.
5. To support the established institutions and organizations concerned with the integrity of his/her profession.
6. To respect the confidentiality of any information entrusted to, or obtained in the course of, the member's business or professional activities.
7. To regulate himself or herself. That is, every member has a two-fold duty to abide by his/her other applicable professional codes of ethics, and to also facilitate the enforcement of this Code of Professional Responsibility. This also means expeditiously reporting breaches of professional responsibility, including one's own, to the NAEPC. The NAEPC assumes responsibility for diligently investigating each reported breach. Confirmed Breaches will result in discipline by the Association, and can include dismissal for the most egregious offenses.
8. To comply with all laws and regulations, in particular as they relate to professional and business activities.
9. To cooperate with Association members, and other estate planning professionals, to enhance and maintain the estate planning profession's public image, and to work together to improve the quality of services rendered.



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ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER® CHECK LIST **COUNCIL AEP CANDIDATE NOMINEES *ONLY***

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT

Please make sure that all of the following materials are included when returning your application to the NAEPC National Office. If you have any questions or need additional information, please call (866) 226-2224.

Please forward your completed packet to: National Association of Estate Planners & Councils
1120 Chester Ave., Suite 470
Cleveland, OH 44114-3514

- _____ Completed Application (pgs. 7, 8 & 9), including Declaration Page (pg. 10)
- _____ Copy of licenses and/or certificates for each license, degree, and/or designation
- _____ Affiliated Council AEP Nomination Resolution Form (pg. 11 – completed in its entirety by the President of the Council and signed by an additional officer)
- _____ Fees
 - _____ ~~\$250 Application Fee~~ \$125 non-refundable fee for council nominated candidates
 - _____ \$100 Yearly Dues

All checks should be made payable to NAEPC.

*New designees joining after July 1 will not be required to recertify and renew for the following year; however, both the application fee and annual dues must be submitted at the time of application.

COMMENTS

ALL REQUIRED FORMS ARE INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET



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APPLICATION

FOR DESIGNATION AS AN ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER®
COUNCIL-NOMINATED AEP CANDIDATES ONLY

PERSONAL INFORMATION (Please print or type)

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Professional Designation(s) / Degree(s) _____

Name of Firm or Organization _____

Title _____

Business Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number _____ FAX Number _____

E-Mail Address _____

Web Address for listing on NAEPC Website _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Telephone Number _____

Alternative E-Mail Address _____

Please send correspondence to () business address or () home address.

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PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

My professional license(s) / designation(s) (listed below) are currently in effect:

- CPA Certificate Number _____ by State of _____ Year Issued _____
- State Bar License Number _____ by State of _____ Year Issued _____
- CLU Identification Number _____ Year Issued _____
- ChFC Identification Number _____ Year Attained _____
- CFP® Identification Number _____ Year Attained _____
- CTFA Identification Number _____ Year Attained _____

*Please supply a copy of licenses and/or certificates for each license, degree, and/or designation.

PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE

I am presently engaged in “estate planning activities” *primarily* (check only one primary discipline) as:

An attorney _____, an accountant _____, an insurance professional and financial planner _____,
or a trust officer _____.

EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT

I have the required experience in estate planning activities in one or more of the aforementioned disciplines. Detailed below is the *percentage* of my time devoted to estate planning activities (practice, educational activities, etc.) in the indicated years. (Please refer to the definition of estate planning and estate planning activities on page 4 when answering these questions.)

Current Year _____ Last Year _____ 2 Years Ago _____ 3 Years Ago _____ 4 Years Ago _____

Total Years of Experience in Estate Planning: _____*

*(15+ years required for council nominated candidates)



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Estate planning activities could include the following functions appropriate to the applicant's respective discipline(s):

- Administering estates and trusts
- Analyzing existing life insurance coverage for continuing relevance
- Analyzing proposed transactions for estate and gift tax implications
- Attending estate planning council meetings and other estate planning educational events
- Business succession planning
- Charitable/gifting planning
- Designing estate plans
- Designing qualified and non-qualified retirement plans
- Developing strategies to minimize potential estate and gift taxes
- Developing programs to conserve assets during lifetime and at death
- Drafting estate planning documents
- Life settlements of life insurance policies
- Preparing estate and gift tax returns
- Preparing fiduciary accountings
- Preparing fiduciary income tax returns
- Probating wills & administering estates
- Proposing life insurance solutions consistent with estate plans
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Note: A full time professor at a college, university, or school of law who teaches courses in estate planning, estate tax, or business continuation planning will be considered engaged in estate planning activities.



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APPLICANT DECLARATIONS

I certify that I am in good standing with my professional organization and/or license authority.

I agree to continuously abide by the NAEPC Code of Ethics, a copy of which is included with this application, and can also be found by visiting the NAEPC website, www.naepc.org.

I hereby acknowledge that I understand the team concept of estate planning and agree to abide by such concept while holding the designation of ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER®.

I certify that I have satisfied a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing education during the previous twenty-four (24) months, of which at least fifteen (15) hours have been in estate planning. I also understand that I may be required to produce documentation substantiating any activity for which I claim credit.

I authorize the NAEPC to contact any person whom I have named as a reference and to contact my applicable licensing or regulatory authority regarding my credentials, and I authorize such persons or authorities to respond to any inquiry.

*Further, I agree, upon receiving the designation of ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER®, to maintain membership in an affiliated estate planning council where such membership is available, or as an At-Large Member in the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils, and to abide by any continuing education and **re-certification** requirements for ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNERS®. Furthermore, I understand that, as an ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER®, I am required to maintain annual AEP® membership in order to use the designation. I agree to promptly supply third-party verification or information from which third-party verification may be obtained regarding any of the foregoing, if I am one of the persons randomly selected for audit. Furthermore, I understand that, if I do not comply with the above requirements, I am ineligible to use the AEP® designation or represent myself as an ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER®. I agree and acknowledge that, if I use the AEP® designation after my right to do so has been rightfully terminated by the NAEPC, then I will be subject to injunctive relief through the courts of such jurisdiction wherein (1) the NAEPC then has its administrative offices, (2) the NAEPC is incorporated, or (3) the then current President of the NAEPC resides. I further agree and acknowledge that I shall be liable for all costs, including attorney fees, incurred by the NAEPC in obtaining such injunctive relief.*

I hereby certify that the information in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. If any of the above statements is determined to be false, or if I do not, in fact, meet the aforementioned requirements, I agree to surrender any certificate that may have been awarded and promptly cease to represent myself as an ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER®, and I authorize the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils to publicize the removal of my designation as an ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER®.

NAME (Please print or type) _____

Signature _____ Date _____



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Affiliated Council AEP® Nomination Resolution *RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF AN AFFILIATED ESTATE PLANNING COUNCIL*

to the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ESTATE PLANNERS & COUNCILS

NOMINATING A CANDIDATE FOR THE ACCREDITED ESTATE PLANNER® DESIGNATION

At a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of the _____ Estate Planning Council held on the ____ day of _____, 20____, the following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS; the above-named Estate Planning Council is a local or regional Estate Planning Council in good standing with the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils (NAEPC); and

WHEREAS; the Board of Directors of said Council would like to nominate one of its members, _____, to be an Accredited Estate Planner® (AEP®) candidate pursuant to the NAEPC Accredited Estate Planner® Designation Handbook; and

WHEREAS; said candidate nominee is a(n) [Attorney, CPA, CLU, ChFC, CFP®, or CTFA (*please circle one*)], and, to the best of our information and belief, is presently and significantly engaged in estate planning activities as a(n) [attorney; accountant; insurance professional and financial planner; or trust officer (*please circle one*)]; and

WHEREAS; said candidate is a member in good standing of our Estate Planning Council, has 15 or more years of experience in estate planning and estate planning activities, is recognized in our community as a distinguished estate planner, embraces the team concept of estate planning, and adheres to the NAEPC's professional code of ethics,

NOW THEREFORE, upon motion made, duly seconded, and adopted by the Board of Directors, it is:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the above-named Estate Planning Council hereby nominates _____ to the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils as an Accredited Estate Planner® candidate.

Name of Nominating Estate Planning Council

Location (City and State) of Nominating Estate Planning Council

Signature of Council President

Signature of Additional Officer

Printed Name of Council President

Printed Name of Additional Officer

Date

Office Held