



Frequently Asked Questions Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) Program & Professional Development

1. Why should I become certified as an economic developer?

The Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) program is the leading industry designation. Having CEcD after your name makes you more marketable (check out our job listings to see what we mean.) It not only shows that you have the breadth of knowledge to perform at the top level in the profession, it enhances your visibility within your organization and the visibility of your organization within the profession.

2. Is there a specific amount of experience required before one can apply for certification?

Yes. To apply for the certification exam, you need to have at least four (4) consecutive years of full-time, paid professional experience in economic development. As part of the exam application process, you must submit a current resume that outlines your experience in the field. Individuals can begin taking coursework before they have the experience requirement.

3. What courses are candidates supposed to take?

All applicants must complete at least six professional development courses, representing four core competencies, plus two electives. The [IEDC course selections](#) are listed below.

Core courses:

- Introduction to Economic Development (Basic Economic Development Courses)
- Business Retention & Expansion
- Economic Development Credit Analysis
- Real Estate Development and Reuse

Electives:

- Economic Development Finance Programs
- Economic Development Marketing & Attraction
- Economic Development Strategic Planning
- Entrepreneurial & Small Business Development Strategies
- Managing Economic Development Organizations
- Neighborhood Development Strategies
- Technology-led Economic Development
- Workforce Development

4. Is there a particular order in which the courses should be taken?

No. You are free to attend the courses that best meet your own schedule, travel budget and professional needs.

5. How long does the certification process take?

There is no set time frame for obtaining certification. The length of time depends on your budget, schedule, and the urgency you personally feel about becoming certified. However, we see a good number of applicants complete the course requirements within a year - 18 months.

6. How much does the certification process cost?

The estimated total investment is just shy of \$9,000. This price is based on the early member rate for IEDC professional development courses set in 2014 and excludes exam retake fees.

<u>Price Breakdown</u>	
Course Registration	\$2710
<small>(5 Courses x \$435, 1 Course x \$535 – Credit Analysis)</small>	
Travel and Lodging	\$5600
<small>(6 Courses & Exam x \$800)</small>	
<u>Exam Registration</u>	<u>\$495</u>
Total	\$8805

7. Does IEDC recognize any other professional development programs for certification credit?

Certification applicants may substitute a [Basic Economic Development Course](#) for IEDC's Introduction to Economic Development course. For training beyond the introductory level, we recognize the courses at the [University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute](#). Practitioners who have attended the National Development Council's (NDC) ED101 or have obtained the Economic Development Financial Professional (EDFP) designation may waive the Economic Development Credit Analysis requirement.

8. Are all candidates required to participate in the “Primer to the CEcD Exam Process: What you Need to Know Workshop”?

New candidates applying to sit for an exam occurring after December 31, 2014 must participate in a “Primer to the CEcD Exam Process: What You Need to Know” workshop, either in-person or via webinar. This free workshop provides candidates with a complete overview of the Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) exam process, from application to the oral examination. Candidates will learn tools and techniques for preparing for the exam and witness a mock oral interview.

This workshop is offered at the Annual and Economic Future Forum (Formerly Spring Conference), free of charge. It will also be offered at least once a year in webinar format.

Although the workshop is recommended for all candidates planning to sit for the exam, this requirement does not apply to candidates who have already been approved. Only first time applicants applying to sit for an exam that occurs after December 31, 2014 must attend this workshop.

9. How do I apply for the exam?

CEcD Exam Applications are downloadable from IEDC's website and must be submitted 60 days prior to your chosen exam schedule. Applications can be sent via email, mail or fax to IEDC's Washington, DC office. The fee for the exam is \$495 for members; \$695 for non-members – Check or Credit Card.

10. How do I prepare for the exam?

Candidates receive an IEDC training manual as part of the registration for each of the IEDC training courses. These manuals serve as the basis for the Multiple Choice/Short Answer portion of the exam, and should be used as the primary study guide as you prepare to sit. You will need six manuals in total, the four competency manuals:

- Introduction to Economic Development
- Business Retention & Expansion
- Economic Development Credit Analysis/Finance
- Real Estate Development and Reuse

And two elective competencies of your choice:

- Economic Development Finance Programs
- Economic Development Marketing & Attraction
- Economic Development Strategic Planning
- Entrepreneurial & Small Business Development Strategies
- Managing Economic Development Organizations
- Neighborhood Development Strategies
- Technology-led Economic Development
- Workforce Development

You will be able to select the competencies you'd like to be tested on at the time of application. Once you've selected these, you will not be able to change them. If you chose to be tested on elective competencies that you've not taken courses on, it is recommended that you purchase the [corresponding training manual](#) to use as you prepare.

Manuals can be purchased from the websites bookstore or by contacting Christina Sabato at 202.223.7800 or via email at csabato@iedconline.org.

We also offer an exam candidate's guide, containing information on certification requirements, the application process, exam format and procedures, as well as sample questions and how to maintain certification once you've achieved it.

11. Are there prep courses?

IEDC does not offer a preparatory course for the CEcD exam. Some state or regional associations offer prep courses as a way to encourage their members to take the exam. We recommend that you contact your state or regional association to find out if they offer such programs. IEDC also offers a CEcD mentorship program for its members.

Candidates can request a mentor as part of the application process. You may also wish to organize a study group or network with other candidates who live in your region or with whom you already network. We recommend using LinkedIn, your state or regional association, and other outlets to connect with others preparing for the exam.

There are a number of prep courses, if you'd like more information please contact the organization:

OU Economic Development Institute
Phone: (405) 325-3891
Email: edi@ou.edu

12. What is the pass rate for the CEcD Exam?

The table below represents the pass rate from 2012-2014

Year	Candidates	Pass Rate
2012	123	37%
2013	131	24%
2014	113	35%
Avg	122	32%

13. What is the schedule for future exams?

October 3-4, 2015

The Hotel Captain Cook
939 West 5th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501

Application Deadline: August 4, 2015

January 23-24, 2016

Sheraton New Orleans Hotel
500 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70130

Application Deadline: November 24, 2015

April 2-3, 2016

Renaissance Arlington Capital View
2800 S Potomac Ave
Arlington, VA 22202

Application Deadline: February 2, 2016

June 11-12, 2016

Hyatt Regency Tulsa
100 East 2nd Street
Tulsa, OK 74103

Application Deadline: April 12, 2016

September 24-25, 2016

Hyatt Regency Cleveland at the Arcade
420 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114

Application Deadline: July 26, 2016

14. What must I do to maintain my certification?

You need to remain active in the field of economic development by participating in professional development events such as conferences and training courses and by contributing to the growth of the profession. The latter may include helping administer the certification exam; publishing articles; committee service; board membership, etc.

- You also must apply for recertification every three years.
- The application will ask you to list all the activities in which you've been involved during the three-year recertification period.
- The application is downloadable from IEDC website.

15. How do I partner with IEDC to bring an education course or a series of courses to my local region?

Partnership arrangements can be forged in a variety of ways and all of the IEDC courses are available for partnership arrangements. Call the education department of IEDC, 202-223-7800, and ask to speak with Emily Bell, Director, Professional Development.