

Retired CPA License Status FAQ & Resources for CalCPA Members

Beginning July 1, 2014, California CPAs who are retired from the profession and no longer actively practicing public accountancy may apply to have their California CPA license placed in a retired status with the California Board of Accountancy.

With many CalCPA members eligible to retire in the near future, the retired status offers retirees who are proud of their many years of service to the accounting profession a way to continue to serve their business communities.

Below is helpful guidance and resources from the CBA for a licensee looking to move their license into a retired status:

REQUIREMENTS FOR RETIRED STATUS

The retired license status application, including instructions and requirements, can be [downloaded from the CBA website](#).

The general requirements are:

- Applicants must submit a completed initial application to the CBA on [Form 11-R48](#) and pay an application fee of \$75.
- Applicants must have held a license as a CPA or public accountant in the United States or its territories for a minimum of 20 total years (does not have to be consecutive).
- Of the 20 total years, applicants must have held a license in an active status as a California CPA or public accountant for a minimum of five years.

Note that the CBA can deny an application if the applicant's CPA license is subject to an outstanding order of the CBA, suspended, revoked or otherwise punitively restricted by the CBA, or is subject to disciplinary action.

Retired Status FAQs

Q: When can I apply for retired status?

A: The retired status was enacted in California on July 1, 2014. A qualified applicant can apply at any time.

Q: How do I apply for retired status?

A: An applicant must submit the completed application form to the CBA, along with the application fee of \$75. The retired license status application, including instructions and requirements, can be [downloaded online](#).

Q: What fees are associated with a retired license status?

A: There is an initial application fee of \$75. However, once in retired status, there is no fee to renew your license. If an applicant wants to restore their license from retired to active status there is a \$50 restoration fee.

Q: If I previously held a retired status license when the CBA originally offered this designation, can I apply to have my license back in retired status since it was cancelled?

A: Yes, any CPA with retired status license between Jan. 1, 1994, and Jan. 1, 1999, may apply for retired status. These applicants must submit the application and fee but are not required to meet the minimum qualifications.

Q: Does retired status have to be renewed?

A: Yes, a license in retired status must be renewed every two years at the time of the licensee's expiration date—similar to renewing a license in active or inactive status. However, there is no renewal fee for retired status.

Q: Are there any continuing education requirements to renew my retired license in retired status?

A: No. However, there are continuing education requirements should a licensee restore their license back to active status.

Q: Once in retired status, can I restore my license back to active status?

A: Yes, you may restore your retired status license to active status at the time of license renewal or any time prior to your next license renewal. In order to restore a license to active status, you must submit:

- The [Restoration from Retired to Active Status](#) form
or

A licensee can submit a written request to restore one's license to active status to the CBA:
California Board of Accountancy
2000 Evergreen St., Suite 250
Sacramento, CA 95815-3832

- A \$50 restoration fee
- A completed [Peer Review Reporting Form \(PR-1\)](#)
- Complete a minimum of 80 hours of continuing education, with at least 20 hours of continuing education being completed within the one-year period immediately before seeking renewal.
- If subject, an applicant must also obtain state and federal fingerprint clearance.

Q: When can I apply for restoration of my retired license to active status?

A: A retired CPA can apply to restore their license to active status at the time of the license renewal, or any time prior to their next license renewal date.

Q: Can someone re-apply for retired status after coming out of retirement once?

A: Yes. An applicant may choose to apply for retired status again after their license had been restored to active. However, an applicant cannot be granted retired status more than two separate times.

Q: Are there limitations on a CPA with a license in retired status?

A: Yes. A licensee with a retired status may not practice public accountancy or engage in any activity for which a permit is required. In addition, similar to "inactive" status, any CPA that is in "retired" status must list this in any title or where the designation "CPA" is used. This includes materials such as correspondence, websites, business cards, nameplates, name plaques, etc.

Q: Can I use the CPA designation when in retired status?

A: Yes, but you will need to disclose that your license is in retired status, similar to the "inactive" status. When using the title "certified public accountant," the CPA designation or any other reference that would suggest that you are licensed by the CBA on materials such as correspondence, websites, business cards, nameplates, or name plaques, the term "retired" must immediately follow the designation.

Q: Can I still receive profits or other compensation from a public accounting firm with my license in retirement status?

A: Yes, a license in a retired status may still receive a share of the net profits from a public accounting firm or other compensation from a public accounting firm. However, the licensee with a license in retired status must not otherwise engage in the practice of public accountancy and must disclose that their license is in a retired status.

Q: Can I do volunteer work or sit on a board of a nonprofit with my license in retirement status?

A: Yes, a licensee may serve on a board or continue to do volunteer work as a retired CPA as long as you are not practicing public accountancy or engage in any activity for which a permit is required. In addition, similar to "inactive" status, any CPA that is in "retired" status must list this in any title or where the designation "CPA" is used. This includes materials such as correspondence, websites, business cards, nameplates, name plaques, etc.

CBA Resources Pertaining to the Retired Status for California CPAs:

- [Retired License Application](#), including instructions and requirements.
- [Retired License Guidance](#)
- [CBA Licensing Renewal Handbook](#): Retired License, pages 18- 22
- [CBA's Retired Status FAQs](#)

Retired License Statutes:

- [Business & Professions Code Section 5058.3](#)
- [Business & Professions Code Section 5070.1](#)

Retired License Regulations:

- [Title 16, Article 2.5-License Status, Section 15](#)

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