



# **IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Candidate Handbook**

**IFPA**

14509 University Point Place  
Tampa, FL 33613

Phone: (800) 785-1924

FAX: (813) 979-1978

E-mail: [ifpa@ifpa-fitness.com](mailto:ifpa@ifpa-fitness.com)

**Web site: <http://www.ifpa-fitness.com>**

© Copyright 2018. International Fitness Professionals Association, IFPA. All copy rights reserved.

# ***Table of Contents***

## **Introduction to the IFPA**

IFPA Mission Statement	Page 8
IFPA Credentials	Page 8
IFPA Code of Ethics	Page 8
IFPA Ethics Violations	Page 9
IFPA Disciplinary Procedures	Page 10
IFPA Complaint Policies and Procedures	Page 10

## **IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification**

Population to be Certified	Page 13
Scope of Practice	Page 13
Purpose of Certification	Page 13
IFPA Certified Fitness Professionals	Page 14
Certification Exam Eligibility	Page 15
Special Accommodations	Page 15
Qualified Individuals with Disabilities	Page 15
Appeals for Denied Eligibility	Page 15
Exam Format	Page 16
Exam Content	Page 16

## **Testing and Grading Policies & Procedures**

Administering the Exam	Page 21
What to Bring to the Exam	Page 21
Passing Criteria	Page 22
Notification of Results	Page 22
Exam Appeals	Page 23
Refund Policy	Page 23
Transfer Policy	Page 23
Rescheduling Policy	Page 24
Extension Fee	Page 24
No Show Candidates	Page 24
Verification of Certification Status	Page 24
Resting	Page 24

## **Other IFPA Policies and Procedures**

Confidentiality	Page 26
Grandfathering Policy	Page 26
Records Retention	Page 26
Security	Page 26

## **Continuing Education**

Requirements	Page 28
How to Obtain CEUs	Page 30
CEU Report Form	Page 34
Renewal Fees	Page 36
Administrative Fee	Page 36
CEU Submission Deadline	Page 36

## Introduction to the IFPA

The IFPA was founded in 1994 to fill a need. Before the IFPA, the certifications that were available were either too rudimentary or too theoretical. The rudimentary certifications were so simple to pass that individuals who had no prior knowledge, skill, training, or experience in the fitness industry could sit through a one- or two-day workshop, be taught the test, and receive certification. The other certifications were so theoretical and academic that they had little in common with the knowledge, skill, or experience needed by a fitness professional to safely and effectively train the general public.

The IFPA was on a mission to correct this disservice. Everyone involved in personal training was in need of a personal training certification that actually measured the competencies of the personal trainer: the Client who used the personal trainer's services, the Gym who hired the personal trainer, the Fitness Industry that was suffering from the poor performance of fitness professionals, and the Trainers who lost what could have been successful careers because they had a sheet of paper from a certifying organization that wrongfully indicated that they had the knowledge, skill, training, experience, and competence to succeed as a personal trainer.

In 1992, the IFPA began putting together a team of the fitness industry's finest experts. The team was comprised of professionals who had both advanced degrees in exercise science and related fields (M.S., PhD, MD, DCM, DO, etc.) and a wealth of knowledge, skill, training, experience, and competence as personal trainers, coaches, and athletes. These Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) began the difficult task of determining what a personal trainer must know in order to train the general public both safely and effectively. This amounted to the first Job Analysis Survey (JAS) for the personal training career.

It was understood from the beginning that the JAS must determine precisely what an entry level personal trainer should know to take generally healthy (no medical restrictions on exercise) clients through personal training sessions safely and effectively. Any medical restrictions such as cardiorespiratory disease, obesity, diabetes, or special populations groups such as young children or the frail elderly would not be considered in the generally healthy group. Therefore, the entry-level trainer would not be required to know this level of knowledge. It was decided that special populations groups would require advanced knowledge, skill, training, and experience, and that this would be an area for other, more advanced certifications.

Once the panel of SMEs determined the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed by entry-level personal trainers to perform their jobs safely and effectively, the SMEs were divided into two groups. The first group was the Certification and Testing Group. The second group was the Education Group. The Certification and Testing Group used the JAS and the KSAs derived from the JAS to develop all of the IFPA Certification Exams. The Certification and Testing Group used the commonly accepted standards for testing. Testing standards are essential to ensure that test candidates are being examined based on valid and reliable assessment instruments (exams).

The Education Group was formed to meet a separate, but equally important, goal. The Fitness Industry was in critical need of an educational system that would educate, train, and prepare students for the profession of personal training. Unfortunately, education in the fitness industry was highly fragmented due to the presence of educators with far too narrow "Scopes of Practice." Some well-known "Fitness Educators" were competitive bodybuilders that had extensive experience on how to gain considerable size in their own musculature, but little knowledge of the exercise science that would make their experience of any value to the non-bodybuilding population. Other fitness educators were highly skilled athletes who had vast personal experience in specific sports conditioning needs that created their own personal success in their chosen sport, but once again lacked the knowledge of exercise science that would enable them to safely and effectively train the general public. The Education Group, therefore, had a separate mission to create a

fitness education system that would enable the personal training student to learn, quickly and efficiently, the KSAs that would ensure that they could train the general public safely and effectively. This would ensure that the needs of those involved in personal training would be met. This would serve to protect the members of the general public from harm, the fitness centers from potential liability lawsuits, and the personal trainers from failed careers.

The goal of the Education Group was to ensure success for clients looking to improve their health and fitness, improve the effectiveness and profitability of the fitness centers and the success of the personal trainer in every way the personal trainer could measure success:

- 1) Increased safety and injury-free sessions
- 2) Increased effectiveness at achieving client goals
- 3) Increased job satisfaction and job fulfillment

Thanks to the dedicated effort and hard work by the SMEs, the IFPA has delivered the best education system and the most valid and reliable Certification Exam in the industry. Every certification in the fitness industry claims to be “the Best,” “the Gold Standard,” “The Industry Leader,” “The World Leader,” but the evidence that the IFPA has the best educational system, the best certification, and the best assessment instrument for determining the skills, knowledge, and abilities for a personal trainer is our success. This success is not the result of a multi-million dollar marketing budget, but of “word of mouth” from the industry’s top experts that the quality of the IFPA Certification is unparalleled.

The IFPA entered the highly competitive fitness certification industry in 1994 and since then has certified over 300,000 personal trainers. The IFPA refused to pattern themselves after previously existing organizations and instead produced an innovative assessment instrument. Leaders in the industry soon recognized the effectiveness of the IFPA credential.

Even more impressive is the testament by many of the fitness industry’s most respected health club chains proclaiming their preference for IFPA Certified trainers. The Q-Sports Clubs, one of the most exclusive, high-end health club chains in the world, reported that their own internal audit determined that IFPA Certified Personal Trainers were the most knowledgeable, best trained, and most effective trainers of all the trainers in their clubs. This includes the far older, far more established members of the fitness industry that rely on reputation and networks of relationships instead of the quality of either their educational products or the validity and reliability of their certification exams. The Q-Sports Clubs and many other national health club chains chose the IFPA for one main reason: the IFPA Certification Exam tests candidates on KSAs that can be directly applied to the personal training career.

It should come as no surprise that the IFPA’s historic rise to success would create a host of imitators and detractors. Now everyone is claiming that their programs are “practical,” that they have performed the same JAS and selected the same KSAs that the IFPA has painstakingly determined. The problem with others making those claims lies in their choice of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). The IFPA spent enormous time, effort, and energy to find the few—the finest fitness experts in the U.S.

The detractors made erroneous assumptions about the IFPA Certification system out of ignorance or malice; either they spent little or no time ascertaining the validity and reliability of the IFPA Certification system, or they simply made false accusations out of competitive jealousy of the tremendous success of the IFPA.

The misrepresentations of the IFPA concerned IFPA workshops and the perceived lack of separation between the Certification Testing Group and the Education Group. The misrepresentation of the IFPA

workshops was the false statement that “all you have to do is sit through a two-day workshop and you can get certified.” This statement is false; there are, in fact, many ways to gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities to pass the IFPA Certification. The IFPA Educational system offers several Personal Training courses and is an outstanding method, both efficient and effective, but it is certainly not the only method. The workshop is a review that provides a candidate with the opportunity to get all his or her questions answered by an esteemed member of the IFPA Faculty. However, without any other preparation, study, knowledge, skills, and abilities, it is highly unlikely that a candidate will pass. A candidate is under NO OBLIGATION, REQUIREMENT, or RESTRICTION to take any IFPA course in order to take an IFPA Certification Exam. A candidate is free to explore any combination of coursework (college or other), book study, internships with other highly qualified trainers, or any learning agenda that is effective for him or her. The IFPA Exam is an extensive test of all the KSAs that have been determined by the industry’s most respected experts to ensure that once candidates pass the IFPA Certification Exam, they will have demonstrated their own understanding of the KSAs in order to safely and effectively train the general public. The other misrepresentation made by IFPA’s detractors is that the lack of separation between the Certification Group and the Education Group creates a situation of “undue influence” in which profitability is more important than a valid and reliable Certification process or the effective education of fitness professionals.

Many of those listening to these false accusations were unaware of the high caliber of IFPA professionals. Detractors failed to acknowledge the integrity, character, and dedication of the fine men and women in the Certification and Education Groups. Taking these misrepresentations into consideration, changes had to be implemented.

### Segregation and Autonomy Between Certification and Education

The IFPA Board of Directors unanimously voted to separate the Certification process from the Education process. The IFPA Board of Directors is held accountable by the IFPA Corporate Bylaws (IFPA is incorporated as of 1994 in the State of Florida) and is prevented from having any undue influence over the decision-making of the IFPA Certification Commission (IFPA-CC). The IFPA-CC is an elected Board of Commissioners that has full responsibility and autonomy for the development and implementation of the IFPA Certification process. The IFPA also separated the education function and is held accountable by the IFPA Corporate Bylaws and prevented from having any undue influence over the decision making of the IFPA Education Commission (IFPA-EC). The IFPA-EC is an elected Board of Commissioners that has full responsibility for and autonomy over the development and implementation of the IFPA Education process.

The IFPA Board of Directors retains responsibility for policymaking, verifying that federal, state, and local laws are followed, making decisions regarding fees charged and collected by the corporation, ensuring that expenses incurred by the corporation (including federal, state, local, employee, payroll, property, and sales taxes) are paid in a timely manner, and developing the corporation’s budget. Budgetary responsibilities require the corporation to fully fund all aspects of the certification process and education process as deemed necessary to develop and implement the policies required by the IFPA-CC and IFPA-EC.

The IFPA Certification Commission (IFPA-CC) is a separate and autonomous division made up of Commissioners elected by members of the IFPA Association. The IFPA-CC is responsible for all aspects of the IFPA Certification process. The IFPA-CC retains full authority and responsibility for the continuous development, establishment, and implementation of standards and testing procedures for the IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer program and process. The IFPA-CC is responsible for all aspects of the certification process, including, but not limited to: documentation, eligibility requirements, application, registration, certification, continuing education, and recertification policies and procedures. The IFPA-CC

will make all decisions regarding the initiation of updates on the Certification Exam, including, but not limited to: new JAS, KSAs, and item writing.

The IFPA Education Commission (IFPA-EC) is responsible for the development of educational products and services.

Doctor's Fitness Centers (DFC) is a separate division, dedicated to educating doctors on exercise and nutrition prescription to address the growing needs of their patients, and management consulting to seamlessly integrate the fitness lifestyle into the doctor's medical practice.

### The Future of the Fitness Industry

The new structure of the IFPA will enable the IFPA to better address the needs of the fitness industry. The Obesity Epidemic has led to devastating metabolic syndromes that have created a Cancer Epidemic, a Diabetes Epidemic, and a host of other diseases, dysfunctions, and disabilities that are ravaging our country. At this rate, the average life span of Americans will decrease; the quality of American life has already suffered. No one is capable of achieving their genetic potential when they are afflicted by the poor health Metabolic Syndrome conveys. No child will ever fulfill his or her destiny—not mentally, emotionally, physically, artistically, financially, socially, or spiritually—when they are consumed by the biochemical dysfunctions that wreak havoc on their immature, underdeveloped physiological systems as a result of obesity.

You are reading this because you are considering a career in the fitness industry. If you are like many candidates who are considering a career as a personal trainer, you probably want to know how much money you can make. You have undoubtedly heard that personal trainers routinely make \$30, \$40, \$50, \$60, \$100, \$150 per hour and more. While it's true that top-earning fitness professionals can command hundreds of dollars per training session, you should begin to realize that the top earners achieved their success because they placed their clients' needs above their own. Top-earning trainers care far more about the success of their clients than they do about their own incomes. You should also begin to realize that the "unhealthy lifestyle" is an assault on the entire American community. Medical and health care costs now exceed three trillion dollars per year! Within a few short years, with 70% of the population obese, medical and health care expenditures will exceed our society's ability to pay.

"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." -John F. Kennedy

The IFPA-Inc. now offers over 70 advanced and specialized certification courses for Fitness Professionals. These courses enable you to gain the advanced K.S.A's necessary to help you and give your clients achieve great success.

The Personal Training Career can be a wonderful career for anyone whose heart is in the right place. It is called "personal" because it is a healthy endeavor between you and one man, one woman and one child at a time. If you focus on doing the best job you can, for everyone you can, you will meet with unparalleled success. If you are prepared to devote yourself to helping others, you are welcome to join the IFPA Association. Your dedication to the personal training career can lead to tremendous rewards—mental, emotional, physical, artistic, financial, social, and spiritual—for both your client and yourself.

Thank you for considering the IFPA Certification.

--The IFPA Certification Commission

## **Mission of the IFPA**

The IFPA is dedicated to raising the acceptable level of competence among all fitness professionals. The IFPA ensures valid, reliable testing on the specific knowledge and skills required by the fitness profession while conducting safe and effective fitness training sessions with the general public. The IFPA's primary concern is first and foremost the safety of the public.

## **Credentials**

The IFPA issues the title: Certified Personal Fitness Trainer (CPFT). This designation is essential in order to differentiate CPFT's from the PT designation assigned to Physical Therapists. The Physical Therapist's Program generally requires 5-6 years of college education to earn and therefore should not be misconstrued with Personal Training. The "Scopes of Practice" for CPFT and PT are dramatically different.

The CPFT credential signifies that the Personal Trainer has been certified. There are no current state or federal requirements for certification as a Personal Trainer. The credential will indicate that the individual has been tested on the requisite knowledge and skill to safely and effectively train the general public.

## **Code of Ethics**

The Code of Ethics is a requirement of the profession of IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers. When a candidate registers for the certification exam, it is understood that these guidelines will be followed once the candidate becomes certified.

As an IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer I have read, understand and agree to:

1. Advance the health and fitness profession in order to fulfill the basic health and fitness needs of every member of society. I have a duty to use my best efforts for the betterment of society, the profession, and the members of the health and fitness profession.
2. Be totally honest in all dealings and not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate anyone who does.
3. Be dedicated to providing safe, effective, and competent health and fitness program execution, with compassion and respect for human dignity and rights.
4. Uphold the standards of professionalism, be honest in all professional interactions, and strive to report to the IFPA professionals who are deficient in character or competence, or engaging in fraud or deception.
5. Respect state and federal laws and also recognize a responsibility to seek changes in those requirements that are contrary to the best interests of members of society.
6. Be respectful of your clients' and potential clients' limitations, and expectations of privacy and confidentiality.
7. Be professional and respectful of everyone's expectations of proper behavior regarding gender, age, religion, race, beliefs, marital status, national origin and avoid any discriminatory behavior.



8. Respect the rights of clients as well as all members of society, colleagues, and other medical, health, and fitness professionals and shall safeguard confidences and privacy within the constraints of the law.
9. Continue to learn, apply, and advance scientific and practical knowledge and skills, stay up to date on the latest research and its practical application, maintain a commitment to fitness, health, nutrition, and medical education, make relevant information available to colleagues and the general public, and obtain consultation and use the talents of other fitness, health, nutrition, and medical experts when indicated in order to continuously improve the state of the health and fitness industry.
10. Participate in activities contributing to the improvement of personal health, our society, and the betterment of the health and fitness industry.
11. Continuously act in the best interests of the general public.
12. Support fair and equal access to health and fitness care for all people.
13. Retain current CPR and First Aid certifications according to credential requirements.

## **Ethics Violations**

The IFPA takes Ethics Violations very seriously and requires every IFPA Certified Fitness Professional to do the same. The following violations of the IFPA Code of Ethics may result in revocation of IFPA credentials:

1. Conviction of a felony while currently an IFPA Certified Professional
2. Proof of misuse, sale, or distribution of any illegal or controlled substance without medical prescription.
3. Proof of misconduct towards a client, employer, or employee resulting in civil judgment against an IFPA Certified Professional due to theft, embezzlement, libel, slander, sexual harassment, or any other unethical or immoral behavior.
4. Proof of “Gross Negligence” in the performance of the personal training profession.
5. Proof of any word, action, or deed that would be considered unethical, immoral, illegal, or disrespectful.
6. Proof of any word, action, or deed toward a client, potential client, or general public that is beyond the “Scope of Practice” that the IFPA Certified Professional has the knowledge, skill, or ability to perform. Example: attempting to diagnose a client’s medical state.
7. Proof of any word, action, or deed toward the IFPA, another IFPA Certified Professional, or other professionals, an employer, an employee, or a client that would be classified as malicious, libelous, slanderous, or unethical.

8. Violation of IFPA Rule #1: “Do No Harm.” The IFPA Certification Commission is dedicated to the concept of “innocent until proven guilty”; however, the IFPA Certification Commission is first and foremost dedicated to protecting the public. Secondly, the IFPA-CC will take any and all action against individuals who would jeopardize the trust the public places on fitness professionals by unethical, immoral, or illegal activities.

\*For additional guidelines suggested by the IFPA, refer to The Book on Personal Training, Chapter 1.

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

By becoming an IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer, the certificant agrees to follow the IFPA code of ethics and guidelines.

The IFPA reserves the right to revoke a member’s certification or take disciplinary action for the following reasons:

1. Falsification of certification through IFPA.
2. Unauthorized use of IFPA proprietary materials and/or copyright infringement.
3. Behavior that disregards the safety and rights of the client.

## **Complaint Policies and Procedures**

The IFPA’s Code of Ethics consists of guidelines that have been put in place to protect the public and the profession. The IFPA will receive complaints from any individuals who have reason to believe that an IFPA member has violated the IFPA Code of Ethics, including other IFPA members, other fitness professionals, and members of the general public. When appropriate, individuals should attempt to resolve complaints directly with the charged member before filing a complaint with the IFPA.

Only written complaints, signed by the complainants, will be considered. Complainants must send a letter including the name and IFPA member number of the charged member, name(s) and address(es) of the complainant(s), names and addresses of any other persons who have knowledge of the facts involved, and a brief description of why the complaint is being filed to:

IFPA PROFESSIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE  
14509 UNIVERSITY POINT PLACE  
TAMPA, FL 33613

Once complaints have been acknowledged by the IFPA Professional Review Committee, formal complaint forms will be sent to complainants. Complainants will be informed that copies of the formal complaints, evidence, and documents submitted in support of the complaint will be provided to the charged member. The charged member will be sent a copy of the formal complaint by certified U.S. mail, with return receipt requested, along with a copy of these policies and procedures and a copy of the IFPA Code of Ethics. The charged member will be asked to respond to the complaint against him/her in writing within thirty (30) business days. The charged member must also submit all evidence and documentation that he/she wishes to be considered by the Professional Review Committee in reviewing the complaint within thirty (30) business days.

Appeals/ Responses must be mailed to:

IFPA PROFESSIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE  
14509 UNIVERSITY POINT PLACE  
TAMPA, FL 33613

The IFPA Professional Review Committee will review the complaint, response, and any supporting documentation to determine the outcome of the complaint. In the event that it is determined the IFPA Code of Ethics has been violated, the IFPA Professional Review Committee will impose one of the following sanctions:

1. Probation for a specified period of time, to be determined by the IFPA Professional Review Committee.
2. Suspension from IFPA Membership for a specified period of time, to be determined by the IFPA Professional Review Committee.
3. Revocation of any and all current IFPA Certifications that the IFPA Member holds and permanent expulsion from IFPA Membership.

The IFPA Professional Review Committee shall notify the charged member of their decision within thirty (30) business days by certified U.S. Mail, return receipt requested. The charged member shall also be notified of his/her right to appeal. The complainant will also be notified by U.S. Mail regarding the outcome of the complaint.

#### Appeal of Disciplinary Decisions

Decisions of the IFPA Professional Review Committee may be appealed by the member found to have been in violations on the following grounds:

1. The Professional Review Committee violated its policies and procedures for processing complaints of the ethical violations.
2. The decision of the commission was arbitrary and capricious and was not supported by the materials provided by the complainant and the charged member
3. The sanctions imposed are inconsistent with or disproportional to the violations found.

After the member has received notification that he/she has been found to be in violation of the IFPA Code of Ethics, he/she must notify the IFPA Appeals Committee in writing within thirty (30) business days by certified mail if he/she wishes to appeal the decision. If an appeal is not requested, the IFPA Professional Review Committee shall issue its decision as soon as the time during which an appeal may be filed expires. An appeal may consist only of a letter stating one or more of the acceptable grounds for appeal and the reasons for appeal. Appeals must be sent to:

IFPA APPEALS  
14509 UNIVERSITY POINT PLACE  
TAMPA, FL 33613

Appeals will be reviewed and responded to within 4-6 weeks.

The IFPA Appeals Committee will render a decision regarding the appeal within thirty (30) business days of their receipt of the appeal. The decisions of the IFPA Appeals committee are limited to the following.

1. Upholding the decision of the IFPA Professional Review Committee.
2. Upholding the decision of the IFPA Professional Review Committee, but altering sanctions.
3. Reversing the decision of the IFPA Professional Review Committee.

All decisions of the IFPA Appeals Committee are final and are not subject to further appellate review.

# **IFPA Personal Trainer Certification**

## **Population to be certified**

The IFPA will accept as applicants males and females, age 18 or older, regardless of gender, ethnicity, background, age, religion, marital status, national origin or physical disability who have earned either a high school diploma or GED and a CPR Certification from a reputable organization such as the American Heart Association or Red Cross.

In order to become an IFPA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer (CPFT) all applicants will be required to pass the IFPA Certification Exam. The CPFT Certification will expire 2 years following the successful completion of the Certification exam. Continuing Education can be earned prior to expiration to maintain Certification.

## **Scope of Practice**

The entry-level personal trainer is prepared to work with the generally healthy population (no medical restrictions on exercise or physical activity). The personal trainer is responsible for communicating with and motivating individuals to begin and maintain a fitness lifestyle. The personal trainer begins with an initial interview, consultation, and fitness assessment for the client. Utilizing the fitness industry's standard operating procedures and their knowledge of anatomy, physiology, exercise science, and biomechanics, the personal trainer will prepare exercise prescription and program design methodologies to develop safe, effective, and customized fitness and conditioning programs that are scientifically valid and reliable and based on the client's needs, wants, and goals.

The personal trainer will then employ the fitness industry's standard operating procedures, biomechanics, exercise technique, and valid and reliable exercise management strategies, tactics, and procedures to guide their clients to safely and effectively achieve their health and fitness goals. Exercise management also requires continuous dialogue with the client in order to garner the feedback necessary to properly guide the client.

The personal trainer must maintain his or her IFPA Certification and Emergency Cardiac Care (CPR) Certification, respond appropriately in emergency situations, refer clients to other medical or health care professionals when appropriate, and maintain the IFPA Code of Ethics.

The personal trainer cannot perform any other skill or function outside of his or her scope of practice; for example, attempting to diagnose a client's injury or disease is "Practicing Medicine Without a License" and a violation, not only of the IFPA Code of Conduct, but also of the law—unless, of course, the personal trainer also holds a medical license.

Educating the client of the basic tenets of healthy nutrition or physique is permitted. However, writing detailed nutritional diet plans falls under the jurisdiction of the Registered Dietician (RD).

## **Purpose of Certification**

*The purpose of the IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification (CPFT) is not only to test on the required sciences, but the application of the sciences in training the public.*

The IFPA held its first certification testing in July 1994. The IFPA was conceived and founded to fulfill a need. At the time of inception, there were certification programs for Personal Fitness Trainers (PFTs) that

did an adequate job of testing on the required sciences (anatomy, physiology, exercise science and biomechanics). There were no certifications for PFTs that tested on the precise skills that the entry level PFT would need to know in order to safely and effectively train the general public.

The IFPA's Job Analysis Surveys (JAS) are conducted to determine the skills and knowledge required for the PFT to be both safe and effective. The IFPA's Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) determined that while a basic understanding of anatomy, physiology, exercise science and biomechanics was important, these sciences were irrelevant if the PFT did not know how to apply the information (teaching the proper technique for a squat or other basic exercise movements).

The SMEs also determined that other Personal Training certifications created a potential hazard to the public by excluding the assessment of the vocational skills necessary for the PFT to take a client successfully and safely through an exercise routine. Therefore, the SMEs recommended that for the overall safety of the public, the IFPA PFT certification testing would be required to maintain a multiple choice examination that tested candidates on the precise knowledge, skills and abilities needed by the entry level personal trainer to train generally healthy people safely and effectively.

### **IFPA Certified Fitness Professionals**

The IFPA offers over 70 certification courses and over 60 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) courses (as of 12/2017), with many more programs in development and becoming available on a monthly basis. Including all 72 IFPA Certifications, the IFPA has certified over 300,000 Fitness Professionals since 1994.

IFPA Aggregate Performance Data for 2017	
Total Number of all IFPA Certifications as of 12/15/2017	320,238
Total Number of Personal Trainer Certifications as of 12/15/2017	117,367
Total Number of Candidates who took the CPFT Exam in 2017	692
Total Number of Candidates who passed the CPFT Exam in 2017	492
Percent Passing Rate for First Time Test Takers	72.00%
Percent Failing Rate for First Time Test Takers	28.00%

Total of ALL IFPA Certified Professionals: 320,238  
(includes all IFPA Certifications)\*

## Certification Exam Eligibility

To take the IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam, you must meet all of the following criteria:

### **Eligibility Criteria\*** – *As Determined by the IFPA Certification Commission*

1. You must be 18 years of age or older.
2. You must have a high school diploma or equivalent.
3. You must have proof of current CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) Certification. To obtain CPR certification, contact the American Heart Association or American Red Cross or a local hospital. Proof of CPR must be provided in order for exam to be processed. A copy your CPR card front and back must be submitted to IFPA headquarters.

Note: The IFPA does not guarantee placement after examination.

\*Note: Neither purchase of course materials, nor enrollment in IFPA courses, is required for eligibility to take the exam.

## Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations for testing due to disability or other reason you must provide a written request with your completed registration form. Candidates with disabilities (visual, sensory or physical) must provide documentation of disability by a licensed professional (as stipulated by the Americans with Disabilities Act). The IFPA will try its best to accommodate your request and reserves the right to review request for reasonableness. Reasonable accommodations do not include steps that fundamentally alter the purpose or nature of the examination. Request must be received 6 weeks prior to exam date.

## Qualified Individual with a Disability

A “qualified individual with a disability” is one who has a disability and satisfies the requisite skill, experience, education and other requirements of the service, program or activity of which he or she is being measured; and with or without accommodations, can perform the essential functions of the service, program, or activity. An essential function is one that individuals are required to perform, and removing that function would fundamentally change the service, program, or activity. A person must be a “qualified individual with a disability” to be protected under the ADA.

## Denied Eligibility

*The IFPA reserves the right to deny registration/applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements determined by the IFPA Certification Commission. Appeals to denied applications must be submitted in writing and include an explanation of why you think you should be eligible. Appeals will be reviewed and responded to within 4-6 weeks. Send appeals to:*

IFPA APPEALS, 14509 UNIVERSITY POINT PLACE, TAMPA, FL, 33613

## Exam Format

The IFPA Personal Trainer Certification Exam is designed to assess the readiness of candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities in order for candidates to train future clients safely and effectively. The exam is paper based and candidates are given 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete the exam. The exam consists of 105 questions; with 100 scored and 5 experimental questions. The 5 experimental questions are not included in the candidate's score. They are spread throughout the exam and are used for statistical purposes only. An 80% is required to pass the exam.

The IFPA conducted a Job Analysis Survey that identified the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) necessary for the entry level Personal Trainer. The information obtained from the Job Analysis Survey formed the blueprint for the content of the Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam. The Job Analysis Survey (JAS) determines the seven (7) domains that are the categories for the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) that were determined to be essential for the personal trainer (the 7 domains are listed in the charts below). The JAS also determined the importance frequency of the KSA and therefore, what percentage of questions should come from each domain.

Domains for Multiple Choice Exam Questions	# Of Questions On Exam
(1) Client Consulting	9
(2) Fitness Testing & Assessment	16
(3) Exercise Prescription	17
(4) Program Design	16
(5) Exercise Management	18
(6) Physiology/ Exercise Science	16
(7) Nutrition Education	8

## Exam Content

### Domain 1: Client Consulting

- 1) Establish client's health and fitness goals
- 2) Interview client with Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q) to identify if the client is physically ready to exercise-use in combination with Health History Questionnaire (HHQ)
- 3) Interview client screening using a Health History Questionnaire (HHQ) to identify medical conditions that may affect workout
- 4) Interview client with other forms to learn about diet, nutrition, exercise, and health practices/habits that might be improved (example: Lifestyle Profile Evaluation Form)
- 5) Determine the Client's knowledge (or lack thereof) of Nutrition
- 6) Prepare to consult, advise, educate client on the fundamental need for healthy nutrition, nutrition planning and implementation
- 7) Nutrition Education: the majority of clients have little knowledge & understanding of proper, healthy nutrition. In order for the PFT to guide their clients to achieve their health & fitness goals, PFT must educate their clients on nutrition. As a minimum the PFT must be prepared to educate the client on :



- Macronutrients: Carbohydrates, Fats & Protein
- Micronutrients: Vitamins & Minerals
- Hydration: Healthy Water Intake
- Energy Management: Caloric Intake vs. Outgo
- Meal Planning: Frequency & Volume
- Nutrition for Health Improvements
- Nutrition for Body Composition Improvements
- Nutrition for Optimal Performance

8) Explain Consent & Release forms

9) Explain policies and describe the program

- what client is to expect
- rules
- payment policies
- cancellation policies
- administrative forms

## **Domain 2: Fitness Testing & Assessment**

1) Test client to compile “resting” fitness data

- resting heart rate
- resting blood pressure
- height
- weight
- body composition analysis
- circumference measurements

2) For active clients, test clients to establish

- Muscular endurance
- Aerobic endurance
- Flexibility

3) Evaluate 12 components of fitness of the client and determine if any component is lacking:

1. Strength
2. Speed
3. Power
4. Aerobic Endurance
5. Anaerobic Endurance
6. Agility
7. Balance
8. Coordination
9. Flexibility
10. Body Composition
11. Symmetry
12. Biochemical Balance

### **Domain 3: Exercise Prescription**

- 1) Determine the precise protocols to avoid to prevent injury i.e. exercises to be avoided to prevent damage to a previously injured joint.
- 2) Determine the precise protocols needed to meet the client's goals, needs, and desires.
- 3) Determine the IFPA Components of Fitness to use to maximize safety and effectiveness.
- 4) Determine Frequency, Intensity, Time & Type of exercise needed according to the FITT Principle to maximize safety and effectiveness.

### **Domain 4: Program Design**

- 1) Needs analysis; establish a workout plan that fits the client's goals, and information obtained from initial consultation and fitness testing
- 2) Review fitness data to determine level of fitness of client: beginner, intermediate, advanced, elite
- 3) Evaluate 12 components of fitness of the client, and metabolic needs according to Energy Systems and Fiber Types.
- 4) Review/Incorporate the goals of the client (example: weight loss, lean muscle gain, general health improvements, strength and power gain, flexibility, etc.)
- 5) Identify obstacles (example: pain, prior injuries, health and medical issues-refer to advanced personal trainer for special populations) that need to be considered when creating exercise program
- 6) Design exercise program incorporating level of fitness, level of each component of fitness, goals of the client and obstacles that affect training
- 7) Establish periodization for resistance training (utilize exercise physiology principles (-GPO, FITT, SAID, Individuality Principles, etc.)
- 8) Professional Program Design requires a thorough knowledge in:
  - Exercise Physiology
  - Exercise Science
  - Anatomy
  - Biomechanics & Safety Guidelines

### **Domain 5: Exercise Management**

- 1) The Entry-level PFT must have the requisite knowledge, skills & abilities (KSAs) to consult, assess, manage & evaluate each client for each Component of Fitness in order to determine the safest, most effective method for guiding the client to achieve their health & fitness needs, wants, desires and goals
- 2) Instruct client in resistance training (with or without weights) exercises, insuring proper breathing, timing, exercise technique (kinesiology & biomechanics), safety guidelines, and spotting, warm-up, workout, and cool-down

- 3) Encourage client to reach level of exertion needed to achieve goals
- 4) Instruct client on cardiovascular equipment for aerobic workout
- 5) Move weights and set-up equipment
- 6) Monitoring the client during exercise to insure proper breathing, timing and exertion level
- 7) Document exercises performed including type of exercise, amount of weight used, repetitions, sets, cardiovascular endurance (exercise log) and other exercise types
- 8) Track changes-increases or decreases in performance
- 9) Modify workout to better achieve client's goals
- 10) Motivate clients to develop a consistent exercise lifestyle
- 11) Knowledge of: primary exercises and muscle groups worked (example: squat for the quadriceps, bench press for pectoralis major, pectoralis minor)
- 12) Knowledge of: variations of primary exercise and their implications for muscles worked (example: squat-sumo squat-emphasizes inner thighs, vastus medialis; narrow stance squat-emphasizes outer thighs, vastus lateralis)
- 13) Knowledge of: resistance training systems, different methods of strength training to promote results (example: single set, multiple set, superset, light to heavy, stripping etc.)
- 14) Knowledge of: safety and injury prevention practices (e.g., proper range of motion for exercise, proper spotting techniques, timing, recognition of errors in form).
- 15) Knowledge of: CPR and First Aid certification, emergency procedures
- 16) Ability to: Create organized sequential workout plan for maximum results (periodization).
- 17) Ability to: Apply Exercise Physiology principles (GPO, FITT, SAID, etc., obtained from certification and/or formal education).
- 18) Ability to: Integrate knowledge to develop effective exercise programs
- 19) Ability to: communicate clearly with clients
- 20) In order to stay safe & effective the entry-level personal trainer must continue his or her education and keep up to date on current health & fitness information and to obtain knowledge on working with special populations.

## **Domain 6: Physiology/ Exercise Science**

- 1) Exercise Physiology and Anatomy, along with Biomechanics and Safety, provide the foundation of knowledge, skills and abilities needed by the Personal Fitness Trainer to conduct the task of

Exercise Management. Understand Physiology/ Exercise Science is critical to all phases of the IFPA Personal Training Process.

## **Domain 7: Nutrition Education**

- 1) Fitness professionals must have a functional understanding of the healthy principles and practices of sports nutrition sciences in order to educate their clients on a health and fitness lifestyle.
- 2) Fitness professionals must have the ability to communicate and educate their clients on unhealthy and “faddish” nutrition trends.
- 3) Fitness professionals must be able to educate their clients on supplementation.
- 4) Experienced and knowledgeable CPFT’s know that nutrition can be 80% of the battle in helping your clients achieve their goals. Knowledge in nutrition and the skill & ability to educate your clients on nutrition is essential to helping your clients achieve their health and fitness goals.

## **Study Materials**

**The IFPA does not require certification candidates to purchase any IFPA study materials** (books, study guides, dvds, etc.) in order to sit for the IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam. If you feel that you are proficient in the subject domains assessed by the IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam and wish to take it with no further preparation, **you may register for the exam only for a cost of \$349\***. Upon successful completion of the exam, you will become an IFPA certified PFT and receive a certificate and wallet card.

If you feel that you need additional study materials to prepare for the IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam, the IFPA offers four different packages for you to choose from. The following items are included with the basic Bronze Personal Fitness Trainer certification package for \$399. \*\*:

- Course Manual – The Book on Personal Training
- Candidate Handbook/Study Guide
- Certification Testing
- Certificate with Wallet Card
- IFPA Membership

\* Other course options available on the IFPA website, [www.ifpa-fitness.com](http://www.ifpa-fitness.com)

## **Registration Process**

1. Select your Personal Trainer Package: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum or Testing Only
2. Choose a testing location. Call for locations in your area at 1-800-785-1924
3. Register by phone, the internet ([www.ifpa-fitness.com](http://www.ifpa-fitness.com)), fax, or U.S. mail.
4. Upon paid registration, candidates will receive confirmation of registration from IFPA Headquarters.

# Testing & Grading Policies & Procedures

## Administering the Exam

The IFPA Personal Trainer Certification Exam, is a closed book, proctored exam. The exam must be taken at a designated IFPA Approved Testing Site.

Exams are administered by proctors trained by the IFPA Certification Commission. Be sure to bring proof of payment. A valid ID with your name, signature and photograph is required. Plan to arrive at least 20 minutes before your scheduled appointment for check-in procedures. If you arrive later, you may not be admitted, and your test fee will be forfeited. No cell phones, smart phones, PDAs and other electronic, listening, recording and photographic devices are permitted. No study materials of any kind will be permitted with you during the examination.

Exam must be taken within six months of registering for the certification exam. All correspondence regarding proctors and proctored exams will be conducted via e-mail or fax. Any additional questions can be sent to [proctor@ifpa-fitness.com](mailto:proctor@ifpa-fitness.com).

### \*Note

Do not set up your proctored exam if you are not ready to test. Sign up for testing if you are ready to test within 2-3 weeks. Proctors are not permitted to hold IFPA Exams.

You must submit proper paperwork to sign up for a proctored exam 2 weeks prior to testing.

Some testing locations may require a proctoring fee to be paid at the time of testing directly to the proctor by the candidate. Candidates will be notified prior to taking test with confirmation of test location, date and time. If this occurs submit receipt of payment to the IFPA for a credit of the amount to be made to your IFPA account.

Please allow 10-14 business days for receipt and processing of exam.

## What to Bring to Your Examination

1. Plan to arrive at the certification site 20 minutes early. Be sure to bring a photo ID and pen/pencil. **All students must provide proof of payment and have a valid photo ID to gain admittance to the certification examination.**
2. No visitors are allowed in the exam room at any time.
3. Candidates may not bring any other personal items (other than those listed in (1)) into the exam room. This includes, but is not limited to: books, book bags, briefcases, papers of any kind, cell phones, coats, electronic devices (including calculators), pagers, purses, phones, etc.
4. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Any inappropriate behavior will be cause for immediate removal.

5. All candidates are required to conduct themselves with the highest level of ethics and professionalism. Cheating will not be tolerated. The IFPA Certification Commission will fully investigate any and all allegations of cheating.
6. All candidates are required to maintain the integrity of the IFPA Examination Process. Copying, memorizing, discussing, or in any way attempting to steal questions from the IFPA Exam is an ethical violation and a violation of International Copyright Laws. The IFPA Certification Commission (IFPA-CC) goes to great lengths to develop IFPA-CC Exams. Any attempt to steal questions from the exam will be thoroughly investigated by the IFPA-CC and violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.
7. Once the exam begins, a candidate is not permitted to talk or look at any other person or their exam. A candidate must not question the proctor. The proctor is responsible for administering the exam and guaranteeing the integrity of the IFPA Certification Commission Exam process by ensuring that there will be no cheating. The proctor is not permitted to answer any questions once the exam has begun.
8. The candidate is advised to listen carefully and follow all the instructions given to him or her by the proctor. The candidate should read all the directions in the test booklet thoroughly.
9. If a candidate believes that a test question (or questions) was misleading, confusing, or inaccurate in any way, he or she may request an “IFPA Certification Commission Exam Discrepancy Form” after the exam time expires. The candidate is advised to list the nature of the discrepancy using as much detail as possible. The Exam Committee reviews each and every comment, and where necessary, appropriate action will be taken. Individual responses will not be provided to the candidate. A candidate’s decision to submit a discrepancy form will not affect his or her exam score.
10. A candidate must ask for permission to leave the exam area during the exam. The candidate will be allowed seven minutes to return to the exam, during which time the candidate is not permitted to discuss the exam with any other party. Delays beyond the time limit may preclude a candidate’s re-admission to the exam. The candidate will NOT be granted additional time to make up for his or her absence.

## **Exam Passing Criteria**

The IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam, is a 105, multiple choice examination; with 100 scored and 5 experimental questions. The 5 experimental questions are not included in the candidate’s score. They are spread throughout the exam and are used for statistical purposes only. An 80% is required to pass the exam.

## **Notification of Results**

Each candidate is sent a results letter that includes the percentage scored on the exam. Candidates may also request a breakdown of subject areas missed on the exam in order to better understand their strengths and weaknesses in the topics assessed. Complete processing of certification exams and notification of results may take six weeks from the date the IFPA receives the examination(s). Individuals who achieve passing scores will receive their certificates and wallet cards when they are notified of their results.

Rush Processing is available upon request for a fee of \$25. With the Rush Processing option, results will be faxed or e-mailed to the candidate within three business days of the IFPA receiving the exam. This option must be selected before the candidate's examination is received for grading. Results will then be mailed (along with a certificate and wallet card, if applicable) within two weeks.

Scores are only official once assigned at the IFPA headquarters. Proctors are not allowed to review candidates' examinations on site.

## **Exam Appeals**

### **1. Rescoring**

Exams are graded at IFPA headquarters. For security reasons, candidates will not be able to review their exam or obtain information on particular test questions. Feedback is welcomed so that the IFPA can review current test items; however, in order to protect the integrity of the exam, no responses will be given to feedback. Quality control measures are in place to monitor the reliability and validity of test scoring. Any candidate who feels that there was an error in test grading and wants his/her exam rescored must submit a written request with reasoning and \$10 to:

IFPA Appeals  
14509 University Point Place  
Tampa, FL 33613

It is likely that the score will not change. Tests will be regraded one time only no later than 60 days after receipt of original exam.

2. If there are any deviations from standard testing policies or improper behavior by a proctor or anyone or anything at your examination site, notify the IFPA Appeals Department in writing. Include an explanation of the incident and how it negatively impacted your performance (example: air conditioning/heating failed or was inappropriate). The IFPA will need verification of the event to render a decision. Notification must be made within thirty (30) days of testing to:

IFPA Appeals  
14509 University Point Place  
Tampa, FL 33613

### **No Refund Policy**

All IFPA programs provide professional education, training and certification. All course materials are non-reusable and non-returnable. All IFPA registration fees and shipping fees are non-refundable. Registered candidates are given the opportunity to complete the certification exam by proctored exam. A change in any enrolled candidate's career path or decision to exit the fitness industry will not provide for an exception to the refund policy.

### **Transfer Policy**

You may transfer certification registration to another individual. Verification of payment, a written letter stating who the program was originally sold to, who it will be transferred to and a \$50 transfer fee is required. The new candidate must meet eligibility requirements and submit registration form.

## **Rescheduling the Certification Examination**

Any individual who wishes to reschedule his or her certification examination (this includes re-takes) to a different date or location may do so for a rescheduling fee two (2) weeks prior to their exam certification date. (Contact the IFPA for current charges.) *The IFPA Policy on retaking examinations is subject to change at the discretion of the IFPA.*

## **Extension Fees**

Candidates are allowed to reschedule exam dates; however, the exam must be completed within 6 months of registration. After 1 year the candidate will need to pay the full registration fee to take the exam. Three- or six-month extensions are available for a fee. Contact the IFPA for current prices.

## **No Show Candidates**

Any candidate that wishes to reschedule to a different exam date should do so at least two (2) weeks prior to their original exam date. If the candidate does not reschedule two weeks in advance and does not attend their scheduled exam, the candidate will fall under the classification of “No Show” and your test fee will be forfeited

## **Verification of Certification Status**

The IFPA maintains public Trainer Locator Directory on the IFPA Web Site. This is a complementary service offered to you as a mechanism to help you acquire clients once you become IFPA certified. It is completely free to you as a current member of the IFPA. You must “Opt-In” to take advantage of this opportunity. IF you do not “Opt-In” all your information will be held confidential for internal IFPA USE ONLY.

The only information the IFPA is allowed to share with the public in the event that someone specifically enquires about your Certification Status is limited. Enquiries can be made by phone to the IFPA Corporate Headquarters by phone: (813) 979-1925, email: [info@ifpa-fitness.com](mailto:info@ifpa-fitness.com), or mail IFPA 14509 University Point Place, Tampa, FL 33613.

Enquires will ONLY be told your current IFPA Certification Status: (1) Currently Certified; (2) Not Currently Certified; (3) Never Certified. All other information is confidential and will not be shared.

\*Note: When you pass the IFPA-CPFT Exam, you will be IFPA Certified for 2 years. Prior to your two year anniversary deadline, you must complete a minimum of 12 CEUS to re-certify for one (1) year or 24 CEUs to re-certify for two more years. The same process must be followed before your certification expires to remain current and a Certified PFT in “Good Standing.” Any enquiries of your Certification will be informed of your current status.

## **Retesting**

Individuals who do not receive a minimum score of 80% on the exam will be notified in writing. Candidates may retake the exam within 3 months of receiving results for a \$99 fee. Candidates may retest by retaking the exam at the next available IFPA-scheduled exam date and IFPA-designated site for the cost of the retest. After 3 months, retesting will be available for the cost of the retest plus a penalty fee. Retesting is not available after 6 months from the date of notification of results. The current retest fee is \$99. Prices are subject to change. Retest fees will be listed on the student’s results letter.



IFPA Fitness Career Advisors can provide candidates with study and exam preparation suggestions before they retest. Although exams scores and answers cannot be discussed over the telephone, candidates may request a breakdown of the subject areas that they missed so that they may better focus their study efforts. Candidates should contact their IFPA representative at 1-800-785-1924 if they have any questions.

## **Other IFPA Policies and Procedures**

### **Confidentiality**

All candidate information provided, including eligibility, registration and testing information, will remain confidential. Scores will not be provided to students over the phone. This policy helps to maintain confidentiality for the student and helps ensure accuracy of results. Test results are provided with a certificate or by letter to the applicant. Results will not be released to a third party without written authorization. The IFPA can verify to the public the certification status. No scores or other confidential information will be given out.

### **Grandfathering Policy**

The IFPA does not, nor has it ever, practiced “grandfathering.” The IFPA does not grant certification to individuals without an evaluation of their knowledge and skills.

### **Records Retention Policy**

Personal Fitness Trainer Certification paper exams will be kept for 4 years. Electronic records will be kept indefinitely and updated as a certificant renews his/her certification. All test records and statistical reports are accessible to authorized personnel only. Records are kept in secure locations at the IFPA Headquarters, accessible only by personnel authorized by the IFPA Certification Commission.

### **Test Security**

Collaborative behavior with regard to providing others with specific test questions on the exam is considered a security violation. This is considered a violation of copyright laws and will result in revocation of certification or disqualification from taking the exam. By registering for the certification exam, the candidate is accepting the terms and conditions of the IFPA including retaining confidentiality of the exam. Certificants and certification candidates are encouraged to report any suspected security violation. Exam materials may not be removed from the testing area by the candidate.

Cheating and disruptive behavior also invalidate the integrity of the exam. Candidates are not to bring notes and may not look around during the examination. Candidates suspected of cheating will be notified after the exam and will be failed automatically. Any right to retake the exam at a reduced rate will be forfeited and the candidate will be required to re-register for the certification, paying the full registration fee.

### **Restricted Access Policy: Test Grading**

Exams can only be graded in the IFPA Exam Scoring Room. No exams are permitted to be removed from the Exam Scoring Room without permission of the Testing Manager. Exams will be filed in alphabetical order in the designated secure, locked file cabinets in the Testing Room at all times when not being graded or being used for Data Entry purposes on the designated secure computer in the Testing Room.

Only the designated secure computer in the Exam Room can be used for Test Data Entry. IFPA Authorized Personnel may not leave the tests, test data, Exam Data Entry Designated computer, or Exam Room unattended or unlocked. Only those personnel designated by the Testing Manager are allowed access to the Exam Room, Testing Files, exams, or Exam Data Entry Designated computer.

Security and confidentiality of all exams, testing materials, test data, and Candidate and Certificant records are of paramount concern. Any and all precautions must be taken to prevent unauthorized access to the Exam Room and related materials.

## Continuing Education

IFPA Certifications and Continuing Education Programs are designed to progressively improve one's skills and knowledge in fitness, as well as to refresh these skills. The IFPA encourages all certified instructors to seek advanced knowledge to improve their training and fitness skills.

IFPA Certification requires Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in order to remain valid. Continuing education is essential for all fitness professionals to stay on top of their field. Continuing education requirements can be met by a wide variety of continuing education courses offered by the IFPA and the IFPA core Certifications (Sports Nutrition Specialist, Advanced Personal Fitness Trainer, Master Personal Fitness Trainer, Group Fitness Instructor, Youth Fitness Instructor, and Tai Chi–Chi Kung Instructor, etc.). In addition, CEUs may be obtained from IFPA-recognized correspondence courses and continuing education providers, college courses, CPR, and First Aid.

The IFPA Personal Fitness Trainer Certification requires 24 Continuing Education units within two years of initial certification and each year thereafter to remain valid. All IFPA primary certifications have this same requirement. For additional information on acceptable CEUs, visit our website [www.ifpa-fitness.com](http://www.ifpa-fitness.com) or call the CEU Department at 1-800-785-1924.

### IFPA Continuing Education Requirements & General Information

Dear fitness professional:

The following packet outlines information regarding Continuing Education Unit (CEU) policies and procedures. This packet includes **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT INFORMATION** regarding the IFPA re-certification procedures.

Continuing Education Units are essential to...

- (1) Expand and update the individual's qualifications and knowledge within health, fitness, and nutrition.
- (2) Refine and build upon the skills of the certified professional.
- (3) Promote the ongoing competency of certified fitness professionals.

CEUs play a vital role in the quality of any profession. Fitness is no different. We are constantly bombarded with the 'new' and 'better' diet and exercise plan. As professionals, we need to work hard to ensure that we make sound judgments in all of our health, fitness, and nutrition decisions and recommendations. Please review the enclosed packet very carefully so that you can maintain a valid certification without the extra headaches that can result from poor planning and trying to obtain CEUs at the last moment.

There are two ways to obtain a renewal on your current certification:

1. Certified instructors are required to obtain 12 CEUs prior to the end of the two year period of certification. This is designated by the expiration date on your certificate and membership card. When the certificate comes up for renewal, the certified individual is required to submit all relevant information pertaining to CEU credits obtained. Once approved and submitted with the appropriate fees, the individual will be granted a new certificate that will expire one year after the initial expiration date. CEU credits must be obtained during the time period in which the original certification was valid. CEUs above the required minimum may NOT be applied to a future certification period. Future renewals of the certification will require obtaining 12 CEUs per year.

2. Certified instructors can obtain 24 CEUs by completing an additional **IFPA** Certification for a two year renewal when proper documentation is submitted prior to your expiration date. This is designated by the expiration date on your certificate and membership card. When the certificate comes up for renewal, the certified individual is required to submit all relevant information pertaining to CEU credits obtained. Once approved and submitted with the appropriate fees, the individual will be granted a new certificate that will expire two years after the initial expiration date. CEU credits must be obtained during the time period in which the original certification was valid. CEUs above the required minimum may NOT be applied to a future certification period. Future renewals of the certification will require obtaining 12 CEUs per year or complete another additional **IFPA** Certificate for a two year renewal. Outside sourced certifications are not accepted.

**Please note, presenting CEU information for recertification is the responsibility of the individual certified.** To renew one's certification, all necessary documents must be submitted to the IFPA prior to the expiration of the certification.

For detailed information on obtaining CEUs, please see the enclosed CEU policy and recording forms. The following is an overview of the process:

- 1) Obtain 12 CEUs within your certification time-frame for a one year renewal.
- 2) Obtain 24 CEU's by completing an additional IFPA (only) Certification, which requires passing the appropriate exam for the designated IFPA course, within your certification time-frame for a two year renewal.
- 3) Document CEUs on CEU report form and make a copy of certificate of attendance or other proof of completion for these CEUs.
- 4) **Submit documentation with CEU report form along with the appropriate fees prior to the expiration of your certification.**
- 5) Maintain copies and documentation of your CEU report and submitted CEUs.
- 6) Allow 6 weeks to receive your renewed certification.

After reviewing all of the information in this packet, please feel free to contact the IFPA if you have any questions so that we may assist you in maintaining a current certification.

Sincerely,

CEU Department

## **IFPA Policies and Procedures for Obtaining Continuing Education Units**

### **Purpose**

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are required to assist the certified fitness professional in staying abreast of knowledge within the field and to encourage the highest degree of competency within the profession. CEUs also allow you to “re-fresh” previously learned knowledge, as well as expand your knowledge to build your career.

### **Requirements**

In order to remain certified, the IFPA requires that all IFPA certified professionals obtain 12 CEUs within two years of the initial certification. After the initial two years, certified members must obtain a minimum of 12 CEUs per year in order to maintain a current and valid IFPA certification. To obtain credit for CEUs, certified members must:

- A) Complete 12 Continuing Education Units by successfully completing any of a variety of continuing education opportunities as recognized by the IFPA.
- B) Document and record proof of Continuing Education Units
- C) Submit completed IFPA Continuing Education Report Form, documentation of CEUs (ex. copy of certificate of completion or attendance), and appropriate renewal fees to the IFPA before expiration.
- D) Maintain copies of all documentation for your records.

### **Eligible CEUs**

CEUs are eligible if they meet the following criteria:

- 1) They are current (12 months old or less).
- 2) They are reputable (IFPA, Universities, Colleges, American Heart Association, American Red Cross etc.).
- 3) They are pertinent to the fitness profession.

### **Obtaining CEUs**

CEUs may be obtained in a variety of ways. The primary means are listed below. Please note that some means of obtaining CEUs may be used only once (ex. CPR & First Aid). Other categories may have a limit to the number of CEUs that can be applied during a given re-certification period. This is not to say that you may not obtain more than the maximum units in a given category, just that certain categories can only be applied to a given extent toward certificate renewal.

### **The IFPA-CC Re-certification Time Interval**

The IFPA-CC has set the re-certification time interval. The initial time interval for initial IFPA-CPFT Certification is the Personal Fitness Training Certification Industry standard of two years. The 2-year time interval has been used throughout the Certified Personal Fitness Training Industry for many decades, which the IFPA supports, for several reasons:

- 1) The CPFT Certifications are “Entry Level” Certifications. There is much more for the CPFT to know in order to become a Master of Fitness Training than can be examined in a single

certification exam. More education and frequent education in the form of CEUs is necessary to achieve this goal.

- 2) The CPFT career is constantly evolving. Personal Training is a very recent career endeavor. The first CPFT Certification is less than 3 decades old and most of the CPFT certifications are less than 2 decades old. In many ways the CPFT career continues to change; sometimes drastic change, not only due to the natural maturation of a new career, but as a result of the ever changing needs of the population that the CPFT must deal with. Recent projections are that 70% of the adult population will be obese by 2020; this creates tremendous change within the CPFT Industry. The Obesity Epidemic has created diabetes, cancer and heart disease epidemics with even more changes to the CPFT career.
- 3) All education and learning models clearly demonstrate that any learned material will fade quickly from memory without reinforcement. Most research demonstrates that a learner will forget most of what they have learned within the first 24 hours of learning new material. CPFT must continuously strive to retain as much knowledge as humanly possible. The general population is put in peril by trainers that forget their safety guidelines, signs and symptoms of a cardiac event or other critical information the CPFT must know to protect their clients from harm. Therefore, the Fitness Certification and the IFPA-CC requires that a CPFT earn 12 CEUs before their certification expires (2 years after successfully passing their CPFT Exam). The Fitness Certification Industry and the IFPA-CC therefore allows the certificants to maintain their certification for the two years initially, and then requires 12 CEUs every year after the initial two year certification. The IFPA-CC also allows the certificants to take the IFPA-CPFT Exam again, and upon successfully passing the Exam, they earn 24 CEUs that allows them to re-certify for a two year period.

## How to Obtain CEUs

### Category I—IFPA Courses, Workshops, Conventions, and Continuing Education Courses

- ❖ Passing the designated Course Exam is the only way to pass an IFPA Course.
- ❖ Successful completion of any IFPA certification course typically counts as 24 CEUs. These courses include: Personal Fitness Trainer, Advanced Personal Fitness Trainer, Group Fitness Instructor, Youth Fitness Instructor, Sports Nutrition, etc.
- ❖ Program Design Specialist Certifications or attendance at IFPA conventions typically counts as 12 to 16 CEUs.
- ❖ IFPA Continuing Education Courses include PNF stretching, Plyometrics, the Business of Personal Training, and many other course opportunities. IFPA Continuing Education Courses (CEUs) typically count two to twelve CEUs and are offered by correspondence.
- ❖ CEUs are also offered for attendance at IFPA Conventions. CEUs for attendance at other workshops, conventions, CECs, and other IFPA events are designated with the given activities.
- ❖ The IFPA grants 1 CEU per contact hour for each IFPA event.
- ❖ **NOTE: 6 of the 12 CEUs required for renewal *MUST* be obtained from Category I. Passing the designated Course Exam is the only way to pass an IFPA course.**

### Category II—CPR/ First Aid/ EMT/ AED

- ❖ *CPR/First Aid/EMT Certification/Re-certification*—CPR and/or First Aid or EMT certifications/re-certifications may be applied one time toward IFPA CEUs. CPR and First Aid each count toward 3.0 CEUs and EMT counts toward 6.0 CEUs. (Claiming EMT for CEUs disallows also using CPR & First Aid.)
- ❖ *A maximum of 6 CEUs may be obtained from Category II in a given re-certification period.*

### Category III—Presentations and publications

- ❖ *Presentations*—Presentation as a panelist or featured speaker at a fitness-type clinic or conference. The candidate must submit a copy of the event program, a description of the presentation, and receive IFPA approval for the content and scope of the presentation. The normal CEU allotment is 1.0 per presentation in excess of 1 hour. (CEUs not granted for presentations less than one hour in length.)
- ❖ *Publications*—Published articles in which you serve as an author or co-author. The candidate must submit a copy of the published article (copied from publication), date of publication, and publication name for approval by the IFPA—1.0 CEU for non-peer reviewed articles and 2.0 CEUs for publication in peer reviewed journals. (Ex. Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise, International Journal of Sports Nutrition)
- ❖ *A maximum of 6 CEUs may be obtained from Category III in a given re-certification period.*



#### **Category IV—Completion of IFPA recognized correspondence courses, workshops, or certifications**

- ❖ *Correspondence Courses*—Contact the IFPA to find out about IFPA and other available correspondence courses. CEUs vary according to course.
- ❖ *Workshops and Certifications*—The IFPA will recognize a variety of fitness related workshops and certifications to apply toward continuing education units. CEUs are granted on a per event basis and require documentation of attendance and a copy of the program describing the content. Typical CEUs granted are 1.0 CEU per contact hour or a maximum 6.0 CEUs per event
- ❖ *A maximum of 6 CEUs may be obtained from Category IV in a given re-certification period.*

#### **Category V—College/ University Education**

- ❖ *College education after certification*—College courses specifically related to fitness, health, and nutrition can be applied toward CEU credits. Each semester credit hour, if accepted, is granted 1.0 CEU and each quarter credit hour is granted 0.5 CEUs.
- ❖ *A maximum of 6 CEUs may be obtained from Category V in a given re-certification period.*



# IFPA CEU Report Form



Change of Address (check here) \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration \_\_\_\_\_

Current Certification \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (as to appear on certificate) Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit to:** IFPA  
Continuing Education Dept.  
14509 University Point Place  
Tampa, FL 33613-5424

**Certifications to renew (circle all that apply):**

Personal Fitness Trainer	Weight Mngmnt Instructor
Sports Nutrition	Sports Conditioning Spec
Advanced Personal Fitness Trainer	Tai Chi Instructor
Master Personal Fitness Trainer	Fitness Facility Mngr
Group Fitness Instructor	Flexibility Coach Cert
Youth Fitness Instructor	Senior Fitness Instructor
Womens Fitness Spec	Post Sec Rehab Sp

(See reverse for a description of categories & requirements)

Category	Type	Activity Description/Contact Hours	Date	Estimated CEUs
I	IFPA certification, IFPA continuing education, IFPA conventions ( 6 ceu's mandatory from IFPA)			
II	CPR, First Aid, EMT, AED (may be used one time only)			
III	Presentations & publications			
IV	Non-IFPA correspondence courses, workshops, conferences, and certification courses			
V	College/ University Courses			

**For Office Use Only:**

Received:

Approved:

New Expiration:

Sent:

***Signature Required***

By signing and dating this form, I hereby attest that all information presented herein is true and accurate. I understand that any inaccurate representation or reporting of CEU activity may result in the revocation of my certification.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Fees: IFPA re-certification fee  
\$25 per certification (Only category I applies)  
IFPA CEU administrative fee (Categories II-V)  
(\$20 per IFPA CEU Report)

Unit rate	Qty	Total
\$25	_____	\$20 Non-
\$20	_____	

=====

**Total**

Copy as necessary

Check or M.O enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Bill my credit card \_\_\_\_\_

Card type: AmExp \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ MC \_\_\_\_\_ Discover \_\_\_\_\_

Card exp date \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## IFPA Award of CEUs and Documentation Requirements

<u><b>Category</b></u>	<u><b>Activity</b></u>	<u><b>How CEUs are awarded</b></u>	<u><b>Documentation to submit</b></u>	<u><b>Special Notes</b></u>
<b>I</b>	IFPA Certification Courses	24 CEUs per course	Copy of IFPA Certificate	2 yr. renewal on current certification
<b>I</b>	IFPA Continuing Education Courses	Designated by event	Copy of IFPA Certificate	1 yr. renewal with CEUs
<b>I</b>	IFPA Convention or Special Events as attendee	Designated by event	Completed and submitted CEU request to be given through convention	Total CEUs granted subject to change and may be dependent upon successful completion of CECs offered at convention.
<b>II</b>	CPR, First Aid, or EMT, AED	3.0 each for CPR or First Aid or 6 total for EMT	Copy of certificate	Applicable one time only Maximum 6 outside source CEUs/renewal
<b>III</b>	Presentations as presenter	1.0 CEU per presentation in excess of 1 hour (made to public or other fitness professionals)	Copy of program describing presentation content and length	Subject to acceptance by IFPA Maximum 6 outside source CEUs/renewal
<b>III</b>	Publications as author	1.0 CEU for published article in non-refereed publication; 2.0 CEU for published article in refereed journal (Ex. Medicine & Science in Sport & Exercise)	Copy of article direct from publication, publication name, and date of publication	Subject to acceptance by IFPA Maximum 6 outside source CEUs/renewal
<b>IV</b>	Correspondence Courses	Designated on course by course basis—indicated on accepted correspondence courses (Desert Southwest Fitness & others designated by the IFPA)	Copy of certificate of successful completion	Subject to acceptance by IFPA Maximum 6 outside source CEUs/renewal
<b>IV</b>	Workshops, conferences, and certification course by agencies other than the IFPA as attendee	1.0 CEUs per contact hour Maximum 6 CEUs per conference, workshop, or course	Certificate or letter indicating successful completion, contact hours and content description	Subject to acceptance by IFPA Maximum 6 outside source CEUs/renewal
<b>V</b>	College/University courses	1 CEU per semester hour or 0.5 CEUs per quarter hour	Copy of course grades and course description	Subj. to acceptance by IFPA/Max. 6 outside source CEUs/renewal

Non-IFPA CEUs require a \$20 processing fee per each CEU form submitted (Categories II,III,IV,V)  
 \$25 Rush Processing available on IFPA CEU test results—results given by email within three business days of being received by the IFPA. \$25 fee for each test if submitted separately or \$25 fee total if submitting all IFPA CEU tests at once.

## **Renewal Fees**

There is a \$25 recertification fee per certificate being renewed. For example: Renewing an Advanced Personal Fitness Trainer Certification and Sports Nutrition Certification would require a \$50 recertification fee.

## **Non-IFPA CEU Administrative Fee**

In order to encourage a diverse background of knowledge in fitness, health, and nutrition, the IFPA does recognize non-IFPA administered continuing education. Because of the processing and review required to grant CEUs not offered through the IFPA (Categories II, III, IV, and V), requests for CEUs from any of these categories require an additional \$20 fee per CEU form at the time of re-certification. This is a review & processing fee and is non-refundable.

## **CEU Submission Deadline**

All continuing education documentation must be submitted by certification expiration date. By request only, the IFPA will allow a 3-month grace period to submit documentation. IFPA members are NOT certified during their grace period. If the member fails to submit complete documentation during the grace period, the student may no longer recertify by means of continuing education and must retake the certification program.

Requests for recertification and recognition of CEU credits must be submitted using the “IFPA CEU Report Form”. All submission forms must be complete and submitted with appropriate fees and documentation in order for CEUs to be awarded and certifications to be distributed. All submissions requesting CEUs and certificate renewal must be sent to:

**IFPA  
Continuing Education Department  
14509 University Point Place  
Tampa, FL 33613**

## **Change of Address**

In the event that your address or phone number changes, please notify the IFPA as soon as possible to prevent a disruption in notification of certification information. The IFPA can be notified by phone at 800-785-1924, by mail at IFPA, 14509 University Point Place, Tampa, FL 33613, or by e-mail to [info@ifpa-fitness.com](mailto:info@ifpa-fitness.com).

## **Insurance**

IFPA Certified Trainers can obtain \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 liability insurance at one of the most competitive rates on the market. The IFPA makes this insurance available to its certified trainers directly through the insurance agency at cost. If you would like more information about personal trainer liability insurance, please contact the IFPA.

## **Questions about the IFPA**

If you have any questions about the enclosed information, please contact the IFPA Resource Center at 813-979-1925 or 800-785-1924, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. EST. For those with access to the Internet, most questions about the IFPA can be answered on the IFPA website at <http://www.ifpa-fitness.com> or e-mail at [info@ifpa-fitness.com](mailto:info@ifpa-fitness.com).