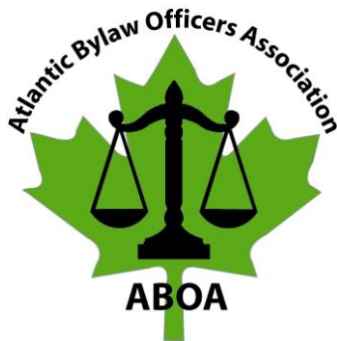




Atlantic Bylaw Officers Association



Certification Program



Table of Contents

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| The ABOA Certification Program | 3 |
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Pre-Requisites when Applying for Certification | 9 |
| Experience | 10 |
| Core Competencies | 11 |
| Job Specific Skills | 13 |
| Specialized Training..... | 14 |
| Merit Points..... | 15 |
| Maintaining Certification | 16 |
| ABOA Certification and Training Committee | 17 |
| Powers of the Committee | 17 |
| Training Materials | 17 |



The ABOA Certification Program

Introduction

In a world that is becoming increasingly 'standards based', the need for a skilled and competent workforce is greater than ever. In order to be effective in their chosen role, many employees will be required by their employers to partake in specialist training provided by a recognised or certified organization. To partake in this training an individual is often required to become a member of a professional association, usually the same body that is delivering the training. The individual will then obtain certification from that association once a set training curriculum has been taken and a minimum set of standards achieved.

In some cases, legislation has been put in place that prohibits an individual from undertaking a specific job until they have been certified. An example of this would be the Nova Scotia Building Officials Association (NSBOA) through their Professional Studies program. An individual is prevented from working as a municipal building official in Nova Scotia until such time as they have obtained the appropriate qualifications from NSBOA.

The position of a Bylaw Enforcement Officer is unique. In order to accomplish their job effectively and successfully, a Bylaw Enforcement Officer requires not only an understanding of the law and statutes that govern their work, but also specialist skills that are specific to their particular role. These skills, combined with an understanding of evidence gathering, note taking and case preparation skills, provide the officer with a wide array of valuable skills and knowledge. ABOA has therefore developed a Certification Program that recognises, and provides a standard of excellence or 'stamp of quality' for this unique and valuable skill set.

When developing the ABOA Certification Program, the Certification and Training Committee examined the various programs offered by other organisations and professional bodies. The ABOA Certification Program has been designed to show an employer that an ABOA member has completed a set curriculum of professional development and has, in many cases, exceeded the minimum standards that are required to effectively undertake the role of Bylaw Enforcement Officer (BEO).

The Certification Program recognises not only the core competencies required of a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, but also the training requirements of a specific jurisdiction, as well as the candidate's specific job requirements and any specialist skills they may possess.



The intent is for ABOA to become the certification body for BEOs, both administering the program and delivering the relevant training. This is the case with our sister association in Ontario, the Municipal Law Enforcement Officers Association (MLEOA). The ultimate goal is for legislation to be put in place that will require all BEOs to be certified.

Until such time as any enabling legislation is in place, entry into the Certification Program, though currently voluntary, is highly recommended to all ABOA members. Achieving certification, whilst not mandatory, will demonstrate to an employer that a BEO has confirmed and broadened their proficiency in established Bylaw enforcement practices and procedures. Certification demonstrates both commitment and professionalism on behalf of the BEO, and strengthens their position with the employer as a knowledgeable and valued employee. In the case of newly qualified BEOs, certification will bridge the gap between education, previous experience and real-world enforcement work requirements, as well as verifying their understanding of fundamental enforcement practices and procedures.

From the employer's perspective, certification standardizes their bylaw enforcement practices and procedures, protects their investment in a competent and proficient enforcement workforce, helps to reduce the enforcement cost by avoiding ill prepared and unsuccessful litigations in court, and lessens the possibility of being sued by the public if the BEO is undertrained and acts inappropriately.

The proposed Certification Program has been designed to ensure that certification is attainable by all ABOA members. It is based upon training, education and work experience, rather than focussing entirely upon academic excellence, and is intended to enable candidates who may have a diverse range of job functions and skills to achieve the same level of certification.

ABOA members are encouraged to view the proposed Certification Program as a means of recognising the importance of their position and showing their commitment towards professional development. As a Certified Bylaw Enforcement Officer, an ABOA member should also become a more valued and pivotal member of any employers workforce.



Implementing the Certification Program

In order to allow existing members to become certified, and to take advantage of currently available training whilst ABOA develops its own curriculum, it is envisaged that the Certification Program will be implemented in five stages. Each step of the implementation plan is described below.

Step 1 ***Appointment of the Certification and Training Committee and the development of its Guidelines, Procedures and Working Practices.***

This process has already begun. The Certification and Training Committee has already been formed and the Guidelines, Procedures and Working Practices are under development.

The first task of the Certification and Training Committee was to develop the Certification Program that is described in this document.

Once the Certification Program is adopted, the Certification and Training Committee will be extended to include members with responsibility for Training, and its mandate amended to include this extended role.

Step 2 ***Introduction of the Certification Program application form and a survey questionnaire.***

The application form, used to apply for certification, is already developed and forms part of the Certification and Training Committee Guidelines and Procedures.

The purpose of the survey questionnaire will be to gather details of the membership's specific job functions and skills. This will then be used by the Certification and Training Committee when designing targeted training materials.

Step 3 ***Developing a detailed list of the current ABOA membership, their job functions and skill set.***

This will be accomplished using the results obtained from the survey questionnaire developed in Step 2. It will assist the Certification and Training Committee when awarding certification to existing members.



Step 4

Introduction of the Certification Program based on currently available training courses and materials.

In this way, the Certification and Training Committee will be able to offer certification to the ABOA membership whilst the ABOA proprietary training materials are developed. Members, who have already attended Law Enforcement training courses not provided by ABOA, as well as any training courses provided by ABOA in recent years, may be eligible for certification if they are able to satisfy the entry criteria, and can demonstrate they have the required level of training and skills.

Step 5

Development and introduction of ABOA courses.

Once the certification program is in place, the Certification and Training Committee will begin the process of developing the ABOA specific training courses outlined later in this document. These courses will be geared specifically towards the role of a BEO.

Once the ABOA courses become available they will become a mandatory requirement for certification. Enforcement courses offered by other organisations will still be recognised, but will no longer qualify for the same amount of points that may be used towards certification as the ABOA courses. A candidate will be required to attend an ABOA course in order to achieve certification.



An Overview of the Certification Program

In order to apply for certification, the candidate will be expected to satisfy a number of pre-requisites based around their employment, schooling and membership of ABOA. These pre-requisites have been put in place to ensure that only suitably qualified candidates, such as those with relevant and appropriate work experience and training may apply for certification.

The Certification Program consists of a number of sections that can be used to accrue points. Once the required number of points has been obtained a candidate may apply to the Certification and Training Committee for certification. Points can be accrued in a number of ways.

Some elements of the Certification Program are mandatory, others are based upon the specific skills and working environment of the candidate.

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Experience | A candidate can obtain points based on their experience working as a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, or in a related field. |
| Core Competencies | The candidate must possess the basic skills required of a Bylaw Enforcement Officer. There will be a mandatory requirement to ensure a candidate meets the minimum standards required by the Certification and Training Committee; however a candidate may accrue more than the minimum required points in this section. |
| Job Specific Skills | A candidate may possess skills that are specific to their particular job function, or their employer may require skills that are not common among other employers. The Certification and Training Committee may award points for these. |
| Specialist Skills | The client may possess specialist knowledge that, whilst not essential for the role of a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, may be of use. The Certification and Training Committee may choose to award points for these skills. |
| Merit Points | A candidate may earn merit points that will count towards certification. Merit points may be earned, for example, by serving on an ABOA committee or the Executive Committee. Members undergoing certification may then use a certain number of these Merit Points to boost their scores in each of the sections in order to attain a pass. |



Points will be awarded in each section based upon the individual candidate's experience and training.

Where a candidate has attended a training course that was not provided by ABOA they may still qualify for points. The Certification and Training Committee has a set of Guidelines and Procedures that details all recognised training courses as well as acceptable equivalencies and specialist training, and provides a points rating for these. The committee will use this document to ensure that all candidates receive the points they have qualified for, and that points are awarded in both a fair and consistent manner.

In order to become certified, a candidate must achieve a total of **75** points, and must accrue a minimum of 25 points in the Core Competencies section. These basic requirements described above are explained in more detail on the following pages.

An application fee, as determined from time to time by the Certification & Training Committee, must be paid when applying for certification.



Pre-Requisites when Applying for Certification

In order to be eligible to apply for certification, candidates must satisfy the following requirements;

- The candidate must be a member of ABOA in good standing, and must have been a member for a minimum of 12 months prior to applying to enter the certification program.
- The candidate must be employed in a Bylaw enforcement capacity or related field by a Local, Provincial or Federal Government body or a First Nations Council for a minimum of 2 years prior to applying for certification.
- The candidate must be of good character and adhere to the ABOA Code of Ethics.
- The candidate must have a grade 12 diploma, GED or be able to prove they have graduated any international education system with an equivalent standard of education.
- Be at least 21 years of age.

Candidates will be expected to submit documentary proof, where required, for all of the above when they apply for certification.



Experience

This section provides a point weighting that relates to the candidates work experience. A maximum of **10** points may be taken from this section and used towards the total certification score. Points are awarded for various levels of experience working as a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, or for work experience in related fields.

Candidates wishing to apply for certification will be required to provide documentary proof of all relevant work experience that they wish to use to qualify for points.

| Experience | Requirement | Accepted Equivalency | Possible Points |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | 1 to 4 years experience as a BEO. | 1 to 4 years work experience in any field deemed relevant by the Certification and Training Committee. | 5 |
| | 4 or more years experience as a BEO. | 4 plus years work experience in any field deemed relevant by the Certification and Training Committee. | 10 |
| | Any other work experience that is deemed appropriate and relevant by the Certification and Training Committee. <i>Points may be awarded for experience in differing fields, e.g.: Corrections, Law-Enforcement and Legal.</i> | | 5 |
| Total Points in this Section that May be Used Towards Certification | | | 10 |

It will be the responsibility of the Certification and Training Committee to evaluate a candidate's work experience for eligible for points. The committees Guidelines and Procedures contain a more detailed explanation of the acceptable equivalencies and the points they may qualify for.



Core Competencies

This section provides a weighting based on the basic core competencies that the Committee feels a candidate must possess in order to function effectively as a Bylaw Enforcement Officer. A minimum of **25** points are required to qualify from this section as these skills are mandatory. A candidate may qualify for more than 25 points if they have taken part in any appropriate training and possess the relevant skills.

Attaining points that will count towards these core competencies can be done by attending the basic courses provided by ABOA, or another recognised training body. ABOA courses will qualify for the maximum possible points shown in the table, whilst courses provided by other organizations will only be eligible for a portion of the possible points.

| Core Competencies | Requirement | Equivalency | Possible Points |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | ABOA BEO Course Level 1 | Any other course or combination of courses that consist of essentially the same content as the ABOA BEO Course Level 1 | 15 |
| | Current First Aid Certificate/CPR | | 5 |
| | WHIMIS | | 2.5 |
| | ABOA Diversity Training | | 5 |
| | Completed any ABOA delivered basic training course. | | 5 |
| | Attended a training seminar at ABOA yearly conference. Points are awarded for each different seminar attended. | | 2.5 |
| | Received any Law-Enforcement related basic training that is recognised by the Certification and Training Committee. | | Points awarded as appropriate |
| | | Holding a certification as a BEO in another province or territory | 20 |
| | | Being certified by a related professional organisation or body | 10 |
| Minimum Points that are Required to Pass this Section | | | 25 |



Courses shown with a **green** background are mandatory, unless a candidate was certified in another province or territory. In this case only First Aid and ABOA Diversity Training courses are considered mandatory.

When a candidate applies for certification the Certification and Training Committee will determine what other courses are eligible to earn points, and how many points will be awarded in these cases. The committee will refer to its Guidelines and Procedures when making this determination.

Candidates are expected to provide documentary proof of attendance at, or graduation from all training courses that have been attended, and if certified in another Province or Territory, a copy of that certification.



Job Specific Skills

This section focuses on training that would be of benefit to a Bylaw Enforcement Officer working in a specific role, or for an employer who requires the Bylaw Enforcement Officer to possess a different skill set. A total of **25** points may be earned in this section and used towards the final certification score.

In order to make certification attainable for candidates from different Provinces or candidates who may have different job requirements and skills, points can be awarded for skills and training that may not fall within the core competencies of a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, but would still be beneficial to the role.

Candidates are expected to provide documentary proof of attendance at, or graduation from all training courses that have been attended.

| Job Specific Skills | Requirement | Accepted Equivalency | Points |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | ABOA BEO Course Level 2 | Any other course or combination of courses that the Certification and Training Committee deems appropriate. | 15 |
| | Completed any ABOA delivered advanced training course. | Attended any advanced training course that is recognised and approved by the Certification and Training Committee. | Up to 5 per course |
| <i>Total Points in this Section that May be Used Towards Certification</i> | | | 25 |

It will be up to the Certification and Training Committee, referencing its Guidelines and Procedures, to determine if the job specific training received by a candidate will qualify for points.



Specialized Training

This section focuses on any skills and training that do not necessarily represent the core competencies or job specific skills of a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, but would assist in the execution of their duties and contribute to a safer working environment. A total of **15** points may be earned in this section.

Candidates will be required to provide the Certification and Training Committee with documentary proof that they have attended the training in order to qualify for points.

| Specialized Training | Requirement | Accepted Equivalency | Points |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Completed any ABOA delivered specialist training course. | Attended any specialist training course that is recognised and approved by the Certification and Training Committee. | Up to 5 points per course |
| <i>Total Points in this Section that May be Used Towards Certification</i> | | | 15 |

The following are examples of courses that would qualify for points in this section:

- Self Defence or Martial Arts Training
- Defensive Driving
- Radio Communication
- Firearms Course
- Waste Inspection

It will be up to the Certification and Training Committee to decide if any specialized training received by a candidate will qualify for points. The committees Guidelines and Procedures document contains information that will assist in making this decision.



Merit Points

ABOA members who are undergoing certification may also earn Merit Points that may be used to boost their scores in the certification process. Merit points can be earned in a variety of ways and the table below provides some examples.

A total of **10** merit points may be used towards the final certification score.

| Merit Points | Requirement | Accepted Equivalency | Points |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| | Serving on any ABOA committee for a minimum of 24 months | | 2.5 |
| | Serving on the ABOA executive for a minimum of 24 months | | 2.5 |
| | Being certified by any other non-related professional organisation | | 2.5 |
| | A member in good standing of ABOA for a minimum of 3 years. 1 point per year to a maximum of 5 points. | | 5 |
| | | Any other situation where the Certification and Training Committee determine that merit points are warranted. | Awarded as appropriate |
| <i>Total Points in this Section that May be Used Towards Certification</i> | | | 10 |

It will be up to the Certification and Training Committee to decide if a candidate will qualify for merit points. Once again, the committee will refer to its Guidelines and Procedures when making this determination.



Maintaining Certification

In order to maintain their status of Certified Bylaw Enforcement Officer, ABOA members are encouraged to continue their on-going professional development throughout their career. They must also remain a member in good standing of ABOA whilst certified.

Once a member has achieved certification they will be required to obtain a minimum of **15** training points every 3 years in order to remain certified. Points can be accrued by attending a yearly ABOA training seminar and/or any of the courses indicated in the tables shown on the previous pages. Any Merit points that a member earns will also count towards maintaining certification.

Any training points that were earned before the member was certified cannot be used towards maintaining certification. For example, even though a member may have achieved 100 points in the certification process, the excess 25 points will not count towards maintaining certification.

Certified members will be required to provide the Certification and Training Committee with documentary proof that they have attended a training course. The Committee will employ the Guidelines and Procedures to determine the point's value of each training course a certified member has attended.

Should a certified member fail to achieve the number of points needed to maintain certification in the required period, the Certification and Training Committee will write to them informing them of the potential shortfall. The candidate will have 6 months in order to accrue sufficient points.

Candidates who let their certification lapse beyond 12 months may have their certification revoked by the Certification and Training Committee subject to a hearing and appeal process.



ABOA Certification and Training Committee

In order to administer the Certification Program, develop ABOA proprietary training materials and provide guidance to the membership, a Certification and Training Committee, drawn from suitably qualified members, will be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Certification and Training Committee will consist of a minimum of 5 members and policies, procedures and guidelines will be put in place that will govern the working of the Committee.

Powers of the Committee

The Certification and Training Committee will exercise authority to deal with all aspects of the Certification Program. All decisions made by the Certification and Training Committee must be approved by a majority.

The Certification and Training Committee may award points where a candidate has received training in an area that is appropriate to the candidate's specific job function or to a Bylaw Officer's role in general.

The Certification and Training Committee will resolve issues relating to the certification process without referring these back to the ABOA Executive Committee, unless the circumstances of the issue in question are warranted.

Subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, the Certification and Training Committee may appoint a person to administer the certification process, and to award this person a salary or an annual stipend to cover the work this may involve.

The Certification and Training Committee, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may revoke a member's certification should the member be found to be in breach of the ABOA Code of Ethics, or other such information comes to light that makes that member's certification inappropriate.

The Committee may award certification to any member where it feels the member's experience, qualifications or any combination of these warrant the status of Certified Bylaw Officer, provided that the member has satisfied the mandatory, minimum core competencies.

Training Materials

The Certification and Training Committee will, over time, develop and maintain training courses and materials that are appropriate to both the certification program and the duties of a BEO and of a benefit to the general membership.



The Committee will also examine training provided by other bodies or organizations to determine if this is appropriate to qualify for points that may be used towards certification.

Until such time as the ABOA specific training materials become available, the Certification and Training Committee will recognise certain training that is provided by a 3rd party as an acceptable equivalent. This 3rd party training will qualify for the same number of points as would be awarded for attendance at ABOA delivered training. Once the ABOA proprietary training is available these 3rd party courses will still be recognised, but will no longer have the same point's value. The Certification and Training Committee will reference its Guidelines and Procedures when awarding points for such training. This document contains examples for recognised equivalent training courses, and provides guidance for the committee when it evaluates new 3rd party training materials.

Subject to the approval of the ABOA Executive Committee, the Certification and Training Committee will have the power to acquire the services of another body or organization to develop training materials on its behalf, and to acquire any training materials it feels are both suitable and appropriate.