

# Top 10 Questions about CompTIA's Continuing Education Policy

Beginning January 1, 2011, CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+, CompTIA Security+ and CompTIA CASP certifications are valid for three years from the date the candidate becomes certified. A "valid through" date will appear on all certificates and certificate holder CompTIA ID cards.

## 1. I work for the DoD and hold a CompTIA certification as part of DoD 8570. How does this affect me?

Beginning January 1, 2011, the DoD will require every CompTIA certified IA workforce member to obtain a CompTIA CE credential. DoD personnel who take a CompTIA exam after January 1, 2011 will automatically be enrolled in the CE program. Individuals who certified before Jan. 1, 2011 must enroll in the CE program by December 31, 2012. The previous date of December 31, 2011 has been extended by the DIAP. Please contact your specific component IAM if you have questions pertaining to enrollment deadline requirements.

## 2. Why has the DoD enrollment date changed?

In February (2011) the Director of the IA Workforce Improvement Program (IA WIP) provided directions to the DoD Components stating that IA Workforce Members who held CompTIA certifications were required enroll in the CompTIA Continuing Education program by 31 Dec 2011. Based on DoD 8570.01-M policy as well as feedback from their Component representatives, the Director of the DoD IA WIP has modified the initial guidance to align with CompTIA's program guideline which allows "certified for life" individuals the option to enroll by December 31, 2012. This aligns to the DoD policy to "comply" with the certification provider standards/requirements.

## 3. Does the DWCA (Defense Workforce Certification Application) track my participation in the CE program?

Yes. Enrollment in the CE program is tracked and updated within DWCA commonly known as the DMDC (Defense Manpower Data Center) application. Individuals should go to <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwc/index.jsp> to register their CompTIA certification(s).

## 4. I work for DoD. How can I pay for my CE maintenance fee?

CompTIA has worked out a process for DoD components to purchase bulk tokens that can be used by individuals to pay their yearly maintenance fees. Please check with your manager or component POC to learn if you are eligible for a token. Some components may require an individual to pay their fee and submit for reimbursement. If you are unsure who to contact to learn how your component is proceeding, please email [cetokensdod@comptia.org](mailto:cetokensdod@comptia.org).

## 5. Can I keep my certification current without taking a new exam?

Yes. Our certification renewal policy includes a continuing education component that allows eligible individuals to renew their certifications by earning continuing education units. Certification holders have a wide range of ways to keep their CompTIA certifications current without necessarily having to take a new exam.

## 6. CompTIA has always said its certifications are good for life. Why have you changed your policy?

CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+, CompTIA Security+ and CompTIA CASP are accredited by the **International Organization for Standardization (ISO)**, an international body which approves the procedures used by personnel certification bodies. ISO requires that individuals have a way to renew the currency of their certification on a regular basis. In CompTIA's case, that renewal will occur every three years.

## 7. What are the guidelines for continuing education (CE) program participation?

Candidates certified on or after Jan. 1, 2011 will have a certificate expiration date of three years from the date certified. Individuals will automatically be enrolled into the CE program and will have three years from the date certified to successfully complete the required CE units. Upon completion of the CE program, the candidate's certification expiration date will be increased by three years. A candidate may only submit CE units and be recertified once in any three year period. Candidates who allow their certification to expire must retake and pass the current exam(s) in order to opt back into the CE program.

## 8. Is there a cost associated with the certification renewal program?

Yes. There will be an annual fee of \$25 for CompTIA A+ and \$49 for CompTIA Network+, CompTIA Security+ or CompTIA CASP. On or before the CE program expiration date, all fees must be paid in full and all required continuing education units (CEUs) must be completed. CE program fees can be paid on an annual basis or as a one-time payment for the duration of the three year program.

## 9. I hold multiple CompTIA certifications. Am I required to renew each of them?

No. Individuals with multiple CompTIA certifications will be prompted to renew at their highest level of certification held. For example, someone who holds CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+, CompTIA Security+ and CompTIA CASP certifications would only need to meet the continuing education requirements for CompTIA CASP. Renewing at the highest level will also renew lower-level certifications held.

## 10. What types of activities are eligible for continuing education units?

Activities that will qualify for continuing education units include passing the most current version of the exam; teaching, lecturing or presenting on relevant industry topics; participating in non-degree courses or computer-based training; attending relevant industry conferences and events; participating in a CompTIA exam development workshop; publishing articles, whitepapers, blogs or books on relevant topics; obtaining other industry certifications; or completing industry-related college courses from degree-granting institutions.

## 10. I've recently/or am in the process of completing an activity that could qualify for continuing education units. Can I submit it for credit?

You can submit qualifying activities for continuing education units as long as they are completed within 90 days prior to enrollment into CE. For example, if you enroll in CE on Jan. 1, 2011, you can submit qualifying activities that were completed on or after 10/1/10.

**Please contact your specific component IAM if you have questions pertaining to enrollment deadline requirements.**