

DATE: September 19, 2018

TO: Federal Agency Payment Certifying Officers and Members of the Federal Payments Community

FROM: Ronda Kent **Ronda L. Kent** Digitally signed by Ronda L. Kent
Date: 2018.09.19 11:13:41 -04'00'
Assistant Commissioner, Payment Management and
Chief Disbursing Officer

SUBJECT: Mandatory Federal Payment Certifying Officer Training
New Requirement, Effective November 1, 2018

In Fiscal Year 2017, the Federal Government paid \$3.9 trillion to individuals, companies, and other entities around the world. The U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Bureau of the Fiscal Service (Fiscal Service) disbursed 87% of those payments on behalf of more than 250 Federal agencies and programs. Fiscal Service is also responsible for establishing governmentwide policies to ensure that payments are made accurately, to the right payees, and in compliance with legal requirements. Federal Certifying Officers (COs) are key to maintaining the public’s trust in the integrity of the Government’s payment processes.

Effective November 1, 2018, all COs are required to complete online training, provided by the Fiscal Service, as a credentialing requirement for new delegations and designations, and the renewal of delegations and designations, as described in the Treasury Financial Manual (TFM) Volume I, Part 4A, Chapter 3000.

This training requirement applies to all COs, Secure Payment System (SPS) Data Entry Operators, and individuals designated as an “Agent to Receive and Deliver Checks” who process payments through Treasury Fiscal Service. Each of these individuals, who must be government employees, will be required to affirm a current completion of CO training as part of each issuance of new or renewed credentials. We recommend, but do not require, that Non-Treasury Disbursing Office Accountable Officers also complete this informative training.

We look forward to supporting the important work of your agency with this new CO training requirement. For more information, please see the attached information sheet and visit our website at <https://fiscal.treasury.gov/cotraining>. Should you have any questions regarding payment certification policies, please contact Margot Kaeser, Director of the Policy and Oversight Division of Payment Management, at margot.kaeser@fiscal.treasury.gov or (202) 874-6790.

U.S. Department of the Treasury
Bureau of the Fiscal Service
Certifying Officer Training Information

September 19, 2018

Each year the Government delivers 1.5 billion payments totaling \$3.9 trillion to recipients around the world. The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Bureau of the Fiscal Service (Fiscal Service) disburses 87% of those payments on behalf of more than 250 Federal agencies and programs. Fiscal Service is also responsible for establishing governmentwide policies to ensure that payments are made accurately, to the right payees, and in compliance with legal requirements. Federal Certifying Officers (COs) are key to maintaining the public's trust in the integrity of the Government's payment processes.

What is a Certifying Officer?

Federal paying agencies designate authorized officials who may request payments, known as payment "certifying officers". COs are responsible for certifying to Fiscal Service that requested disbursements of agency funds are accurate and legal. COs are personally responsible for the proper issuance of payments.

What is a Data Entry Operator?

Data Entry Operators (DEO) are federal employees who are responsible for payment request creation and editing using the Secure Payment System. Once a DEO submits a payment for certification, it is available for a CO to certify that payment. An individual may not be designated as both a DEO and a CO for the same Agency Location Code (ALC).

What is an Agent to Receive and Deliver Checks?

Designated agents are government employees who receive and deliver Treasury checks drawn on agency funds, as authorized in a Designation. Treasury prefers that agencies schedule all payments to be made by direct deposit to recipients' accounts instead of paper checks. However, under some circumstances, it may be necessary for an agency to pick up or receive checks from a Treasury Financial Center, upon designating official's approval, for direct delivery to the payee/recipient.

What is Certifying Officer training?

Certifying officer (CO) training provides new and experienced COs and members of the federal payment management community with the information needed to understand how to properly certify the validity of payments disbursed on behalf of their agency by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Fiscal Service. The training helps COs and members of the federal payment management community understand their individual and agency responsibility and accountability for ensuring payments are legal, proper, and correct.

Fiscal Service released this training in April 2016 for the benefit of agency COs and other payment staff. The training supplements the instructions found in the Treasury Financial Manual (TFM) at Volume I, Part 4A, Chapter 3000- Requirements for Scheduling Payments Disbursed by the Bureau of the Fiscal Service.

Who must complete this training?

Effective November 1, 2018, all COs, DEOs, and individuals designated as an "Agent to Receive and Deliver Checks," who process payments through the Fiscal Service, are required to complete CO training. Each of these individuals, who must be government employees, will be required to affirm a current completion of CO training as part of each issuance of new or renewed credentials. Fiscal

Service recommends, but does not require, that Non-Treasury Disbursing Office accountable officers also complete this informative training.

What does CO training offer?

The CO training offers visually enhanced computer-based modules designed for ease of understanding, navigation, and ongoing reference. The course takes a few hours to complete, and provides a certificate upon successfully passing the exam at the end of the training. Fiscal Service developed the training as an on-demand resource with continual accessibility for all accountable officers and anyone involved in making federal payments.

What will I learn?

The training is comprised of seven modules that cover subjects such as the history of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the federal payment certification process, the responsibilities of a certifying officer, internal controls, federal shared service providers and their impact on the payment certification process, and payment certification systems.

How can I access this training?

COs and other payment staff can access the CO Training at <https://fiscal.treasury.gov/cotraining>. If you have any technical questions about accessing the training, please contact the Payments Call Center via email at payments@fiscal.treasury.gov.