



# How to Successfully Become an APRP

## An Accredited Payments Risk Professional (APRP)

An APRP is a professional designation awarded by the National Automated Clearing House Association (Nacha), to individuals who have demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge of Risk Management strategies, concepts and mitigation techniques, and a mastery of the complexities of risk management for ACH, check, wire, debit, credit and prepaid cards and emerging and alternative payments. The APRP certification identifies individuals who are dedicated to and serious about their profession, and for a financial institution or company, it validates to regulators and examiners that you are committed to risk management and regulatory compliance.

## The Ideal Candidate for the AAP Program

Passing the APRP exam indicates that you are a Subject Matter Expert in the areas of Risk Management for all payment systems. With that being said, it is not an easy exam to pass. There are three main things that are needed to pass the APRP exam:

### 1. Experience:

Successful candidates have a variety of experience including Compliance, Risk Management, Operations, Sales, Treasury Management, and more."

- Any professional in the payments industry can work towards accreditation. If you have worked in payments for years, you will add a highly respected qualification to your resume. If you are relatively new to the field, you will give yourself an edge over the competition.

### 2. Time:

Successful candidates spend on average 10+ dedicated hours a week studying for the exam including individual study, attending TCHPA's prep series, and participating in study groups.

### 3. Knowledge:

The APRP exam is written in such a way that you'll be answering questions that demonstrate your understanding of risk management, it's concepts, techniques and strategies. APRP Candidates are expected to be familiar with all of the FFIEC Guidebooks.

## What You Need to Know

The APRP exam is sponsored and administered by Nacha and consists of 120 multiple choice questions. Twenty of those questions are pilot questions, meaning they won't be scored. You are allowed three hours to complete the exam.

The exam is comprised of six different categories:

- Fundamentals of Payments Risk Management
- Payments Risk Management Controls
- Payment Systems
- Physical and Information Security
- Regulatory Environment
- Payments Risk Policy and Governance

The weight of these categories can change slightly yearly, as well as the registration fees and key dates. Please see [Nacha's APRP FAQ's](#) for details on this year's exam.

## TCHPA Instructor Recommendations in Studying for the Exam

- Create a study schedule. Not only the days/ times of the week you have set aside to study, but what you want to cover. There's a lot of information to cover, and if not careful, it's easy to get lost or get behind.
- Study with a buddy or a group. Whether that's with one other person or five. Study groups help you retain information better, and help you look at the information you're learning from different perspectives. If you have the ability to do so, consider hosting a study group. You don't have to be an expert, but many people may benefit, even if you're just facilitating a date and time for people to meet and discuss what they're learning.

- Understand the basics of all the payment rails, including participants, workflows, and their legal framework. Don't underestimate the importance of incorporating the different FFIEC handbooks in your study schedule.
- Periodically, do an honest self-assessment of your knowledge. It's important for you to be able to assess your strengths and weaknesses and know where you need to spend some extra time studying.
- Be actively engaged in the TCHPA's APRP Prep Webinar Series. These sessions prove to be the most beneficial when you can focus your attention on the sessions as they are being presented. This gives you a chance to ask questions and make sure you're understanding what you're learning in your individual study sessions.

## Plan Your Budget . . .

Understanding the costs and the ways you can save cash can help you to budget and plan your expenses for the coming year. The upcoming exam window, **Monday, August 5<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, August 31, 2024**

- **Registration for the APRP Exam: \$550 Nacha Member, \$675 Non-Members**  
Note: Nacha charges additional fees for late registration, substitutions and cancellations.
- **APRP Prerequisite, TCHPA [Payments Risk Foundations Certificate](#): Complimentary for Members** – *Uniquely designed to help you to gain core knowledge and lay the foundation before taking the APRP exam*
- **TCHPA Resources: [APRP Exam Prep Webinar](#) (Complimentary for Members)** - *This program has been specifically designed to guide you through the preparation process, providing knowledge checks along the way.*
  - Webinar Training Sessions
  - Training series presentation decks
  - Sessions recorded and available on-demand
  - Online testing tools
  - Quizzes for each session/supplemental material to support the training series

- **Nacha Resources:**
  - The Accredited Payments Risk Professional Handbook – Study Guide provided by Nacha after completion of registration for exam, via an email containing a link to the electronic version of the APRP Handbook
  - “Get A Buddy” – A mentoring program that pairs aspiring APRPs with a current APRP who has volunteered their time to help guide you throughout your study period
  
- **Reference Materials: These are recommended as additional resources for review**
  - Nacha Operating Rules and Guidelines: (TCHPA Member: 1 Complimentary copy per institution, TCHPA Payments Store: \$60 Member, \$95 Non-Member)
  - ACH Risk Management Handbook: (TCHPA Payments Store: \$62 Member, \$95 Non-Member)
  - Revised Uniform Commercial Code 4A and the ACH Network: (TCHPA Payments Store: \$60 Member, \$80 Non-Member)
  - ACH Compliance Manual: (TCHPA Payments Store: \$55 Member, \$75 Non-Member)
  - Third-Party Senders & the ACH Network: (TCHPA Payments Store: \$60 Member, \$85 Non-Member)
  
- **Study Aides:** *Everyone learns differently, so make sure you are consuming information in a way that benefits you the most.*
  - APRP Flashcards (TCHPA Payments Store \$125 Members, \$225 Non-Member)