



Invest in Your Future:

Choose an Accredited Personal Financial Specialist

PERSONAL
FINANCIAL
PLANNING



Select the Best

You've invested countless hours and hard-earned dollars to achieve all that you now have. But getting ahead is getting harder every day. The world of financial planning is becoming more complex: Tax laws keep changing, the real estate market is in transition and a winning investment is more difficult to predict than ever before. That's why the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) has created the Accredited Personal Financial Specialist (APFS) program.

CPAs who have earned the APFS designation have demonstrated their ability to guide you through the confusing financial environment. Whether you need to build college funds for your newborn or develop investment strategies for retirement, a CPA/APFS is the one who can best maximize the effectiveness of your personal financial plans.

Personal financial planning is a process. It begins with an initial plan that is based on your current financial situation. The plan is then monitored so that it changes along with your lifestyle and the financial marketplace.

Financial planning means more than just choosing the mutual fund with the best current yield or deciding to buy a particular life insurance policy. It is the successful integration of your goals, resources, stage of life, and tolerance for risk.

In today's volatile economy, you cannot afford to leave your financial plans to chance. Invest in yourself...select the best. Select a CPA/APFS.

CPA/APFS... The Mark of Distinction

When you select an APFS, you are entrusting your financial well-being to a highly qualified professional who has pledged to uphold a strict code of conduct—mandated by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Candidates for the APFS designation must first be CPAs. The CPA credential, in and of itself, implies a great deal of education, experience and technical skill.

Furthermore, a CPA/APFS must:

- Be an AICPA member in good standing and agree to comply with continuing professional education and reaccreditation requirements.
- Have at least three years of personal financial planning experience which must be documented with letters from clients and peers.
- Demonstrate special competence by passing a comprehensive financial planning examination.

Once a CPA earns the APFS designation, he or she must work to keep it by becoming reaccredited every three years. This process includes taking continuing professional education to stay abreast of the latest developments.

In addition, CPAs with the APFS designation must periodically evaluate and document the professional quality of their practices to ensure that they meet the highest standards of professionalism and integrity. The CPA/APFS must also continue to practice personal financial planning. If the nature of the CPA's

practice changes and the number of financial planning hours drops below the minimum number required, the CPA will lose the APFS designation.


All Financial Planners Are Not Created Equal

Find out whether your financial planner has earned the right to use the initials "CPA" for certified public accountant. These letters are your assurance of competence, objectivity and integrity.

After completing various levels of higher education, CPA candidates must pass a rigorous two-and-a-half-day examination. In most cases, they must also work under a CPA's supervision for a specified period of time required by the CPA's state board of accountancy.

The CPA also is qualified to work with other professional advisers, such as attorneys, insurance agents, stockbrokers, and bankers, to help you secure the best possible financial future.

For more than 100 years, CPAs have been trusted financial advisers to businesses as well as to individuals. Therefore, they come to the financial planning marketplace with broad-based knowledge, including tax, audit, financial consulting, and small business expertise. CPAs who are financial planning professionals understand the framework of finance and the business world far beyond your personal financial planning needs.



A CPA/APFS can provide you with services ranging from an informal personal consultation to a comprehensive financial plan, carefully tailored to your needs and circumstances. These highly individualized professional services will help you to:

- Manage cash flow.
- Build retirement savings.
- Develop an estate plan.
- Minimize tax liability.
- Maximize the return on investments.
- Manage financial risk.
- Determine insurance needs.
- Build education funds.
- Plan for the care of elderly parents.
- Purchase a vacation home.
- Make the most of real estate investments.

About the AICPA

The AICPA is the national professional association of CPAs and has more than 300,000 members. AICPA members are committed to the highest standards of quality, objectivity and ethics. In its continuing efforts to serve the public interest, the AICPA sets audit standards, upholds the profession's code of conduct, provides continuing professional education, implements peer review and quality review programs, and prepares and grades the Uniform CPA and Accredited Personal Financial Specialist examinations.

AICPA *"The Measure of Excellence"*

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