

AICP EXAM OVERVIEW AND TIPS

*Sacramento Valley Section, APA California Chapter
February 21, 2019*



AICP – American Institute of Certified Planners

- APA's professional institute
 - To be AICP, a planner must:
 - *meet requirements for education and experience,*
 - *pass the AICP exam,*
 - *pledge to uphold ethical standards (AICP Code of Ethics), and*
 - *engage in ongoing professional development (Certification Maintenance)*
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Eligibility

- Current APA member
 - Completion of education and professional planning experience
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Level of Education	Total Number of Years of Professional Planning Experience Required
Graduate degree in Planning from a program accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB)	2
Bachelor's degree in Planning from a program accredited by the PAB	3
Graduate degree in Planning from a program not accredited by the PAB	3
Any other post-graduate, graduate, or undergraduate degree	4
No college degree	8

Professional Planning Experience

- Apply a planning process appropriate to the situation
 - Employ an appropriately comprehensive point of view
 - Involve a professional level of responsibility and resourcefulness
 - Influence public decision making in the public interest
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Application Process

- Submit online application
 - *Upload verification documents for degrees and employment you are claiming as professional planning experience*
 - *Submit exam application criteria responses*
 - Pay application/exam fees of \$495 (APACA and Section have scholarships)
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May 2019 AICP Exam Schedule

Application Window Opens	December 3, 2018, 7 am
Early Bird Deadline	December 10, 2018, 2 pm
Final Application Deadline	December 28, 2018, 2 pm
Testing Window	May 6-20, 2019

November 2019 AICP Exam Schedule

Early Bird Notification Deadline	June TBD, 2019
Final Notification Deadline	September TBD, 2019
Registration and Transfer Deadline	October TBD, 2019
Testing Window	November TBD, 2019

Application Process

- Benefits of Early Bird submittal
 - *Early notification of application status*
 - *If denied, opportunity to revise and resubmit application in same exam window*
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Scheduling Your Exam

- Spring testing window is May 6–20, 2019
 - Schedule appointment at: www.prometric.com/aicp
 - Approvals good for 6 exam cycles
 - Need to inform APA if not taking exam in next window
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Preparing for the Exam

- Allocate study time based on subject matter and your background
 - Focus on weak areas
 - Study early and often – 100 hours
 - Utilize study groups and practice exams
 - Remember exam is applicable to national audience
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Preparing for the Exam

- May 2017 exam was first comprehensive update since 2007
- Online tutorial at:
https://www.prometric.com/en-us/clients/AICP/assets/AICP_Tutorial/index.htm

Subject Matter on AICP Exam

- Fundamental Planning Knowledge – 25%
 - Plan Making and Implementation – 30%
 - Areas of Practice – 30%
 - Leadership, Administration and Management – 5%
 - Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct – 10%
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Nature of Exam Questions

- More breadth than depth
 - Situational questions – “What would you do if...?”
 - Emphasis on public agency management:
 - *Planner’s roles vs. elected officials*
 - *Application of technical knowledge*
 - *Analysis of alternatives*
 - *Ethics*
 - *Public interest*
 - *Public involvement in decision-making*
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Nature of Exam Questions

- Use practice exams to understand your grasp of topics
 - Quality of practice exams vary greatly
 - Exam tests 40% knowledge and 60% skills
 - Real exam has a much greater percentage of longer, scenario based questions than typical practice exams
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On Exam Day

- Get plenty of rest
 - Eat before the exam
 - Arrive 30 minutes early
 - Bring 2 forms of identification
 - *Primary (includes photo): Passport, driver's license, or employee ID*
 - *Secondary: military ID, citizenship card, credit card with signature, Social Security card, ATM card*
 - *No draft classification or student ID*
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On Exam Day

- Name on ID must match name on Authorization to Test (ATT)
 - Calculator, pencil, and scratch paper are provided
 - Dress in layers
 - Take no books or reference materials inside testing area
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Computer Based Exam

- Brief tutorial, 3 ½ hours for exam
 - 170 multiple choice questions, including 20 sample questions
 - Pool of 900 questions
 - Scoring on a scale
 - You will receive score before leaving testing center
 - Passing score 55 (range is 25-75)
 - Pass rate is approx. 65%
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Tips for Taking the Exam

- Use “mark” function for hard questions, and move on
 - No penalty for wrong answers
 - Check questions, but be careful about “second-guessing”
 - Answer before reviewing choices
 - Skim answers before reading long questions
 - Do math twice
 - Review feature at end of exam
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Main Study Sources

- Planetizen AICP Exam Preparation Course (\$245 + readers)
 - APA AICP Exam Prep 3.0 (\$199)
 - APA Chapter Presidents Council AICP Study Manual (\$15)
 - Planetizen and APA Prep 3.0 include practice exams
 - ICMA, *Local Planning: Contemporary Principles and Practice* (Green Bible)
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Other Chapter Study Materials

- Georgia: <http://georgiaplanning.org/aicp/aicp-exam-reviews/>
 - Pennsylvania: <http://planningpa.org/for-planners/professional-planners/aicp-exam-prep/>
 - North Carolina: <http://apa-nc.org/aicp/>
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APA Study Materials

www.planning.org/certification/examprep

- AICP Exam Prep 3.0
- Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
- Policy Guides
- Selected Readings
- Planning Advisory Service Reports
<http://www.planning.org/pas/reports/>



Other Materials

- www.planningprep.com
 - Electronical flashcards:
 - www.studystack.com (search AICP)
 - *gFlash app for mobile devices*
 - www.oyez.org
 - *AICP Exam Secrets Study Guide,*
Mometrix Media
 - *The Ethical Planning Practitioner,*
Jerry Weitz
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The landmark case *Agins v. City of Tiburon* (1980) established a test: a regulation is a taking if it can be shown that it:

- I. Prompts a property owner to file a lawsuit.
- II. Deprives property of all economically viable use.
- III. Creates a nuisance on the affected property.
- IV. Fails to advance a legitimate governmental interest.

- A. I and II
 - B. II and IV
 - C. II and III
 - D. III and IV
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You are an urban planner for a city, working on a revitalization plan for a commercial area that is a distinct entry point for the city, as well as an important provider of commercial services to the adjacent residential neighborhoods. The area has two anchor stores that are still vibrant, along with a few new businesses and several vacant or underutilized properties. For this project, the least appropriate method of public outreach and engagement would be:

- A. Delphi Method
 - B. Design Charette
 - C. Taskforce Meetings
 - D. Targeted Interviews
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Industry	Local Employment	National Employment
X	3%	6%
Y	10%	7%
Z	11%	3%

5. Listed above are two types of employment percentages for industries X, Y, and Z in a metropolitan area. The local employment for each industry is listed as a percent of total local employment, and the national employment in each industry is listed as a percent of total national employment. Under the location quotient method, an economic planner can assign which of these industries to the export sector of the metropolitan area?

- A. Y only
- B. X only
- C. X and Z
- D. Y and Z

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