

FACT SHEET

GA Operator Certification Reimbursement Program

Georgia Class IV & Class III certification for current Georgia operators of CWS or NTNCWS systems serving 3,300 persons or fewer

*GA Department of Natural Resources - Environmental Protection Division
Water Resources Branch - Drinking Water Program*

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The purpose of the Program is to reimburse the costs of training, including an appropriate per diem for unsalaried operators, and certification for persons operating community and nontransient noncommunity public water systems (drinking water) serving 3,300 persons or fewer that are required to undergo training in accordance with section 1419(d) of the Safe Drinking Water Act. For information concerning the Safe Drinking Water Act, please visit www.epa.gov/safewater/opcert/opcert.htm

Requests for reimbursement must be submitted within the two-year certification/re-certification time frame (as dictated by the Georgia Secretary of State certification definitions) to be considered for reimbursement.

Priority will be given first to current, properly completed requests for reimbursements. Those requests requiring research as to their validity or hinge on the submittal of further documentation will take secondary priority. NO GUARANTEE of reimbursement is given, expressed, or implied. All requests subject to approval/verification. Money will be dispersed on a first-come, first-served basis. It is in your best interest to keep a file with receipts, forms and any materials that may be necessary to aid in timely reimbursement for your certification expenses. Obtain the necessary training; pass your Certification examination; apply for certification; and upon receipt of certification by the GA Secretary of State's office, complete your reimbursement forms, and submit your request for reimbursement immediately in order to ensure the best chance for reimbursement. Reimbursements will no longer be available when the money allotted to the Program has been expended.

TRAINING

Board Approved Georgia Operator Training Facilities are listed on the Georgia Secretary of State website at: www.sos.state.ga.us/plb/water.

Training provides the information and knowledge necessary to pass the Secretary of State Board Examination. Reimbursement will be made ONLY for examinations resulting in a passing score. (Reimbursements will not be made for failed attempts.)

Your Course Trainer must sign the Course Verification form at the completion of your training for you to receive reimbursement.

You must be currently serving as a Georgia operator for a CWS or NTNCWS serving 3,300 persons or less to be eligible for reimbursement.

Certification levels applicable for reimbursement must be equal to the certification level required by the operating system (according to population served) or to the certification level required by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division Operator Certification Program.

More information and Program forms can be accessed at the Environmental Protection Division website at: www.dnr.state.ga.us/dnr/enviroin; To review Georgia Operating Rules under "Definitions", visit the Georgia Secretary of State's website at: www.sos.state.ga.us/plb/water

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WHO'S ELIGIBLE

Are you currently serving as an operator for a CWS or NTNCWS system serving 3,300 persons or fewer? If so, then you may be eligible to receive reimbursement for certain operator certification expenses. The Program will reimburse the costs of training and examination costs, including an appropriate per diem for unsalaried operators. Salaried persons operating community and nontransient noncommunity public water systems serving 3,300 persons or fewer that are required to undergo training in accordance with section 1419(d) of the Safe Drinking Water Act will receive reimbursement for training and examination costs, excluding per diem.

DEFINITIONS

The difference between Georgia "unsalaried" operators and "salaried" operators of CWS or NTNCWS systems serving 3,300 persons or fewer is as follows: You are "unsalaried" if you perform volunteer services when operating the water system and do not receive compensation from the system owner for these services; if this is your situation you will receive reimbursement for training costs, exam costs, mileage, and per diem (lodging, meals) in accordance with the State of Georgia Statewide Travel Regulations www.audits.state.ga.us/internet/nalgad/trvlpg.html. You are "salaried" if you receive compensation from the system owner; if this is your situation you will receive reimbursement for training and exam costs, and mileage, but not for lodging and meals.

REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

When you'll receive expense reimbursement

Qualified operators will be reimbursed upon completion of required courses, after receiving successful examination results, and issuance of License in accordance with the GA Secretary of State guidelines for Class IV or Class III operator certification www.sos.state.ga.us/plb/water. All required documentation and expense receipts must be submitted to GA EPD to ensure timely reimbursement.

What you must submit to GA EPD, Rebecca Mason, for reimbursement:

Operator Request for Reimbursement form
Course Verification form signed by Trainer
System Director Reference letter - unsalaried operators
Experience Verification letter - salaried operators
Operator Per Diem/Mileage Reports (out-of-state travel requires Pre-approval)
Operator Course/Exam/Expense Report (**Training/Conferences/Continuing Education – subject to a CAP**)
Copy of current license
All applicable receipts to support expense claims

How to achieve Certification:

You must successfully pass an examination proctored by the Georgia Secretary of State to be eligible for Operator Certification
Completion of minimum of high school diploma or GED certificate prior to exam
Appropriate level of experience associated with Certificate sought
Completion of water courses at required for class of system being operated
Upon passing the examination, a qualified applicant may apply for certificate

Certification Examination information:

An applicant must pass a written examination in order to apply for a certificate. These examinations are conducted periodically at locations such as Atlanta, Albany, Macon, and Savannah. For complete details including dates, locations, and fees for examination, examination forms and more, visit the Secretary of State website at www.sos.state.ga.us/plb/water.

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