



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Agriculture  
**FERTILIZER AND PESTICIDE AUTHORITY**  
FPA bldg., BAI Compound, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City  
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**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR**  
**NO. 9**  
**Series of 2024**

**TO :** ALL APPLICANTS AND LICENSED PESTICIDE HANDLERS  
ALL AGRICULTURAL CERTIFIED PESTICIDE APPLICATOR (CPA)  
AND ACCREDITED RESPONSIBLE CARE OFFICER (ARCO)  
EXAMINEES  
ALL CONCERNED STAKEHOLDERS  
THIS OFFICE

**SUBJECT :** GUIDELINES IN THE CONDUCT OF AGRICULTURAL CERTIFIED  
PESTICIDE APPLICATOR (CPA) AND ACCREDITED RESPONSIBLE  
CARE OFFICER (ARCO) EXAMINATION

**I. RATIONALE**

The Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) conducts trainings in partnership with the FPA Accredited Fertilizer and Pesticide Training Association (FATA) and implements accreditation program for fertilizer and pesticide handlers as pre-requisite to licensing. The certification and accreditation program involve the issuance of accreditation card to individuals who attended the required training course, passed the written examination and complied with all the requirements.

Currently, FPA's accreditation program that requires examination includes Agricultural Certified Pesticide Applicator (CPA), which can be specialized into Exterminator, Fumigator, Drone Controller, Drone Spray Crew Supervisor, and Accredited Responsible Care Officer (ARCO).

To establish the procedure in the conduct of examinations for these specializations, the Authority shall establish protocols and procedures to be implemented and observed by examinees, proctors and examiners. These include qualification/admission requirements, application requirements, securing information on testing venue, things to bring on examination day, preliminary activities/documentation, restrictions during the test proper, and release of test results.

Moreover, examinees for CPA and ARCO shall be given guidance prior to attending the examination through the provision of Guide-to-Manuals and a copy of this issuance.

## II. LEGAL BASIS

### 1. Presidential Decree 1144, s. 1977

- **Section 1.** “No person shall engage in the business of importing, manufacturing, formulating, exporting, repacking, distributing, storing or selling any pesticide, except under a license issued by the Authority. A separate license shall be required for each establishment or place of business subject to these rules, to be conspicuously displayed therein.”
- **Section 2.** “All commercial applicators of pesticides shall apply for a license, in a form to be supplied by the Authority and shall obtain a commercial applicator’s license and be assigned a license number by the Authority before such person shall perform services as a commercial applicator. Each commercial applicator shall obtain a license for each place of business maintained in the Philippines.”

### 2. Pesticide Regulatory Policies and Implementing Guidelines, s. 2020

- **Section 4.5.1. Agricultural Certified Pesticide Applicator (CPA)** – provides the scope and application, area of activity coverage, definition of terms, responsibilities of CPA, and the guidelines in the accreditation of CPA.
- **Section 4.5.2. Accredited Responsible Care Officer (ARCO)** – provides the scope and application, responsibilities of ARCO, and guidelines in the accreditation of ARCO.

## III. OBJECTIVES

This guideline provides direction on the administration of examinations for the accreditation of Agricultural Certified Pesticide Applicator (CPA) and Accredited Responsible Care Officer (ARCO). Specifically, it aims to:

1. Institutionalize clear and consistent instructions and procedures for the preparation, administration, and reporting of the results of examinations;
2. Ensure that the examinations are valid, reliable, fair, and transparent, and reflect the standards and criteria of FPA;
3. Establish the roles and responsibilities of the examiners, examinees, proctors, and other stakeholders involved in the examination process; and
4. Safeguard the integrity and security of the examination materials, data and results, and prevent any form of cheating, fraud, or misconduct.





#### IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS<sup>1</sup>

1. **Accreditation** – authorization, manifested in accreditation card, accorded to individuals who attended the training course, passed the written examination and complied with all the requirements.
2. **Accredited Responsible Care Officer (ARCO)** – they may be proprietors or employees of licensed handlers (except for dealers and pest control operators). Once accredited, the person shall be called “Accredited Responsible Care Officer (ARCO)”.
3. **Agricultural Certified Pesticide Applicator (CPA)** – a person who has attended the required training, passed the FPA licensure examination and accredited as an individual with the capacity to safely manage the handling of pesticides. The certification allows the CPA to apply restricted pesticides but not to purchase and enter into commercial contracts for pest control work.
4. **Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS)** – Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS), hereinto referred in this circular as drone, is an unmanned aircraft that is piloted from a remote pilot station. Moreover, agricultural drones are used for agricultural purposes such as crop mapping, field analysis, irrigation, pesticide spraying, and crop monitoring.
5. **Drone Controller** – an accredited CPA who has a license from the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) to operate/fly drone and uses it in the application of pesticides. He should be competent and knowledgeable in the use and application of pesticides such as: (1) appropriateness of pesticide formulation to be applied; (2) correct dose/rate and manner of application; (3) awareness of hazards in the use of product; and (4) first aid procedure.
6. **Drone Spray Crew Supervisor** – an assistant of a Drone Controller, an accredited CPA or ARCO who is knowledgeable and fully conversant with drone operation as well as with procedures in case of pesticide exposure.
7. **Exterminator** – a CPA who uses liquid and powder forms of pesticides, including restricted pesticides and coded compounds in the control/treatment of agricultural pests. The exterminator must be employed in company/institution as its in-house agricultural exterminator and he/she is not allowed to do extermination work outside his/her company/institution. This is not, however, refers to urban pest application.
8. **FPA Accredited Fertilizer and Pesticide Training Association (FATA)** – accredited training providers of FPA for accreditation of Responsible Care Officers (ARCO), Certified Agricultural Pesticide Applicator (CPA) Exterminators and Fumigators and Fertilizer and Pesticide Researchers.

<sup>1</sup> FPA PESTICIDE REGULATORY POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES s. 2020



9. **Fumigator** – a CPA who uses restricted gaseous pesticides or fumigants/coded compounds in the control/treatment of agricultural pests. A fumigator maybe an employee of an FPA-licensed PCO or of company/institution doing in-house work.

## V. GENERAL PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

The following are the procedures and guidelines for the application and conduct of FPA examinations:

### A. QUALIFICATION/ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All applicants must meet the following qualification requirements:

1. *For Agricultural Certified Pesticide Applicator (CPA):*

- a. Filipino citizen
- b. Of Legal Age
- c. Must be at least 1<sup>st</sup> year college level (vocational courses are not allowed)
- d. Completed the CPA Training

2. *For Accredited Responsible Care Officer (ARCO):*

- a. Filipino citizen
- b. Of Legal Age
- c. Must be high school graduate
- d. Completed the ARCO Training

### B. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

New applicants for CPA and ARCO must submit a fully accomplished Application Form with 1x1 photo picture with white background to the FATA after attending training.

All applications shall be verified with the submitted certification of training participants from the FATA. The certification shall be submitted to the Planning, Management and Information Division (PMID) within two (2) working days after the end of the scheduled training. The policy “NO FATA certification, no taking of exam” shall be strictly implemented.

Upon validation, a Notice of Exam will be emailed to the examinees three (3) days prior to the exam schedule.



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### C. VENUE OF EXAM

All FPA exams for CPA and ARCO shall be administered at the FPA Bldg., BAI Compound, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City. However, a special examination venue may be determined by FPA should there be a minimum of ten (10) examinees coming from a particular region or island cluster.

### D. ON EXAMINATION DAY

- a. Examinees should be at the testing venue at least thirty minutes (30) prior to the exam schedule.

*Note: Examinees who will arrive thirty minutes (30) after their exam schedule shall NOT be admitted to the testing venue.*

- b. Bring the following items on the examination day:

Any of the following Identification Cards (ID), which must be valid (i.e. not expired):

- Driver's License
- Passport
- GSIS ID
- SSS ID
- BIR ID (ATM type/TIN card type with picture)
- Voter's ID
- Barangay ID
- PhilHealth ID must contain the bearer's name, clear picture, signature and PhilHealth number);
- PRC ID
- Police Clearance; or
- National ID

- c. Notice of Exam;
- d. Black ballpen/s only;
- e. Calculator (for CPA examinees only); and
- f. Clear bottled water, or preferred beverage (except alcoholic beverage) placed in clear/transparent container, and/or candies/biscuits, if any, which shall be subjected to inspection by the Room Examiner/Proctor.

#### IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

##### **NO ID, NO EXAM**

Failure to take the examination on your scheduled date shall mean forfeiture of your examination slot. Rescheduling of examination date is **NOT** allowed.

Bringing cellular phones and any other gadgets, laptops, including books and any other forms of printed materials and all



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other similar items, is **NOT** allowed. If brought, these shall be surrendered to the Examiner. Firearms, if any, must also be surrendered to the security guard at the entrance of the testing venue.

## E. PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES/DOCUMENTATION

- a. Before occupying their designated seats, examinees should put ALL their personal belongings in front of the exam area. Baseball caps, sunglasses, jackets/sweatshirts (except in cool places, or as needed), and other similar clothing/accessories must also be placed in front of the room.

Examinees should also empty all their pockets of any pieces of paper and all other materials/items.

Examinees wearing long sleeves should roll the same up to elbow level.

- b. For the preliminaries, the only items that the examinees should bring with them in their seats are:
- Black ballpen/s only;
  - Notice of Examination;
  - Calculator (CPA examinees)
  - Clear bottled water/preferred beverage, except alcoholic beverage, placed in clear/transparent container and/or biscuits/candies, if any.
- c. Two (2) important documents in the examination shall be accomplished: the Answer Sheet and the Examinee Attendance Sheet. Instructions on accomplishing these forms shall be provided on the examination day.
- d. In accomplishing the above forms, use **BLACK BALLPEN ONLY** for **ALL WRITTEN** and **ALL SHADED** entries.

## F. THE ANSWER SHEET

The Answer Sheet has numbers written vertically that correspond to the question items. For each question, choose the correct or best answer from among the given answer options, and on the Answer Sheet, shade neatly and completely the circle that corresponds to your chosen answer option using **BLACK BALLPEN ONLY**.

Below are important reminders in accomplishing the Answer Sheet:

- Use **BLACK BALLPEN** only in filling out all text field and in marking/shading answers



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- DO NOT USE gel pen, sign pen, fountain pen, friction pen, pencil or any other kinds of pen, including other colors of ball pen.
- Shade neatly and completely the circles that correspond to your answers
- To change an answer:
  - Put an "X" mark over the original answer, then shade the circle that corresponds to the new and final answer.
  - DO NOT USE correction fluid, correction pen, correction tape, pen eraser, or any other similar materials.
  - Examinees are allowed to **CHANGE AN ANSWER** for each test item **ONLY ONCE**
- DO NOT make any stray/unnecessary marks on the Answer Sheet

#### **G. TEST PROPER**

- For the test proper, the **ONLY ITEMS** to remain with the examinees in their seats are the following:
  - Accomplished Answer Sheets
  - Black Ballpen/s
  - Notice of Exam
  - Calculators (for CPA examinees)
  - Clear bottled water/beverage, and candies/biscuits (if any).
- Use of any aid in answering the test questions (i.e. books, dictionaries and any other forms of printed materials; cellular phones, tablets and any other gadgets; all other similar materials/items) is strictly **PROHIBITED**.
- At any point during the examination, **DO NOT STAND TO SUBMIT YOUR TEST MATERIALS**. The Proctor shall approach each examinees at their seats to collect their Answer Sheets and Test Booklets.
- All remaining examinees, whether or not they finish answering the test by 10 minutes before the allotted time, shall stay inside the room until properly allowed to leave.

#### **H. PASSING GRADE**

To pass the test, an examinee should get a general rating of **at least 70.00%**



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## I. RELEASE OF TEST RESULTS

The List of Passers shall be posted on the FPA Website [www.fpa.da.gov.ph](http://www.fpa.da.gov.ph) seven (7) working days after the scheduled exam. FPA will also email the individual rating to the examinees.

*Note: Only the List of Passers posted on the FPA Website is official. FPA does not recognize and is not liable for any other postings on any other websites that are not affiliated with, or are engaged in the unauthorized use of the name of, the FPA.*

## J. SUSPENDING THE CONDUCT OF FPA EXAMINATIONS IN TIMES OF CALAMITIES


The FPA reserves the right to suspend the conduct of examination in times of calamities (natural or man-made). Such suspension may be partial, or full, based on assessment of conditions as supported by reports issued by authorized government agencies as well as multi-media reports.

In any such event, the FPA shall immediately issue a related directive and post an Examination Advisory on the FPA website [www.fpa.da.gov.ph](http://www.fpa.da.gov.ph). Press Release shall be issued and all efforts exerted to disseminate information including use of social media.

## VI. REPEALING AND EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE

This Circular shall take effect immediately upon signing hereof and shall supersede all other issuances inconsistent herewith.

Signed on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of February 2024.

  
**JULIETA B. LANSANGAN**  
Executive Director III

