

STATE OF NEBRASKA

BOARD OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY

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Dave Heineman
Governor

NEWS RELEASE

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BOARD EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT AMENDED

In November 2010, the Board was approached by members of a private company financial team regarding the Board's experience requirement (two-years within a CPA firm under supervision of a CPA). They were concerned with the need for accounting professionals within their ranks to have the ability to obtain the CPA designation. The Board had heard before from others regarding the current experience requirement under PAA Section 1-136.02. However, no sustained review or action was taken until this request. Basically, there was comfort in the current requirement for CPAs to gain only public accounting experience even though the Uniform Accountancy Act (UAA) several years ago recommended other forms of experience should count toward licensure after one year of experience.

The Board decided to pull together a work group and gather varied opinions and research the issues based on what would be best in Nebraska. Basically, it was time for a hard review of the experience requirement. The vast majority of other states were aligned with the UAA requirement.

Board Chair Douglas Skiles, CPA, called together the Experience Work Group (EWG) that consisted of himself as Chair, State Board Members Tom Obrist, Jim Rieker, and Bernie Gutchewski, State Society leadership including John Fruhwirth, Julie Bauman, Rand Hansen and Dan Vodvarka. Other members included Dr. Jack Armitage, accounting professor from UNO; Mr. Allen Cooper, Vice President of Internal Audit for Conagra; Mr. Ron Carlson, State of Nebraska/DAS Accounting; and Mr. Mike Rayor, McCook.

After several meetings of good, solid discussion and the review of several research papers, current statistics, regulations, and requirements from the 55 State Boards, it was the final consensus of the group that the requirements should be amended to allow private industry, government, and academia experience to count. The Board additionally had a serious discussion on the matter at their July 2012 Board meeting and ultimately agreed with the EWG recommendation. It was agreed that public accounting experience would remain at two years while other forms would require three years. The Nebraska Society of CPAs Board also agreed with the change and in January 2013 Legislative Bill 27

was submitted before the Legislature for consideration by Senator Gaylen Hadley from Kearney. On February 1, 2013 the Bill was heard before the Legislature's Business, Insurance and Commerce Committee and was unanimously forwarded to the full legislature for consideration with no opposition. Ms. Bauman, Mr. Cooper, and Mr. Skiles testified in support of LB 27 and answered questions of Senators at the hearing.

After passing several rounds of approval, on March 14, 2013 LB 27 received final approval of the Legislature. On March 20, 2013, LB 27 was signed into law by Governor Dave Heineman.

The Board has begun the drafting of regulations in response to LB 27 within NAC Title 288. The Board's Legislative Committee, Chaired by Mr. Skiles, will begin the formal drafting after the Board's March 22, 2013 meeting. Input will continue to be received from the EWG and others until a final draft is ready for public comment at a public hearing. It is anticipated the new regulations will be completed this year.

If you have any questions regarding the licensure of CPAs in Nebraska, please contact the Board office at (402) 471-3595 or at Jo.Lowe@Nebraska.gov

The Nebraska State Board of Public Accountancy administers public accountancy law in Nebraska. Six of the eight Board Members are certified public accountants with active permits to practice and two are members of the public. Information about licensed CPA's can be obtained by calling the Board office at (402) 471-3595.
