



FINDING THE RIGHT PROFESSIONAL

A Guide for Leaders
of Community, Homeowner,
and Condominium Associations
and Cooperatives



community
ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE

**ARE YOU PUTTING YOUR MOST
VALUABLE ASSETS IN THE HANDS
OF THE MOST QUALIFIED
PROFESSIONALS?**

**WHY YOU SHOULD HIRE
CREDENTIALLED PROFESSIONALS.**

A community association operates as a government, a community, and a business, making it a truly specialized type of organization. Leading America's 250,000 community associations are more than a million volunteers—homeowners who dedicate their free time to serve on boards and committees.

As a board member, trustee, or volunteer leader working with your association or cooperative, you have fiduciary responsibilities which compel you to make decisions that can have profound financial and social impact on you and your neighbors. Receiving professional and accurate advice on issues such as reserves, maintenance, insurance, budgets, governance, contracts, the law, and rules can make the difference between prosperity and distress.

MANY EXPERTS who work in these fields must earn degrees and pass tests to be certified. So why would a board hire professionals who may not be qualified to look after their homes and their community?

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

To help ensure you have the expert guidance you need to manage your community's assets most effectively, look for professionals with the designations and certifications described in this brochure.

Community Associations Institute's (CAI) designations help ensure that managers and other professionals have the knowledge, experience, and integrity to provide the best possible service to your association. If your manager, reserve provider, or insurance and risk management consultant holds a CAI designation, they have made a substantial commitment and investment in their education and career, and your community's welfare.

“Obtaining designations was my commitment to my community that I wanted to take them to a higher standard of community living.”

*Clint J. Warrell, AMS, LSM, PCAM
Canyon Lake, CA*



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION CERTIFICATIONS AND DESIGNATIONS

“Effective associations must have professionals working with them who truly understand their business and their goals.”

*Barbara D. Wick, CPCU, CIRMS, ARM, AIS
Northfield, IL*

CERTIFIED MANAGER OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS® (CMCA®)

The CMCA is the only national certification program designed to recognize the minimum standards of fundamental knowledge required for practice in community association management. Responding to a need for an industry certification program, the National Board of Certification for Community Association Managers (NBC-CAM) was created by CAI to administer the CMCA program.

The CMCA program provides standards for association management and gives homeowners and boards confidence in their manager's knowledge and ability to provide professional service. It recognizes individuals who have demonstrated the fundamental knowledge needed to manage community associations.

Managers with this certification have successfully completed required coursework of community association management. They have also passed the National Certification Examination, administered by NBC-CAM. Along with adhering to standards of professional conduct, managers must continue their professional development every two years to maintain their certification.

ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST® (AMS®)



The AMS designation is the second tier in CAI's manager career track. Building upon the knowledge gained in earning their Certified Manager of Community Associations credential, AMS designees have passed one of CAI's 200-level Professional Management Development Program (PMDP) courses and have at least two years of professional management experience. They must also comply with CAI's Professional Code of Ethics. In order to maintain the designation, managers must continue with additional education requirements every three years.

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MANAGER® (PCAM®)

The PCAM designation is the highest professional recognition available nationwide to managers who specialize in community association management. A manager who has earned the PCAM designation has displayed a significant commitment to their field. Through extensive education requirements, they have gained an understanding of all aspects of community association management.

To obtain this designation, a manager must earn both a CMCA certification and AMS designation, pass all of CAI's 200-level PMDP courses which cover instruction on a variety of complex management issues, complete an extensive Case Study, comply with CAI's Professional Code of Ethics, and

have at least five years of community management experience. To maintain the designation, a manager must continue with additional education requirements every three years. A manager with a PCAM designation is a dedicated professional at the top of their field.

ACCREDITED ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT COMPANY® (AAMC®)

The AAMC accreditation is awarded to companies that specialize in community association management and are committed to providing unique and diverse services to their clients. A company that holds this designation ensures their staff has the skills, experience, and integrity to help your community succeed.

The requirements of the AAMC are: at least 50% of the company's managers must hold designations or certifications; the senior manager must hold a PCAM designation; and the company must have a minimum of three years experience providing community association management services. An Accredited Association Management Company commits to upholding the highest ethical standards and is required to meet CAI's financial management and reporting standards.

**“We always look for a
PCAM designee when
hiring new managers.”**

*Charles Jacobi, President, Southampton
Condominium, Tamarac, FL*

LARGE-SCALE MANAGER™ (LSM™)

The LSM designation was designed to allow PCAM designees to specialize within their profession. This specialist designation is available only to experienced large-scale community managers who have participated in various activities related to industry-specific education and leadership.

To obtain this designation, a manager must currently manage a large-scale community or hold a minimum of five years of large-scale community management experience or city management experience within the last ten years. Designees must also have at least ten years of community management experience, or at least five years if they hold a Masters degree in Public Administration, Business Administration or Parks and Recreation Administration.

“The potential damage for an association represented by an unqualified individual is enormous. Simple mistakes can lead communities to irreversible damage at the hands of those who think they can do the job but, in reality, cannot.”

*Paul Grucza, CMCA, AMS, PCAM
Coral Springs, FL*

RESERVE SPECIALIST™ (RS™)

The RS designation is awarded to experienced, qualified reserve providers who, through years of specialized experience, can help ensure that your community association prepares its reserve budget as accurately as possible. RS designees must meet comprehensive requirements including: preparing at least 30 reserve studies; holding a bachelors degree in construction management, architecture, or engineering (or equivalent experience and education); and complying with strict rules of conduct outlined by the Professional Reserve Specialist Code of Ethics.

COMMUNITY INSURANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST™ (CIRMS™)

The CIRMS designation recognizes a demonstrated high level of competency within the risk management profession. CIRMS designees must have five years experience in the community association insurance field and be of satisfactory legal and ethical standing in the industry.

A CIRMS designee must also have been an insurance practitioner for at least 25 association insurance programs within the past three years or demonstrated significant involvement in the provision of insurance and risk management services to community associations.



HOW TO FIND A CREDENTIALLED PROFESSIONAL

- Log on to CAI's website at www.caionline.org and click on Directories, then Credentialed Professionals, or visit NBC-CAM's site at www.nbccam.org. From there, you can search the database for credentialed managers in your area.
- Call CAI Direct at 703-548-8600 (M-F, 9-5 ET) and ask our customer care specialists to assist you in a search.
- During the hiring process, ask candidates if they hold a professional certification or designation.
- Look for the certification and designation letters (CMCA, AMS, LSM, PCAM, AAMC, RS, CIRMS) behind the names of professionals who work for you or whom you might hire.

ABOUT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE

America's advocate for responsible communities

Founded in 1973 as a multidisciplinary, nonprofit alliance serving all stakeholders in community associations, Community Associations Institute (CAI) is the only national organization dedicated to fostering vibrant, responsive, competent community associations. More than 16,000 members in 55 chapters throughout the United States and in several foreign countries look to CAI for information about new products, educational opportunities, technologies, and better ways to run their communities.

CAI is regarded as the national expert in educational programs and publications about community association governance, operations, and management.

For more information on how CAI can benefit your association, visit our website at www.caionline.org or call (703) 548-8600.

ABOUT NBC-CAM

Setting the standard for community association managers nationwide

The National Board of Certification for Community Association Managers (NBC-CAM) administers the only national certification program for community association managers. NBC-CAM was created in 1995 by Community Associations Institute as an independent, yet affiliated, nonprofit corporation to operate a certification program that complies with standards established by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

For more information on NBC-CAM, please call (703) 836-6902 or visit NBC-CAM's website at www.nbccam.org.