Didn't I Just Do This? A Closer Look at CLFP Recertification

By: Mel Vinson, CLFP



"It's that time of year again!"

For long-time CLFPs, those words probably mean one thing: Annual Recertification is coming. And somewhere, right about now, there is probably a CLFP thinking, ***"Wait…didn't I just do this last year?"***

Yes. Yes, you did. If you earned your CLFP designation within the past year, you may be wondering something entirely different: ***"Recertification? What is that?"***

Whether you are a seasoned CLFP or experiencing your first Recertification season, the annual process is an important part of maintaining the designation and staying current in an ever-changing industry. The good news for all of us, is that recertifying is a process that takes less than 30 minutes to do. So, grab your coffee, find your favorite CLFP teammate or friend, and let's learn a bit more about why we do this every fall.

Why do CLFPs go through Recertification every year?
Let's start by diving into the "why" behind this process. As every CLFP knows, earning the designation demonstrates a commitment to professional knowledge, ethics, and excellence in the equipment leasing and finance industry. But, over time our industry has changed: Regulations evolve, technology advances, market conditions shift, and business practices are altered and have advanced throughout time. As these industry changes take place, it's clear that the CLFP designation should be evolving with it.

Annual Recertification provides an opportunity for all CLFPs to give their industry knowledge a little annual tune-up. It isn't a second round of the CLFP Exam (thank goodness!), and it isn't designed to prove all over again that you did in fact earn the designation. Instead, it gives the CLFP Community a chance to step back into a growth mindset for a few minutes, polish earned knowledge and skillsets, and dive into relevant industry developments to ensure we're all staying current on the issues that affect our businesses and the customers we serve. Think of it as the professional equivalent of taking your car in for an oil change. You could keep driving without one for a while. But it's probably not the best idea. Tune-ups are necessary for continued performance.

Recertification's History
Recertification has evolved right along with the CLFP community. Historically, CLFPs went through a Recertification process every few years that required documentation of industry involvement, conference attendance, and other professional activities. As the designation grew, it became clear that this approach wasn't necessarily practical or equitable for every CLFP. So, the process changed. Rather than asking all CLFPs to document a list of activities, the Foundation shifted toward an annual education-focused model designed to help professionals maintain familiarity of the CLFP Body with Knowledge and be informed about pertinent industry changes.

The CLFP Recertification Committee plays an important role in that process by identifying relevant topics and developing educational content annually. The result is a process that is now shorter, more accessible, and more focused on something every professional can benefit from: continuing to learn.

And if you are thinking, ***"Didn't I already master the Body of Knowledge when I studied for and took the Exam?"***

Absolutely; however, all CLFPs also probably learned something new about the industry after earning the CLFP letters. And that's the point! Recertification keeps us on the same page, and the mindset of continued growth and development is critical to success. One of the things that makes the CLFP Community so unique is the shared foundation of knowledge represented by the designation, and recertification helps maintain that.

As a refresher, each year when Recertification begins, all CLFPs review information about current industry topics and developments and complete short quizzes along the way. It is a moment to refresh understanding and consider how any industry changes may impact our roles. The process also includes an affirmation of the CLFP Standards of Professional Conduct and Pledge, reinforcing the professional and ethical responsibilities that come with holding the designation. So yes, there are quizzes, but the quizzes are one piece of the bigger picture. The goals of Recertifiation are industry awareness and continued growth. And if this seems like a lot, the good news is that these quizzes (unlike the CLFP Exam) are open-note (if needed!) and shouldn't take more than 30 minutes to complete.

Recertification Doesn't Have to be a Solo Activity
Here's where we would encourage CLFPs to have a little fun. Recertification can be completed individually, but why not make it a team activity?

If you have several CLFPs at your company, consider setting aside 30 minutes and completing the process together as a team. Schedule a Zoom call, put the quiz questions up on the screen. Talk through the articles, compare quiz answers. See who finishes first. Make a game out of it! A little friendly competition never hurt anyone and is a positive way to keep teams united. Over the years, we have heard of teams completing Recertification over breakfast, lunches – even happy hours!

And yes, discussing the quiz questions is absolutely encouraged. In fact, talking through why an answer is correct can be one of the best ways to turn a short annual requirement into a meaningful learning opportunity. After all, professional development doesn't always have to happen in a classroom. Sometimes it happens on a Zoom call with six coworkers, three cups of coffee, donuts, and one person insisting they definitely know the answer.

When is Recertification and other Key Details
Now for the important information that all CLFPs should know: The annual Recertification process takes place each fall, and all CLFPs participate. If this is your first year as a new CLFP, welcome! Your first Recertification season may feel a little unfamiliar, but don't worry. The Foundation team is here to help. For the 2027 Recertification season, the process opened in the first week of September 2026 and will remain open through **November 30, 2026**.

The process includes:

- Reviewing annual educational content covering relevant industry developments and completing the required quizzes*
- Affirming the CLFP Standards of Professional Conduct and Pledge
- Paying annual dues of $155

** If a CLFP earned their CLFP letters in 2026, no quizzes will be required this year, as you just passed the full CLFP Exam!*

If you have questions, encounter an issue, or aren't sure what you are supposed to do, contact **renewal@clfpfoundation.org**. Please use that shared box rather than emailing an individual staff member directly. The renewal inbox is monitored by the full Foundation team, which means your question can get to the right person quickly and allows us to provide consistent and continued support throughout the process.

At the end of the day, Recertification is about so much more than checking something off of a to-do list. It is an annual opportunity to pause and reaffirm the professional standards that come with being a CLFP. Earning the CLFP designation is an accomplishment; continuing to grow as a CLFP is the commitment. Recertification is a small annual touch-up that helps keep our knowledge sharp, our community connected, and the CLFP designation meaningful for the professionals who hold it and the industry that recognizes it.

Mel Vinson, CLFP, serves as Vice President of Academies & Development for the Certified Lease & Finance Professional (CLFP) Foundation. A native of Portland, Oregon, and graduate of Oregon State University, Mel began her finance career with U.S. Bank, eventually discovering her passion for the equipment leasing and finance industry. After earning her CLFP designation, she began volunteering as an instructor for the Academy for Lease & Finance Professionals (ALFP), turning her enthusiasm for education and helping others succeed into a career with the Foundation. Today, Mel leads professional development initiatives, supports the growth of future CLFPs, and champions the CLFP community, while bringing her passion for connection and engagement to the industry. Outside of work, Mel enjoys volunteering, donating platelets, exploring the Pacific Northwest, photography, and running relay races.