

Descriptions of Professional Designations

Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF®)

The AIF® designation certifies that the recipient has specialized knowledge of fiduciary standards of care and their application to the investment management process. To receive the AIF® designation, individuals must complete a training program, successfully pass a comprehensive, closed-book final examination under the supervision of a proctor and agree to abide by the AIF® Code of Ethics. In order to maintain the AIF® designation, the individual must annually renew their affirmation of the AIF Code of Ethics and complete six hours of continuing education credits. The certification is administered by the Center for Fiduciary Studies, LLC (a Fiduciary360 (fi360) company).

Certified Wealth Strategist (CWS®)

The CWS® was designed to respond to an industry need for a practitioner oriented, application-based certification experience. The CWS® program makes sure that each of the professionals are competent and confident in bringing up issues that high net worth individuals face. Pre-requisites for CWS® are: 3+ years' experience in the financial services industry, must have significant experience in a client-facing role, or a 4-year degree from an accredited school. It's strongly recommend you have one of the following: Series 6, Series 7, Series 65, CPA License, Attorney License, Chartered Life Underwriter, or Chartered Financial Consultant

CWS® program includes a 2 day instructor-led class CWS® I - Sales & Practice Management Skill and a self-directed Study on 13 Wealth Management Issues, 10 Study Guides and a Reference Guide – technical drill down, case studies, and discussion points with clients on each of 13 wealth management issues, 2 textbooks for supplemental reading (Concepts for Professionals & Critical Concerns of Estate Planners), Wealth Management Advisors Audio Series CD's, 10 interactive e-learning lessons (approximately 1 hour each), 10 technical assessments – about 30 questions each, 2 day instructor-led class CWS® II - Client Interaction Skills, Cannon interviews - Interviewing Techniques, Presentation Skills and the CAPSTONE Project - The final project is all about applying what you have learned. Training takes approximately 6 months – About 4 hours per week is typical.

CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, CFP®

The CFP® certification is a voluntary certification; no federal or state law or regulation requires financial planners to hold CFP® certification. It is recognized in the United States and a number of other countries for its high standard of professional education, stringent code of conduct and standards of practice and ethical requirements that govern professional engagements with clients. To attain the right to use the CFP® marks, an individual must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements: Complete an advanced college-level course of study addressing the financial planning subject areas that CFP® Board's studies have determined as necessary for the competent and professional delivery of financial planning services, and attain a Bachelor's Degree from a regionally accredited United States college or university (or its equivalent from a foreign university, pass the comprehensive CFP® Certification Examination, Complete at least three years of full-time financial planning-related experience and agree to be bound by CFP® Board's *Standards of Professional Conduct*.

Individuals who become certified must complete 30 hours of continuing education hours every two years, including two hours on the *Code of Ethics* and other parts of the *Standards of Professional Conduct*, to maintain competence and keep up with developments in the financial industry and renew an agreement to be bound by the *Standards of Professional Conduct*. The Standards prominently require that CFP® professionals provide financial planning services at a fiduciary standard of care. This means CFP® professionals must provide financial planning services in the best interests of their clients.

Additional Information:

- AIF: <https://www.fi360.com/>
- CWS: <https://www.cannonfinancial.com/courses/certified-wealth-strategist-cws>
- CFP: <https://www.cfp.net/>