



ISA Certified Tree Climber **PROGRAM GUIDE**

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What is the Value in Becoming an ISA Certified Tree Climber?

Earning an ISA credential is a voluntary activity that demonstrates professionals have the knowledge and skills needed to perform in different segments or roles in the field. Additionally, earning an ISA credential shows a professional's high level of dedication to the profession and community. ISA credential holders understand the importance of continued education to increase their expertise and advance their careers.

The ISA Certified Tree Climber credential is a sign to the public, employers, and peers that a tree care professional has achieved a fundamental level of knowledge and skills needed to climb trees and perform arboricultural work in a safe and efficient manner. As a voluntary program, earning this title shows a professional's commitment to a professional code of ethics, safety best practices in the industry, and continuing education.

Which Areas of Knowledge Will the ISA Certified Tree Climber Exam Cover?

The certification examination was developed by a panel of industry experts representing all aspects of arboriculture. Questions were derived from a job task analysis survey filled out by tree care professionals from around the world. Questions are continually analyzed by the ISA Certification Test Committee using the latest test statistics, and new questions are always being developed and tested for satisfactory performance. Updated examinations are created on a regular basis.

The examination includes a performance-based skills component and a written component. The written exam content is divided into five areas of knowledge, and the percentage next to each area reflects the percentage of questions associated with that area. [These are subject to change when a new job task analysis is completed for the exam.](#)

1. Safety 26%
2. Tree Climbing and Rigging 22%
3. Tree Removal 22%
4. Tree Identification and Health 10%
5. Pruning 20%

What Are the Objectives of the ISA Certification Program?

ISA's objectives for offering professional credentials are to:

- Continually improve the level of technical competency of personnel in the tree care profession. Recertification through continuing education provides incentives for individuals to improve their level of technical competency. It creates a greater opportunity for practitioners to write, publish and speak on technical issues. It creates a translatable practical application stemming from research projects.
- Provide a measurable assessment of the knowledge and competence required to render high quality, professional service.
- Help the employer both in training personnel, selecting new employees and assisting with professional development.
- Give individuals incentives to improve their level of knowledge and demonstrate professional accomplishments to clients, supervisors and the public. The program establishes a uniform standard by which professionals can measure themselves.
- Provide a means for individual recognition among peers.
- Encourage those in the profession to be aware of the profession's performance standards.

Who Is Eligible to Apply for the ISA Certified Tree Climber Exam?

The ISA Credentialing Council requires a candidate to have a minimum of 18 months (1.5 years) of climbing experience in arboriculture. Documentation of work experience is required with submittal of your application. Letter(s) of reference from your current or previous employer(s) is acceptable.

If you are self-employed or own your own company, you will be required to submit three letters of reference with your application. References may be in the form of copies of invoices, contracts, and/or business licenses. The documentation provided must include the climbing experience and outline the dates of work required for eligibility. Please [contact ISA](#) for other possible forms of verification.

Exam candidates must also provide proof of valid hands-on training in CPR and first aid, as well as physical (practice) aerial rescue training, both from within the past year, as part of the application process. Submitted documentation must validate the issuer/provider, date, and location of the required training(s). In certain instances, [a verification form](#) signed by an employer and/or ISA Tree Climbing Championship judge may also be submitted as proof of the applicant's training.

By submitting your application, you authorize ISA to contact the practical experience reference(s) named on your application to substantiate your eligibility.



What Is the Process to Apply for the Exam?

EXAM DATES AND LOCATIONS

ISA Certified Tree Climber written exams are sponsored by an ISA Certification Partner, and/or offered through a PearsonVUE testing center. The skills portion of the exam is held only as an event sponsored by an ISA Certification Partner. Candidates with a valid and approved application are able to view, search, and enroll for available examination events. For more information on local examination events, please contact your local ISA Certification Partner. To find out if a Pearson VUE testing center is close to you, visit <https://www.pearsonvue.com/isa/locate/>.

FEES

Only those with a valid approved application can enroll for an examination.

Candidates who are members of ISA and/or a current ISA credential holder receive a standard 20% discount on exam application and enrollment fees. The application fee is \$40 USD for ISA members and/or credential holders and \$50 USD for all others.

The exam enrollment fee is \$295 USD for ISA members and/or credential holders and \$369 USD for all other candidates with an approved application. The exam enrollment fee is independent of the examination environment selected by the candidate.

ISA CODE OF ETHICS AND THE CREDENTIALING AGREEMENT AND RELEASE AUTHORIZATION

All applicants are required to review and accept the ISA Code of Ethics as well as the Credentialing Agreement and Release Authorization. Please review the [ISA Code of Ethics](#) and the [Credentialing Agreement and Release Authorization](#). Your review, agreement, and acceptance of both documents is required to complete and submit your application.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The first step in earning an ISA certification is submitting an application. An application can be submitted by those who believe they have met eligibility requirements for the program. If you are an ISA member and/or credential holder or if you have purchased any ISA products in the past, you have an online account with ISA.

Simply log in at credentialing.isa-arbor.com and look for the ISA credential you are interested in applying for and click 'Apply Now' to start the process.

Only fully completed applications can be submitted for review. Submitted applications will be reviewed within five (5) US business days. You will be notified by ISA of your application approval by email. If our team requires more information for approval, you will also be notified by email. You may review application status at any time through ISA's credentialing management system. You will only be able to enroll for an examination once you have an approved application in the system for the program.

ISA has the right to contact any person or organization as part of the review of your application. By applying, you authorize the release of any information requested by ISA for the purpose of reviewing your application. ISA has the right to notify appropriate organizations if your application contains false information.

EXAM ENROLLMENT

Once your application has been approved, you will be eligible to enroll for an examination. Paper-based exams and performance-based skills exams are offered through local ISA Certification Partners. Computer-based examinations are offered through Pearson VUE testing centers. You can find the closest Pearson VUE testing center by visiting <https://www.pearsonvue.com/isa/locate/>.

Enrollment will include the processing of applicable exam fees. The exam enrollment fee is independent of the examination environment selected by the candidate. **ISA does not provide refunds for exam enrollments.**

Onsite registration is not available for ISA exams, only candidates enrolled and confirmed for an examination will be able to sit for the exam on a given examination site, date, and location.

For computer-based exams held through Pearson VUE, you will receive a 120-day authorization period to schedule and take the exam.

RESCHEDULING EXAM OR ADDITIONAL 120-DAY AUTHORIZATION PERIOD REQUESTS

If circumstances change after you have enrolled for a computer-based examination, you may be able to reschedule your exam or request an additional 120-day authorization period. You may reschedule an existing exam appointment, at no additional cost, within your 120-authorization period at any time at least one (1) US business day in anticipation of an existing appointment. If you would like to reschedule the examination appointment on a date outside your 120-day authorization period, a fee of \$50 USD will apply to make the change. Additional 120-day, computer-based authorization requests must be received within the candidate's current 120-day authorization period.

Requests to reschedule examinations sponsored by ISA Certification Partners must be received at least 16 days in anticipation of the examination date and a fee of \$50 USD will apply to make the change.



If the request is not received by ISA at the relevant deadlines as described or the candidate fails to schedule within the 120-day authorization period, or the candidate does not take the examination at the scheduled appointment, the candidate will be considered a no-show and all exam fees will be forfeited.

Registrations are not transferrable to another person.

FAILURE TO ATTEND EXAMINATION OR SCHEDULE WITHIN A 120-DAY AUTHORIZATION PERIOD

No refunds or discounts will be issued if you do not attend or complete the examination or you are removed from the test site due to inappropriate conduct. There are no exceptions. If you do not reschedule your appointment or request an additional 120-day authorization period, or you do not show up to take the exam at your scheduled time and location, you will be considered a no-show and the exam taken. This will result in forfeiting any enrollment fees associated with the exam you missed.

If this happens, you will have to pay a retake fee of \$120 USD to re-enroll in another exam.

ISA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CANCEL A PAPER-BASED OR SKILLS EXAM

ISA reserves the right to cancel any paper-based examination or skills examination event that does not meet the minimum enrollment requirement or for other reasons. If your paper based or skills exam is canceled by ISA, you will be notified by email and your enrollment will be moved to pending status. You may elect to have your pending exam enrollment status moved to any other paper-based or skills examination event available or you may request to enroll in a computer-based exam for no additional charge.

What Is the Format of the ISA Certified Tree Climber Exam?

The examination consists of two parts:

- The written portion is made up of 65 multiple-choice questions. Each question has four possible answers listed, only one of which is correct. You will have 1.5 hours (90 minutes) to complete the written exam.
- The skills-based part of the exam is an outdoor practicum. You will have 45 minutes to safely and successfully complete it.

You must pass both parts to obtain the certification. If you have been a participant in an ISA chapter, associate organization, or regional tree climbing championship or the International Tree Climbing Championship, you may waive the skills exam provided you satisfy all of the other requirements and complete all requirements noted on the [Skills Exam Waiver Form](#).

PRETESTING OF EXAM QUESTIONS

Within the written exam, there will be 15 new questions that have not been used on previous exams. Responses to these questions are not used in determining individual exam scores. These 15 questions are not identified and are scattered throughout the exam so that candidates will answer them with the same care as the questions that make up the scored portion of the exam. This methodology assures candidates that their scores are the result of sound measurement practices and that scored questions reflect current practice.

SKILLS EXAM PREPARATION

The following informs the ISA Certified Tree Climber applicant of the requirements to pass the tree climbing skills test. It outlines in detail what you need to know and which skills must be demonstrated during the test.

UNDERSTANDING THE EVALUATION FORM

The evaluation form that is used to assess the applicant's skills is designed to be as fair and objective as possible. Every attempt has been made to eliminate bias on the part of the evaluators. Every applicant will be judged by at least two trained evaluators. The skills to be demonstrated are outlined in specific task statements. Each task statement includes performance standards that indicate exactly what constitutes successful completion of the task. View the [skills form](#).

Each evaluator judges the candidate's performance of each task to be either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Candidates begin with 38 points. Points are deducted for each unsatisfactory performance of a task. The point deductions are proportional to the importance of the task. In order to pass the skills test, an applicant must have a minimum of 27 points. Certain tasks, determined to be skills that are critical to a tree climber's competency. That means if a candidate fails to satisfactorily complete any critical tasks, they will fail the skills test.

PRE-CLIMB: INSPECTION OF EQUIPMENT

The candidate must demonstrate a pre-climb inspection of their equipment. This includes a manual and visual inspection of the rope, safety lanyard, and climbing saddle for any defects which could pose a safety hazard. Defective equipment must not be used.

PRE-CLIMB: PROPER TIE-IN

The applicant must demonstrate a proper tie-in. The applicant will tie a recognized friction hitch (tautline hitch, Blake's hitch, Distel, Schwabisch, or Valdotain Tresse [VT]).



PRE-CLIMB: ON ROPE TEST

Climbers demonstrate on rope test ascent and descent to the height of 6.5 feet (2 meters).

PRE-CLIMB: KNOTS AND HITCHES

Climbers must demonstrate the tying of six additional knots within a one-minute-per-knot time limit. Four of these must be tied correctly to proceed to the main skills test. Each knot must be tied correctly on the first attempt in order to receive a satisfactory mark. The candidate must correctly dress and set each knot. When the candidate hands the knot to the evaluator, it is considered to be an attempt.

The point deduction for failure to tie each knot successfully is 1 point. The following are the required knots:

- Attaching hardware (i.e., girth hitch, cow hitch with a better half, timber hitch)
- Termination knot (i.e., Buntline hitch, anchor hitch/anchor bend, double Fisherman's bend/double fisherman's knot)
- End-line rigging termination knot (i.e., clove hitch with two halves, running bowline)
- Rigging rope joining knot (i.e., sheet bend, quick hitch)
- Midline knot (i.e., clove hitch, alpine butterfly knot)
- Tree climbing friction hitch (i.e., tautline hitch, Blake's hitch, Distel, Schwabisch, Valdotaín Tresse [VT])

ROPE THROW: TREE AND SITE INSPECTION

The climber must perform a tree and site inspection. The purpose is to check for:

- The location of utilities and wires
- In-ground targets
- Above-ground targets
- Tree structure and stability

ROPE THROW: CLIMBING LINE INSTALLATION

The time allowed to perform the climb will start on the first throw. The climber must install the climbing rope at a predetermined position (20 to 25 feet [6 to 8 meters] above ground). The use of a throw weight is permitted, but the climber must successfully install the climbing line. A total of 15 attempts is the maximum permitted. If this task is not completed satisfactorily, the climber may not continue.

SECURED ENTRY: SECURED ENTRY INTO TREE

The climbing rope must be installed in a manner that will permit a secured entry into the tree. Candidates must attach and configure industry-accepted mechanical rope work positioning devices or a friction hitch to a climbing line for ascent. Climbers **MUST NEVER** be in a position to fall for more than 3 feet (1 meter). A first warning is given, but a second offense will constitute failure at any point in the examination. Also, when applicable or required by local occupational and safety laws and regulations, a recognized friction hitch (e.g., tautline hitch, Blake's hitch, Distel, Schwabisch, or French Prusik [VT]), must be tied for ascent. Additionally, a climber may have to be tied in securely with at least two secured systems (main rope and backup system).

ROPE ADVANCEMENT: AERIAL TREE INSPECTION

Climbers must identify any structural defects and potential hazards present on the tree (e.g., dead branches, lean, cracks, splits, excessive weight, wildlife). The climber must advance the climbing rope to the final tie-in position and may throw the rope as many times as necessary in this task. The use of a pole to reset the climbing line is permitted. Climbers are also permitted to climb the tree using safety lanyards. They must then ascend to the final, predetermined tie-in point using safe and accepted climbing techniques. The climber must remain tied in or secured at all times. If at any time the climber is not safely secured, they shall be instructed to tie in immediately and come down. This offense will constitute failure.

ROPE ADVANCEMENT: ASCEND TO FINAL, PREDETERMINED TIE-IN POINT

The climber must tie in using a safe and appropriate manner within the maximum time limit set for the skills test. The purpose is not to introduce an element of speed into the exam, but rather to eliminate any candidate who is clearly not competent or prepared to do an efficient climb. The climber chooses the technique. The climber remains tied in at all times with a lanyard, the other end of a climbing rope, or a second climbing line.

TIE-IN: FINAL TIE-IN

The climber should tie in with an industry-recognized friction hitch and stopper knot in the bitter end (running end) of the climbing line. Recognized friction hitches include: tautline hitch, Blake's hitch, Distel, Schwabisch, or French Prusik (VT). The climber must be secured at all times. Failure to do so will result in termination of the exam.



HANDSAW CONTACT STATION: FIRST DESIGNATED WORKSTATION

The climber must access the first designated work station, demonstrating the controlled use of climbing rope and friction hitch while performing vertical and horizontal movements in the tree canopy. During completion of this task, climbers must be secured by at least two points of attachments (e.g., primary climbing rope and work positioning lanyard). Climbers must exhibit techniques to prevent uncontrolled swings. When applicable or required by local occupational and safety laws and regulations, a third point of attachment or contact with the tree may be required.

POLE SAW/PRUNER WORKSTATION: SECOND DESIGNATED WORKSTATION

Climbers must move to the second designated work station where they must contact the flag or bell with a pole saw or pole pruner while demonstrating controlled use of climbing rope, friction hitch or mechanical rope work positioning device. The pole must be requested and sent up from the ground.

DESCENT: DESCEND TO GROUND

The climber must ensure sufficient rope to reach the ground. The climber pulls up the running end of the climbing rope AND shows a figure-8 stopper knot. The climber should descend and land in a controlled manner at a safe speed without damaging the rope.

SKILLS EXAM TIME LIMIT

The entire exam must be completed within 30 minutes to avoid point deductions. The maximum time allowed for the climb is 45 minutes.

Items to Bring with You

For the skills exam, each climber candidate should bring a full set of climbing gear that meets all pertinent safety standards and is in good repair.

This includes:

- Climbing-style helmet
- Eye protection
- Work boots
- Climbing line
- Arborist saddle
- Self-closing, self-double-locking carabiners that meet the minimum standards of rope snaps with a gate-lock mechanism that requires at least two consecutive, deliberate actions to unlock
- Work-positioning lanyard
- Handsaw and scabbard

All personal protective equipment and fall protection, shall, at a minimum, satisfy local regulations and relevant standards (e.g., OSHA, and ANSI [for U.S.], CSA [for Canada]), or other relevant standards that apply in your jurisdiction. Rope snaps should be of the locking type. Carabiners used as part of the climber's primary fall protection system must meet the minimum standards of rope snaps and be of a design such that they cannot unintentionally be opened during work operations. Failure to abide by these rules may result in the applicant's failure of the skills examination.

What Are the Onsite Rules and Conduct Expectations During the Exam?

ADMISSION

- Arrive at the testing site 30 minutes before the start time of the exam and have your identity confirmed by providing two forms of valid identification—a valid photo identification card and an identification card displaying your signature. Please log in to ISA Credentialing to view your exam appointment date, time, and location.
- The exam host will check your photo ID. If you do not have a photo ID with you at the check-in time of the exam, you will not be allowed to sit for the exam and will be considered a no-show.
- There may be audio and video taping at the testing centers. If you are not prepared to be taped, you may not be allowed to test at the facility.

SITE RULES

- Dress appropriately. While every attempt is made to provide a comfortable classroom atmosphere, indoor temperatures and outdoor weather conditions may vary.
- Visitors are not permitted in the exam area.
- Books, papers, and other reference material will not be allowed in the testing area.
- No cell phones or other mobile devices will be allowed in the testing area.
- No food or beverages may be taken into the exam.
- No smoking or vaping will be allowed in the testing area.



SITE RULES (CONT.)

- You will be permitted to take restroom breaks on an individual basis. Time spent on breaks will be considered part of the time permitted for completing the exam.
- Writing on the test booklet is not allowed during the exam.
- If you are caught looking at another individual's exam or talking during the exam, your score may be invalidated or exam materials confiscated.
- Applicants who are impaired by the use of alcoholic beverages or other drugs, or use them at the examination site, will immediately be disqualified from taking the exam. It is of utmost importance that you carefully follow all directions and regulations. Listen carefully to all instructions given by the exam administrator and follow the directions completely.
- Applicants and evaluators are expected to comply with all relevant laws and safety standards and requirements that apply in the relevant jurisdiction. The skills examination is designed to simulate actual working conditions. Equipment used by climbers must provide adequate protection for use in working conditions.

INAPPROPRIATE APPLICATION AND EXAMINATION CONDUCT

ISA intends that participation in its certification programs will be a professionally relevant, informative, and rewarding experience for all candidates. All participants in ISA certification exams are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner and to refrain from any objectionable, improper, or unprofessional conduct. To ensure fairness in an examination environment, the following policy and rules apply:

- When an ISA or ISA-designated representative finds that a candidate has engaged in inappropriate conduct or behavior, ISA reserves the right to respond with actions including, but not limited to:
 - Rejecting an application for certification
 - Preventing or precluding a person from participating in an examination, including removing a person from the testing site
 - Invalidating or nullifying examination results
 - Issuing and enforcing any other lesser response or action determined to be appropriate or necessary
- Inappropriate conduct or behavior includes, but is not limited to, misrepresentation; failure to disclose requested information; cheating; unauthorized possession, use, or distribution of copyrighted or legally-protected material; verbal or physical disturbances of the examination; failure to pay fees in a timely manner; and any other objectionable, improper, or unprofessional actions by a person participating in the ISA certification process.
- By submitting an application for certification, candidates acknowledge their understanding and agreement to the terms of this policy.

What is the Process for Attaining Certification?

COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

The ISA Certified Tree Climber program includes both written and skill-based components. To obtain this ISA certification, you must achieve the required passing scores for each examination. The current passing scores are 80 percent for the written component and 70 percent for the skill-based component. Please note that when a job task analysis of the exam is performed, [the passing scores are subject to change](#).

When you receive your written exam results, please remember that the domains are weighted, and the average of the domains will not be equal to the overall score. If you do not achieve an overall passing score on both components, you must retake the component that you did not pass until an overall passing score is achieved.

Once certified, you will receive the designation of ISA Certified Tree Climber. Your certification is personal to you and may not be transferred or assigned to any other individual, organization, or entity. When publicizing your credential, you must comply with the requirements of the [ISA Branding and Style Guide](#).

EXAM SCORING

The computer-based exams are graded by Pearson VUE, the testing vendor. Paper-based exams sponsored by ISA Certification Partners are graded at ISA Headquarters. The skill-based exam is scored on-site by the Approved Evaluator administering the exam and then sent to ISA Headquarters. ISA will notify you via email when your results are available and they can be viewed by [logging into your account](#) in ISA's credentialing management system.

EXAMINATION RESULTS AND NOTIFICATION OF CERTIFICATION

Computer-based exams provide result notification immediately upon completion of the exam. Your formal results will be sent approximately six weeks after your exam date. Percentage scores will be provided for each domain tested on the written exam and a pass/fail result will be provided on the skills exam. Those who pass will receive a congratulatory letter, score sheet, certificate, identification card, hard-hat decal, and patch. Your results are confidential.

If you have questions concerning your exam results, direct them in writing to the ISA Credentialing Department at certops@isa-arbor.com. Because of the need to maintain test security, exam questions and answers cannot be made available for review,



and the ISA Credentialing Department does not provide a list of questions that were answered correctly or incorrectly. The only information available regarding your performance on the exam is provided in your score report.

REQUEST FOR REGRADING EXAM

You may request to have a paper-based exam regraded. A fee of \$50 USD applies for each hand-graded score report. Requests for regrading may take up to six weeks for completion. If you request to have your exam regraded, you may not schedule another exam until after you receive the regrading results. If you wish to have your exam regraded after receiving your initial score report, please contact certops@isa-arbor.com.

RETAKE THE EXAMINATION

If you do not pass the exam, you will receive a notification via email to access your web account with the results.

You will be able to retake the examination thirty (30) days after your most recent exam attempt. A retake fee of \$120 USD will apply for scheduling each retake attempt, regardless of examination environment.

Additional Information About ISA Certification

WHAT DOES ISA CERTIFICATION REPRESENT AND REQUIRE?

By passing the exam, holders of ISA certifications have demonstrated a broad knowledge base in the area in which they are certified. No other conclusions may be drawn concerning certification holders. ISA certifications do not represent licensure, registration, or other authorization to practice or to conduct business activities for a fee or otherwise.

The ISA Certified Tree Climber credential is subject to ongoing requirements, such as participation in continuing education activities and abiding by the [ISA Code of Ethics](#) and [Credentialing Agreement and Release Authorization](#).

EXPIRATION AND RECERTIFICATION

ISA Certified Tree Climber certification is valid for three (3) years. To retain certification after each three-year period, an ISA Certified Tree Climber must recertify. Notify ISA promptly if your contact information changes. We are not responsible for undeliverable recertification notices.

The ISA Certification Program offers two methods of recertification. The first method is to retake and pass the certification exam again. The second option is to accumulate at least 15 continuing education units (CEUs) over the three-year certification period that relate to the eight tested domains on the exam; provide current proof of training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and completion of a physical (practice) aerial rescue; and pay the recertification fee of \$220 USD. This is the base price for recertification. Those who have multiple ISA credentials receive a discount on recertification for multiple credentials. CEUs, current proof of training, and proper payment must be received in the ISA office in a timely manner. Allow four to six weeks for processing and posting CEUs to your account. Please visit the ISA website for detailed information on maintaining your credential. You may contact ISA at isa@isa-arbor.com if you need further clarification.

IMPARTIALITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ISA commits itself to impartiality in its certification activities and understands how critical impartiality is to carrying out its certification activities. ISA manages conflict of interest and ensures the objectivity of all certification activities. All persons involved in certification activities, including ISA Headquarters staff and member volunteers, accomplish this through compliance with ISA's structure, policies, and procedures related to certification activities.

ISA is an accredited certification body for compliance with international standards (ISO/IEC 17024). Earning and maintaining this accreditation provides assurances to applicants, candidates, credential holders, regulators, and the public that the certification process is impartial, fair, valid, and reliable.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The ISA Certification Program does not discriminate in determining eligibility on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

DENIAL, REVOCATION, AND DECERTIFICATION

Your certification may be denied or revoked for any of the following reasons:

- Falsification of application
- Violation of testing procedures
- Misrepresentation of your identity or other information

In the event that your ISA certification is denied, suspended, or revoked or you otherwise become decertified, you must immediately stop using and/or displaying the ISA certification mark, credential, and any other designation indicating an affiliation with the ISA Certification Program. You must comply with any additional directives of the ISA Certification Program.



SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the intent of ISA to provide accessibility to ISA exams to any qualified participant with a documented disability or condition upon reasonable notice. If you have a special need and require an accommodation for an exam, please complete the [Special Accommodations Request Form](#) and submit the form with each enrollment request. Your request for accommodation will be reviewed, and you will be notified of a determination and/or if additional information is required. In certain situations, ISA cannot provide a requested accommodation to participants with a disability if it is determined that the accommodation fundamentally alters what the exam is intended to measure, risks exam security or causes undue hardship to ISA or the testing center. ISA will work with you to identify alternative accommodations that are reasonable and effective.

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

Appeals and complaints are accepted and resolved in accordance with the [ISA Credentialing Appeals and Complaints](#) policy.

ISA RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

ISA recognizes the need to maintain books and records that facilitate operations and comply with record retention needs for its certification program, while also acknowledging the adverse impact excessive records and record keeping duties can have on the organization.

Please note that the following record retention policies apply to records retained by ISA concerning applications, continuing education unit (CEU), and special accommodations records:

- Pending application records: 1 year following processing
- Approved Continuing Education Unit (CEU) attendance records received: 5 years
- Examination sheets: 5 years
- Special accommodation records: 2 years

PRIVACY

By applying for an ISA certification, you authorize ISA to make your contact information available to your local ISA Certification Partner (if any) and ISA professional affiliates so they can share information with you about educational seminars and other relevant educational events. ISA may also share other relevant information concerning your credential with local ISA Certification Partners (e.g., customer ID number, certification ID number, certificate issue and expiration dates, and CEU information). Your name, ISA credentials and related digital certificates will be available to members of the public on the [ISA Spotlight Directory](#).

Credential holders may update and include more information associated with their profiles by logging into their account with our digital badge provider. Those who do not wish to be listed in the ISA Spotlight Directory and have their digital certificates available publicly can also choose to make their account and/or certificate(s) private. ISA maintains the right and responsibility to verify a credential holder's certification status to the public or to other interested parties.

You will be notified of whether or not you passed the certification examination, but your score will not be disclosed to any third party except vendors and subcontractors that are part of the certification process and have signed confidentiality, conflict of interest, and impartiality agreements. Your status as a certification holder, past or present, and dates of certification may be disclosed to third parties.



Our Mission

Through research, technology, and education we promote the professional practice of arboriculture and foster a greater worldwide awareness of the benefits of trees.



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