



HOW TO EARN YOUR CEP™

A GUIDE FOR THE NATIONAL SPEAKERS ASSOCIATION CERTIFIED EMCEE PROFESSIONAL™

2027





Certified Emcee Professional™ (CEP) Official Applicant Handbook

This handbook outlines the eligibility standards, competency framework, application materials, evaluation process, and renewal requirements for the Certified Emcee Professional (CEP) designation. The CEP credential recognizes professional excellence in event hosting, facilitation, and audience engagement within the meetings and events industry.

Program Vision

To redefine and elevate the role of the professional emcee as a critical driver of event success, audience connection, and conference culture. This certification program will establish industry-recognized standards for excellence in event hosting and facilitation while positioning emceeing as a distinct professional discipline requiring advanced communication, leadership, adaptability, and strategic presence.

The program will champion the value of skilled emcees not only as presenters, but as leaders who manage event challenges in real time, sustain audience energy, create meaningful engagement, and influence outcomes far beyond logistics. By challenging outdated assumptions that event hosting can simply be assigned to executives, board members, or internal stakeholders, the certification will advocate for investing in professional emcees with the same intentionality organizations bring to keynote speakers and other event talent.

Through professional standards, development, and recognition, the program will elevate the visibility, credibility, and impact of emcees across the meetings and events industry while strengthening the overall experience and success of conferences, meetings, and live events.

Certification Objectives

- **Recognize** professional excellence in emceeing through a nationally respected credential that validates advanced event leadership, audience engagement, facilitation expertise, and the ability to guide successful event experiences.
- **Support** continued professional development through structured learning, best practices, and industry standards that prepare emcees to lead dynamic, high-impact meetings, conferences, and live events.
- **Increase** the credibility and marketability of certified emcees by elevating awareness of the profession's strategic value within the events industry. The program will help shift industry perception by reinforcing that a skilled emcee is not simply a logistical moderator, but a critical contributor to audience experience, energy management, adaptability, event continuity, and overall event success.
- **Promote** greater representation and visibility within the emceeing profession by recognizing and elevating diverse voices, perspectives, styles, and leadership approaches. This certification should broaden the landscape of who is seen as a professional emcee and signal that excellence exists across diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities.
- **Promote** ethical standards, professionalism, and accountability that reflect the values and

expectations of trusted event leaders.

- **Strengthen** a collaborative professional community aligned with NSA values, fostering connection, mentorship, innovation, and advocacy for the emceeing profession.
- **Encourage** organizations, associations, and event planners to invest intentionally in professional emcees with the same level of consideration given to keynote speakers and other event talent.

Eligibility Requirements

- A minimum of 100 professional event engagements serving in roles such as Emcee, Host, Facilitator, Entertainer, or Moderator completed within the past 5 years.
- A minimum of five (5) years of professional experience in event hosting, facilitation, or program leadership.
- Demonstrated income of at least \$30,000 per year derived from emceeing or hosting services in at least three (3) of the past five (5) years.
- Participation in NSA programming or equivalent professional development activities.
- Must have attended at least one NSA or GSF equivalent event in the last 10 years.
- No ethics violations within the past ten (10) years and maintenance of professional standing.

Eligible Professional Titles

- Emcee
- Host
- Facilitator
- Moderator
- Entertainer

Applicants may combine engagements across these titles provided the responsibilities reflect professional leadership of event flow, audience engagement, and program continuity.

Core Competency Framework: The Five E's

- **Eloquence** – Communication mastery, clarity of message, and stage presence.
- **Enterprise** – Business acumen, professional sustainability, and client relationship management.
- **Ethics** – Integrity, inclusion, professionalism, and accountability.
- **Expertise** – Event management, preparation, collaboration with event stakeholders, and adaptability.
- **Engagement** – Audience activation, energy stewardship, and facilitation of meaningful experiences.

Application Materials

- Completed CEP application form.
- Professional video portfolio consisting of 5-7 clips totaling a minimum of 20 minutes of emcee performance. Video submissions may not be more than three (3) years old at the time of application submission.
- A minimum of three examples of professional event documentation (e.g., run-of-show, scripts, briefing materials).
- 10–15 client evaluations verifying professionalism, preparation, and performance.
- Demonstrated income of at least \$30,000 per year derived from emceeing or hosting services in at least three (3) of the past five (5) years.

Assessment & Evaluation

Applications are evaluated by a trained CEP Review Panel using a standardized evaluation rubric aligned with the Five E's competency framework. Reviewers assess demonstrated professional skill, stage leadership, event management capability, and audience engagement effectiveness.

Final certification decisions are typically issued in March, after the final board vote.

Certification Term & Renewal

- The CEP designation is valid for three (3) years from the date of certification approval.
- Completion of at least 10 credits of approved Continuing Education within each three year certification cycle.
- Evidence of at least 10 emcee or hosting engagements during the certification period.
- Reaffirmation of adherence to the NSA Code of Professional Ethics.
- Maintenance of good standing with the National Speakers Association.

Recognition & Professional Standing

Certified Emcee Professionals may use the CEP designation and official digital badge. Certificants may be included in the NSA Certified Host Directory and may be eligible for additional professional visibility opportunities through NSA programming and events.

Professional Commitment

By applying for and maintaining the Certified Emcee Professional designation, applicants affirm their commitment to excellence in event leadership, ethical professional conduct, continued learning, and service to the meetings and events industry.

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