



THE UPDATE

SDFM BUCKEYE CHAPTER BULLETIN

CDFM CERTIFICATION

Buckeye Chapter SDFM

Why should you obtain your Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM certification)?

The Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM) is a professional certification for financial management professionals within the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). Administered by the Society of Defense Financial Management (SDFM), the CDFM certification validates a candidate's comprehensive understanding of essential defense financial management principles and standards.

Recognized across both military and civilian sectors, the CDFM credential signifies a high level of professionalism and expertise in areas such as resource management, budgeting, cost analysis, and fiscal law. CDFM holders are instrumental in ensuring mission readiness and fiscal accountability throughout the DoD, whether they are involved in policy development, operational support, or oversight.

What are the requirements for passing the three core modules?

Resource Management Environment

DoD structure, financial responsibilities, and strategy alignment

Budget and Cost Analysis

Budgeting process, cost analysis, and performance metrics

Accounting and Finance

Federal accounting concepts, internal controls, and audit readiness

Note: Candidates may optionally take a fourth module (see CDFM Specialty), but only Modules 1–3 are required for the base certification.

Eligibility

Before beginning the certification process, it is important to verify that you are eligible to earn the CDFM. To be awarded CDFM or CDFM-A certification, a candidate must:

- Possess a high school diploma or equivalent.
(Although education requirements are reported on the honor system, all CDFM Program enrollees and candidates are subject to audit at any time.)

[Pledge to adhere to the SDFM Pledge of Professionalism](#)

- Apply for the CDFM Program
- CDFM Candidates: Pass CDFM exam modules 1-3 within the two-year application period

- CDFM-A Candidates: Pass CDFM exam modules 1-4 within the two-year application period
- Submit a Verification of Financial Management Experience (VFME) form demonstrating the required financial management experience outlined below:
 - An associate degree or higher plus 2 years of defense-related or 4 years of Federal Government-related financial management experience, OR
 - A high school diploma or equivalent plus 3 years of defense-related financial management experience

.Preparing to Test:

- The CDFM exams are closed-book, proctored exams offered year-round, designed to evaluate candidates seeking professional certification in the field of defense financial management.
- Each of the 4 examination modules contains 80 multiple-choice items, and candidates are allowed 2 hours to complete each exam.
- The exams may be taken in any order, and a candidate must take and pass:
 - Module 1 (Resource Management Environment)
 - Module 2 (Budget and Cost Accounting)
 - Module 3 (Finance and Accounting) within a two-year time frame to earn CDFM certification.
 - Module 4 (Acquisition Business Management) must also be taken and passed to earn the CDFM with Acquisition Specialty designation.

CDFM Exam Blueprints and Reference Lists:

To effectively prepare, candidates should review the CDFM Candidate Handbook and the 2024 CDFM and CDFM-A Acquisition Specialty Exam Blueprints. Use these documents to assess your knowledge across all domains and identify areas requiring additional preparation.

SDFM recommends using these resources to build a study plan, which may also include the official CDFM Practice Test App or other preparatory courses.

<https://sdfm.org/cdfm/cdfm-practice-test/>



To obtain the Certified Defense Financial Manager Candidate Handbook please see link below:

https://sdfm.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/CDFM_Candidate_Handbook_v25.05.01_Final.pdf

Benefits and Pricing:

<https://sdfm.org/cdfm/get-certified/benefits-and-pricing-comparison-overview/>