



Tree Care Industry Association, Inc.

**Crew Leader Qualification Certificate Program –
Policies and Standard Operating Procedures**



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Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA)

Foreword

TCIA Policy and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) manuals are provided to facilitate various functions. If you have questions, suggestions, or requests for exemptions regarding Policies see your immediate supervisor. Suggestions will be addressed in an appropriate manner (verbal or written). Exemptions should only be provided in written format. No suggestion or exemption will apply until approved by the TCIA Leadership Team.

1 Purpose, Target, Objectives, Stakeholders

1.1 Purpose of the Program

1.1.1 The TCIA Crew Leader Qualification (Crew Leader) is a voluntary, assessment-based certificate program designed to provide training and assessment in the knowledge and skills that are important in the effective leadership of a tree care crew.

1.1.2 For the individual, earning the Crew Leader Qualification certificate will provide a set of skills that will allow continued growth and development in leadership and personnel management. It will also be a formal recognition of professional achievement.

1.1.3 For the employer or supervisor of crew leaders, the certificate will represent a means of ensuring that an individual has received training and has been assessed in certain critical crew leader skills and has successfully demonstrated satisfactory achievement.

1.2 Target Audience

The target audience for this certificate includes individuals currently working as crew leaders in the tree care industry, individuals supervising crew leaders, and individuals working toward becoming crew leaders.

1.3 Program Objectives

The objectives of the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate program shall be:

1. To provide a means of training and assessing individuals in the knowledge and skills identified as being important to crew leadership in the tree care profession.
2. To provide a certificate that can assure crew leader employers and/or supervisors that an individual has successfully demonstrated those skills and knowledge.
3. To recognize achievement of the certificate as a means to enhance an individual's leadership skill set, create a community of qualified crew leaders, and provide tools for ongoing professional development.

1.4 Identification of Primary Stakeholders

The primary stakeholders for this program include crew leaders in the tree care industry and employers/supervisors of crew leaders.

2 Application

TCIA's Department of Certification shall apply these Policies in a fair, balanced, and objective manner to meet all purposes of the program. TCIA's Department of Certification must provide top-quality customer service while maintaining the integrity of the Crew Leader Qualification program to keep the program useful for private companies and governmental agencies.

3 Normative references

ANSI A300 Tree, Shrub, and Other Woody Plant Management – Standard Practices

ANSI Z133, Arboricultural Safety Requirements

29 CFR 1910, General industry¹⁾

29 CFR 1910.268, Telecommunications¹⁾

29 CFR 1910.269, Electric power generation, transmission and distribution¹⁾

29 CFR 1910.331 - 335, Electrical safety-related work practices¹⁾

¹⁾ Available from U.S. Department of Labor, www.osha.gov

4 Definitions

4.1 Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam: The proctored test is administered at the end of the Crew Leader Certificate Workshop. Passing the Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam is a requirement that must be met to earn a Crew Leader Qualification Certificate.

4.2 Crew Leader Qualification Course: The online course that covers the body of knowledge for the Crew Leader Qualification program. The requirements to complete the online course include discussion board assignments and video demonstration assignments. The assignments are administered within TCIA's learning management system, Brightspace, and are reviewed/graded by TCIA's Department of Certification or a TCIA Qualified Trainer.

4.3 Crew Leader Qualification Course Badge of Completion: Documentation issued by TCIA for completion of all Crew Leader Qualification Course requirements, see 4.2.

4.4 Crew Leader Qualification Certificate: Documentation issued by TCIA's Department of Certification for completion of all Crew Leader Qualification program requirements. The certificate includes the graduate's name and the completion date.

4.5 Crew Leader Qualification Certificate Program: The complete TCIA Qualification scheme for crew leaders. The scheme requires the graduate to hold a Crew Leader Qualification Course Badge of Completion, attend the Crew Leader Workshop, and pass the Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam.

4.6 Crew Leader Qualification Workshop: A one-day Virtual Workshop that uses a combination of lectures, course discussion, and small-group activities to teach and practice crew leader skills. The workshop instructional design incorporates best practices for adult education.

4.7 Demonstration of Competency: Documentation of on-the-job training that shows the student has been trained in specific job skills and demonstrated the ability to apply those skills during work operations in a satisfactory manner.

4.8 Purchaser: The company, organization, workshop provider, or individual buying (a) Crew Leader Qualification program. A company or organization that purchases a Crew Leader Qualification program for a Candidate is considered a sponsoring company or organization and may access Candidate information related to the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate program.

5 Crew Leader Customer Service, Confidentiality, and Public Information

5.1 Unless noted otherwise in this Policy, general questions regarding the Crew Leader program shall be answered by TCIA's Department of Certification within two business days.

5.2 Unless noted otherwise in this Policy, public information about Crew Leader Qualification program candidates and certificate holders shall be limited to enrollment status (yes/no) and certificate status (yes/no). All other information is considered confidential, with access limited to only the sponsoring company or organization management, the Candidate/crew leader qualification certificate holder, and TCIA.

6 Crew Leader Qualification Certificate Standard Procedures

6.1 Certificate Requirements: In order to earn a Crew Leader Qualification Certificate, each Candidate must complete the following steps:

1. Complete the Crew Leader Qualification online course and receive a Badge of Completion upon passing the video demonstration and discussion board assignments. **See 6.3 Crew Leader Qualification Course.**

2. Attend and complete the Crew Leader Qualification Virtual Workshop by participating at an acceptable level, including engagement in all workshop activities, **see 6.4 Crew Leader Qualification Workshop.**

3. Pass the Crew Leader Qualification Proctored Online exam, **see 6.5 Crew Leader Proctored Online exam.**

6.1.1 Upon completion of the requirements outlined in 6.1, a Crew Leader Qualification Certificate shall be issued for the Candidate, **see 6.6 Crew Leader Qualification Certificate.**

6.2 Eligibility

6.2.1 There is no eligibility requirement for enrolling in the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate program.

6.3 Crew Leader Qualification online course

6.3.1 The Crew Leader Qualification online course is considered the body of knowledge for the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate program.

6.3.1.1 Validation for the body of knowledge in the Crew Leader Qualification course shall be accomplished by conducting initial and periodic Job Task Assessments (JTA) surveys of the target audience.

6.3.1.2 JTA surveys shall be designed, executed, and analyzed by TCIA's Department of Certification with assistance from professionals skilled in instructional design and subject-matter experts. Learning objectives shall be developed and prioritized based on the JTA, and the course content shall be developed to ensure the link between intended learning outcomes and specific learning objectives.

6.3.2 Revisions of the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate program may be initialized by TCIA's Department of Certification or by petition of the TCIA Credential Council at any time.

6.3.3.1 Crew Leader Qualification course JTA will be reviewed and updated if necessary.

6.3.3.2 Additional considerations for revision include authoritative documented changes in industry practices or changing trends in business leadership. Authorities include ANSI Z133 Arboricultural Safety standards, ANSI A300 Tree Care Management standards, and ISA Best Management practices.

6.3.3.3 Revisions of the Crew Leader Qualification course, assignments, and competency checklists are reviewed and approved by the TCIA Credential Council in consensus with TCIA's Department of Certification.

6.3.3 Crew Leader Qualification Program Registration

6.3.3.1 Each course license allows the registration of only one candidate with TCIA.

6.3.3.2 Once a candidate is registered, they are registered in the Crew Leader Qualification online course and the online course license can not be transferred to another employee/participant.

6.3.3.3 Each Candidate shall have their own login credentials and online course enrollment

6.3.4 Crew Leader Qualification Course Completion Overview: Completing the Crew Leader Qualification course includes:
a. Passing the Crew Leader Qualification course assignments as graded

by TCIA's Department of Certification and TCIA Qualified Trainers.

- b. Candidates who do not pass a Crew Leader Qualification Course assignment have unlimited resubmission attempts
- c. Candidates must complete the Crew Leader Qualification Course and receive the Crew Leader Qualification course Badge of Completion prior to the Virtual Workshop.

6.3.5 Crew Leader Qualification Course Administration by TCIA

Upon receipt of a valid Crew Leader Qualification registration, TCIA will:

- a. send a Welcome e-mail with the window of dates for the Crew Leader online course and a deadline for completing the discussion posts and video assignments.
- b. notify Candidates of the approaching workshop date one month, two weeks, and one week before the workshop date.

6.3.6 Crew Leader Qualification Course Badge of Completion

The Crew Leader Qualification Course shall be complete when all assignments are graded by TCIA's Department of Certification or TCIA Qualified Trainer and passed.

- a. A Crew Leader Qualification course Badge of Completion shall be dated and issued on the date of completion.

6.4 The Crew Leader Qualification Workshop - subject matter shall be based on the body of knowledge contained in the Crew Leader Qualification course, which was developed to address the learning objectives resulting from the Job Task Analysis (JTA).

6.4.1.1 A most recent JTA was reviewed and found to still be relevant.

6.4.1.2 The training, course materials, and assessment(s) will be developed to align with the purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes of the course.

6.4.1.3 The workshop shall include activities (individual and/or group) developed according to best practices for adult education.

6.4.1.4 The workshop activities shall be developed to align with the needs and characteristics of the target audience using techniques deemed most effective to

achieve the learning outcomes.

6.4.1.5 Training will be delivered by qualified personnel with training in adult education methods and techniques. The instructors will be trained in the course content and delivery methods.

6.4.2 The Crew Leader Qualification Workshop Completion Overview: Attendees must complete the Workshop by:

- a. Actively participating in the workshop.
- b. Must attend at least two-thirds of the workshop to be considered present.
- c. **Completing the learner workshop guide - Journal Posts assignments**

Workshop Participant Guide

A workshop participant guide, referred to as the **Journal Posts**, shall be given to each workshop participant. In order to complete the Crew Leader Qualification Workshop with active participation, the attendee must complete the participant guide and submit it for TCIA Qualified Trainer Review.

Exception: In the event the participant does not get the Journal Posts approved for a specific workshop activity, the participant may ask the Qualified Trainer to verify the completion of the activity through the Socratic Method. If the participant can demonstrate satisfactory knowledge relating to the goal of the specific activity, the instructor may sign off the activity in the passport as complete. This exception intends to provide an alternative activity completion path for individuals who have specific learning disabilities or personality types that are not conducive to excelling in a specific activity. **Limitations:** Up to two workshop activities can be completed using this method.

6.4.3 The Workshop shall be capped at 20 attendees.

Workshops will be conducted by a Crew Leader Workshop-Qualified Trainer.

6.4.4 The workshop attendance is mandatory to complete the program requirements.

6.5 Crew Leader Qualification Exam

6.5.1 The Crew Leader Qualification online course and Crew Leader Virtual Workshop shall be the body of knowledge for the Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam. The Crew Leader Qualification course and Crew Leader Virtual Workshop content shall be based on the program learning outcomes and specific learning objectives as established by

the Expert Panel based on the job task analysis.

6.5.2 The Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam questions shall be based on and aligned with the course learning objectives.

The Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam passing score shall be set after initial and periodic analyses according to best testing practices, such as using an Anghoff analysis.

6.5.3 The Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam shall be proctored by online proctored software and administered by the TCIA's Department of Certification

6.5.4 Proctor Services and Audits

6.5.4.1 All proctor services and test security must be provided by an online proctoring service that meets applicable standards.

6.5.4.2 All audits of flagged anomalies will be reviewed and assessed by the TCIA's Department of Certification

6.5.5 Test Control

6.5.5.1 All tests, answers, and test session data will be tracked and maintained within TCIA's secured learning management system

6.5.5.1.1 Tests and Answers keys are to be uploaded onto TCIA's secured Learning Management system by a member of TCIA's Department of Certification

6.5.5.1.2 Test Candidates must log into the testing portal with their unique login credentials

6.5.5.1.3 The testing portal will perform facial recognition and proof of ID validation for the testing session

6.5.5.1.4 The proctoring service will capture, analyze, and report three data sets for the duration of the test session, including screen view, microphone, and video feed.

6.5.6 Test Security

6.5.6.1 Only Crew Leader Qualification candidates who have completed all prerequisites can sit for the certification test.

6.5.6.2 Crew Leader Qualification Candidates who plan to sit for a test must be registered by TCIA.

6.5.6.3 Photo IDs of Crew Leader Qualification candidates should be uploaded to the test as additional proof of attendance and positive identification.

6.5.6.4 The test is a closed book; the candidate is only allowed to use a pen, pencil, calculator, and Z133 as a reference.

6.5.6.5 Cell phones, and any other electronic device that can be used to call, text message, search, or take pictures are not permitted.

6.5.6.6 Searching the internet and speaking to others is not permitted.

6.5.6.7 Candidates shall remain in front of the camera while taking the test.

6.5.6.8 Only tests with all control elements complete should be graded.

6.5.7 Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam Eligibility and Completion

6.5.7.1 The Crew Leader Online Proctored Exam will open the day after the Crew Leader Qualification Workshop, and will remain available for a **two-week** exam window.

6.5.7.3 Test takers who fail the exam must retake it through TCIA's learning management system and online proctoring software at an additional cost.

6.5.7.4 Test takers are allowed two exam retake opportunities. If they don't pass these attempts, they must register for another Crew Leader Qualification program, which includes the Online course, Workshop, and Exam.

6.6 Crew Leader Qualification program Completion Requirements and Certificate

6.6.1 Upon completion of the requirements outlined in **6.1**, a Crew Leader Qualification **Exam Grade** will be released, and a **Certificate** will be issued to the Candidates.

6.6.2 Crew Leader Qualification Certificate has no expiration date.

6.6.3 The certificate shall note:
Issue Date of Certificate;
Signature of Director, Credentialing Programs

6.6.4 All Program requirements must be completed by the Final Exam Window End Date

6.6.5 Failure to meet the program requirements will result in the forfeiture of your program registration fee, which is non-refundable

7 Crew Leader Workshop instructors

7.1 Crew Leader Workshop Qualified Trainers shall be qualified by TCIA to facilitate The Crew Leader Qualification Workshop.

7.2 Minimum qualifications for approval of Crew Leader Qualification Workshop Instructor candidates shall be:

- A.** Holding a valid TCIA Qualified Trainer Qualification
- B.** Attending Crew Leader Qualification Instructor's workshop
- C.** Passing the Crew Leader Qualification online Proctored Exam with a score of 100%

8 Crew Leader Qualification Certificate Program Policies

8.1 The TCIA board has authorized the TCIA Credentialing Council – to review, assess, and guide the content and delivery of the TCIA Crew Leader Qualification Certificate program.

8.2 TCIA's Department of Certification shall develop, approve, review, publish, and distribute the Crew Leader Qualification Program Policies and Standard

Operating Procedures.

8.3 The Crew Leader Qualification Program Policies and Standard Operating Procedures shall include procedural requirements for enrolling, attaining, and maintaining a Crew Leader Qualification Certificate.

8.4 The Crew Leader Qualification Program Policies and Standard Operating Procedures shall include a procedure for appeals.

8.5 Implementation

8.5.1 The TCIA's Department of Certification shall be responsible for the implementation and management of the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate program.

8.5.2 The TCIA Department of Certification shall be authorized to issue a Crew Leader Qualification Certificates.

9 TCIA Crew Leader Qualification Certificate Record Retention Policies

9.1 Electronic proof of completion of Crew Leader Qualification Certificate program components shall be maintained in TCIA's Learning Management system – Brightspace

10 Marketing and Logo Usage Guidelines

10.1 Individuals holding a Crew Leader Qualification Certificate will receive an electronic version of the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate logo.

10.2 The Crew Leader Qualification Certificate logo must be depicted as provided by TCIA, including the "TM" emblem to show that the logo is trademarked to TCIA.

10.3 Claims regarding the professionalism of Crew Leaders Qualification Certificate holders and companies employing them must be factual and must not be misleading.

Example of a factual statement: "Our crew leaders are highly-trained qualified professionals and many of our crew leaders hold TCIA Crew Leader Qualification Certificates which means they received training, practice, and assessments in personnel management and customer service knowledge and skills."

Example of a misleading statement: “All of our crew leaders have earned the TCIA Crew Leader Qualification Certificate, which means they are the best crew leaders in the country.”

10.4 TCIA considers violations of these marketing and logo usage guidelines to be ethical violations as addressed in this document.

10.5 Former Crew Leader Qualification Certificate holders must cease and desist marketing and use of the logo if the certificate is withdrawn.

10.6 Former Crew Leader Qualification Certificate holders must notify employers, or those responsible for marketing the status, within 5 business days of notification from TCIA of certificate withdrawal. Former Crew Leader Qualification Certificate holders must request in writing that those organizations/individuals cease and desist marketing the status. Email is considered acceptable for making such requests.

11 Right to appeal

Appeals shall be based on potential procedural errors or specific mitigating factors regarding the implementation of these Crew Leader policies. Appeals based on actual program content are not accepted. Appeals shall be submitted in writing to the TCIA Director, Credentialing Programs, or other TCIA executive.

Annex A – Crew Leader Qualification Workshop, Trainers, and Proctored Exam – Principles and Assessment Methods

A-1 TCIA will use best practices in instructional design and adult education techniques for course design and delivery.

A-1.1 Knowles concepts of the five teaching strategies for adults will be integrated into course design and delivery:

1. Adults understand why something is important to know or do;
2. Adults have the freedom to learn in their own way;
3. Learning is experiential;
4. The time is right for them to learn; and,
5. The process is positive and encouraging

A-1.2 A primary design theme of Model, Demo, and Practice (Tell-Show-Do) will be used to deliver key concepts.

A-2 The passing score for the Crew Leader Proctored Exam shall be established by the Expert Panel and TCIA Staff using a modified Anghoff Method.

A-3 TCIA will assess the Crew Leader Workshops and Crew Leader Instructors by use of Evaluation/Survey forms

Annex B – Public notification of Crew Leader Qualification Certificate and logo use procedure

B-1 TCIA has a due-diligence responsibility to notify the public when companies and/or individuals illegally claim to have earned a TCIA credential.

B-2 False claims of Crew Leader Qualification Certificate and logo use process:

- 1.** TCIA receives notification from an industry or public contact that a company or individual is illegally claiming to hold a Crew Leader Qualification Certificate;
- 2.** TCIA receives or finds positive, physical proof that the company and/or individual is illegally claiming to hold a Crew Leader Qualification Certificate (social media, advertisements, websites, letterhead, etc.). In the case of TV or radio ads, TCIA will request the date, time, and station involved in order to notify the alleged offender.
- 3.** TCIA notifies the company and/or individual via telephone and in writing (certified mail) that they have 30 business days to respond to the complaint. TCIA confirms receipt of the certified letter and files the signed proof of delivery. Companies and/or individuals will be given detailed instructions on the actions they need to take and what action TCIA will take if they do not or cannot comply.
- 4.** If the company and/or individual complies with TCIA's request and provides proof that all logos and/or other forms of false claims have been removed, the case is closed.
- 5.** If the company and/or individual does not or cannot comply with TCIA's request and continues to illegally claim to hold a Crew Leader Qualification Certificate, a number of procedures may be pursued. The procedures will include:
 - a. A public notice posted on the TCIA website (www.tcia.org). The reason for the public notice will be indicated as "this individual/company falsely claims to be, or to employ an individual or individuals holding Crew Leader Qualification Certificates;"
 - b. TCIA may file an official written complaint with the Better Business Bureau;
 - c. TCIA may file a complaint with the organization or agency running or posting the offending media spots; and,
 - d. TCIA may file an official written complaint with the appropriate state attorney general's office and/or consumer protection department/agency.
- 6.** The public notice will remain posted until TCIA's requests, as outlined in the certified letter are satisfied.

Annex C – Crew Leader Qualification Certificate Program Code of Ethics

Crew Leader Qualification Certificate holder (**QCL**) must follow the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate Program Code of Ethics:

Tree Care Industry Association recognizes that the manner in which QCLs conduct business, safety audits, and report incidents reflects upon the professionalism of the entire tree care industry and the arboriculture profession.

QCLs and registrants assume a responsibility to the profession, society, and their peers by pledging to uphold and abide by the following:

- Provide objective, fair, accurate, and professional service while conducting safety-related duties so that the value of the Crew Leader Qualification Certificate is maintained.
- Keep informed of the current industry standards, including updates, revisions, and interpretations that affect safety program compliance for tree care industry businesses.
- Conduct duties in an honest and dignified manner and adhere to the local, national, and international laws that govern us locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Maintain a professional image in actions and appearance to positively affect the public perception of tree care businesses.
- Agree that safety, training, and adherence to ethical business practices and industry standards at all times are of the utmost importance when conducting duties.
- Respect the views, ideas, and contributions of other QCLs, employees, regulators, or safety professionals.
- Always file accurate reports regarding incidents and statistics regardless of whether the reports are for internal or external purposes, including submission to regulatory agencies.
- Open and honest communication, sharing of ideas, and experience is valued, however, confidentiality of individuals involved in specific incidents must be maintained.
- Strive to report mistakes and failures to maintain confidentiality, whether intended or not, to your employer, to the regulatory agency involved, and to TCIA as soon as possible, as applicable.”
- Never partake in the falsification of documentation or reports.

Annex D – TCIA Credentialing Council Member Position Description

D-1 The Council is charged with the ongoing oversight and evolution of the Crew

Leader Qualification. Expertise on the Council will provide credibility and breadth of knowledge to give the Crew Leader Qualification validity for the profession as well as for the government and public.

D-1.1 The TCIA Board of Directors has approved the following representative seats and advisors on this Council.

Seat 1: OSHA

Seat 2: DOT/FMCSA

Seat 3: National Safety Council

Seat 4: Independent safety consultant (or associated with risk management)

Seat 5: One large tree care company member (as defined by the gross tree care revenue dues structure)

Seat 6: One medium-sized tree care company member (as defined by the gross tree care revenue dues structure)

Seat 7: One small tree care company member (as defined by the gross tree care revenue dues structure)

CLQ Advisor: Independent academic advisor

D-1.2 The TCIA Board of Directors can make adjustments to council seats and advisors.

D-2 Qualifications and Skills

Council Members will bring diverse knowledge and skills sets to the Council, creating a synergy. Their knowledge and skills sets may include, but are not limited to:

- A. federal regulatory compliance;
- B. teaching adults;
- C. Hispanic/Latino culture;
- D. generational cultures;
- E. familiarity with other individual credentialing programs, particularly safety-related certifications;
- F. statistical knowledge concerning accidents and underlying contributory factors in tree care and/or landscaping; and,
- G. familiarity with tree care/landscape operations, management, and company hierarchical structure.

D-3 Terms

Terms for representatives for each seat and advisors are for three years and may be reappointed for an additional three years.

D-4 Council Responsibilities

D-4.1 The Council is an independent, objective certification body charged with establishing the parameters around which the program will be administered and the qualification granted. The TCIA Board approves the annual budget of the CLQ.

D-4.2 The Credentialing Council is a TCIA council that is independent and objective. The council is responsible for developing and maintaining policies and procedures that outline the parameters of the CLQ administration, including:

- A. granting qualification.
- B. expanding and reducing the scope of the qualification; and,
- C. suspending or withdrawing the qualification.

D-4.3 The council may also participate in:

- A. overseeing the development of test questions or other means of evaluating candidates' suitability for CLQ designation;
- B. periodically evaluate and adjust CLQ knowledge domains;
- C. tracking of trends in the program;
- D. making recommendations for program development to support CLQ; and,
- E. representation of the program to the general public, consumers, industry groups, or government officials.

D-5 Expenses

TCIA provides reasonable funds to cover the expenses for participating in Council meetings. TCIA will contract for hotel rooms as needed. Council members will be reimbursed for the lowest coach airline tickets, purchased at least 21-30 days in advance, or the equivalent of the price at that time, in order to maximize cost efficiencies to TCIA. Receipts are required for reimbursement for all items. Mileage will be reimbursed at the going IRS rate. Expenses should be submitted within 30 days.