

# CPA Alberta Convocation ceremonies

## Frequently asked questions

Welcome to the profession! This document will answer some questions about the upcoming CPA Alberta Convocation Ceremony.

CPA Alberta Convocation has two distinct parts: the ceremonies, where graduates are formally welcomed to the profession, and the dinner and dance, which is a chance to celebrate with friends, colleagues, and family.

## Do I need to complete my practical experience requirements to be part of Convocation?

No. To be part of the 2025 CPA Alberta Convocation events—both the ceremony and dinner and dance— you must have successfully passed the Common Final Exam (CFE) in 2024. Completion of practical experience hours is not required to attend these events; however, these hours are required to apply for membership and, once admitted, be granted the right to use the CPA designation.

## When are the CPA Alberta Convocation ceremonies?

The 2025 CPA Alberta Convocation ceremonies, which is for those who successfully passed the CFE in 2024, will be on January 31 and February 1 in Calgary and February 21 in Edmonton.

Several ceremonies are held in each city to accommodate the number of graduates.

**You will receive your ceremony date and time by email approximately one week prior to the event.**

NOTE: Ceremonies will be held on Friday during the day and evening and may require graduates, sponsors, and guests to take time away from work or other commitments to attend.

## What happens at the ceremonies?

1. Graduates and sponsors check in and find their seats in the designated area
2. General seating for other guests opens
3. Ceremony commences
4. Formal program with introductions of the graduates
5. Ceremony ends

## Is there a cost to attend?

The CPA Alberta Convocation ceremonies are complimentary for registered graduates and their guests.

Parking and coat check may have associated costs determined by the venue. All other costs are covered by CPA Alberta.

## If the event is free, why do I have to register?

You need to register to be presented at a CPA Alberta Convocation ceremony to ensure we can properly welcome you into the profession. Please complete the form before the deadline, indicating whether you are attending and the number of expected guests. Tickets are not required for entry.

## When will I find out what ceremony I have been assigned to attend?

Graduates should receive their ceremony assignment approximately one week prior to the event, which will include the time and date. Graduates should share this information with their sponsor and guests.

## What if I cannot attend?

This celebratory event is optional. CPA Alberta does not provide any official documents or certificates at the event, nor does this impact your admission to the profession; these are determined separately as part of your membership application.

## Will the ceremonies be live streamed?

Yes, the ceremonies will be live streamed on the CPA Alberta Convocation webpage.

## Where can I park?

In Calgary, parking is available in the TELUS Convention Centre parkade. In Edmonton, parking is available at Canada Place, which is across the street from the Edmonton Convention Centre. For more information on parking, please visit the venues' websites.

## What are the seating arrangements?

You and your sponsor will have designated seats. Other guests will sit in general seating. If a group wishes to sit together, they should arrive together and early to secure seats.

## Can I sit with my family or friends?

No. You will be sitting in a designated seating area away from guests. The formal program requires graduates and their sponsors to move to and from the stage, and all graduates need to be seated where they can be prompted when the time comes to go backstage.

## How long is the ceremony?

The ceremony is approximately 1.5 hours, **but you and your sponsor will need to arrive early**; your participation will take approximately two hours.

You and your sponsor are expected to arrive one hour prior to the scheduled start time of your ceremony to allow time for registration and instructions.

We ask that guests arrive on time and stay for the whole ceremony to respect all graduates and their guests. Guests going in and out of the ceremony can be disruptive and distracting for the people on stage and other guests in attendance.

## What is a sponsor?

A sponsor is the person who will escort you across the convocation stage and present you to the profession. Your sponsor must be a member of the profession and, ideally, an Alberta CPA in good standing. They should be someone who has been a mentor, leader, or supporter for you and who has encouraged, inspired, or helped you throughout your CPA education. Your sponsor can be a family member, a professional colleague, a friend, partner, or anyone who has helped you reach this point in your career.

Sponsors may also assist graduates in writing their citation. We encourage a sponsor and graduate to write the citation together.

At the event, your sponsor will not speak publicly or perform any duty other than accompany you and stand on stage with you while your citation is read.

CPA Alberta does not handle communication with sponsors, so you must keep them updated about your assigned ceremony date and time and other details. Please try to arrive with your sponsor so you can check in together.

A sponsor may act for more than one graduate. If this is the case, the sponsor will need to inform the on-site staff prior to the start of the ceremony.

## Why do I need a sponsor?

The sponsor represents the CPA profession and welcomes you on behalf of the profession as a whole. They represent the values of the profession and are an embodiment of the expertise, integrity, and ethical standards the profession is known for.

## Can my sponsor be from outside the province or country?

An ideal sponsor would be an Alberta CPA member in good standing.

For those graduates who would like a sponsor who is a member of the profession from another jurisdiction, we require an official letter or correspondence from that individual's regulatory body to confirm their membership. This information must be sent via email to [events@cpaalberta.ca](mailto:events@cpaalberta.ca) **before the registration deadline of December 18, 2024, for Calgary and January 10, 2025, for Edmonton**. Otherwise, we reserve the right to assign an Alberta CPA to act as your sponsor.

## What if a graduate cannot find a sponsor?

We encourage you to seek out your own sponsor by asking a colleague, mentor, supervisor, leader, or supporter who has encouraged, inspired, or helped you throughout the program. However, if you are unable to find a sponsor, please complete the form according to the instructions provided during the registration process. CPA Alberta will arrange a sponsor for you, who you will meet just prior to your assigned ceremony.

## What is expected of me and my sponsor at the ceremony?

### Before the ceremony

You and your sponsor arrive at least one hour before the start of the ceremony, allowing time to check in, receive any instructions or clarify anything in your citations, and find your seats.

At check in, you will confirm your name and sponsor and receive a name tag, which gives you and your sponsor backstage access and ensures the correct citation is read at the correct time. You must wear your name tag until a CPA Alberta staff member tells you to remove it just before you walk on stage.

When you enter the hall, CPA Alberta staff will guide you and your sponsor to your seats. At this time, **any sponsor presenting more than one graduate should alert the staff, who will then provide instructions on how to proceed and where to sit.**

### During the ceremony

You and your sponsor will be guided to the back of the stage and directed by CPA Alberta staff when the time comes for you to be presented.

When you are brought backstage, please remain quiet as the ceremony will be continuing with other graduates. Conversations should be kept to a minimum.

You will be queued when it is your turn to be presented on stage. You will proceed to a marked area on the stage, and your citation will be read aloud. After the citation is read, you will turn toward your sponsor, shake their hand, and exit the stage. After you exit, you and your sponsor will return to your seats for the rest of the ceremony.

### After the ceremony

To allow CPA Alberta time to prepare for the next ceremony, you are asked to promptly exit to the foyer, where you can meet up with your guests.

No pictures are allowed inside the ceremony hall or on stage after the ceremony, but there will be a few CPA backgrounds set up in the foyer. If using the background for photos, please be mindful of other graduates waiting for their turn and move along promptly.

## Can I bring my family on stage with me?

No, family is not permitted on the stage (with the exception, of course, of a family member who is a sponsor). The only other individual on stage with you is your sponsor.

## What should I wear?

The dress code for the ceremonies is business. A cap and gown are not provided nor required for the ceremony.

You and your sponsor will be in the spotlight on the stage and on your feet for extended periods of time before and after, including standing, walking, and ascending and descending stairs. We recommend you wear professional yet comfortable shoes.

## What should I bring with me?

Tickets are not required for the ceremonies, and you and your sponsor should bring minimal personal items (everything should be able to fit into a pocket) as you will be on stage and on camera. You will be seated separately from your guests, so be sure everything you need during the ceremony is on your person.

## What if I and/or my sponsor need mobility assistance or cannot stand for long periods of time?

Please be sure to note this in your registration in the appropriate space, and CPA Alberta staff will be in touch to discuss accommodations.

## What is a graduate citation?

Your citation is a brief description about you that will be read aloud by a professional announcer while you and your sponsor are on stage at the Ceremony. A citation should include a brief overview of your journey, reflect on your achievements, and thank those who have supported you. No changes other than your employer or sponsor can be made after the deadline.

Keep the following in mind:

- Include a maximum of 150 words. CPA Alberta staff will edit all citations for length, clarity, appropriateness, and grammar.
- Write in a respectful, tasteful, and positive tone. Remember, the ceremonies are attended by professionals, family members, and many other guests. Inappropriate content or language will be removed by CPA Alberta staff.
- Use the third person voice to refer to yourself in your citation.
- Consider discussing your citation with your sponsor, colleagues, family, or friends to get ideas for what to include.

### Sample citations

#### Jack Mills

Jack is with Smith, Turner and Co. in Calgary and is presented by Tom Lawrie. Today is a special day for Jack, but it is even more special for Porsche and BMW. As a CPA, Jack intends to pay good money to local premium car dealerships. As a student, Jack has owned seven sports cars (as opposed to the two beaters Tom has driven, even though he has had his designation for five years). Fortunately, Jack backs up his good taste in cars with a great work ethic, which Tom believes will make him a premium CPA. Jack thanks his family and friends for their support.

### Sam Ruddy

It was a magical moment for Sam when he walked into the PWC office after passing the CFE. That came just a few short months after another amazing moment: the birth of his first baby in July. Sam is being accompanied by his coach at PWC, Lisa Shepard, who he thanks for her support. He also thanks his wife, sister, and all his colleagues at PWC.

### Jenny Chu

Jenny works at Atco and is being presented by Michelle Dang. Jenny has always been inspired by Albert Einstein, who was a slow learner and, consequently, was expelled from school. Today, we know him as the father of modern physics. Thanks to that inspirational story, Jenny is standing here today to accept this accolade. Jenny thanks her parents for all their sacrifices, friends and coworkers for their constant words of encouragement, fiancé for being her backbone, and mostly her brothers for accompanying her on every step along this journey. Albert Einstein once said, “Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value.” Jenny hopes to accept every accomplishment with a sense of humility, modesty, and gratitude.

## Do I have to submit a citation?

All graduates wishing to attend the CPA Alberta ceremony must submit a citation by the **registration deadline of December 18, 2024, for Calgary and January 10, 2025, for Edmonton**. It can be as simple or as complex as you choose to make it.