



**AMCTO**  
THE MUNICIPAL EXPERTS

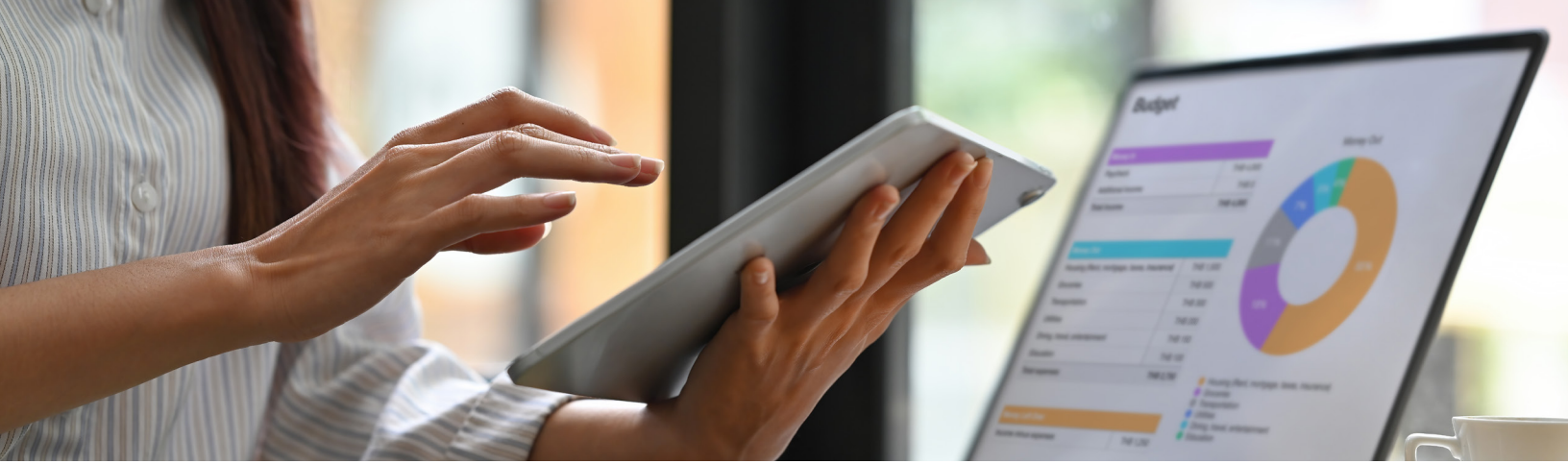
# **Certified Municipal Officer Handbook**



Certified  
Municipal  
Officer

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## Introduction

This handbook is your guide to the Certified Municipal Officer (CMO) Accreditation Program. It provides you with everything you need to know in order to participate in and complete the certification process.

This handbook is presented in three parts and is designed to provide you with the information you need as you work through each step of the process. Each part focuses on a key phase of the certification program.

**Section A:** Program Overview

**Section B:** Submission & Review Process

**Section C:** Maintenance of the Designation

If you still have questions after reading the handbook and reviewing the website, please contact our accreditation team at [accreditation@amcto.com](mailto:accreditation@amcto.com).

Candidates for certification are required to follow all policies, procedures and guidelines outlined in this handbook.





## Section A: Program Overview

Today's ever-evolving municipal environment demands management professionals to possess diverse skills and knowledge such as visionary leadership, and keen problem-solving. The CMO accredits these core skills, along with the knowledge and expertise required to be a successful local government leader.

The CMO showcases your knowledge of local government management, your professional readiness and commitment to career-long learning and ethical practice. The CMO is the leading local government designation in Ontario – successful completion and approval of the requirements confer the right to use the initials CMO after your name.

This is recommended reading for those who want to find out more about the CMO and for all prospective CMO candidates prior to registration.

### ***Setting Standards***

The CMO is a management and leadership focused designation for municipal professionals. The CMO designation provides municipal management and leadership professionals the ability to prove their competency and be confident in their knowledge, skills and abilities in the field.

### ***Prerequisites***

To apply for the CMO, candidates are required to:

1. Be a member of AMCTO in good standing,
2. Be employed by a municipality (or related organization) with at least three (3) years of municipal management/leadership experience; and
3. Have completed the AMCTO Municipal Administration Program (MAP) or an acceptable equivalent. Find out if you are eligible for an exemption by reviewing Section 5 in the [Diploma in Municipal Administration \(DMA\) Terms of Reference](#).



## Competencies

Candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge, skill and ability in the eight management competencies as outlined in the [CMO Competency Framework](#), available on our website. This includes:



AMCTO will exempt holders of certain professional designations from having to prove relevant CMO competency areas. For more information, see **Appendix 2** on page 13.





## Section B: Submission & Review Process

Preparing your submission is a lot of work and we want you to be successful. We have designed the submission process and prescribed forms to help you compile all the relevant documentation and assist you in addressing required outputs against which your submission will be assessed.

It is important to follow the submission process in order to ensure that you do not miss a step. If you still have questions about the submission process after reading this information, please contact [accreditation@amcto.com](mailto:accreditation@amcto.com).



### **Step 1: Read**

- **CMO Prerequisites:** Have you met all entry prerequisites? You will be required to provide proof.
- **CMO Competency Framework:** You will be required to demonstrate ALL competencies, associated sub-competencies, behavioural indicators and required outputs, unless you qualify for exemptions (for more information on exemptions, see **Appendix 2** on page 13).
- **CMO Handbook:** The purpose of the handbook is to guide candidates through the Accreditation Program. It is the primary source for program support.

### **Step 2: Self-Assess**

It is important to identify any gaps in knowledge or experience you may have, as this may impact your ability to demonstrate competency (a list of competencies and sub-competencies are included in **Appendix 1** on page 12). For full details on the required competencies and sub-competencies, please review the [CMO Competency Framework](#), available on our website.

If you have knowledge and experience in each of the eight competencies, proceed to the next step. If not, your self-assessment can be used to plan your professional growth to acquire the knowledge and experience you require for the CMO. You also have the option of applying for the Accredited Municipal Professional (AMP) as it is designed for non-management professionals, and revisiting the CMO submission process down the road.

### ***Step 3: Register***

**Register online as a CMO candidate through the AMCTO website.**

Payment will be required following the verification of your prerequisites. Once paid, registered candidates will receive access to the CMO accreditation program in AMCTO's online learning platform, AMCTO Connect. It will contain program information, resources and the prescribed forms you will need to complete your application.

Once registered, you will be assigned a mentor. Mentors have gone through the accreditation process themselves and while not mandatory to connect, most candidates find their insight (planning and approach, overcoming hurdles, general guidance) incredibly valuable as they work through their submission.

### ***Step 4: Submit***

Complete your CMO submission by using the prescribed submission form within AMCTO Connect. Submissions should be completed including all related supporting documentation.

When your CMO submission is ready for the review process, complete the "Ready to Submit" form within AMCTO Connect to alert the accreditation staff that your application is ready for review.

### ***Submission Dates***

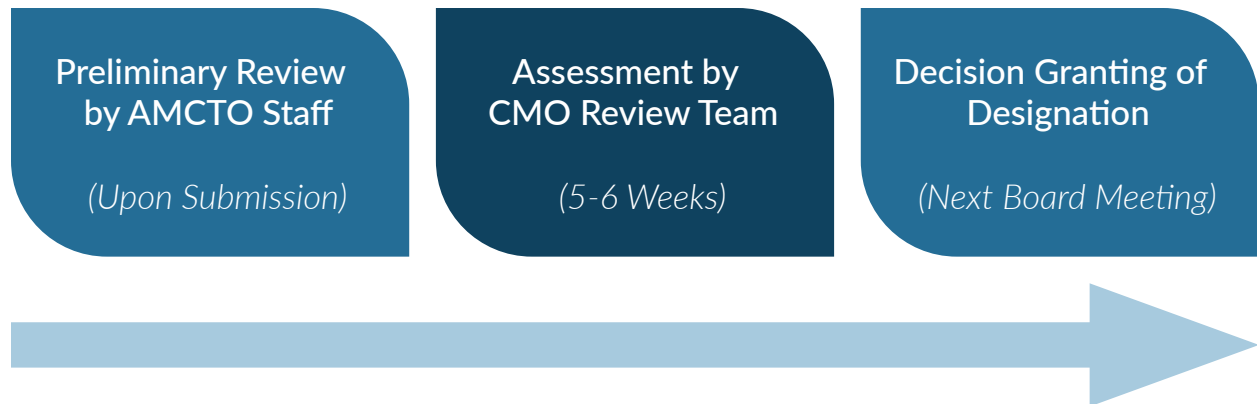
- **March 15** for granting of designation at the June Board of Directors meeting. Note: any submissions received after March 15 will be held and processed only after all submissions received by the deadline are processed. AMCTO does not ensure any applications received after March 15 will be processed prior to the June Board meeting.
- **July 15** for granting of designation at the September Board of Directors meeting.
- **September 15** for granting of designation at the November Board of Directors meeting.
- **December 1** for granting of designation at the February Board of Directors meeting.

### ***Requests for Exemptions***

For more information about eligibility and claiming exemptions, review the exemption guidelines in this handbook (**Appendix 2** on page 13).



## Review Process



**Preliminary Review:** AMCTO staff will conduct a preliminary review of your submission to determine if it is complete. Candidates will be contacted if anything is missing or the prescribed forms are incomplete. If required, your submission will be returned to you to complete.

**Assessment by CMO Review Team:** A CMO Review Team consisting of three reviewers will individually review your submission against the CMO Competency Framework including competencies, sub-competencies, behavioural indicators and required outputs.

**CMO Approvals Threshold:** Applicants that meet an 85%-100% approval rate for their submission will be automatically recommended for the CMO designation. Applicants that do not meet the threshold approval rate for their submission will be provided feedback for the opportunity to improve their submission for a secondary review.

**Granting of Designation:** The AMCTO Board of Directors grants the CMO designation. Once the Board of Directors grants the CMO designation, candidates are notified by letter, which grants the candidate authorization to use the CMO designation. In order to be awarded the CMO, candidates must be an AMCTO member in good standing.

Successful CMO recipients will be invited to the next AMCTO Annual General Meeting to be recognized for this achievement. Alternate arrangements will be made for those who cannot attend in person.







## Section C: Maintenance of the CMO Designation

Members of AMCTO who hold the CMO designation will retain the designation and will not be required to prove competency again, however, they will be required to maintain the designation within the three-year professional development unit (PDU) maintenance program. This will require them to participate in professional development activities over a three-year cycle.

### Reporting PDUs

Members who hold the CMO designation will be required to maintain a log of professional development activities. This log contains a record of your professional development activities over a three-year cycle, allowing you to claim PDUs and get credit for your work as you continuously develop within your profession.

CMO holders will receive a notice from AMCTO every three years asking for submission of their PDU log. CMO holders will be required to keep supporting documentation for all PDUs claimed as random audits may be conducted from time to time by AMCTO. Supporting documentation will not be required when it comes time to submit your PDU log.

Table 1 outlines the requirements for submission of professional development activities. Table 2 is a sample of a completed section of the PDU log.



Table 1: PDU Chart - 60 PDUs are required in a three-year cycle

Category	Description of Acceptable Activities Related to the Municipal Sector	Required Documentation <i>Apply your activity to one of the eight competency categories</i>	Additional Required Documentation <i>(if audited)</i>
<b>Continuing Education &amp; Professional Development</b> <i>(Minimum of 30 PDUs required in this category)</i> 1 hour of activity = 1 PDU	Attending educational courses offered by AMCTO or other relevant educational courses, conferences, seminars or symposiums; completing an academic course offered by a university or college	Name/topic and date(s) of course/program, name of certificate/degree granted if applicable, certificate of completion	Registration receipt, syllabus
<b>Sharing Your Knowledge</b> 1 hour of activity = 1 PDU	Acting for a municipal organization as a marker, reviewer, mentor of academic or accreditation programs	Your role, name and type of organization, and length of time involved - include documentation of role from organization	Letter from organization acknowledging participation, time spent and brief explanation
<b>Teaching &amp; Presenting</b> 1 hour of activity = 1 PDU	Serving as a speaker or instructor for management-related courses and presentations, serving as a moderator of a relevant discussion, serving as a subject matter expert for a panel discussion, presenting in a webinar or podcast	Topic/type and date of teaching and/or presenting	Agenda, schedule or lesson plan outlining session details
<b>Designing Courses</b> 1 hour of activity = 1 PDU	Creating a course or developing course content for management related courses	Topic/type of course and content	Agenda, schedule, brochure, table of contents
<b>Professional Writing</b> 1 hour of activity = 1 PDU	Authoring/co-authoring a management textbook, a peer reviewed article, article for relevant electronic or print newsletters, an article published on an official organization, professional or company blog	Name of article, book, etc. and publication issue and title or website link	Copy of article, table of contents, any other material as evidence of published material
<b>Community Involvement</b> 1 hour of activity = 1 PDU	Providing volunteer, non-compensated management services to non-employer/non-client groups; active participation with professional/community organization (senior level)	Your role, name and type of organization and length of time involved	Letter from organization acknowledging your participation, time spent and brief explanation
<b>Self-Directed Learning (non-structured)</b> 2 hours of activity = 1 PDU	Individualized learning events involving personally conducted research or study; reading articles, books, instructional manuals, or digital publications; watching videos, podcasts, or other source material; having formal discussions with colleagues, co-workers, clients or consultants; being coached or mentored by a colleague, co-worker or consultant	Topic and method of learning	Evidence, description, purpose and sample notes



Table 2: Sample of CMO PDU Log

Category	Competency Category	Description of Activities
<b>Continuing Education &amp; Professional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Strategic and Organizational Management</li> <li>• Service Delivery</li> <li>• Financial Management</li> <li>• Government Relations and Citizen Engagement</li> <li>• Human Resource Management</li> <li>• Municipal Operations</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	<p>Course Name: Emotional Intelligence (proof of attendance attached)</p> <p>Course Provider: IHHP</p> <p>Course Date: October 15, 2024</p> <p>Number of Hours: 7 = 7 PDU</p> <p>Certificate/degree granted: None</p> <p>Description of content:</p> <p>Why do smart people fail? Why do technically brilliant individuals have trouble managing others and collaborating on a team? It is not because they lack intelligence or technical skills. Far from it. What they lack is a critical level of emotional intelligence. Whether you are a formal manager or want to increase your individual performance (or both), this training program, will teach you the foundational skills.</p>



## Appendix 1: Competencies & Sub-Competencies

To be granted the CMO designation, you must be able to demonstrate applied knowledge and skills in eight areas of competency and the associated sub-competencies (listed below). For more information, please refer to the [CMO Competency Framework](#) (available on the AMCTO website).

### Municipal Operations

Implementation & Administration of Legislation

Policy Development

### Communication

Report Writing & Presentation Skills

Media & Priority Audience Relations

Social Media & Information Technology

### Service Delivery

Delivery of Service

Quality of Results

### Government Relations & Citizen Engagement

Public Engagement & Consultation

Government Relations Advocacy

### Strategic & Organizational Management

Problem Solving & Decision Making

Project Planning, Execution & Control

Knowledge of Organization

Managing Consultants, Partners & Other Priority Audiences

Strategic Planning

### Human Resource Management

Recruitment & Hiring

Performance Management

Coaching & Mentoring

Labour & Employee Relations

### Financial Management

Budgeting

Financial Analysis & Reporting

Internal Control

Procurement

Risk Management

### Leadership

Team Leadership

Vision

Managing Change

Emotional Intelligence

Integrity





## Appendix 2: Exemptions

### ***Prerequisite Exemption***

For those who qualify, AMCTO will provide an education-related exemption from the Municipal Administration Program (MAP) requirement. Individuals who graduated with a degree focused on municipal public administration from an accredited Canadian university within the past 10 years may be eligible to apply for exemption. For more information, please refer to Section 5 in the [Diploma in Municipal Administration \(DMA\) Terms of Reference](#).

If you meet the conditions for a prerequisite exemption, contact [education@amcto.com](mailto:education@amcto.com) for the application.

### ***Submission Exemption***

AMCTO will exempt holders of certain professional designations from having to prove relevant CMO competency areas. Upon submission, you will need to identify and provide evidence/written documentation to support any exemptions you are claiming. AMCTO will confirm your eligibility.

For those who qualify, the following exemption applies to the submission/maintenance of designation requirements:

- 1. AMCT designation granted by AMCTO**
  - CMO applicants who hold the AMCT designation granted by AMCTO will be provided an exemption for the Municipal Operations Competency of the CMO Accreditation Application.
- 2. Human Resources designation granted by the Human Resources Professional Association (HRPA)**
  - CMO applicants who hold the Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) designation granted by the HRPA will be provided an exemption for the Human Resource Management Competency section of the CMO Accreditation Application.
- 3. CPA designation**
  - CMO applicants who hold the Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation will be provided an exemption from the CMO Financial Management Competency section of the CMO Accreditation Application.

Candidates must submit proof of their designation with their submission.





## Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

**Competency:** A cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills that enable a person (or an organization) to act effectively in a job or situation.

**Sub-Competency:** Describes in more detail the knowledge, skills and abilities related to the competency. A competency can have one or more sub-competencies.

**Behavioural Indicator:** Observable, demonstrated behaviour that indicates whether someone has the knowledge, skills and abilities for that particular competency/sub-competency.

**Situational Leadership:** Using different leadership styles depending on the situation.







The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) represents excellence in local government, management, and leadership. Over the past 85 years, we have provided education, accreditation, leadership, and management expertise for Ontario municipal professionals. With 2,200+ members working in municipalities across the province, we are Ontario's largest association of local government professionals and the premier organization for professional development in the sector.

Our mission is to deliver professional growth, networks, advocacy, and leadership to support and strengthen the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of municipal professionals now and into the future.

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