



Achieving Your NCP

Exam Overview & Study Tips

National Check Payments Certification

ECCHO®

DISCLAIMER

The following slides are intended only to provide general information to assist NCP test takers in developing a plan for study. Many of the tips included are suggestions from previous NCP test takers.

Following any of these suggestions or recommendations is not a guarantee to pass the NCP exam. Test takers must study to complement their experience and must be able to apply that combined knowledge to complex questions and scenarios that may be found on the exam.



What is an NCP?

- National Check Professional (NCP)
 - Person with proven expertise in all aspects of the check payment system including:
 - ✓ Rules and Regulations
 - ✓ Fraud and Risk Mitigation
 - ✓ Check Operations
 - ✓ Check Products
- See NCP directory for listing of active NCPs
www.eccho.org/ncpc_current_ncp_dir



Value of NCP

- Knowledge is Power
 - Good for the payments industry
 - ✓ Security and accuracy
 - Good for your organization
 - ✓ Reduced risk—tangible examples reported
 - ✓ Respected by auditors
 - ✓ Appreciated by customers
 - Good for you
 - ✓ Be recognized for your expertise
 - ✓ Be knowledgeable—getting learning opportunity
 - ✓ Advance your career
- Candidate recommendations:
 - Minimum of 2+ years related experience
 - Commitment to studying / digging into subject matter
 - Interest in becoming a payments expert



Once You Become an NCP

- Accreditation for 5 years
 - Continuing Education Requirements
 - ✓ 50 credit hours in 5 years and
 - ✓ 3 ECCHO-hosted NCP workshop webinars
 - NCP is responsible to track, report and file CE credits with ECCHO to meet CE requirements
 - ✓ Enter and file credits
 - ✓ Track/verify CE status via self-service webpage
NCPConnect
 - Visit [NCP portal](#) on ECCHO homepage



Achieving the NCP

- ECCHO wants you to succeed and earn your NCP
- Study and preparation are keys to success for any certification program
- ECCHO provides many free study aids upon registration
 - Not registered? Go to <https://store.eccho.org/>
- Following provides an overview of the exam process and study tips to assist the test-taker to sit for the NCP exam



NCP

- NCP Exam window
 - 3rd Saturday in April for 3 full weeks
- Exam fees: \$450 ECCHO mbr / \$575 non-mbr
 - Note sure if you're a member?
 - ✓ Go to www.eccho.org/memberships
 - Need to retake exam?
 - ✓ 50% off price of registration to re-take exam
- NCP program began in 2011
 - To date we have had nearly 1,000 who have earned the NCP designation
- NCPs are found in 49 of the 50 states and in Guam



NCP Exam Overview

- 3 hours allotted for exam
 - Plenty of time to answer all questions
 - Generally enough time to go back and review “marked” questions if desired
- Exam Format
 - 120 multiple-choice questions
 - ✓ 4 answer choices for each question
 - 100 questions scored each exam year
 - 20 questions are “piloted”
 - Pilot questions:
 - ✓ Are not identified separately on the exam
 - ✓ Evaluated for use on future exams
 - ✓ May/may not be scored in any exam year



NCP Exam Overview

- Types of Questions

- Designed to test knowledge, not your ability to memorize

- ✓ Definitional questions and general questions

- Must know the definition, purpose, meaning or operation

- ✓ Scenario-based questions

- Must apply your knowledge to a given situation

- ✓ Questions may include a graphic to illustrate question and/or provide additional information

- Must apply your knowledge to a situation

- ✓ Pass/fail results received via email in early June

- Email includes individual candidate report containing bar charts indicating performance in each of the four exam knowledge categories

- ✓ NCP certificate (suitable for framing) and NCP lapel pin sent by mail

- Question Topics

- Based on the NCP Exam Blueprint



NCP Exam Blueprint

34% – Rules, Laws, and Regulations

- Demonstrate working knowledge of the following topics, as they relate to check, with respect to Reg CC, Reg J, UCC Articles 3 & 4, ECCHO Rules, Federal Reserve OC3 and selected sections of NACHA Rules and Regulation E.
 - Key terms defined in the rules, laws, and regulations
 - Eligible items
 - MICR line repair
 - Warranties
 - Indemnifications
 - Error resolution, returns, adjustments
 - Imperfect/Non-imageable items
 - Indorsements
 - Presentment
 - Re-presentment
 - Returns
 - Disclosures
 - Funds availability
 - Bank settlement & finality



NCP Exam Blueprint

25% – Fraud and Risk Mitigation

- Demonstrate knowledge required to identify fraud and mitigate risk associated with check products and services and to comply with the regulatory requirements, including UCC Articles 3 and 4, BSA/AML, and FFIEC guidance.
 - Key provisions of laws, regulations and guidance
 - Definitions of types of fraud and risk
 - Allocation of risk
 - Consumer, bank, and commercial agreements
 - Risks associated with RDC and RCCs
 - Risk mitigation techniques
 - Data security and data breach
 - Business continuity/disaster recovery



NCP Exam Blueprint

33% – Operations

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of check operations and key standards and formats.
 - Item processing
 - File control
 - Exception handling
 - Retention, retrieval, and destruction
 - Account Statements
 - Application of ACH format for check conversion
 - ANSI Standards



NCP Exam Blueprint

8% – Products

- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the types, benefits, and purpose of correspondent banking products (commercial and consumer products).
 - Types of checks
 - Global checks
 - Check conversion
 - Account reconciliation products
 - Positive Pay
 - Controlled disbursement
 - Lockbox
 - Image cash letter
 - Remote deposit capture
 - Float
 - Statements
 - Image retrieval
 - Remote deposit capture
 - Online and mobile banking



NCP References

Check Return Code Handbook

ECCHO Rules

Federal Reserve Check Adjustments Quick Reference Guide

Federal Reserve Operating Circular 3 | Oct 2018

FinCen Resources – Advisories | FIN-2012-A010 and FIN-2016-A005

FFIEC:* Authentication in an Internet Banking Environment | Oct 2005

FFIEC:* Bank Secrecy Act | Anti-Money Laundering Examination manual | 2010

FFIEC:* Information Security | Sep 2016

FFIEC.*Operations | Jul 2004

FFIEC.*Retail Payments Systems | April 2016

FIEC:* Supervisory Guidance for Remote Deposit Capture | Jan 2009

FFIEC:* Supplement to Authentication in an Internet Banking environment | June 2011

Regulation CC | Reg CC | Availability of Funds and Collection of Check

Regulation E | Reg E | Electronic Fund Transfers

Regulation J | Reg J | Collection of Checks and Other Items by Federal Reserve

Treasury Securities & Programs

Uniform Commercial Code | UCC | Article 3

Uniform Commercial Code | UCC | Article 4

X9 TR 47-2016: Universal Companion Document

X9.100-188: Return Reasons | August 2018

Note:

Links to each found on NCP References page:

https://www.eccho.org/ncpc_exam_blueprint



ECCHO Study Materials



ECCHO Preparation Materials

- JumpStart Reading Program
- NCP Roadmap
- P.R.E.P. Training Guide
- Question of the Day emails
- NCP Guide handbook and program
- ECCHO website <https://www.eccho.org/ncp-program>
- During early-registration promotional period:
 - 2 Pre-recorded webinars available to registrants:
 - ✓ Check Payments – The Basics
 - ✓ Check Payments and Check Processing



JumpStart Reading Program

- Path that outlines NCP resources (with links)
 - Suggests a quick overview of the materials
 - Good way to start studying
- Start early—perhaps a summer reading program
- Keep JumpStart on your desktop
 - Will always have access to resources
 - Easy “quick reference” as you begin to study and prepare for the exam



NCP Roadmap

- Guide to assist in developing a comprehensive study plan including:
 - High level timeline
 - Steps in the test-taking process
 - ✓ Exam decision
 - ✓ Registration with ECCHO
 - ✓ Selecting exam preparation training
 - ✓ Making an exam appointment with testing center
 - Suggestions on how to approach the materials
 - ✓ At what level to study using the available resources
 - Ex: Attention to detail on regulations vs. general operations or product subjects



P.R.E.P. Guide

- **Payments Resource and Exam Prep**
 - 300+ page study handbook
 - ✓ Primarily designed as a training guide
 - Includes range of information:
 - ✓ Program Logistics
 - ✓ Training sections w/Quizzes (answer keys provided)
 - ✓ Study Tips
 - ✓ Sample Multiple-Choice Exam
 - ✓ Glossary
 - Some areas overlap
 - ✓ Ex: Rules with regulations, warranties and operational considerations if warranty breach occurs, etc.
 - Designed to reinforce information
 - ✓ Not written in “text book” format



Question of the Day

- Emailed daily starting 1st business day in January
 - Today: Receive a new question
 - Tomorrow: Receive answer to yesterday's question with next new question
- Excellent daily tool for self-study
 - Keeps NCP front-of-mind
- Questions consolidated weekly
 - Weekly Summary link sent with each Friday's question
- Open-ended style – not multiple-choice format
 - Questions often include additional information & references
 - Use added detail to:
 - ✓ Reinforce the concept presented in each question
 - ✓ Create additional notes or personal flash cards where needed



NCP Guide Program

- Pairs a certified/active NCP with exam registrant
- Role of NCP Guide:
 - To help establish a study plan
 - To provide general support and reminders
- Guide and NCP Exam Candidate may discuss:
 - Milestones / timeline of NCP program
 - Testing center experience
 - Partner training experience
 - Lessons learned and tips on how to recall areas of study
 - ECCHO study aids
- Guides do not
 - Teach study materials (refer to ECCHO or one of NCP partners)
 - Share any exam questions or answers
- See Guide Handbook for additional information including a program overview, call ideas and study tips <https://www.eccho.org/ncp-guide-get-a-guide>



Other NCP Study Aids

- NCP Exam Prep training courses
 - Offered by NCP Educational Partners
 - Based on core content developed/maintained by ECCHO
 - 11 webinars recommended
 - ✓ One or more review sessions recommended
 - Some Partners offer boot-camps or other in-person reviews
 - See partner listing and available training options at:
www.eccho.org/ncp-partners-providers
- Other Check Payments Resources:
 - Flash Cards (EPCOR)
 - CheckPro: Online testing tool (NEACH)
 - ECCHOEd training library (see ECCHO website)
 - Other check basics and/or certificate classes from partners
www.eccho.org/partner_resources



NCP Exam Prep: Core Training Course

- Eleven (11) sessions recommended for NCP Exam prep:
 - Check Payments and Check Processing
 - Regulations - Uniform Commercial Code
 - Regulations - Regulation CC – Part I
 - Regulations - Regulation CC – Part II
 - Standards and Formats
 - Image Exchange: Rules and Agreements – ECCHO Rules
 - Image Exchange: Rules and Agreements – Fed OC 3
 - Image Exchange: Processes
 - Exceptions - Returns and Adjustments
 - Check Products
 - Fraud, Risk, and Risk Mitigation
- One or more Training Review Session(s) recommended



NCP Training Partners

- ePayResources
- EPCOR
- First National Bankers' Bank
- MACHA
- NEACH
- PaymentsFirst
- Southern Financial Exchange
- TCH Payments Authority
- UMACHA
- United Bankers' Bank
- WACHA
- WesPay



Developing a Study Plan



Study Time

- Passing NCP exam takes **study**—even if you have many years of experience
- How much time?
 - Amount of time depends on your
 - ✓ Expertise/tenure working with check payments?
 - ✓ Breadth of experience?
 - ✓ Familiarity with questions/answers – do you need to look up the answer or do you know the answer
 - ✓ Ability and comfort-level with multiple-choice format exams
- May need to study more/less than others
 - Create a study approach that works for you!
- Most common advice from prior test-takers:
 - Start Early . . .and Study, Study, STUDY!**

Sample Study Program & Tips

- Complete JumpStart Reading program and review the complete NCP RoadMap
 - Determine what you know and don't know
 - Decide how much time you will have to study and allocate your study time accordingly
 - Add focus to cover those areas where you are less familiar with the NCP Exam Blueprint topics
- Read through the NCP P.R.E.P. Guide
 - Highlight or tag areas that are unclear or that you need to review further
 - ✓ Read through those sections more than once
 - Take all the quizzes found at the end of selected P.R.E.P. Guide sections
- Read all NCP Questions of the Day and answers (received via daily emails starting in January)
 - Review “Additional Information” and related materials as needed
- Make your own notebook/flashcards:
 - Writing it out can reinforce difficult concepts
- Take an NCP Exam Prep Training and/or Review course
 - See available NCP Partner offerings www.eccho.org/ncp-partners-providers
- Buddy up! Form a study group or get an NCP Guide www.eccho.org/ncp-guide-get-a-guide
 - Ask experts at your organization to discuss topics or answer questions
- Review materials until you know them without looking up the answers
 - Be able to apply that knowledge to scenario questions

Thank You!

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