

# **PROGRAM FOR CERTIFICATION**

Fellow in  
Temple  
Administration

**F.T.A.**

*Jointly Sponsored by the  
Union for Reform Judaism  
National Association of Temple Administrators  
and the  
Central Conference of American Rabbis  
through the  
Board of Certification for Temple Administrators*

# WHAT IS A FELLOW IN TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION?

## FTA

Administrators of Reform congregations often serve as role models for synagogue members and the community. It is a demanding and challenging profession requiring individuals with education, knowledge, training and distinct professional skills.

In recognition of the critical role played by a Temple administrator in the life of the congregation, the National Association of Temple Administrators (NATA), the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) and the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) set forth a proposed standard of knowledge and experience that is becoming a recognized credential for those who wish to demonstrate their competency as Temple Administrators. The Fellow in Temple Administration (FTA) Certification Program is another step in NATA's continuing effort to enhance the professionalism and knowledge of its membership.

The earning of an FTA by a Temple Administrator is objective evidence of an Administrator's professional competence. It differentiates the certificate holder from other Administrators in the field. Additionally, it demonstrates to the members of the congregation, to other professionals employed by the synagogue and to the community-at-large the Administrator's commitment to continued learning and improved professional performance.

### **ORIGIN AND AUTHORITY**

The Board of Certification (hereafter referred to as the "Board"), established in 1962, is authorized to establish standards for certification, to conduct examinations and to award its Certification of Fellowship to those candidates who have complied with the requirements for certification and have successfully passed its examinations.

Its membership consists of three members of NATA appointed by its president: the chairperson and director of the Joint Commission on Synagogue Administration appointed by the president of the URJ; and two members of the CCAR appointed by its executive vice president. In addition, an academician is appointed by the chairperson of the committee.

The Board is not an educational body. It confers no degree. Its certificate does not bestow legal qualification on a candidate. In no way does the Board purport to interfere with or limit the professional activities of any Temple Administrator. Neither is it the intent of the Board to define requirements for employment of a Temple Administrator by any congregation.

### **OBJECTIVES**

To establish standards of qualification for Temple Administrators who desire and request the Board's certification attesting to their ability to meet these standards.

To issue Certificates of Fellowship to those candidates who have met its requirements.

To further opportunities for better training of Temple Administrators in order to elevate the standards of the profession.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION**

1. Applicants must complete and submit the application form and provide all requested data completely and accurately at least 30 days before the announced date of the examination. The application must be submitted in accordance with the rules published by the Board, and it must be accompanied by an application fee of \$50.00, which non-refundable unless the applicant is rejected from taking the examinations. The candidate must sign the Candidate's Agreement, which is

part of the application form.

2. The Board reserves the right to reject an application for any reason deemed advisable and without stating the same, and the action of the Board shall be final.
3. The candidate must possess high ethical and professional standing in the profession.
4. The applicant must be a Regular Member in good standing of the National Association of Temple Administrators, and must be employed as a full-time administrator.

### **SENIOR MEMBER**

NATA has established a category of membership referred to as Senior Member. Senior Member status denotes that a Temple Administrator has embarked on the certification process and has completed a portion of the requirements needed to achieve the F.T.A.

### **CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY**

A Temple Administrator is eligible for certification upon:

- a. successful completion of all specified examinations in the subjects of synagogue management and Judaic studies as described herein;
- b. submission of an acceptable thesis; and
- c. completion of a minimum of three years of active service as a full time Administrator in a Reform congregation.

A Temple Administrator who is a Regular Member in good standing of NATA may begin the process of certification before achieving three years of service, but certification as a Fellow or recognition as a Senior Member require a minimum of three years full time service in a Reform congregation.

### **THE EXAMINATIONS**

1. Examinations are conducted at such times and places as the Board may from time to time designate. Regular examinations are scheduled annually in conjunction with NATA's Annual Convention as well as during NATA-sponsored Professional Institutes. Additional examinations may be scheduled on the request of groups or individuals completing special courses of study.
2. The Board may designate persons to serve as Proctors to the Board in the conduct of its examinations. Such Proctors may also serve as examiners in the oral portions of the examination.
3. The Board may conduct written and/or oral examinations of the candidates.
4. The examinations will be one and one half (1 1/2) hours in duration in each of the following areas of study (except Hebrew reading):
  - 1) Synagogue Finance
  - 2) Techniques and Tools of Management:
    - a) Office Management and Personnel Practices
    - b) Facilities Management
  - 3) Communications and Human Relations:
    - a) With congregants, lay leaders, rabbis and professionals
    - b) Leadership Development
    - c) Public Relations and Publicity
  - 4) History of Reform Judaism
  - 5) Reform Jewish Practices, Customs, Ceremonies and Liturgy

6) Hebrew Proficiency; the ability to read prayers, in Hebrew, from Reform prayer books.

Examinations in all subjects must be completed on the days designated. Candidates who fail an examination will be so notified by the board.

### **THE THESIS**

Each candidate will be required to submit an original paper of at least 2,000 words on a topic of the candidate's own choosing related to synagogue management and/or matters related to Reform Jewish life. The subject of the thesis should provide insight into some facet of the management process and should reflect issues of significance that can benefit a wide range of congregations.

The topic shall be subject to the approval of the Board. Once a topic has been selected, the candidate must submit a thesis proposal to the Board. The proposal, which includes a brief description of the objective of the paper and its rationale, an assessment of its relevance to the work of the Temple Administrator, an outline of the thesis and a preliminary bibliography. Upon approval of the topic, the candidate can commence writing.

If a proposal is rejected by the Board may not be re-submitted. At the discretion of the Board, the candidate shall submit a new proposal on a different subject or on the same subject in accordance with the Board's recommendations, which will be considered at a subsequent meeting of the Board.

Candidates whose papers are accepted as being satisfactory may, with the permission of the Board, publish such papers. All papers shall remain the property of NATA.

Accepted papers may be reproduced by NATA as part of a resource bank to provide assistance and guidance to colleague administrators or congregational lay leaders.

### **CERTIFICATION**

The decision of the Board is final in respect to the candidate's passing, failure or partial failure. The final action of the Board is based on the candidate's ethical and professional record, training and attainments, as well as on the results of his/her formal examinations and thesis.

A certified Administrator should refer to himself/herself as a "Fellow in Temple Administration" and may append the letters "F.T.A." after his/her name in all professional publications and correspondence.

### **REVOCAION OF CERTIFICATES**

Certificates issued by the Board are subject to the provisions of the Board, and each certificate is subject to revocation in the event that: (a) issuance of the certificate shall have been contrary to any of the provisions of the Board; or (b) the candidate so certified shall not have been eligible to receive such certificate, irrespective of whether or not the facts constituting him/her so ineligible were known to or could have been ascertained by the Board at the time of the issuance of such certificate; or (c) the candidate so certified shall have made any pertinent misstatement of fact in his/her application for certification; or (d) the Temple Administrator so certified shall violate the standards of ethical practice and conduct.

### **GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION IN THE AREA OF JEWISH CONTENT**

In preparing for examination in Jewish studies, candidates should understand that primary emphasis is directed to the application of Jewish history, thought and practice to the operations of the Reform synagogue and the life of the Reform Jew. That emphasis would relate especially to the evolution of Reform Jewish life in Europe and America, the range of belief and practice which distinguishes Reform Judaism and the application of those patterns of thought and practice to observance of rituals and ceremonies and the pursuit of social justice in Reform Jewish life.

In addition, candidates are required to demonstrate a basic Hebrew reading fluency and vocabulary to participate knowledgeably in the worship service and to understand the Hebrew terminology most frequently employed in study programs and ritual procedures of Reform congregations.

**CCAR-NATA-URJ  
BOARD OF CERTIFICATION FOR TEMPLE ADMINISTRATORS**

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Temple Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of Regular Membership status in NATA: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attach the following information:**

- 1) Professional Experience: List all positions, exact dates of employment and job title.
- 2) Educational
  - a) Background: List name of institution(s), degree(s) or diploma(s) earned together with date(s).
  - b) List courses in Jewish studies and/or Jewish Communal Service together with name of Institution(s), date(s), and credits or certificate(s) granted.
- 3) Attach any additional data, statement and/or job descriptions which you believe will assist in determining your eligibility.

**CANDIDATE'S AGREEMENT**

I hereby apply to the Board of Certification for Temple Administrators for examination in accordance with its rules and requirements and enclose the application fee of \$50.00 (payable to NATA), which is non-refundable unless I am rejected for examination. I also agree that prior to or subsequent to my examination; the Board may investigate my standing as a Temple Administrator, including my reputation for complying with the standards of ethics of the profession.

I hereby certify that all of the answers given by me in this application are true and complete.

Signature of Applicant:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**INQUIRIES:** NATA National Office: 1-800-966-NATA [www.natanet.org](http://www.natanet.org)