

## Vermont Certified Public Manager® Program Candidate Criteria Guidelines

Thank you for considering The Vermont Certified Public Manager® Program (VCPM). VCPM is a two-year leadership and management development curriculum offered by the Vermont Department of Human Resources as a part of its leadership and management programming through the Center for Achievement in Public Service (CAPS).

Success in VCPM relies on a moderate level of competency in a variety of areas. VCPM is not the “first stop” in most employee development plans but is an intermediate or advance step in developing leaders in the public sector, especially in state government. Candidates may apply for consideration in the following ways:

- An individual may apply directly to the program, having received the approval of her/his manager and financial officer (if different);
- A department or agency may arrange with VCPM to refer a pre-screened candidate; or
- An individual from another public-sector entity in Vermont may apply, documenting their funding source.

In all cases, please refer to the criteria below when determining whether VCPM may be the appropriate next step in one’s professional development plan. Candidates need not demonstrate excellence in any of these criteria but should have some working knowledge and experience as described. At the end of the criteria are suggestions for steps interested individuals can take to prepare for VCPM.

### Criterion 1: Demonstrates leadership in work and relationships.

VCPM candidates need not be supervisors or managers currently, if in the work they perform they must take “the long view” -- i.e.:

- Their work spans beyond their department; or
- They work with complex issues that require participation by various tiers of the organization, or by internal and external constituencies.

If they play a leadership role in guiding this work and can describe it from a “big picture” as well as a task perspective, they meet this criterion.

Applicants who are not supervisors or who have not had supervisory skills training comparable to [Supervising in State Government](#) should be prepared to demonstrate and document leadership experience, and equivalent training and skills.

### Criterion 2: Demonstrates a command of supervision concepts and skills, or comparable.

VCPM does not provide training in basic supervision skills but does rely on an assumption that anyone currently serving in that role, or about to take on such a role, has already achieved a basic level of competency in this area. Any VCPM candidate who is a supervisor or who is in line to become one must already demonstrate a command of the core competencies of supervision. This is most easily demonstrated by completing the Supervising in State Government Program, or by having taken another supervision skills program of similar weight. VCPM staff reserves the right to defer candidates until they have completed such a program.

### Criterion 3: Demonstrates aptitude in personal reflection and honesty, giving and receiving feedback, and teamwork.

VCPM calls on each participant to reflect on their strengths and challenges and to select and work on specific goals in personal development that will result in improved work-related communication and leadership. Individual applicants, and leaders who recommend candidates,

should consider whether they are ready to “hit the ground running” with these aptitudes. If not, a variety of appropriate developmental classes are available through the CAPS, or elsewhere.

Criterion 4: Demonstrates aptitude in analysis, planning, and strategic and systems thinking.

Similarly, VCPM calls on participants to apply increasing levels of planning, systems thinking, analysis and synthesis as the two years progress. We ask individual applicants and leaders referring employees to consider whether the candidate is ready to jump into this. They may benefit from first attending classes that introduce the more basic skills involved in strategy and systems work.

Criterion 5: Writes and communicates competently.

The VCPM curriculum assumes participants can express themselves in writing and orally using good English language skills. Written materials are well-organized, and verbal presentations, whether informal or formal, are cogent, appropriate to the audience, and rely on their own strengths. Candidates need not be perfect in this area. There will be opportunities to receive input and feedback on both skill sets. If an applicant does not function well in communication skills, we will recommend they begin their development program with other courses and apply to VCPM later in their plan.

Criterion 6: Has approval for the VCPM fee, sufficient time available, and the support from immediate and higher supervisors/managers.

VCPM requires a substantial time commitment, and missing classes can hamper both the learning process and one’s ability to complete the course on schedule. Two-to-three-day courses occur up to six times in the first year, and a substantial team project occurs in the second year. Success in VCPM requires that workloads be adjusted for participants such that they may complete their VCPM work as a part of a reasonable workload, and that participants will be afforded the flexibility they need to attend all classes and meetings, and to complete assignments outside of class.

**Acceptance**

Acceptance determinations are based on:

- The above criteria
- Space available
- Diverse cohort composition
- Manager approval

Thank you for considering VCPM. Please visit our [web page](#) for fees, course outlines, and an application form.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact:

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