

# **Georgia Association of Floodplain Management (GAFM)**



**CFM Mentor Program**

## ***Become a GAFM CFM Mentor or Mentee***

### **Overview**

Do you need professional guidance in preparing for the CFM exam or as a newly certified CFM ? Mentoring is a traditional method for assisting in the training of those who are wishing to take the CFM exam and/or for orienting individuals to “life as a CFM” once they have passed the exam. The CFM Mentor will be a “big brother” or “big sister” to the new CFM for the first two years after passing the exam, or for a longer period of time if desired by the Mentee and agreed to by the Mentor. The CFM Mentor will encourage continuing education through attending conferences and workshops at the local, state and national level, assist the new CFM in building a “network” at those conferences, and be a resource of where to find information and answers about issues and problems that the new CFM may encounter.

The CFM Mentor Program is also a valuable means for supporting the development – even accelerating the professional growth – of existing and experienced CFMs. Individuals who share knowledge, experiences, and skills to benefit someone else provide valuable leadership. Mentors also learn to hone their skills through teaching others.

The Georgia Association of Floodplain Management (GAFM) has set aside one of the At-Large Representative positions on the Board of Directors to be the CFM Mentor Program Coordinator. The Coordinator will enlist a group of volunteer mentors for the Program – it is recommended that the CFM Mentor have been a CFM in good standing for a minimum of two years.

It is preferred, but not required, that the Mentor be in the same geographical region in which the Mentee resides, and if at all possible, the Mentor should reside in a community similar to that of the Mentee.

## **To Become a CFM Mentor**

To become a CFM Mentor, all you have to have is a willingness to teach and to share your experiences as a CFM or floodplain manager and a commitment to meet (in person, on the phone, or on-line – whatever is mutually agreed on) with your Mentee as needed. It also helps to pinpoint specific skill areas where you have strengths and also to know the strengths of your colleagues so that if you don't know the answer, you know where to go to find it. It should be noted that the Mentor is not meant to take the place of the State NFIP Coordinator or FEMA Region IV for questions or issues of importance about floodplain management.

The Mentor may mentor more than one Mentee at a time, but it is recommended that the Mentor-Mentee relationship not exceed two Mentees at any given time.

It is recommended that the CFM Mentor(s) have been a CFM in good standing for a minimum of two years. It is preferred, but not required, that the Mentor be in the same geographical region in which the Mentee resides, and if at all possible, the Mentor should reside in a community similar to that of the Mentee.

## **To Become a CFM Mentee**

To become a CFM Mentee, all you have to have is a willingness to learn and a commitment to meet (in person, on the phone, or on-line – whatever is mutually agreed on) with your Mentor as needed. It also helps to know the specific areas where you have weaknesses and/or need specific attention and, after certification, areas which you would like to develop as a new CFM. It should be noted that the Mentor is not meant to take the place of the State NFIP Coordinator or FEMA Region IV for questions or issues of importance about floodplain management.

## **How to get started**

For CFM Mentors: Obtain a CFM Mentor Program - Mentor Application form online at [www.gafloods.org](http://www.gafloods.org). The form will include the following information: name, address (either home or work), e-mail and phone number(s) where you prefer to be contacted, your region and your area(s) of expertise (such as coastal, local government, being a floodplain manager, etc.)

For CFM Mentees: Obtain a CFM Mentor Program – Mentee Application form online at [www.gafloods.org](http://www.gafloods.org). Information will need to be provided on the form such as name, address (either home or work), e-mail and phone number(s) where you prefer to be contacted, your region and your area(s) of weakness (mapping, hydraulics and hydrology, understanding the Model Ordinance, etc)

### **The first meeting**

The CFM Mentor Program Coordinator will give the Mentee the name and contact information of the Mentor. The Mentee will be responsible for scheduling a meeting with the Mentor – this can be in person, on the phone or on-line – whatever is mutually agreed on, although a face-to-face meeting is encouraged for the first meeting.

For Mentor/Mentee relationships in which the Mentee is preparing to take the CFM exam, the Mentor and Mentee will mutually set goals and discuss learning strategies including preferred learning styles of the Mentee.

For Mentor/Mentee relationships in which the Mentee is already a CFM, the Mentor will assess needs of the Mentee, if any, and provide resources and/or contact information to the Mentee to meet his/her needs.

### **Successive meetings**

For Mentor/Mentee relationships in which the Mentee is preparing to take the CFM exam, the Mentor and Mentee will agree on dates and times for successive study sessions through the taking of the CFM exam. After the exam, the Mentor will either:

- 1) Assess weaknesses as outlined in a non-passing exam;
- 2) Begin to work on new goals and strategies to assist the Mentee in preparing to retake the CFM exam;

-or-

- 3) Begin to mentor the Mentee as a new CFM.

For Mentor/Mentee relationships in which the Mentee is already a CFM, the Mentor will provide resources and/or contact information to the Mentee to meet his/her needs as the need arises.

### **Continuing the partnership**

The CFM Mentor will be a “big brother” or “big sister” to the new CFM for the first two years after passing the exam, or the first two years after establishing the Mentor/Mentee relationship, and for a longer period of time if the Mentee desires and it is agreed to by the Mentor. The Mentor will be the “go-to person”, in most cases, for the new CFM and will provide advice and guidance, as applicable. The Mentor will also provide resources

for the new CFM, when the Mentor cannot readily answer a question or solve a problem on their own. It is not the intent of this Program for the Mentor to become a “crutch”, but rather a facilitator for guiding the Mentee to the people and resources that the Mentee needs to successfully fulfill their role as a new CFM, independent of the Mentor. It should be noted that the Mentor is not meant to take the place of the State NFIP Coordinator or FEMA Region IV for questions or issues of importance about floodplain management.

The Mentor will also encourage training, continuing education, and networking among peers to promote the sound development of the new CFM.

### **Concluding the partnership**

Since the Mentor-Mentee relationship is a voluntary relationship for both the Mentor and the Mentee, either the Mentor or the Mentee can conclude the relationship at any point with proper professional courtesies being exercised.

Please remember that the Mentor-Mentee relationship can be concluded for a variety of reasons such as health, job responsibilities, family obligations and/or for many other unforeseen factors. It should be noted that conclusion of the Mentor/Mentee relationship does not necessarily mean that there have been conflicts between the Mentor and Mentee.

If the conclusion of the Mentor-Mentee relationship is prior to the CFM exam, or if the Mentee wishes to enlist another Mentor in a different area of expertise, or if the relationship is concluded in the first two years of the Mentee as a new CFM, a new Mentor can be arranged by contacting the CFM Mentor Program Coordinator via the information provided for the Coordinator on the website at [www.gafloods.org](http://www.gafloods.org).

### **Feedback**

At the conclusion of the Mentor/Mentee experience, a “CFM Mentor Program Feedback” form may be obtained online at [www.gafloods.org](http://www.gafloods.org). The “CFM Mentor Program Feedback” form is for both the Mentor and the Mentee to fill out in order to provide feedback to the CFM Mentor Program Coordinator and the GAFM Executive Board of Directors on the merits of the CFM Mentor Program. Be honest in evaluating the CFM Mentor Program – share both positive and negative feedback - the success of the Program depends on the feedback from the Mentors and the Mentees.

Print and mail the completed CFM Mentor Program Feedback form to the CFM Mentor Program Coordinator at the address provided on the form – these forms will be kept in strict confidence and will only be viewed by the Coordinator and members of the

Executive Board (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) for assessing the effectiveness of the CFM Mentor Program.

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in the Georgia Association of Floodplain Management's CFM Mentor Program. It is the goal of GAFM's CFM Mentor Program to support the development and professional growth of aspiring, new, existing, experienced, and seasoned CFMs within the State of Georgia.*

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