

Government Finance Officers Association

Award Management System

End User Documentation:

Using the Award Management System

- Registering for the AMS
- Submitting the COA Application and Fee Payment Forms
- Navigating the Repository

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Laserfiche®

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Using the Award Management System

This document describes how to create an account for the for the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Award Management System (AMS), access and submit an application and fee payments for the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (COA) Program, and how to navigate the Laserfiche repository to view documents related to the COA.

This document describes:

- Creating an AMS Account
- Accessing the COA Application
 - Logging into Laserfiche Forms
- Submitting the COA Application
 - Completing the Application
- Submitting Payment
- Answering Questions from GFOA
- Navigating the Repository

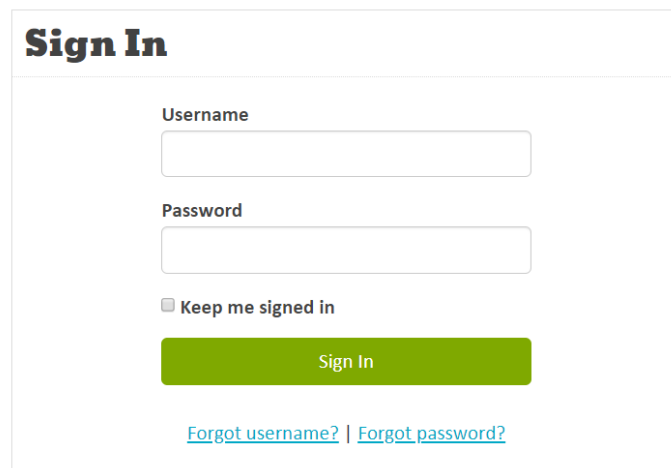
Creating an AMS Account

Please note that the AMS is **organization-based**, not member-based like the GFOA membership system. Only **one** registration per organization is accepted. Sign-on credentials are issued to the organization and will be associated with the email address you provide in this registration. You may update this information at any time by contacting coaprogram@gfoa.org.

To create an AMS account, log in to <https://estore.gfoa.org/imis15/CoaAWARD> with your personal GFOA username. This is the only time you will use your personal GFOA username. You will only need to create an AMS account the **first time** you submit a COA application.

GFOA

Sig

A screenshot of a 'Sign In' form. The form has a title 'Sign In' in bold black text. Below the title are two input fields: 'Username' and 'Password'. Below the 'Password' field is a checkbox labeled 'Keep me signed in'. Below the checkbox is a green button with the text 'Sign In'. At the bottom of the form are two links: 'Forgot username?' and 'Forgot password?'.

Sign In

Username

Password

☐ Keep me signed in

Sign In

[Forgot username?](#) | [Forgot password?](#)

Upon login, you will be presented with a data confirmation form that will ask you to confirm your email address, your company's information and membership status.

If any information is incorrect, please close the form and contact membership@gfoa.org to have it corrected. If all is correct, click the green bar at the bottom of the screen and submit.

After submission, you will receive an email with a temporary password. Change your password immediately.

NOTE: If instead of the data confirmation form you receive a notification like the one below, this means that your government is already registered. You can skip this step and go directly to Accessing the AMS below. Contact the email address below or go to <https://www.gfoa.org/submit-an-application-or-request-an-extension-for-the-coa-program> for login instructions.

**An account has already been created for your organization's IMIS ID.
For more information, please contact the AMS staff at ams@gfoa.org**

Accessing the AMS

You will access the AMS to file extension requests, submit COA applications, and respond to inquiries from GFOA staff.

To access the AMS, perform the following steps:

1. Enter following link into your browser to access the AMS submission portal:

<https://lf.gfoa.org/Forms>

The log in form appears:

The image shows a screenshot of a web-based login form for Laserfiche. At the top, there is an orange header bar with the word "Laserfiche" in white. Below this, the form is contained within a light gray border. It features a "User name" label above a text input field. Below that is a "Password" label above another text input field. To the right of the password field is a link that says "Forgot password?". Below the password field is a gray "Sign In" button. At the bottom of the form, there are two checkboxes: "This is a public computer" and "I have an MFA code". At the very bottom of the form, there is a small copyright notice: "©2020 Laserfiche".

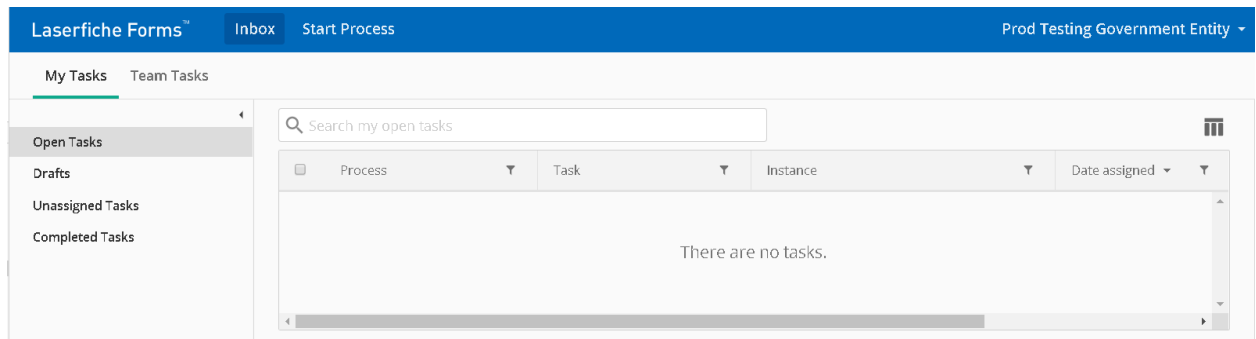
2. In the **User name** box, enter your government's GFOA member ID number (NOT your personal GFOA member ID.) You can find this number on the comments document you received from a prior year award.

3. In the **Password** box, enter your password. If you do not remember your password, click “forgot password?” and a password reset link will be sent.
4. If you are using a public computer, select the **This is a public computer** box.

Note: Do not select **I have an MFA code**.

5. Select **Sign In**.

Your inbox appears:



Submitting the COA Application

The COA application collects information required by GFOA to process your application, including information about your organization, auditors, and specific budgetary disclosure questions. If any information is missing or incomplete, you will receive an email with details about the information that is missing information and how to submit it.

Completing the Application

This section describes how to complete a COA application. All fields on the COA application marked with an asterisk are required.

Completing the Government Information Section

To complete the government information section, perform the following steps:

1. Log in to the AMS as noted in the Accessing the AMS section above
2. In the top navigation bar, select **Start Process**. Information similar to the following appears:

Laserfiche Forms™
Inbox
Start Process
Prod Testing Government Entity

Process ▲	Description
☆ AMS Account Update	Start
☆ Check COA Status	Start
☆ COA Application	Start
☆ COA Extension Request	Start
☆ Unsubscribe from COA Status Emails	Start

1-5 of 5
Show 20 ▼

3. Next to **COA Application**, select **Start**.

The first section of the COA Application Form appears similar to the following:

COA Application Form

Applicants must submit their COA to GFOA within six months of the government's fiscal year end (or, if that date falls on a weekend or holiday, the next business day). GFOA will consider a one-month extension to this deadline.

If you have questions, please e-mail coaprogram@gfoa.org or call the Technical Services Center at (312) 977-9700.



Section I: Government Information

Name of Government *	State	Government's Member ID# *
Agency COA Test Acct Spec Dist	Illinois	300253415

If the Government Name and/or Member ID is incorrect, please contact GFOA member services at membership@gfoa.org.

Please select the dates of the fiscal year covered by the report. For the start date, the first day of the month is assumed, and for the end date, the last day of the month is assumed.

Report Fiscal Year Begin:		Report Fiscal Year End:	
Year * (?)	Month *	Year * (?)	Month *
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Government Type *
(choose from drop down list)

Size Indicator*

Please enter the size of your organization in the Size Indicator field. Be sure your entry matches the number in the Statistical section of your report. Usually this is a figure in the Statistical section of your financial report.

- School Districts – enter total district enrollment
- Special District (including stand-alone business-type activities, colleges/universities, councils of governments and investment pools) – enter number of FTE employees
- Retirement/Pension/OPEB – enter number of members
- All others – enter population

4. The **Name of Government, State, and Government's Member ID#** fields should be automatically filled with your information. If they are not, or if any information is incorrect or if the government name is not as it appears on the comprehensive annual financial report, contact GFOA member services at membership@gfoa.org.
5. In the **Report Fiscal Year Begin** section, select the **Year** and **Month** your fiscal year began.
6. In the **Report Fiscal Year End** section, select the **Year** and **Month** your fiscal year ended.

Note: If you select a date range covering a period of more or less than 12 months, the following request for acknowledgement appears:

☐ I acknowledge that the report covers a period that is either less than twelve months or greater than twelve months.

You must select the box to confirm that you are submitting a report that covers a period of time less than or greater than one year.

Note: Applications to the COA Program are due within six months of a government's fiscal year end. If your fiscal year end was more than six months ago, a link will appear that allows you to file an extension request. Select the link. Any information already entered in the application will be pre-populated in the extension request form. You will not be able to submit the application until receiving an extension.

When GFOA receives your extension request, it will be evaluated, and you will receive an email indicating whether your request has been approved. If you have been granted an extension, the following notification will appear on your COA application, which you will now be able to complete and submit:

Your extension request has been approved!

7. Confirm that the **Government Type** is correct. Make any necessary changes. For example, if the population of a city was 305,000 and the government type was listed as Municipalities Small, the government type should be changed to Municipalities Large.

8. If your government type is Special District, a subtype field will appear. Select the correct subtype from the **Report Subtype** list.
9. In the **Size Indicator** box, enter the appropriate number. Depending on the type of government, the following numbers should be entered:
 - States, municipalities, and counties should enter the population.
 - School districts should enter the total student enrollment in the district.
 - Special districts (including stand-alone business type activities, colleges/universities, councils of governments and investment pools) should enter the number of FTE employees
 - Retirement and OPEB plans should enter the total number of members (active + inactive) in the plan.

Completing the Submitter Information Section

The first part of the submitter information section appears similar to the following:

Section II: Submitter Information	
Official Requesting Review – the person who will receive notification of results, detailed comments and suggestions for improvement, the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the Award for Financial Reporting Achievement (AFRA), and a press release.	
First Name *	Last Name *
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Title *	Salutation *
<input type="text"/>	(Mr., Ms., Miss., etc.) <input type="text"/>
Email *	Phone *
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Confirm Email *	
<input type="text"/>	

Report Preparer – the person who prepared the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and can answer technical inquiries and other questions about information included in the report.

Same as Official Requesting Review?

First Name *

Last Name *

Title *

Salutation *

(Mr., Ms., Miss., etc.)

Email *

Phone *

Confirm Email *

To complete the submitter information section, perform the following steps:

1. In the **Official Requesting Review** section, in the **First Name** and **Last Name** boxes, enter your name.
2. In the **Title** box, enter your job title.
3. In the **Salutation** box, enter your preferred salutation (e.g., Mr., Ms., Mayor).
4. In the **Email** and **Confirm Email** boxes, enter your email address.
5. In the **Phone** box, enter your phone number.

Continue to the **Report Preparer** section.

6. Complete the Report preparer section. If you are also the preparer, select the **Same as Official Requesting Review?** button to copy information that has already been entered.
7. Continue to the next section. Here the government can choose and up to three individuals and one Department to be recognized as being primarily responsible for the government's earning the certificate were the government to receive the certificate:

If the government is awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting the Award for Financial Reporting Achievement (AFRA) will be prepared to recognize those that contributed to the achievement of the award. You may choose to recognize a department and/or up to three individuals as being primarily responsible for the government's success in earning the certificate. Identify the department name and/or up to three individual names below (each individual receives their own award).

Who should receive the AFRA? *

- ☐ Department
☐ Individuals
☐ None

8. If you do not want to have your organization receive an AFRA, select **None**.

If you want a department to receive an AFRA, continue to the next step.

If you want an individual, or individuals, to receive an AFRA, go to step 10.

Note: You may select both a department and up to three individuals to receive AFRA's.

9. If you would like to select a department to receive an AFRA, select **Department**. The following appears. Enter the name of the department in the space provided:

Who should receive the AFRA? *

- ☒ Department
☐ Individuals
☐ None

AFRA Department Name * (?)

Note: Do not include commas or slashes in the department name.

10. If you would like to select an individual, or individuals, to receive the AFRA, select **Individuals**.

The following appears:

AFRA Individuals

Name *

Title *

Add up to three individuals

[Add](#)

11. Enter the individual's name and title in the appropriate boxes.

12. If you want to add a second individual, select **Add**. Enter the name and title of the second individual:

AFRA Individuals

Name* <input type="text" value="William Cooper"/>	Title* <input type="text" value="Accountant"/>	×
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	×

Add up to three individuals

[Add](#)

13. Repeat step 12 to add a third individual. To remove an individual, at the right of the row, select the X.

When you have completed adding AFRA recipients, continue to the next question.

14. If the government were to receive the award, the government can elect to have a formal announcement of the award and a press release to be prepared for a third party, such as a mayor or board chair. In the **Formal Announcement / Press Release** section, select the appropriate option.

If you select **Yes**, the following appears. Fill in the information as requested:

Formal announcement letter / press release*

If the government is awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, do you wish GFOA to send a formal announcement of the award and a related press release to another official such as the mayor or board chair?

☒ **Yes**
☐ **No**

First Name* <input type="text"/>	Last Name* <input type="text"/>
Title* <input type="text"/>	Salutation* <input type="text"/>

Email* (?)

Confirm Email* (?)

15. Continue to the award medallion / plaque address section. The information provided in this section lets GFOA know who to send medallions and plaques to, and what address to send them to:

If the Government is awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, you will receive either an award medallion (for participants who have previously received the Certificate) or an award plaque (for first-time recipients and those who have received the Certificate ten times since receiving their previous plaque). Please provide the name and address of the individual to whom GFOA should send the medallion or plaque:

Same as Official Requesting Review?

First Name* Last Name*

Title* Salutation*

Street Address*

Street address only. GFOA does not ship to PO boxes.

City* Zip Code*

State* Country*

United States of America

16. Enter the appropriate information. If you are the recipient, select the **Same as Official Requesting Review?** button to populate the **First Name**, **Last Name**, **Title**, and **Salutation** boxes.
Note: Please provide a physical street address, not a P.O. box. Please include suite numbers or floor numbers in the address where applicable.
17. Continue to the **Auditor** section.

Completing the Auditor Information Section

The auditor information section appears as follows:

Section III: Auditor Information

Audit Agency or Firm Name *

Start typing your audit firm name. A list will appear with selections that match your entry. Then, select the corresponding State. If your audit firm is your state auditor, please select “**State Auditor**” as the audit firm name and then select your corresponding state. **Do NOT type your state as part of the audit firm name.** After choosing one of the Audit Agency or Firm options and selecting a State, a table below will be presented. If our database contains multiple addresses or contacts for your selection, you will be presented with rows and checkboxes to select the correct contact and address. If your audit firm is not in our database, please complete all fields in this section. Please check for variations of your audit firm name in the selection list before entering your own data.

Audit Agency or Firm State *

Select an existing auditor:

First	Last	Address	City	State Zip	Phone	Email
Contact First Name *	Contact Last Name *					
Phone *	Email *					
Street Address *	City *					
State / Region / Province *	Postal / Zip Code * (?)					
Country *						
USA						

☐ Clear Auditor Fields

To complete the auditor section, perform the following steps:

1. In the **Audit Agency or Firm Name** box, enter the name of the audit agency that audited the government’s comprehensive annual financial report. This box functions as a search box, and as you enter keywords of the audit agency name, the name may appear in a drop-down menu. Select it when it does. If your audit firm is your state auditor, choose State Auditor as the audit firm name and then choose the corresponding state in the State field below; do NOT include the state name as part of the audit firm name.

2. In the **Audit Agency or Firm State** list, select the state where the audit agency is located. If the firm has offices in multiple states, select the state where your specific auditor is located.
3. A list of auditors appears, for example:

Select an existing auditor:

First	Last	Address	City	State	Zip	Phone	Email
<input type="checkbox"/> James	Arnette	425 5th Avenue North	Nashville	TN	37243	615-401-7841	jim.arnette
<input type="checkbox"/> Jeff	Bailey	425 5th Avenue North	Nashville	TN	37243	615-401-7841	jeff.bailey@
<input type="checkbox"/> Robyn	Probus	425 5th Avenue North	Nashville	TN	37243	615-401-7960	robyn.prob
<input type="checkbox"/> Steve	Reeder	James K. Polk Building Suite 1500	Nashville	TN	37243	931-526-4210	steve.reed
<input type="checkbox"/> Mark	Treece	5401 Kingston Pike, Building 2 Su	Knoxville	TN	37919	865-594-6134	mark.treec

4. If your auditor is listed, select the box next to their name. Their information will be copied to the appropriate contact information boxes beneath this list of existing auditors. If specific contact information needs to be updated, changes can be made directly to the appropriate contact information boxes.

If your auditor is not listed, enter the auditor's information in the contact information boxes manually.

Note: If you select an incorrect auditor, select the **Clear Auditor Fields** button beneath the auditor information boxes.

5. Continue to the **GASB Statements** section:

Please check any applicable GASB statements that this agency newly implemented in this report:

<input type="checkbox"/> GASB 83	<input type="checkbox"/> GASB 84	<input type="checkbox"/> GASB 87
<input type="checkbox"/> GASB 88	<input type="checkbox"/> GASB 89	<input type="checkbox"/> GASB 90
<input type="checkbox"/> GASB 91	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Guide 2019-1	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Guide 2019-2

6. Select the appropriate boxes to indicate the statements that have been newly implemented in the comprehensive annual financial report that is being submitted.
Continue to the next section.

Completing the Display and Disclosure Section

The display and disclosure section appears as follows:

Section IV: Display and Disclosure Questions

Please answer each of the following questions. Your answers will assist the SRC in determining whether the item addressed by the question is properly displayed or disclosed in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Questions are Applicable to Material Items Only

1. Is the government included in the reporting entity of another governmental unit? *

(e.g., as a department, enterprise fund, fiduciary fund, or component unit)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Did the government engage in short-term debt activity during the year (e.g., anticipation notes, user of lines of credit), even if no short-term debt was outstanding at the beginning or end of the year? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Does the government pay all or a portion of the cost of retiree healthcare? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

4. If retirees participate in the same healthcare plan as active employees, do retirees pay the same blended premium for healthcare as active employees? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

5. Does your entity legally adopt a budget for government funds? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

To complete the display and disclosure section, perform the following steps:

1. For the **Is the government included in the reporting entity of another governmental unit?** question, select **Yes** or **No**.

If you select **No**, go to step 3.

If you select **Yes**, the following appears:

1. Is the government included in the reporting entity of another governmental unit? *

(e.g., as a department, enterprise fund, fiduciary fund, or component unit)?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes: *

- ☐ 1.a) Is this government unit reported in one or more separate funds within the primary government and not a fiduciary component unit?
- ☐ 1.b) Is this government unit a fiduciary component unit?
- ☐ 1.c) Is this government unit reported as a discretely presented component unit in the primary government's CAFR?
- ☐ 1.d) None of the above. (This application is ineligible for the program.)

2. Select the appropriate response. If you select **1.d**, do not continue. You will be unable to submit the application.
3. For the **Did the government engage in short-term debt activity during the year (e.g., anticipation notes, user of lines of credit), even if no short-term debt was outstanding at the beginning or end of the year?** question, select **Yes** or **No**.
4. For the **Does the government pay all or a portion of the cost of retiree healthcare?** question, select **Yes**, **No**, or **N/A**.
5. For the **If retirees participate in the same healthcare plan as active employees, do retirees pay the same blended premium for healthcare as active employees?** question, **Yes**, **No**, or **N/A**.
6. For the **Does your entity legally adopt a budget for government funds?** question, select **Yes** or **No**.

If you select **No**, you are finished with this section.

7. If you select **Yes**, the following appears:

5. Does your entity legally adopt a budget for government funds? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

5.a Select the legal level of budgetary control which represents the level at which the government's management may not reallocate appropriations over a predetermined limit, if at all, without approval of the governing body. *

5.b Is a different legal level of budgetary control applicable to other funds? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

5.c Did the government publicly issue a separate budget report which demonstrates compliance at the legal level of budgetary control? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

5.d If your CAFR reports government funds, check the applicable funds and indicate the number of funds with legally adopted annual budgets for each fund type below:

<input type="checkbox"/> General fund	<input type="checkbox"/> Special revenue funds	<input type="checkbox"/> Debt service funds
<input type="checkbox"/> Capital projects funds	<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent funds	

8. Select the appropriate level of budgetary control from the list in Question 5.a.
9. For the **Is a different legal level of budgetary control applicable to other funds?** Question 5.b, select **Yes** or **No**.

If you select **No**, continue to step 12, Question 5.c.

If you select **Yes**, continue to the next step.

10. The following appears:

5.b Is a different legal level of budgetary control applicable to other funds? *

☒ Yes
☐ No

5.b.1 Explanation *

11. In the **5.b.1 Explanation** box, enter an explanation of where different levels of budgetary control applies.

12. For Question 5.c, select Yes or No in response to the following: **Did the government publicly issue a separate budget report which demonstrates compliance at the legal level of budgetary control?**

Select “Yes” only if the budgetary comparisons in the comprehensive annual financial report for the general fund and any special revenue funds that have legally adopted annual budgets are not detailed enough to demonstrate compliance at the legal level of budgetary control. A separate budget report is needed to show that level of detail.

Select “No” if the budgetary comparisons in the comprehensive annual financial report do demonstrate compliance at the legal level of budgetary control for these funds and no separate report is needed.

13. For Question 5.d, **If your comprehensive annual financial report includes government funds, check the applicable funds and indicate the number of funds with legally adopted annual budgets for each fund type below** , select the appropriate options.

If you only select **General fund**, you are finished with this section.

If you select any option in addition to the **General fund**, an additional box will appear for each additional fund type selected:

5.d If your government reports governmental funds, check the applicable funds and indicate the number of funds with legally adopted annual budgets for each fund type below:

☐ General fund
☐ Special revenue funds
☐ Debt service funds

☐ Capital projects funds
☐ Permanent funds

14. In the box that appears for each fund type, enter the number of funds with legally adopted annual budgets. For example, if you have five capital projects funds with legally adopted annual budgets, in the **5.d.3 Capital projects funds** box, enter **5**.

Continue to the next section.

Completing the Upload Required Documents Section

A section to upload required documents appears next:

Section V: Upload Required Documents

Please upload PDFs of the required documents

(?) Comprehensive Annual Financial Report	(?) Prior Year Comments and Applicant Responses
(?) Original Adopted Budget Resolutions or Ordinances	(?) Separate Budget Report

Note: The number of documents that need to be submitted and therefore the number of upload buttons that appear is dependent on answers to questions in the display and disclosures section and whether the government submitted to the program the previous year.

To upload the required documents, perform the following steps:

1. Select the **Comprehensive Annual Financial Report** button. A window appears displaying the files on your PC.
2. Browse to the correct file.
3. Select the file and then select **Open**. The file is attached to the COA application.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 for each button that appears in the upload section.

Note: Only files with .pdf extensions can be uploaded. If a file other than a pdf file is to be uploaded, it will need to be converted to a pdf file and then uploaded. Also, you will only see upload buttons for documents that are required for your application. Some shown above may not be applicable for your application.

Completing the COA Fee Section

The COA Fee section appears next:

Section VI: COA Fee	
<p>The COA review fee is shown below. Please choose your method of payment for the COA fee shown below. If you have chosen to pay by credit card, after application submission, you will automatically be directed to the payment screen to complete payment.</p> <p>If you have chosen to pay by check, the individual designated as the Official Requesting Review on your application will receive an invoice for the COA fee shown below.</p>	
COA Fee*	Method of Payment*
\$ 1,150.00	<input type="radio"/> Pay Online <input type="radio"/> Pay by check

The COA fee is automatically determined based on your government type and size and whether the government is a member of GFOA.

NOTE: If the COA Fee does not automatically populate, please be sure that you've entered the correct size indicator for your entity as noted in the legend to the right of the Size Indicator field and that the entry in the Government Type field is correct. For population-based types, you may need to adjust the Government Type based on your size indicator. Finally, be sure that you have answered all questions in Section IV Display and Disclosure Questions as those affect the fee calculation.

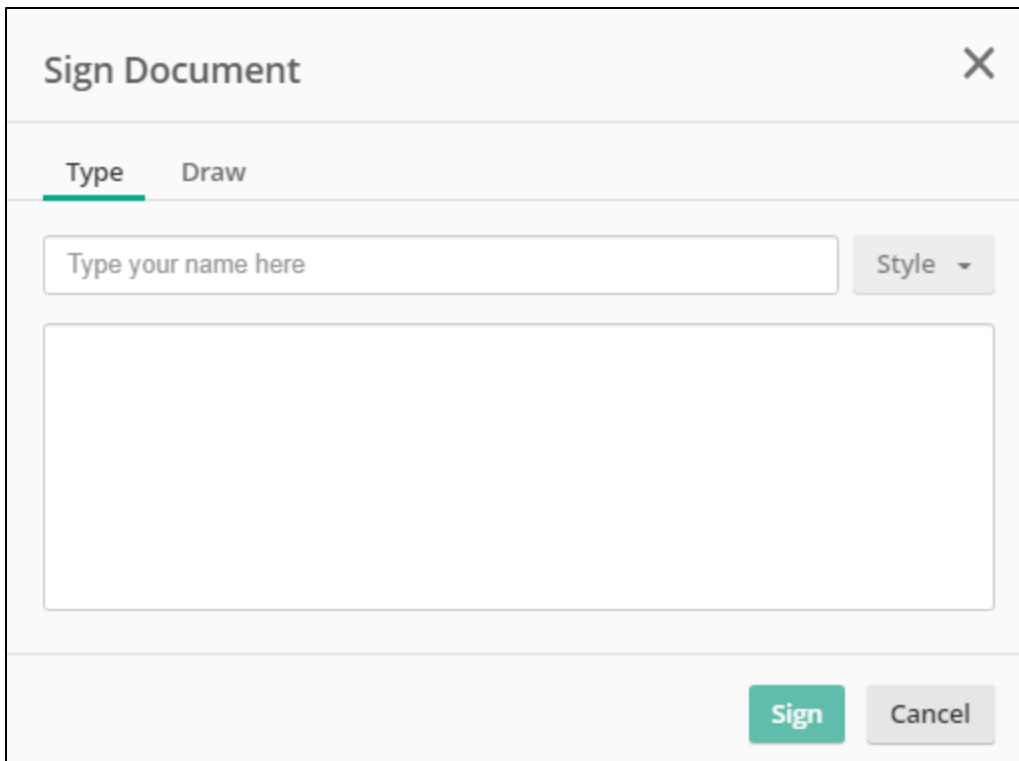
In the **Method of Payment** section, select whether you are paying online or by check. If you select **Pay Online**, after you submit the application, you will be redirected to GFOA's online payment gateway. (For more information about online payments, go to the Submitting Payment section of this document). Continue to the next section.

Completing the Submission Authorization Section

The submission authorization section appears:

PARTICIPANT APPLICATION AND CONSENT		
<p>By submitting this Participant Application and Consent (Application) for the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Program (Program), the Applicant hereby requests and authorizes the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) to review the information contained in the Application, accompanying Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (Report), and any other materials provided in connection with the Application.</p> <p>Applicant understands and acknowledges that the Program is intended solely to: (i) recognize state and local governments' efforts to make financial reports available to the public in a manner that is readable and organized; and (ii) encourage those entities to produce Report documents that comply with GFOA's Program criteria. Applicant acknowledges that it is responsible for satisfying all applicable generally accepted accounting principles and legal requirements. Applicant further represents and warrants that it will at all times rely on its own independent judgment to determine the accuracy, adequacy, or sufficiency of the financial information or practices presented in its Application, the Report, and any other materials provided in connection with the Application. Applicant understands and acknowledges that GFOA only reviews the Report for compliance with Program criteria (some of which are based on certain generally accepted accounting principles), and GFOA does not otherwise evaluate or assess the accuracy, adequacy, or sufficiency of the financial information made available by Applicant or the financial solvency or soundness of Applicant or its financial practices. Applicant further understands and acknowledges that receipt of a Certificate of Achievement is not, and may not be used to imply, GFOA's endorsement, evaluation, or approval of the accuracy, adequacy, sufficiency, or financial soundness of Applicant's financial status.</p> <p>Applicant represents that the information provided in this Application, the Report, and any other materials provided in connection with the Application are truthful, accurate, and complete, and Applicant will cooperate fully with GFOA in connection with participation in the Program. GFOA reserves the right to disqualify Applicant from further participation in the Program if Applicant submits any false, misleading, or incomplete information in its Application, the Report, or any other materials provided in connection with the Application. Applicant understands and acknowledges that its Application does not create a contractual relationship with GFOA, and Applicant hereby waives any claim for damages, equitable relief, or otherwise that it may have against GFOA, its officers, directors, members, employees, and agents by reason of any act of omission or commission that they, or any of them, may take in good faith in connection with this Application.</p>		
<p>Policy compliance *</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Select to confirm that all the information entered in this form is accurate and correct, and that you consent to the statement above.</p>	<p>Electronic Signature *</p> <div>Sign</div>	<p>Date *</p> <p>Date will be automatically entered upon submission</p>
<p>Processing this application may take a minute. Please don't select the submit button twice.</p>		

1. Select the box to confirm that the information entered is accurate and correct.
2. Select the **Sign** button. The following appears:

A screenshot of a 'Sign Document' dialog box. The title bar at the top says 'Sign Document' with a close button (X) on the right. Below the title bar are two tabs: 'Type' (which is selected and underlined in green) and 'Draw'. Under the 'Type' tab, there is a text input field containing the placeholder text 'Type your name here'. To the right of this field is a 'Style' button with a downward arrow. Below the text field is a large, empty rectangular box for drawing a signature. At the bottom right of the dialog are two buttons: a green 'Sign' button and a grey 'Cancel' button.

3. Type your name in the box. Alternatively, select **Draw** and then enter your signature. When your signature is entered, select **Sign**.
4. Confirm that you have entered all required information, and then select **Submit Application**. It may take several days for GFOA to review and validate your application and confirm all required documents have been submitted. An email will be sent to the email address entered in the **Submitter Email** box to confirm the application has been received. A second email will be sent after the application and attachments have been verified and the application is determined eligible for review.

The receipt confirmation email will include a full copy of the application attached as a pdf file. Additionally, your AMS account has access to the GFOA repository where your uploaded files, award documents, and GFOA policy documents are stored. A link to the repository is provided on the GFOA web site. For more information on the GFOA repository, see the related user manual.

Submitting Payment

Paying the COA Fee Online

If you selected **Pay Online**, after your application has processed, you will be redirected to the **COA Submission Fee** page:

COA Submission Fee

Please choose your method of payment for the COA fee shown below. For credit card payments, please enter the credit card number and expiration date.

AMOUNT

\$ 1150.00 USD

Note! Sandbox Mode

PAYMENT METHOD

PayPal

Card Number

Expiration Date

Submit

To pay your COA fee online, perform the following steps:

1. Select the **PayPal** button to pay using PayPal, or enter your credit card number and expiration date in the **Card Number** box and **Expiration Date** box as appropriate. The amount charged appears in the **Amount** box.
2. If you use a credit card for payment, after you select **Submit**, select confirm. Your payment will be submitted through BrainTree, a division of PayPal.

Otherwise, follow instructions on the PayPal site to submit payment.

After you have submitted payment, an invoice will be sent to the email address entered in the **Submitter Email** box on the COA application.

Paying the COA Fee by Check

If you selected **Pay by Check**, after your application has been processed, you will receive an invoice for the COA fee. Mail the check to the address provided on the invoice. Please note that GFOA will not release results of its review if payment has not been received.

Answering Questions from GFOA

During the course of the application process, GFOA staff may request further information or have additional questions. Any requests will take place through Laserfiche Forms.

If GFOA needs additional information on your application, you will receive an email at the address entered in the **Submitter Email** box with the subject *Your COA Application requires your attention*. The email will indicate the information GFOA is requesting and will contain a link to your Laserfiche Inbox.

Process	Task	Instance	Date assigned
▼ Today (12/30/2020) (1)			
COA Application	Application Re-Submissi...	COA Application: Agency COA Test Acct Spec ...	10:38 AM

To respond to GFOA, perform the following steps:


1. Log in to the AMS.
2. Select the appropriate task from the **Open Tasks** in your Inbox.

The following appears:

COA Application Form

Applicants must submit their financial report to GFOA within six months of the government's fiscal year end (or, if that date falls on a weekend or holiday, the next business day). GFOA will consider a one-month extension to this deadline.

If you have questions, please e-mail coaprogram@gfoa.org or call the Technical Services Center at (312) 977-9700.



Section I: Government Information

Name of Government*	State	Government's Member ID#*
Agency COA Test Acct Spec Dist	Illinois	300253415

If the Government Name and/or Member ID is incorrect, please contact GFOA member services at membership@gfoa.org.

Please select the dates of the fiscal year covered by the report. For the start date, the first day of the month is assumed, and for the end date, the last day of the month is assumed.

Application Re-Submission

COA Application: Agency COA Test Acct Spec Dist - 300253415 - 01145 - 12/30/2020

Summary **Action History**

- 12/30/2020 10:38 AM
... **Prod Testing Government Entity** is in process with task [Application Re-Submission](#)
- 12/30/2020 10:38 AM
... **Diane Griffin** is in process with task
- 12/30/2020 10:03 AM
... **Finance** is in process with task
- 12/30/2020 10:38 AM
✓ **Diane Griffin** completed task
[Return to Submitter](#)
Example question to applicant
- 12/30/2020 10:01 AM
✓ **Prod Testing Government Entity** submitted

- Click on Action History on the right side of the screen and scroll through the list until you see an action labeled Return to Submitter with a blue check mark. Underneath that action you will see a note regarding the action you must take to resolve the problem with your application.
- In the left side of the screen, scroll down until you see the bottom section of the form, with a response box. Enter your response to GFOA in the provided comment box. You may also be asked to upload a new version of your documents. Click "Submit" to re-submit your application.

Place your comments for the internal COA Team here. To view past comments on this Form (including those from the internal COA Team), expand the Details Pane on the right side of the screen and select Action History.

Submit

Note: Any task in your Open Tasks folder may indicate something that needs to be done by you in order for GFOA to continue with the review of the government's comprehensive annual financial report. Tasks may have different names and the form that appears may look different

from the one above, depending on why the application was returned and what action must be taken to resolve the problem. For example, if a reviewer has questions about the comprehensive annual financial report documents or responses to comments, the task will be named **Return to Applicant - <Your Government Name> - <Your State> - <Government Type Abbreviation>**. If more information is needed or documents are incorrect, the task will be named **Application Re-Submission**.

Using the Laserfiche Repository

All documents related to your COA application are located in the Laserfiche repository. This includes any files you uploaded, as well as documents provided by GFOA, such as detailed listing of comments and suggestions for improvement and certificates that are provided as part of the result packages GFOA produces each time a review of a comprehensive annual financial report is completed. The repository also includes GFOA policy information. The repository is read-only: you cannot add, remove, or rename any files. If information in a file is incorrect, contact GFOA COA support.

To log in to the Laserfiche repository, follow the instructions in the Logging in to the Laserfiche Repository section of this document.

Logging in to the Laserfiche Repository

The Laserfiche repository and COA application use the same username and password. If you have not created a Laserfiche account, follow the instructions in the Creating a Laserfiche Account section of this document.

To log into the Laserfiche repository, perform the following steps:

1. Go to <https://lf.gfoa.org/laserfiche>

The login page appears similar to the following:



The image shows the Laserfiche login interface. It features an orange header with the 'Laserfiche' logo. Below the header is a white login box with a light blue border. Inside the box, there are two input fields: 'User name' and 'Password'. The 'User name' field has a blue border and a cursor. To the right of the 'Password' field is a link that says 'Forgot password?'. Below the input fields is a grey 'Sign In' button. At the bottom of the login box are two checkboxes: 'This is a public computer' and 'I have an MFA code'. At the very bottom of the page, there is a copyright notice: '©2020 Laserfiche'.

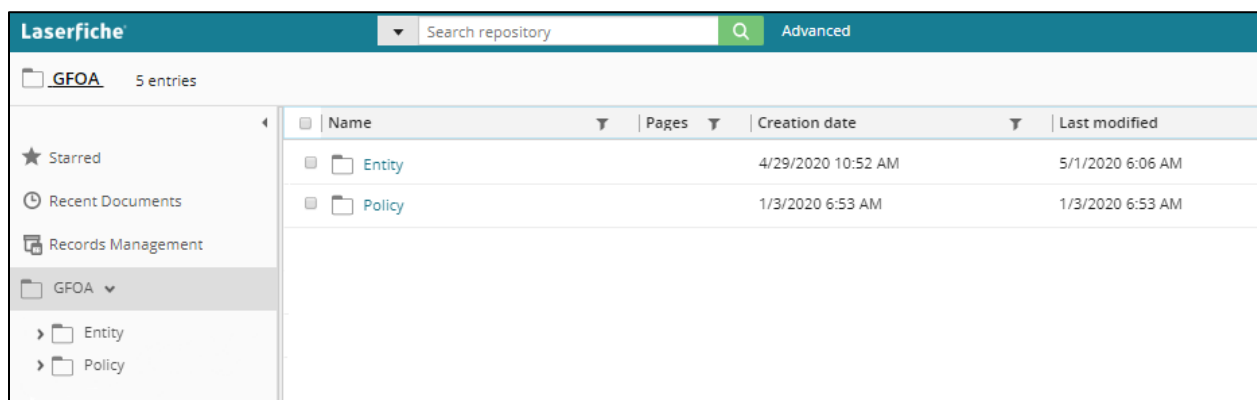
2. In the **User name** box, enter your corporate GFOA member number.
3. In the **Password** box, enter your password.
4. If you are using a public computer, select the **This is a public computer** box.

Note: Do not select **I have an MFA code**.

5. Select **Sign In**.

Navigating the Laserfiche Repository

The repository appears similar to the following:

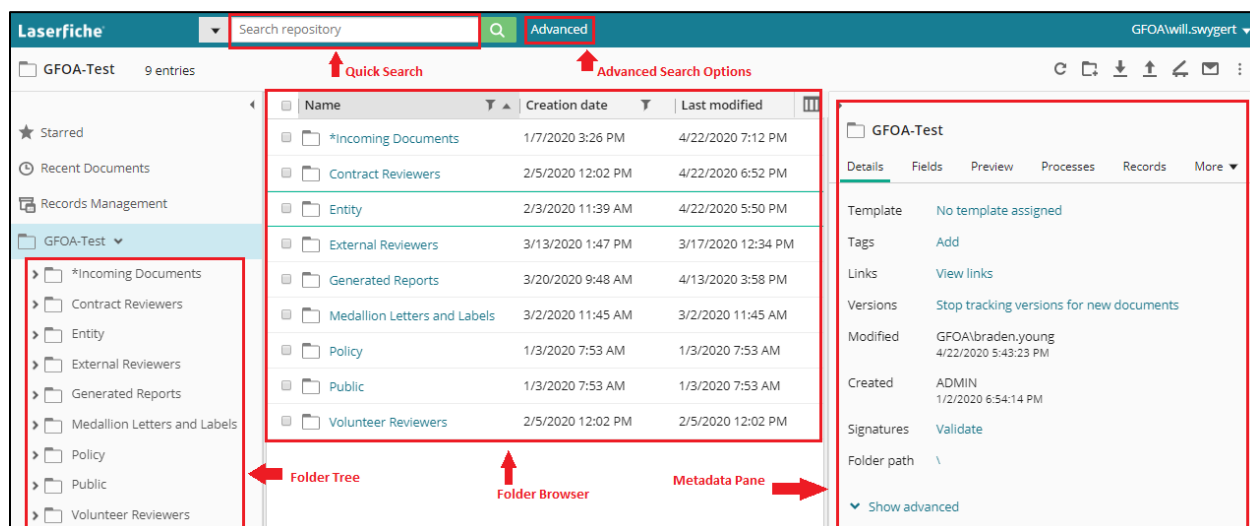


The image shows the Laserfiche repository interface. It has a teal header with the 'Laserfiche' logo, a search bar with the text 'Search repository', and a green 'Advanced' button. Below the header, there is a sidebar on the left with a tree view showing 'GFOA' (5 entries) expanded, with sub-items 'Entity' and 'Policy'. The main area displays a table of repository entries.

Name	Pages	Creation date	Last modified
Entity		4/29/2020 10:52 AM	5/1/2020 6:06 AM
Policy		1/3/2020 6:53 AM	1/3/2020 6:53 AM

Identifying Information in the Repository










The repository folder browser functions much like Windows Explorer or MacOS Finder. The below image describes the main areas of the repository:



Each item in the center pane is an *entry*. The four types of entries in the repository are folders, record folders, documents, and shortcuts. You will mostly be working with folders and documents.

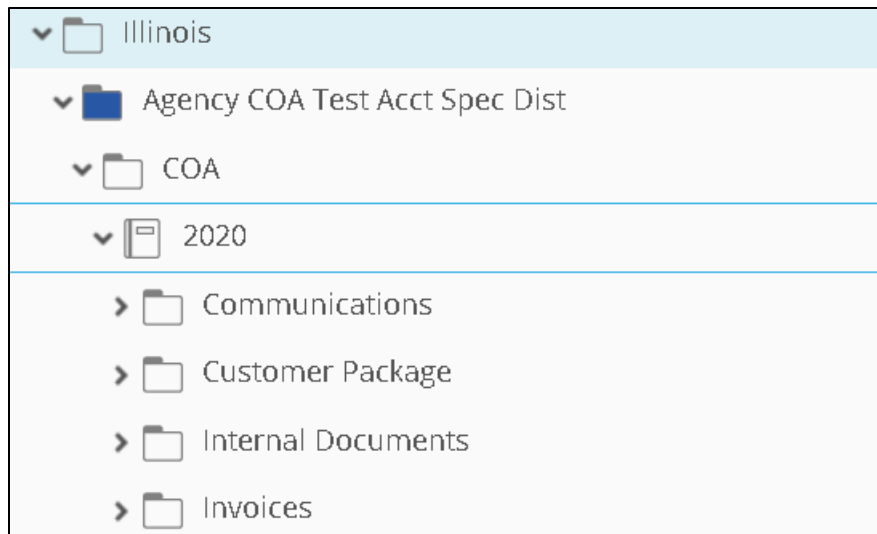
Understanding Entry Types

This section describes the entry types available in the Laserfiche repository.

- A *folder*  is used to organize repository contents. A folder can contain entries of any type.
- A *record folder*  is used to organize repository contents and can contain entries of any type. Unlike a folder, a record folder has a retention schedule that dictates when the contents will be destroyed for records management purposes.
- A *document*      can be any of various file types. When you select a document, the Document Viewer will open so you can view the file.
- A *shortcut*   is a reference to another entry type. A shortcut can be identified by an arrow in the lower left of the entry icon.

Navigating Folders in the Repository

To navigate folders in the repository, either select folders from the folder tree in the left navigation pane, or the folder browser in the center navigation pane. A fully-expanded navigation tree appears similar to the following:




Accessing Your Files

To access your files, navigate to the **Customer Package** folder.












While your application is being processed, the only files available will be any files you uploaded.

After the review of your comprehensive annual financial report is complete, the files provided by GFOA on the basis of that review—the result letter, GFOA’s comments, a certificate (if a certificate has been received)—will be added to the Customer Package. An example of the documents that might be in the Customer Package after a review is complete is below. Please note: As soon as a review is completed, the government will receive an email letting them know the review is complete and providing a link to the repository where those documents can be accessed.

Select a file to view it in the browser. Or, to download, either right-click a single file and select **Download** or, to download multiple files at once, select the boxes next to the files you want to download, and then select the download icon  that will appear at the upper right.

Information similar to the following appears:

Entity+ > Illinois > Agency COA Test Acct Spec Dist > COA > 2020 > Customer Package

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	Creation date
<input type="checkbox"/>	 1 - Result Letter - Awarded	12/30/2020 11:40 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 2 - Guide to reference sources	12/30/2020 11:37 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 3 - Summary of Grading	12/30/2020 11:40 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 4 - Detailed Listing of Comments	12/30/2020 11:40 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 5 - Certificate	12/30/2020 11:40 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 6 - Press Release	12/30/2020 11:40 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 AFRA, Finance	12/30/2020 11:40 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Agency COA Test Acct Spec Dist - Uploaded Financial Report Original	12/30/2020 10:02 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Announcement of Award	12/30/2020 11:40 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Instructions for reproducing certificate	12/30/2020 11:37 AM
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Program policies and procedures	12/30/2020 11:37 AM

Download

2 files selected

ZIP

Electronic file

Download options

Download

Cancel

Select **ZIP** and **Electronic file** if not already selected, and then select **Download**. Your files will download to the default download folder.

Viewing GFOA Policies

GFOA policies are maintained in the \Policy\COA folder. Shortcuts to the policy files are available in your Customer Package folder for the policy year.

