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# Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certifications Handbook

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Guidance for  
Continuing  
Professional  
Educational (CPE)  
Units Required to  
Maintain Federal IT  
Security Institute  
(FITSI) Sponsored  
Certifications

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## 1. Overview

Maintaining a Federal IT Security Professional (FITSP) certification issued by the Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI) demonstrates that Certification Holders keep their knowledge, skills, and abilities current in the ever-changing federal information technology (IT) security landscape. Each FITSP certification is valid for three years and requires holders to earn and report a minimum number of continuing professional education (CPE) units during the certification's lifetime. Certification Holders must also pay an annual maintenance fee (AMF), which covers the cost of tracking and documenting those CPE units.

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## 2. Applicability

This handbook applies to all FITSP Certification Holders and provides pertinent information about the continuing professional education (CPE) requirements for maintaining their certifications. These requirements apply to each FITSP certification a Certification Holder possesses.

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### 3. What is a CPE?

Continuing professional education (CPE) units are earned by completing activities that demonstrate professional growth and skill development. In general, one CPE unit equals one hour spent gaining additional industry knowledge or experience.

CPE units must be earned outside a holder's routine job duties. Activities that fall within normal work responsibilities do **not** qualify. If a FITSP Certification Holder performs an activity as part of their regular job, that activity cannot be claimed for CPE credit.

Although qualifying activities must be beyond day-to-day duties, they do **not** have to occur outside normal work hours. For example, attending a security-related conference during regular work hours still counts, because it lies outside the holder's routine responsibilities and contributes to professional development.

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## 4. CPE Requirements

Certification Holders must earn and report **at least 60 CPE credits during every three year** cycle for each FITSP certification they hold. This is done through the FITSI private portal. There is no annual minimum; credits may be accumulated at any point within the cycle.

For example, if John Doe earns the **FITSP-Manager** credential on January 1, 2018, it remains valid until January 1, 2021. He must therefore must earn 60 CPE credits between January 1, 2018, and January 1, 2021.

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## 5. Where to Log CPEs

CPE credits are reported in the **My Certifications and CPEs** section of the FITSI private portal.

Every FITSP Certification Holder receives portal credentials in the **Certification Welcome Packet** sent after the credential is awarded. The credentials are delivered to the e-mail address provided during exam registration. Certification Holders who do not receive this e-mail should contact FITSI at [contactus@fitsi.org](mailto:contactus@fitsi.org) with **“PORTAL LOGIN”** in the subject line and include:

- Full name
- Mailing address used during registration
- FITSI ID and certification numbers (printed on the FITSI ID card)
- Preferred e-mail address for FITSI correspondence

With these credentials, holders can sign in through the **Account Login** section at <https://www.fitsi.org>. The login screen appears as follows:

The screenshot displays the FITSI Account Login page in a web browser. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://www.fitsi.org>. The page features the FITSI logo and the text "FEDERAL IT SECURITY INSTITUTE" at the top. To the right of the logo, contact information is provided: "3213 Duke St #190, Alexandria, VA 22314, Phone 703-828-1196". Below the header, the main content area is titled "FITSI Account Login" and includes the instruction "Please log in with your email address and password." Underneath, there is a section titled "Account Login" with two input fields: "Email Address:" and "Password:". A "Login" button is positioned below these fields. Additionally, there are two links: "If you can't remember your Password, please [click here](#)" and "If you don't yet have a FITSI account, please [click here](#) to register." The footer of the page states "Copyright © 2009-2013 FITSI - Federal IT Security Institute".

**Figure 1:** The FITSI Private Portal Login Screen

The **My Certifications & CPEs** function provides certification holders with an overview of their current FITSP certifications, including certification cycles, CPE credit requirements, and earned credits to date. Each FITSP certification requires the completion and reporting of 60 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits over a three-year cycle. Figure 2 below, illustrates this function.

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### My Certifications & CPEs

From this page you can view and or manage your CPEs for your FITSI Certifications.

If you enter an incorrect activity simply delete it and enter it with the updated information. Press the Submit button at the bottom of the screen when done.

**Name:** Joe Doe      **Certifications:** FITSP-M-NG, FITSP-A-NG

**FITSP-M-NG - Current Cycle:** 1/1/2025 to: 12/31/2027, **Initial Date of Issue:** 1/1/2025

Cycle	Start Date	End Date	# Hours	Earned CPEs
Year 3	1/1/2027	12/31/2027		
Year 2	1/1/2026	12/31/2026		
Year 1	1/1/2025	12/31/2025	32.00	32.00
<a href="#">Add/Manage CPEs</a>		<b>Totals:</b>	<b>32.00</b>	<b>32.00</b>

**FITSP-A-NG - Current Cycle:** 1/1/2023 to: 12/31/2025, **Initial Date of Issue:** 1/1/2023

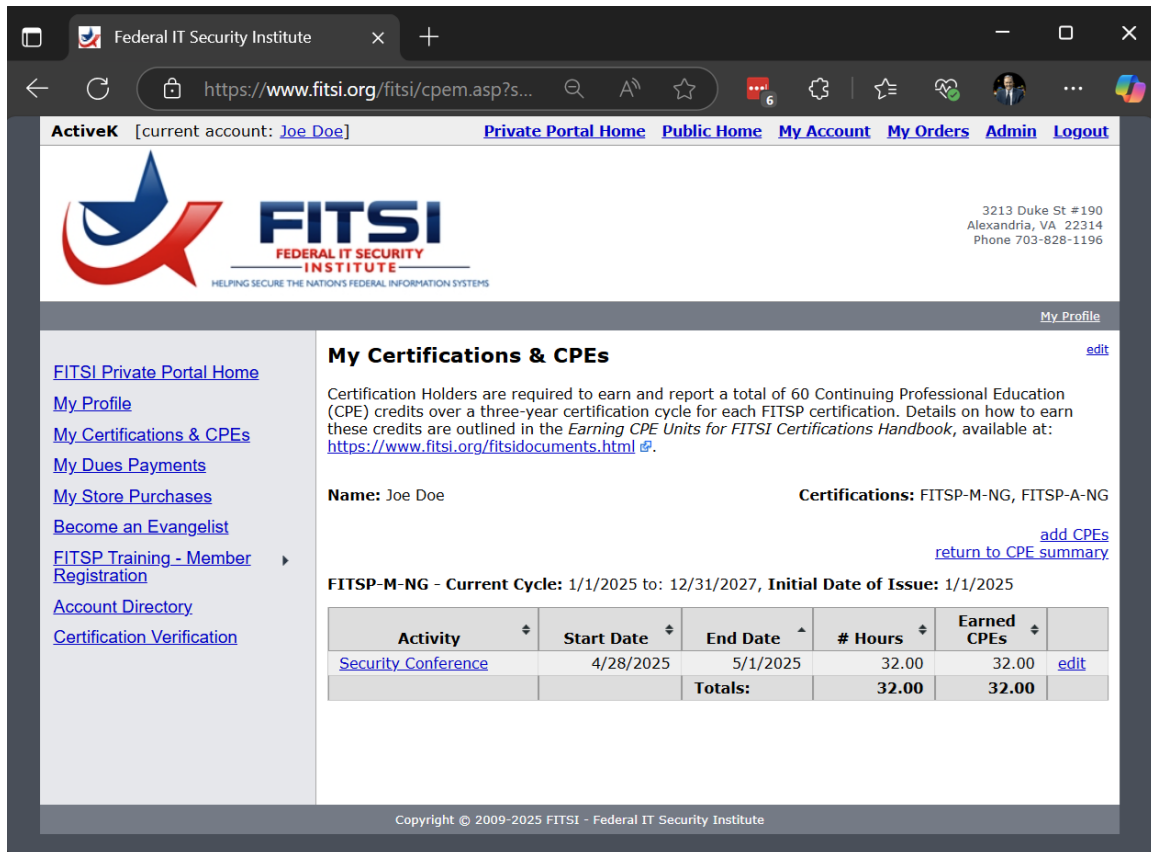
Cycle	Start Date	End Date	# Hours	Earned CPEs
Year 3	1/1/2025	12/31/2025		
Year 2	1/1/2024	12/31/2024		
Year 1	1/1/2023	12/31/2023	14.00	14.00
<a href="#">Add/Manage CPEs</a>		<b>Totals:</b>	<b>14.00</b>	<b>14.00</b>

[View complete CPE list](#)

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**Figure 2: My Certifications & CPEs Function**

The **Add/Manage CPEs** function allows certification holders to view, update, or add Continuing Professional Education (CPE) entries for a specific FITSP certification. This section displays all recorded CPE activities within the current three-year certification cycle, including the activity name, start and end dates, total hours submitted, and CPE credits earned. Figure 3 below shows an overview of this function.



**ActiveK** [current account: [Joe Doe](#)] [Private Portal Home](#) [Public Home](#) [My Account](#) [My Orders](#) [Admin](#) [Logout](#)

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### My Certifications & CPEs [edit](#)

Certification Holders are required to earn and report a total of 60 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits over a three-year certification cycle for each FITSP certification. Details on how to earn these credits are outlined in the *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certifications Handbook*, available at: <https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html> #.

**Name:** Joe Doe **Certifications:** FITSP-M-NG, FITSP-A-NG [add CPEs](#)  
[return to CPE summary](#)

**FITSP-M-NG - Current Cycle:** 1/1/2025 to: 12/31/2027, **Initial Date of Issue:** 1/1/2025

Activity	Start Date	End Date	# Hours	Earned CPEs	
<a href="#">Security Conference</a>	4/28/2025	5/1/2025	32.00	32.00	<a href="#">edit</a>
<b>Totals:</b>			<b>32.00</b>	<b>32.00</b>	

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**Figure 3:** Add//Manage CPEs Function for a given Certification

The **Add CPEs** function is used to submit Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits for eligible professional development activities related to your FITSP

certification(s). You must enter each activity as a separate submission using the required fields. These include selecting the associated certification, identifying the activity type, providing a brief description, indicating the total number of hours earned, and specifying the activity’s start and end dates. Additional comments may be added if needed. Before submitting, ensure all details are accurate and complete. FITSI may conduct audits, so retain all supporting documentation (e.g., agendas, certificates, proof of participation) for your records. Once the form is completed, click “Submit/Save Data” to add the CPE entry. Use “Return to CPE List” to go back without submitting. Figure 4 shows an overview of this function.

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### Add CPEs – Instructions

Use this page to submit **Continuing Professional Education (CPE)** credits for professional development activities related to your FITSP certification(s). Each certification holder is required to earn **a minimum of 60 CPE credits every three years** for each FITSP certification they maintain.

**Important Notes:**

- **One activity per entry:** Please submit each CPE activity as a separate entry.
- **Documentation:** FITSI may audit submitted activities, so **retain supporting documentation** for all CPE entries (e.g., certificates, agendas, transcripts).
- **Accuracy matters:** Ensure all information is complete and accurate before submission.
- **Submission:** Click "Submit/Save Data" when you are ready to Add the CPEs.

[return to CPE list](#)

**Required Fields**

**Associated Certification** FITSP-M-NG

**Activity**

**If other please describe**

**Description**

**Total Number of hours**

**Activity Start Date**

**Activity End Date**

**Notes / Comments**

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**Figure 4: Add CPEs Function**

The **Complete CPE List** function provides a comprehensive record of all Continuing Professional Education (CPE) entries submitted by the certification holder across all

FITSP certifications they maintain. It allows users to easily track and review their full CPE history over time. Figure 3 shows an overview of the Complete CPE List page.

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### Complete CPE List

This page displays a comprehensive list of all Continuing Professional Education (CPE) entries submitted by the Certification Holder across all associated FITSP certifications.

**Name:** Jane Doe **Certifications:** FITSP-M, FITSP-O

[return to CPE summary](#)

Certification	Activity	Start Date	End Date	# Hours	Earned CPEs
FITSP-M	Security Conference	3/7/2022	3/9/2022	24.00	24.00
FITSP-O	Security Conference	3/7/2022	3/7/2022	24.00	24.00
FITSP-M	Professional InfoSec Meeting	7/4/2021	7/4/2021	2.00	2.00
FITSP-O	Professional InfoSec Meeting	7/4/2021	7/4/2021	2.00	2.00
FITSP-M	Training Class	10/5/2020	10/9/2020	40.00	40.00
FITSP-O	Training Class	10/5/2020	10/9/2020	40.00	40.00
FITSP-O	Training Class	7/8/2019	7/21/2019	30.00	30.00
FITSP-M	Publish Whitepaper	7/8/2018	7/8/2018	5.00	5.00
FITSP-O	Training Class	7/1/2018	7/1/2018	40.00	40.00
FITSP-M	Other	1/14/2017	1/14/2017	2.00	2.00
FITSP-M	Security Conference	7/1/2016	7/5/2016	40.00	40.00
FITSP-M	Training Class	5/6/2015	5/7/2015	14.00	14.00
FITSP-M	Training Class	7/1/2014	7/5/2014	40.00	40.00
FITSP-M	Read IT Security Book	7/1/2013	7/31/2013	5.00	5.00
FITSP-M	Security Conference	3/1/2012	3/5/2012	32.00	32.00
FITSP-M	Training Class	7/1/2011	7/3/2011	25.00	25.00

**Figure 5: Complete CPE List Function**

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## 6. Qualifying Activities

Certification Holders may earn CPE credit through a variety of professional-development activities, provided the activities occur **outside routine job responsibilities** and advance their IT-security knowledge. One CPE unit is awarded for each hour spent on a qualifying activity.

### Eligible activities

- Attend security conferences - 1 CPE per hour of security-related sessions attended.
- Attend security training classes -1 CPE per hour of instruction. Classes may be instructor-led, online, or computer-based.
- Publish security white papers - 1 CPE per hour spent writing, up to 5 CPEs per published paper.
- Publish security books - 1 CP- E per hour spent writing, up to 30 CPEs per published book.
- Teach IT-security training classes - 3 CPEs per hour of classroom instruction.
- Read IT-security books 1 CPE per hour of reading, up to 5 CPEs per book.
- Provide NIST commentary on draft documents - 1 CPE per hour preparing comments, up to 5 CPEs per submission.

### Examples:

1. Conference attendance - A five-day (35-hour) security conference yields 35 CPEs.
2. College-level course - A class that meets once a week for 10 weeks, 1.5 hours per session, earns 15 CPEs ( $10 \times 1.5 = 15$ ).
3. Reading a book - Five hours of reading an IT-security book earns the maximum 5 CPEs for that title.

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## 7. CPE Documentation

FITSP Certification Holders must keep evidence demonstrating the completion of every activity claimed for CPE credit. The Audit Committee may request this documentation if a holder is selected for audit. Recommended records include:

### 1. Security conferences

- Receipt showing conference payment and attendee name
- Conference program/guide listing sessions attended and their durations
- Certificate of completion (if provided)

### 2. Security training classes

- Receipt (or confirmation e-mail for free courses) with attendee name
- Course title and description
- Course syllabus
- Record of hours spent in class
- Certificate of completion

### 3. Published security white papers

- Paper title
- Detailed log of time spent preparing the paper
- Copy of the published paper and reference (e.g., URL)

### 4. Published security books

- Book title, author, publication date, and ISBN
- Detailed log of time spent writing and editing

### 5. Teaching IT-security training classes

- Course title and description
- Course syllabus
- Class schedule showing hours taught (CPEs are calculated as three times the teaching hours)

### 6. Reading IT-security books

- Book title, author, publication date, and ISBN
- Log of time spent reading
- Summary of lessons learned relevant to the holder's FITSP certification area

### 7. NIST commentary on draft IT-security documents

- Titles of draft documents reviewed
- Copy of commentary submitted to NIST
- Log of time spent analysing the draft and preparing comments

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Certification Holders should retain these records for the full three-year certification cycle in case of audit. After the cycle is complete and the certification is renewed, documentation from the previous cycle may be discarded.

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## 8. Documentation and Audits of CPE Units

FITSI audits reported CPE credits as part of its oversight and validation program, ensuring that the credits are industry-relevant and properly quantified. Certification Holders must keep the supporting documentation described in Section 6 of this handbook to substantiate the credits they report. Although every Certification Holder must retain this documentation, not all will be audited in a given certification cycle. Complete records enable FITSI to conduct reviews quickly and efficiently.

Certification Holders selected for audit will be notified by e-mail and asked to submit the required documentation. After the audit is successfully completed, the holder will receive the findings. If additional information is needed, FITSI will request it.

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## 9. Non-Compliance

A Certification Holder may be considered **non-compliant** if they fail to report the requisite CPE credits (within the 3 year cycle) or fail to pay the annual maintenance fee (AMF).

If, during an audit, a Certification Holder cannot provide adequate documentation for reported CPE activities, the related certification(s) may be suspended.

Certification Holders found to be non-compliant have **90 calendar days** to correct the deficiency. Failure to do so within that period will result in suspension of the affected certification. After another 90 days of suspension, FITSI will withdraw (revoke) the certification.

FITSI will notify Certification Holders deemed non-compliant because of unreported CPE credits or non-payment of the AMF.