



GACCE CERTIFIED CHAMBER PROGRAM

Purpose:

The GACCE Certified Chamber Program is designed to promote public awareness of the intent of the chamber of commerce brand as a not-for-profit community development- based business membership organization by providing a peer review process of generally accepted chamber of commerce organizational benchmarks.

Implementation:

- The program is 100% voluntary. There is no requirement to participate.
- Any Chamber that is currently accredited through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce at the date of this application is exempt from all application requirements with proof of accreditation – complete the 2nd application at the end of this packet.
- Any Chamber seeking to be re-certified must review and complete the 3rd application at the end of this packet.
- Any current GACCE member Chamber of Commerce may apply.
- The deadline for applications will be **Friday, June 29, 2018.**

A committee appointed by the GACCE Board of Directors will review the applications and issue recommendations to the full Board. The recommendations would either be “Approved” or “Suggest Improvement.”

Approved recommendations would be issued a suggested press release for its announcement to the local community.

Suggested Improvement recommendations would be issued a letter to the local chamber with specific suggestions that if implemented may result in an approved designation.

Each year, GACCE will publicly acknowledge those chambers that receive the Georgia Certified Chamber designation at the Volunteer Leader Conference in November, including the presentation of a Georgia Certified Chamber award.

Chambers should submit the following application and required documentation to:

GACCE

Tiffany Fulmer Ott, Executive Director
1622 Tarklin Valley Road
Knoxville, TN 37920



GACCE CERTIFIED CHAMBER PROGRAM

One of the most prestigious programs of the Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (GACCE) is the Georgia Certified Chamber Program. The Georgia Certified Chamber Program sets standards of excellence for chambers in Georgia. It recognizes chambers that have met those standards while offering guidelines for those to improve their effectiveness.

GACCE follows the U.S. Chamber model, and the designation needs to be reapplied for every five years. Being a Certified Chamber of Commerce places you in a higher plateau of achievement. It shows you have gone through a detailed analysis of who and where you are as an organization.

Why should your Chamber become a Georgia Certified Chamber?

The benefits are numerous. Certification demonstrates your commitment to improvements in your operations that makes you a more valuable and competent organization.

Certification will benefit your Chamber by:

- Committing the chamber to meet important standards established collectively by members of GACCE.
- Establishing that the Certified Chamber meets those important standards by GACCE.
- Validating the Certified Chamber as existing for the purpose inherent in the time-honored tradition of a "Chamber of Commerce."
- Increasing your credibility with your Boards of Directors and your membership.
- Helping with membership recruitment and retention.
- Helping differentiate your chamber from other chambers and business associations.

What does the Georgia Certified Chamber designation mean to the community or area where the chamber is located?

Certification benefits the community by:

- Setting high standards, which their chamber of commerce voluntarily ascribes to and meets.
- Providing the assurance that their local chamber of commerce aspires to excellence in a manner consistent with chambers of commerce throughout Georgia.
- Strengthening free enterprise by protecting the business environment.
- Providing assurances to the businesses joining the chamber that they are investing in a not for profit corporation whose revenues are utilized for business and public good and not personal gain.



GACCE CERTIFIED CHAMBER PROGRAM CHECKLIST

A Chamber must meet the following standards to achieve the Georgia Certified Chamber designation.

***Please submit one copy via notebook (with 30 tabs) or electronically of the following items.
Chamber must have each of the following to qualify for accreditation:***

- | | Provided |
|--|----------|
| ORGANIZATION | |
| 1. Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation | _____ |
| 2. Certification letter as an IRS 501(c)6 | _____ |
| 3. Board of Directors and Officers nomination process and election | _____ |
| 4. Board of Directors orientation, job description, conflict of interest declarations and other onboarding materials | _____ |
| 5. Samples minutes from two Board meetings | _____ |
| 6. General Policy & Procedure Manual – Chamber Operations Manual | _____ |
| MISSION FOCUS | |
| 7. Most recent Annual Report to membership | _____ |
| 8. Mission/Vision Statements | _____ |
| 9. A Board Approved Program of Work/Business Plan | _____ |
| 10. Description of chamber’s Retention Plan | _____ |
| 11. Description of all services available to members, including programs, products, and services | _____ |
| 12. Describe the process used to determine member needs | _____ |
| PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATION | |
| 13. Organizational Chart | _____ |
| 14. Personnel Manual | _____ |
| 15. Job descriptions for all staff members | _____ |
| 16. Staff evaluation policy or performance evaluation | _____ |
| 17. Staff development policy and budget | _____ |
| FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT | |
| 18. Financial Policies and Procedures if not defined in #6 to include reserve and contingency fund balance goals | _____ |
| 19. Most recent annual budget | _____ |
| 20. Most recent fiscal financial report or audit | _____ |
| 21. Most recent 990 report | _____ |
| 22. Descriptions of insurance coverages (workers’ comp, general liability, etc.) | _____ |

COMMUNICATIONS

- 23. Most recent Member Communications Plan including the use and frequency of email, social and print communications _____
- 24. Describe website maintenance plan and primary functions (membership directory, event registration, resources) _____
- 25. Sample of recent press release promoting Chamber activity _____
- 26. Two different samples of recent member communications (written or electronic) _____
- 27. Describe membership directory and other publications _____
- 28. Describe the use of database software program/s to maintain member information _____

ADVOCACY

- 29. Describe the process used to advocate for local, state, & national issues that affect members _____
- 30. Attach a copy of the Chamber’s legislative agenda / public policy _____

Chief Board Officer Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Chief Staff Executive Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



APPLICATION: GEORGIA CERTIFIED CHAMBER PROGRAM

CHAMBER

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE

FAX

E-MAIL

WEB SITE

CONTACT

TITLE

Payment

All fees must accompany the application. The application fee is **\$250 for GACCE members** in good standing. Application deadline is **Friday, June 29, 2018.**

___ Check enclosed. Please make payable to GACCE.

___ Checklist provided accompanied by notebook (30 tabs) or electronically.



APPLICATION: GEORGIA CERTIFIED CHAMBER PROGRAM
(For US Chamber Accredited Chambers Only)

CHAMBER

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE

FAX

E-MAIL

WEB SITE

CONTACT

TITLE

Payment

All fees must accompany the application. The application fee for accredited chambers is **\$100 for GACCE members** in good standing. Application deadline is **Friday, June 29, 2018**.

____ Check enclosed. Please make payable to GACCE.

____ Copy of your U.S. Chamber accreditation certificate is enclosed.



APPLICATION: GEORGIA CERTIFIED CHAMBER PROGRAM
(To Renew Your Certification – Every 5 Years)

For those Chambers that have achieved certification and are renewing that certification, the following items will need to be provided. If the Chamber has a new Executive Director/President since the time of the first certification, the full process (notebook or electronically) will be required for re-certification.

- A letter from the Chamber Professional and volunteer chair stating that all the previous policies and formal documents are still active. This letter should also include any improvements / enhancements to the previously provided documentation demonstrating the Chamber’s constant efforts to improve.
- Business Plan / Program of Work
- Latest annual financial budget and P&L statement
- Latest IRS Form 990
- Latest proof of workers’ comp and general liability insurance
- Sample of the latest news release promoting Chamber activity

_____ CHAMBER

_____ TELEPHONE FAX

_____ E-MAIL WEB SITE

_____ CONTACT TITLE

Payment

All fees must accompany the application. The application fee for accredited chambers is **\$100 for GACCE members** in good standing. Application deadline is **Friday, June 29, 2018**.

_____ Check enclosed. Please make payable to GACCE.