

# About the **ASTA VERIFIED** Travel Advisor Certification Program



ASTA has long provided the finest world-class education and information resources available so that our members are able to provide the utmost in professional service to their clients. Only ASTA members subscribe to a 12-point Code of Ethics, the core of which is the concept of "Integrity in Travel." Put simply, this is the pledge our members stake their reputations on.

## **THE INDUSTRY STANDARD:**

For over 85 years ASTA has been the standard of professionalism, the pre-eminent brand in travel. People don't look for just an advisor; they look for an ASTA advisor. Our brand is synonymous with trust. Every day consumers contact us to verify an advisor's membership in ASTA. Thousands of consumers visit our consumer-oriented website, TravelSense.org, every day to find an ASTA travel advisor. Why do consumers visit TravelSense.org? They come to ASTA because they want to work with a professional travel advisor they can trust.

The ASTA Verified Travel Advisor® designation lets the travel industry and the consumer know that the travel advisor has met ASTA criteria for industry knowledge, professionalism, and ethics. This nine course program provides a higher level of verifiable professional business knowledge to the advanced seller of travel and proves proficiency and dedication to their travel career as well as our industry.

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **WHAT IS THE VERIFIED TRAVEL ADVISOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM?**

To continue to enhance professionalism and allow ASTA travel advisors to distinguish themselves as trusted advisors to the traveling public, ASTA is launching the Verified Travel Advisor® certification program. The program draws from ASTA's in-house expertise as the national trade association for travel agencies of all shapes, sizes and business models as well as from outside industry experts.

The Verified Travel Advisor® program is an advanced certification earned by the travel professional once they have completed, and passed the core courses within the program.

The majority of courses take about an hour to 1 ½ hours to complete. Select courses consist of a manual, online video and exam. The advisor will receive a certificate of completion after passing each course exam. The advisor will be awarded a Verified Travel Advisor® certificate once they have successfully completed all nine courses. Travel advisors will have 12 months to complete the nine required courses. Specific guidelines for maintaining one's Verified Travel Advisor® certification are under development and will be published soon.

*The certification program will initially consist of nine courses on the following topics:*

**Advanced Public Speaking**  
**Ethics for Travel Advisors**  
**Legal Overview for the Travel Agency Industry**  
**Marketing YOU! Promoting Your Value**  
**Project Management and Planning for the Travel Advisor**  
**Real World Sales Tactics**  
**The Art and Science of Negotiation**  
**Agency Relationships and the Law**  
**U.S. Travel Agency Regulatory Compliance 3rd Edition**

### **WHO CAN ENROLL?**

Any travel advisor that meets the membership criteria to join ASTA, anywhere in the world, can enroll in the Verified Travel Advisor program. If a travel advisor is not a current member of ASTA, the Verified Travel Advisor registration fee includes a one-year membership in ASTA. While the coursework will be open to all, the Verified Travel Advisor designation requires membership in ASTA.

### **HOW DO I ENROLL?**

**[www.ASTA.org/VTA](http://www.ASTA.org/VTA)**



## **COURSE CREATION BY ASTA STAFF AND BUSINESS EXPERTS:**

The Verified Travel Advisor® program is comprised of nine courses developed by ASTA's expert staff, as well as other business and industry professionals. ASTA has drawn on the

unique expertise and knowledge from this team to create a well-rounded, powerful, and comprehensive program for the ASTA member.

### **Contributors:**

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## **WHY IS ASTA LAUNCHING THE VERIFIED TRAVEL ADVISOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM?**

The ASTA Verified Travel Advisor® certification (VTA) program is the ASTA standard for educational excellence. Through our consumer research we discovered that Americans are more likely to use an advisor when they believe that advisor will put their clients' interests first.

ASTA recognizes the importance of ethics in this industry and holds ASTA members to a higher ethical standard. Earning the Verified Travel Advisor® certification demonstrates

dependability, integrity and trustworthiness in support of the consumer. The program is a tool that will allow ASTA members to further enhance their professional development and credibility with consumers, suppliers and even the government. Becoming an ASTA Verified Travel Advisor® also means that ASTA has verified your knowledge of the core legal, ethical and regulatory framework that encompasses the business of selling travel.

## **CAN I MAINTAIN MY VERIFIED TRAVEL ADVISOR STATUS WITHOUT BEING AN ASTA MEMBER?**

No. You must renew your ASTA membership in order to maintain your ASTA Verified Travel Advisor® certification.

## **HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO ENROLL IN THE VERIFIED TRAVEL ADVISOR PROGRAM?**

- ✓ ASTA Member: \$399 per person
- ✓ Non-Member Independent Travel Advisor: \$598 (includes ASTA membership for one year)
- ✓ Non-Member Travel Advisor: \$729 (includes ASTA agency membership for one year)

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING AN ASTA VERIFIED TRAVEL ADVISOR?**

- ✓ Achieve an exclusive level of trust and integrity
- ✓ Gain a competitive advantage
- ✓ Build a better business

## **HOW IS THE VERIFIED TRAVEL ADVISOR PROGRAM DIFFERENT FROM OTHER EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS AND CERTIFICATIONS?**

The ASTA Verified Travel Advisor® program offers unique proprietary content in areas where ASTA's expertise is unmatched, including ethics, law, and regulatory compliance, among others. We pair our expertise at ASTA with courses

from leading educators. While there may be other education programs in the market, our program uniquely compliments our strategic partners' educational offerings.

## **WILL OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACCREDITATIONS COUNT TOWARDS THE ASTA VERIFIED TRAVEL ADVISOR PROGRAM?**

Initially, no. However we envision elective courses to be added and new core courses developed as part of continuing education.

Enroll Today at [ASTA.org/VTA](https://ASTA.org/VTA)

