

How to Earn Blue, Silver and Gold Collars

This policy will apply as of the following dates:

- January 1, 2025 – Effective Date only for people who are candidates for induction as Chief Master or Grand Master at the 2025 mastership ceremony.
- January 1, 2026 – Effective Date for everyone else. (This is a target date. ATA Headquarters will be updating its database system in order to generate automatic reports based on this new collar policy. The expectation is that this update will be in place prior to January 1, 2026. If it is not, then this Effective Date may be adjusted.)

As of your Effective Date, collars will be awarded based on the Cumulative Testing Points (“CTP”) you have earned over the course of your ATA career. As soon as you have reached the following thresholds, you may apply for and receive your collar:

- Blue Collar = 9,000 CTP
- Silver Collar = 18,000 CTP
- Gold Collar = 45,000 CTP

The threshold for Gold Collar is significantly higher than for Silver Collar. This is intentional. A Gold Collar signifies that you have had a substantial impact on students of Songahm Taekwondo. Earning a Gold Collar takes you one step closer to becoming a Grand Master. When you consider the fact that Eternal Grand Master Haeng Ung Lee had over 100,000 *active* students before he was inaugurated as Grand Master, requiring you to accumulate 45,000 CTP *over the course of your ATA career* in order to earn a Gold Collar seems eminently reasonable. The Presiding Grand Master and the Masters’ Council will continually collect and review data to determine whether any of the CTP thresholds above should be adjusted over time.

How Cumulative Testing Points Are Calculated for Licensees

CTP from 2002 and Later

You earn one CTP for every Tiger Rank, Classic Rank, Black Belt Rank or Black Belt Midterm that has been processed since 2002 under the school numbers for any of the following:

- Every active or inactive school or club license in your name or in the name of anyone who is currently in your lineage
- Every active or inactive school or club license in the name of someone outside of your lineage (“Non-Lineage Owner”) if that school or club previously was licensed in your name or in the name of anyone who is currently in your lineage before being sold or transferred to the Non-Lineage Owner (however, you only receive credit for testings submitted by the Non-Lineage Owner for the 24-month period immediately following the transfer)

- Every active or inactive school or club license where at least one of the staff instructors is or was someone for whom you are the Royalty Instructor (meaning the instructor is your “Royalty Junior”) if the following conditions are satisfied: (a) your Royalty Junior was employed at the licensed location for at least 12 months beginning on or after January 1, 2023, and (b) your Royalty Junior was listed in the ATA database as a staff instructor for the licensed location and (c) your Royalty Junior is a Legacy Level 3 instructor. You only receive credit for testings submitted during the time that your Royalty Junior was teaching at the licensed location.

CTP from Before 2002

ATA’s testing data only goes back to 2002. If you were a licensee prior to 2002, then your pre-2002 Cumulative Testing Points will be calculated as follows:

$$(\text{Total CTP from 2002-Present}) / (\text{Total Years from 2002-Present}) \times (\text{Total Years as a Licensee Prior to 2002}) = \text{Total Pre-2002 CTP}$$

Example: The year is 2026. You have a total of 14,400 CTP from 2002-2026 (24 years). You were a Licensee starting in 1996 (for a total of six years up to 2002). Your pre-2002 CTP is calculated like this:

$$14,400 / 24 \times 6 = \mathbf{3,600}$$

Adding these 3,600 pre-2002 CTP to your 14,400 post-2002 CTP gives you a grand total of 18,000 CTP.

How Lineage is Determined for the CTP Calculation

For the purposes of CTP calculations, your lineage consists of the following people (and anyone in their lineage):

- Anyone for whom you are the Royalty Instructor
- Anyone for whom you are the Training Instructor (if you previously were but are no longer their Training Instructor, then they do not count toward your CTP calculation)
- All verified ex-employees with school or club licenses if the licensee was granted in 2024 or later and the following requirements are satisfied: (a) employment is verified with W-2s or other evidence, (b) the employee worked for you for a minimum of two years and (c) no more than 12 months passed from the time of employment to the time the ex-employee became a licensee. The Masters’ Council may vote to waive requirement (c) in special circumstances (for example, if your ex-employee goes to college before opening a school or club).

Questions

If I become someone's Training Instructor, do I get credit for their entire history? Or only for testings they submit after I become the Training Instructor?

If you become someone's Training Instructor, you will only receive CTP credit for their testings held on or after the date you became the Training Instructor. You will not get credit for their prior testing history.

If my junior chooses a new Training Instructor, do I lose credit for any of their testing history?

No. If you are someone's Royalty Instructor (meaning you were their instructor when they earned their Level 3 instructor certification), then you always will get credit for their entire testing history, even if someone else becomes their Training Instructor. This policy rewards you for producing instructors.

How Cumulative Testing Points Are Calculated for Non-Licensees

Employees

If you are a Level 3 instructor and have at least 12 months of verifiable employment (working at least 20 hours per week) for a Licensee, then you earn CTP that the location where you are employed ("Employment Location") has generated *during the time of your employment*. If you work at more than one location owned by the same Licensee, then your Employment Locations are determined as follows:

- If you are a full-time manager of multiple locations (and designated as such by the Licensee), then all of those locations are your Employment Locations and you will earn CTP for all of those locations.
- If you are not a full-time manager of multiple locations but do work at more than one location owned by the same Licensee, then the Licensee must designate one of those locations as your Employment Location, and you will earn CTP for that location.

You only receive credit for your Employment Location or Locations. If your employer owns additional locations but you do not work there, then you do not get credit for testings from those additional locations.

You also get credit for schools or clubs that you had a role in creating: You earn all CTP generated by locations licensed in the name of anyone who trained at your Employment Locations while you were employed there and who earned Level 3 certification under your employer.

If your term of employment includes any years prior to 2002, then the pre-2002 CTP from your Employment Locations will be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{(\text{Total CTP for Employment Locations from 2002-Present})}{(\text{Total Years of Employment from 2002-Present})} \times (\text{Total Years Working for Employer Prior to 2002}) = \text{Total Pre-2002 CTP}$$

Example: The year is 2026. You have worked for the same employer since 2000. From 2002-2026 (24 years), your Employment Locations generated 12,000 CTP. Your two years of pre-2002 CTP is calculated like this:

$$12,000 / 24 * 2 = \mathbf{1,000}$$

Adding these 1,000 pre-2002 CTP to your 12,000 post-2002 CTP gives you a grand total of 13,000 CTP.

If you are applying for a collar based on your status as an employee, you will provide employment details on your application form. You must provide W-2s or other evidence of employment upon ATA's request.

Questions

If I worked for one Licensee for six months and for a different Licensee for six months, does this fulfill the 12-month requirement?

No. You must work for the same Licensee for a minimum of 12 months in order to earn CTP from your Employment Locations. You may not stack employment terms from separate Licensees. If you leave a job after less than 12 months, then you do not earn any CTP from that employment.

Exception: If your employer sells or otherwise transfers their location or locations to another Licensee and you continue working for the new Licensee, then your years of employment with the first Employer will be combined with your years of employment with the new Licensee.

If I work at one location for six months and at a different location owned by the same Licensee for six months, does this fulfill the 12-month requirement?

Yes. As long as you work for the same Licensee for at least 12 months, you earn CLT from the locations where you work. In this example, you would receive CLT from the first location for the six-month period when you worked there, and you also would receive CLT from the second location for the six-month period when you worked there.

Spouses

If your spouse is a Licensee, then you earn one CTP for every Tiger Rank, Classic Rank, Black Belt Rank and Black Belt Midterm that has been processed since 2002 under the school numbers for any of the following:

- Every active or inactive school or club license in your spouse's name
- Every active or inactive school or club in the name of anyone who is currently in your spouse's "License Lineage," meaning the lineage of your spouse's active or inactive schools or clubs (if someone is in your spouse's lineage but is not in the lineage of your spouse's schools or clubs—such as someone who selects your spouse as their Training Instructor after beginning their training under a different instructor—you do not get credit for that person)
- Every active or inactive school or club license in the name of someone outside of your spouse's License Lineage ("Non-License Lineage Owner") if that school or club previously was licensed in your spouse's name or in the name of anyone who is currently in your spouse's License Lineage before being sold or transferred to the Non-License Lineage Owner (however, you only receive credit for testings submitted by the Non- License Lineage Owner for the 12-month period immediately following the transfer)

If your spouse was a Licensee prior to 2002, then your pre-2002 CTP will be determined by plugging your CTP into the formula used for Licensees (see "**How Cumulative Testing Points Are Calculated for Licensees**" above).

Example: The year is 2026. Using the rules for spouses set forth in this section, you have a total of 13,200 CTP from 2002-2026 (24 years). Your spouse was a Licensee starting in 1996 (for a total of 6 years up to 2002). Your pre-2002 CTP is calculated like this:

$$13,200 / 24 \times 6 = \mathbf{3,300}$$

Adding these 3,300 pre-2002 CTP to your 13,200 post-2002 CTP gives you a grand total of 16,500 CTP.

Sublicensees (outside of the US and Canada)

If you operate a school or club outside of the US or Canada under a sublicense with an ATA Master Licensee, then you earn all CTP that your sublicensed locations have generated during the time of your employment. You also get credit for schools or clubs that you had a role in creating: You earn all CTP generated by locations licensed or sublicensed in the name of anyone who earned their Level 3 certification while they were a student at your sub-licensed locations.

In countries where testing reporting has been inconsistent or incomplete over the years, ATA will rely on the assistance and integrity of Master Licensees in determining CTP for sublicensees.

Question

How are my CTP calculated if I have had multiple roles (licensee, spouse, employee) during my ATA career?

For each role you have had, your CTP will be calculated according to the rules for that role.

Example: From 2005-2010, you were an employee. From 2011-2015, you were the spouse of a Licensee. From 2016-2026, you were a Licensee. Your CTP credits for 2005-2010 will be calculated according to the Employee rules above. Your CTP credits for 2011-2015 will be calculated according to the Spouse rules above. Your CTP for 2016-2026 will be calculated according to the Licensee rules above. Then all three numbers will be combined for your total CTP.

How to Apply for Your Collar

Before putting the collar on your uniform, you must complete a collar application and receive formal approval from ATA Headquarters. On the application form, you will provide information about your eligibility for the collar, including details of every person you believe to be in your lineage. ATA will verify these details before approving your application.

If you intend to seek a mastership title that has a collar requirement (Senior Master, Chief Master or Grand Master), then you must submit the collar application within 30 days after earning the relevant rank (7th, 8th or 9th Degree Black Belt), and you must receive approval for the title within 90 days after receiving the relevant rank. If you do not fulfill these requirements, then you may not go through the mastership process that year.

You may not submit the application prior to your Effective Date (see page 1). In other words, the only people who may submit collar applications in 2025 are people who are candidates for Chief Master or Grand Master titles at the 2025 mastership ceremony. All others must wait until after January 1, 2026, to submit collar applications. If you contact Headquarters prior to that date requesting a calculation of your CTP, your request will be denied. This is because ATA needs to update its database to provide automated CTP calculations. Until that process is complete, it would be prohibitively time-consuming to do manual tabulations for everyone who requests one.

Question

If I earned a collar prior to the Effective Date of this new policy, is my collar still valid?

Yes. Once you earn a collar, you do not lose it. If your Effective Date (see page 1) is January 1, 2025, you will keep the highest collar that you have earned as of December 31, 2024 under the old rules (meaning the ones that were in effect prior to your Effective Date). Similarly, if your Effective Date is January 1, 2026, then you will keep the highest collar that you have earned as of December 31, 2025.

Example 1: You earned a blue collar in 2007 under the old rules, but you only have 8,000 CTP. Under these new rules, you do not have enough CTP for a blue collar. Nonetheless, you may continue to wear the blue collar you earned in 2007. When you apply for the Senior Master title (which now requires a blue collar), your pre-existing blue collar will count. However, when you apply for the Chief Master title (which now requires a silver collar), you will need to have 18,000 CTP to earn a silver collar.

Example 2: You earned a silver collar in 2024 under the old rules, but you have 50,000 CTP. Under these new rules, you have enough CTP for a gold collar. After your Effective Date, you may apply for and wear a gold collar.