

S-CHP COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

SkillGP Certified HOA Professional™ (S-CHP) HOA-NOW Professional | Powered by SkillGP

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1. Purpose

This framework defines the competencies an HOA/community association manager must demonstrate to earn the S-CHP credential and provides the blueprint for connecting each competency to SkillGP assessment questions. It is intended to support a defensible, job-relevant certification scheme in which assessment evidence demonstrates the ability to apply knowledge and skills to HOA management situations.

ISO/IEC 17024:2026 defines competence as the ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results and describes assessment as evaluation of a person's fulfillment of certification requirements. Accordingly, S-CHP questions should test applied judgment and behavior, not merely recall.

2. Competency Architecture

Competency	Weight	Minimum	Primary Evidence
Communication	15%	80%	Scenario-based judgment
Active Listening	10%	80%	Response selection / interpretation
Emotional Intelligence	10%	80%	Self-regulation and social-awareness scenarios
Conflict Resolution	15%	80%	Conflict diagnosis and intervention
Relationship Management	10%	80%	Trust, collaboration, stakeholder scenarios
Negotiation	15%	80%	Preparation, interests, options, agreement
Critical Thinking	15%	80%	Evidence, governing documents, risk, alternatives
Interpersonal Effectiveness	10%	80%	Adaptability, professionalism, influence

1. Communication

Competency definition: Communicates HOA information clearly, accurately, professionally, and appropriately for homeowners, Boards, vendors, colleagues, and other stakeholders.

Observable performance indicators

- Selects the appropriate message, channel, timing, and tone for the audience.
- Explains governing documents, policies, decisions, responsibilities, and next steps without unnecessary ambiguity.
- Separates facts, assumptions, opinions, and unresolved information.
- Uses professional written and verbal communication during routine and difficult interactions.
- Confirms understanding and documents material decisions or commitments.

Required HOA context coverage

- Homeowner complaint or violation notice
- Board direction that is unclear or sensitive
- Vendor performance issue
- Emergency/community update
- Email requiring clarity, tone, and accountability

20-question assessment blueprint

- Q1–Q4: clarity/audience/tone
- Q5–Q8: difficult communication and accountability
- Q9–Q12: written communication and documentation

- Q13–Q16: Board/homeowner/vendor scenarios
- Q17–Q20: integrated judgment

2. Active Listening

Competency definition: Accurately receives, interprets, clarifies, and responds to stakeholder concerns before deciding or acting.

Observable performance indicators

- Allows the speaker to explain the issue without premature conclusions.
- Uses clarifying and open questions to identify facts, needs, and concerns.
- Paraphrases or summarizes to confirm understanding.
- Recognizes emotional and nonverbal information without treating assumptions as facts.
- Distinguishes listening to understand from immediately defending, solving, or persuading.

Required HOA context coverage

- Angry homeowner
- Board member giving incomplete direction
- Vendor explaining a delay
- Resident with a recurring concern
- Meeting disagreement

20-question assessment blueprint

- Q1–Q4: attention and clarification
- Q5–Q8: paraphrasing and confirmation
- Q9–Q12: emotion/nonverbal cues
- Q13–Q16: avoiding assumptions
- Q17–Q20: integrated listening scenarios

3. Emotional Intelligence

Competency definition: Recognizes and manages personal emotions while accurately responding to the emotions and perspectives of others.

Observable performance indicators

- Recognizes personal triggers and maintains professional self-control.
- Pauses or adjusts behavior when emotion could impair judgment.
- Demonstrates empathy without automatically agreeing or abandoning policy.
- Reads stakeholder emotional context and adapts communication appropriately.
- Maintains composure under criticism, pressure, conflict, and uncertainty.

Required HOA context coverage

- Hostile meeting comment
- Personal criticism from a Board member
- Homeowner distress
- High-pressure emergency
- Conflict between professionalism and emotional reaction

20-question assessment blueprint

- Q1–Q4: self-awareness
- Q5–Q8: self-regulation
- Q9–Q12: empathy/social awareness
- Q13–Q16: pressure and triggers
- Q17–Q20: integrated emotional judgment

4. Conflict Resolution

Competency definition: Diagnoses conflict, reduces unnecessary escalation, and facilitates fair, practical resolution consistent with authority and governing requirements.

Observable performance indicators

- Identifies the underlying issue, stakeholders, interests, and constraints.
- Separates positions from underlying concerns.
- Uses de-escalation and neutral language.
- Determines when to facilitate, document, escalate, or refer the matter.
- Develops workable next steps while maintaining boundaries and procedural fairness.

Required HOA context coverage

- Neighbor dispute
- Board/homeowner disagreement
- Vendor dispute
- Enforcement conflict
- Meeting escalation

20-question assessment blueprint

- Q1–Q4: conflict diagnosis
- Q5–Q8: de-escalation
- Q9–Q12: options and boundaries
- Q13–Q16: escalation/referral
- Q17–Q20: complex HOA conflict

5. Relationship Management

Competency definition: Builds and maintains productive professional relationships while preserving appropriate roles, boundaries, trust, and accountability.

Observable performance indicators

- Builds credibility through consistency and follow-through.
- Maintains constructive relationships despite disagreement.
- Coordinates effectively among Boards, homeowners, vendors, and internal teams.
- Sets expectations and professional boundaries.
- Repairs trust after misunderstandings or service failures.

Required HOA context coverage

- Board-manager relationship
- Difficult homeowner relationship
- Vendor accountability
- Internal team coordination
- Trust recovery after missed commitment

20-question assessment blueprint

- Q1–Q4: trust and credibility
- Q5–Q8: collaboration
- Q9–Q12: boundaries
- Q13–Q16: relationship repair
- Q17–Q20: stakeholder integration

6. Negotiation

Competency definition: Prepares for and conducts negotiations that protect association interests while seeking practical, ethical, and sustainable agreements.

Observable performance indicators

- Defines objectives, authority, constraints, alternatives, and acceptable outcomes before negotiating.
- Identifies interests behind stated positions.
- Develops and compares options rather than reacting to the first proposal.
- Uses objective criteria, evidence, and appropriate concessions.
- Documents agreements, responsibilities, deadlines, and unresolved issues.

Required HOA context coverage

- Vendor pricing/scope
- Contract renewal
- Service failure remedy
- Board/vendor expectations
- Competing stakeholder interests

20-question assessment blueprint

- Q1–Q4: preparation and authority
- Q5–Q8: interests vs. positions
- Q9–Q12: options/concessions
- Q13–Q16: objective criteria and leverage
- Q17–Q20: agreement and documentation

7. Critical Thinking

Competency definition: Evaluates information, governing requirements, risks, alternatives, and consequences before recommending or taking action.

Observable performance indicators

- Identifies the actual problem before selecting a solution.
- Verifies relevant facts and distinguishes reliable evidence from assumptions.
- Consults governing documents, contracts, policies, budgets, expert input, and authority as appropriate.
- Compares alternatives, risks, costs, urgency, and downstream consequences.
- Recognizes when information is insufficient and seeks clarification or qualified expertise.

Required HOA context coverage

- Emergency maintenance
- Competing vendor proposals
- Board request conflicting with documents
- Budget/reserve decision
- Homeowner allegation with incomplete evidence

20-question assessment blueprint

- Q1–Q4: problem definition
- Q5–Q8: evidence and assumptions
- Q9–Q12: authority/documents
- Q13–Q16: alternatives and risk
- Q17–Q20: complex decision scenarios

8. Interpersonal Effectiveness

Competency definition: Works effectively with diverse stakeholders by combining professionalism, adaptability, respect, influence, boundaries, and situational awareness.

Observable performance indicators

- Adapts interaction style without compromising standards or integrity.
- Demonstrates respect and professionalism across differences in role, communication style, and priorities.

- Influences through credibility, reasoning, questions, and relationship rather than inappropriate pressure.
- Maintains boundaries and responds assertively when necessary.
- Recognizes how personal behavior affects cooperation, trust, and outcomes.

Required HOA context coverage

- Board meeting dynamics
- Cross-functional teamwork
- Difficult personality
- Persuading without authority
- Setting professional boundaries

20-question assessment blueprint

- Q1–Q4: adaptability
- Q5–Q8: respect/professionalism
- Q9–Q12: influence
- Q13–Q16: boundaries/assertiveness
- Q17–Q20: integrated interpersonal judgment

3. Question-to-Competency Mapping Standard

Every scored assessment question must be tagged in the assessment system with: (a) primary competency; (b) performance indicator; (c) HOA scenario/domain; (d) cognitive demand; (e) difficulty level; (f) correct/best response; (g) scoring weight; and (h) rationale. A question should count toward only one primary S-CHP competency unless a validated scoring model explicitly supports cross-competency scoring.

Recommended cognitive distribution for each 20-question assessment: approximately 20% recognition/understanding, 50% application and judgment, and 30% analysis of complex scenarios. The certification pilot should review item statistics and stakeholder feedback before these percentages become permanent requirements.

4. Assessment Item Design Rules

- Use realistic HOA/community association scenarios involving homeowners, Boards, vendors, governing documents, budgets, maintenance, emergencies, competing priorities, and professional communication.
- Prefer a single best answer among plausible alternatives; avoid obviously wrong distractors.
- Measure the stated performance indicator rather than trivia, company-specific procedures, or unsupported legal conclusions.
- Do not require candidates to choose an action outside a manager’s authority unless the question is specifically testing escalation or authority recognition.
- Where law, governing documents, contracts, or professional expertise control the outcome, test whether the manager recognizes the need to verify or escalate rather than pretending one universal answer applies.
- Keep language accessible and job-relevant. Review items for ambiguity, bias, unnecessary reading burden, and clues to the correct answer.
- Maintain an item bank larger than the live assessment so forms can be rotated and security improved.

5. Scoring and Evidence Rules

Each competency assessment requires at least 80% to achieve S-CHP competency credit. Candidates must achieve all eight competencies; an overall average cannot compensate for an unachieved competency. The weighted overall S-CHP score is calculated only after all eight minimum thresholds are met.

During pilot implementation, SkillGP should retain item-level response data so the Certification Governing Committee can evaluate item difficulty, discrimination, reliability, unusual response patterns, and whether questions actually represent the intended performance indicators. Passing standards and weights should be reviewed using pilot evidence and subject-matter-expert judgment before being treated as permanently validated.

6. Competency Evidence Matrix

Competency	What candidate must demonstrate	Assessment evidence	Certification credit
Communication	Clear, audience-appropriate, documented communication	20-question scenario assessment	15%
Active Listening	Clarify, interpret, confirm, respond	20-question scenario assessment	10%

Emotional Intelligence	Self-regulate and respond to emotions	20-question scenario assessment	10%
Conflict Resolution	Diagnose, de-escalate, resolve/escalate	20-question scenario assessment	15%
Relationship Management	Build trust, collaborate, maintain boundaries	20-question scenario assessment	10%
Negotiation	Prepare, identify interests, create/document agreement	20-question scenario assessment	15%
Critical Thinking	Verify, analyze, compare risk and alternatives	20-question scenario assessment	15%
Interpersonal Effectiveness	Adapt, influence, respect, assert boundaries	20-question scenario assessment	10%

7. Governance and Validation

The S-CHP Certification Governing Committee should approve competency definitions, assessment blueprints, item-writing rules, passing standards, material revisions, and retirement of items. Subject-matter experts should include experienced community association managers and, where appropriate, Board, HR/learning, compliance, and assessment expertise.

This framework is a certification-scheme design document, not a claim of accreditation. ISO/IEC 17024:2026 requires a certification scheme that specifies competence criteria and certification methodology, and ANAB describes personnel certification as assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities. Future accreditation work should therefore validate the job analysis, assessment methods, scoring, impartiality, security, and recertification processes.

8. Implementation Sequence

1. Approve the eight competency definitions and performance indicators.
2. Map every existing HOA-NOW assessment question to the framework tags.
3. Identify gaps, duplicates, weak distractors, and questions that test knowledge rather than applied competence.
4. Build or revise the item bank to achieve the required blueprint coverage.
5. Conduct subject-matter-expert review and pilot testing.
6. Analyze pilot data and establish defensible passing standards and final assessment forms.
7. Connect verified results to the S-CHP candidate dashboard and certification record.
8. Review the framework at least annually and whenever the HOA manager role or certification requirements materially change.

Reference Basis

ISO/IEC 17024:2026, Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons.

ISO guidance: How to develop schemes for the certification of persons — Guidance of ISO/IEC 17024.

ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB), Personnel Certification under ISO/IEC 17024.