



# NAHP CANDIDATE HANDBOOK National Association for Health Professionals (NAHP)

## Candidate Handbook

NRCAHA

NRCCS

NRCEKG

NRCMA

NRCPCT

NRCPhT

NRCPT

NRCST

NRCDA

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# About the Candidate Handbook

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## Introduction

Congratulations on your decision to pursue credentials offered by the National Association for Health Professionals (NAHP). We commend your commitment to your career and the healthcare profession. The *NAHP Candidate Handbook* provides information essential to the certification process from application through examination and renewal for the following credentials:

- Nationally Registered Certified Administrative Health Assistant (NRCAHA)
- Nationally Registered Certified Coding Specialist (NRCCS)
- Nationally Registered Certified EKG Technician (NRCEKG)
- Nationally Registered Certified Medical Assistant (NRCMA)
- Nationally Registered Certified Patient Care Technician (NRCPCT)
- Nationally Registered Certified Pharmacy Technician (NRCPHT)
- Nationally Registered Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NRCPT)
- Nationally Registered Certified Surgical Technician (NRCST)
- Nationally Registered Certified Dental Assistant (NRCDA)

## About the National Association for Health Professionals

Established in 1982, the National Association for Health Professionals is the premier certification body providing credentialing for healthcare professionals in the roles of administrative health assistants, EKG technicians, coding specialists, dental assistants, medical assistants, patient care technicians, pharmacy technicians, phlebotomy technicians, and surgical technicians.

### NAHP Mission

As an organization of distinction, consisting of the world's leading healthcare professionals, the mission of the NAHP is to promote and provide quality certification programs that validate knowledge in the healthcare arena for the enhancement of patient care and professional practice.

### NAHP Certification Council

Governed by leading healthcare professionals in practice and academia, the Certification Council endeavors to advance healthcare education and practice by certifying competent healthcare professionals, promoting education and research, and elevating the standard of care in professional practice.

The Certification Council is solely responsible for essential decisions related to the development, administration, and ongoing maintenance of the certification programs. The Council ensures that all application and eligibility requirements, examination development and administration, scoring of examinations, renewal requirements, and all certification program policies and procedures are directly related to the purpose of the certification programs.



## **Consultants**

NAHP contracts with independent psychometric consultants to assist in the development, administration, scoring, score reporting, and analysis of the NAHP certification programs.

## **Examination Development Committees**

The Examination Development Committees responsibilities are cyclical and include the development of content, review of content relevancy, evaluation of performance data, and expertise with the establishment of the passing standard for the examination.

## **Examination Development Process**

The content of the NAHP examinations are based on the outcomes of a job analysis study. A job analysis is a comprehensive definition of the tasks performed by professionals currently holding the NAHP credentials. The purpose of the job analysis is to describe, in specific terms, the precise nature of the tasks performed by incumbent professionals who work in the industry for which the examination is being developed. Job analyses are conducted every 5-7 years, or more often as circumstances may warrant, to verify the content of the examination. The results of the job analysis influence to what extent the competencies are revised for the NAHP certification examinations.

The NAHP examinations are based on an explicit set of competencies. These competencies have been determined through job analyses studies conducted on practitioners. The competencies are grouped into domains, subdomains, and tasks. As the NAHP examinations may only assess knowledge pertaining to these competency statements, they serve as the outline, or blueprint for the examinations. These Content Outlines are published on the NAHP website.

The examination specifications are established or revised at the same time as the development of the examination blueprint. The specifications include the total number of test items, test item type(s), total test duration, and scoring methodology. The examination blueprint and specifications are based on the outcome of the job analysis study and are reviewed and approved by a panel of subject matter experts.

All examination items (or questions) are directly linked to the approved examination specifications and are written and reviewed by panels of trained subject matter experts. The Examination Development Committees, working with the psychometric consultant, regularly review items and approve the examinations.





# About the NAHP Credentials

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Professionals earn these distinctions through a combination of education, training, and supervised clinical experience in the healthcare arena validated by their performance through the NAHP certification examinations.

## **Nationally Registered Certified Administrative Health Assistant (NRCAHA)**

The Nationally Registered Certified Administrative Health Assistant (NRCAHA) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the administrative knowledge and proficiency required of the administrative health professional in health care settings.

## **Nationally Registered Certified Coding Specialist (NRCCS)**

The Nationally Registered Certified Coding Specialist (NRCCS) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the diagnostic, procedural, and medical coding and billing knowledge and proficiency required of the coding professional in the health care practice settings.

## **Nationally Registered Certified EKG Technician (NRCEKG)**

The Nationally Registered Certified EKG Technician (NRCEKG) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the cardiovascular diagnostic and technical knowledge and proficiency required of the electrocardiogram professional in health care settings.

## **Nationally Registered Certified Medical Assistant (NRCMA)**

The Nationally Registered Certified Medical Assistant (NRCMA) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the administrative and clinical knowledge and proficiency required of the medical assistant professional in the physician and health care practice settings.

## **Nationally Registered Certified Patient Care Technician (NRCPCT)**

The Nationally Registered Certified Patient Care Technician (NRCPCT) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the medical knowledge and medical assistance skills to provide direct patient care in health care settings.

## **Nationally Registered Certified Pharmacy Technician (NRCPhT)**

The Nationally Registered Certified Pharmacy Technician (NRCPhT) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the knowledge, skills, and clinical proficiency to assist pharmacists in health care settings.





### **Nationally Registered Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NRCPT)**

The Nationally Registered Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NRCPT) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the medical knowledge and clinical proficiency for collecting blood and laboratory specimens in health care settings.

### **Nationally Registered Certified Surgical Technician (NRCST)**

The Nationally Registered Certified Surgical Technician (NRCST) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the medical knowledge, skills, and clinical proficiency to assist surgeons and surgical teams in health care settings.

### **Nationally Registered Certified Dental Assistant (NRCDA)**

The Nationally Registered Certified Dental Assistant (NRCDA) designation demonstrates to colleagues, patients, employers and the public at large that certified individuals have the medical knowledge and technical proficiency to assist dentists in health care practice settings.

### **Nondiscrimination**

NAHP does not discriminate against any candidate for certification on the basis of race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, religion, disability, marital status, parental status, ancestry, sexual orientation, military discharge status or source of income, or any other status protected by law. All candidates for certification are judged solely on the criteria determined by the NAHP Certification Council.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

NAHP has developed requirements for eligibility to ensure that the application process is fair and impartial for all applicants. Each eligibility requirement has been established to ensure that individuals certified by NAHP have an acceptable level of knowledge and proficiency needed to provide healthcare services.

### **Examination Eligibility Criteria**

All educational and experience requirements must be met before applying to sit for the NAHP examinations.

To be eligible to sit for the NAHP examinations, **all** applicants must be a graduate of a state and/or regionally accredited high school or its equivalent (i.e. GED) or have successfully passed the Ability To Benefit (ATB) examination.

Applicants must also fulfill and demonstrate one of the following eligibility criteria:

- Successfully complete a credential-relevant approved program of study from an educational institute accredited by the Allied Health Education and Accreditation of the American Medical Association (CAHEA), Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES), Commission on Accreditation of



Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) or any accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.\*\*

- Successfully complete two (2) years of medical training in the United States Armed Forces; or
- Have a minimum of two (2) years professional experience in a credential-relevant field.

**\*\*Note:** New Jersey residents must attend an accredited educational program recognized by the U.S. Department of Education with a minimum of 600 clock hours. Work experience and military training are NOT eligible criteria for New Jersey residents.

### **Higher/Post-Secondary Education Requirement**

- Applicants who have successfully completed a credential-relevant program of study from an accredited institution must submit official school transcripts for all required coursework.
- Applicants who have successfully completed two (2) years of medical training in the United States Armed Forces must submit official transcripts for all required coursework or a DD 214 (Report of Separation).

### **Professional Healthcare Experience Requirement**

- Applicants who have successfully fulfilled a minimum of two (2) years professional experience in a credential-relevant field must submit the Supervised Professional Experience Form located on the NAHP website at [www.nahpusa.com](http://www.nahpusa.com).
- Applicants with professional experience but without higher education, must submit official transcripts and/or verification conferring either the high school degree, GED, or passing of the ATB examination.





# Applying for Certification

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Before submitting an application, carefully review the information contained in this handbook. Taking the certification examination is voluntary. NAHP strictly adheres to the eligibility requirements for certification. It is the responsibility of the applicant to comply with all application procedures and deadlines in order to establish eligibility to take the examination.

## Examination Dates, Deadlines, and Fees

The NAHP examinations are administered in various locations in the United States in both paper-based and computer-based formats. Application, forms, fees and all information pertaining to certification is available at [www.nahpusa.com](http://www.nahpusa.com).

## Application Requirements

Applicants may register by submitting a hardcopy application available online at [www.nahpusa.com](http://www.nahpusa.com).

To apply for a NAHP examination, the following forms must be submitted along with the appropriate application fee:

- NAHP Certification Application
- Higher Education Transcripts of required coursework; or
- Military Training Transcripts/DD Form 214 (Report of Separation); or
- Supervised Professional Experience Form plus official transcripts and/or verification conferring high school degree, GED, or passing of the ATB examination.
- Attestation to comply with the NAHP Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
- Request for Special Accommodations Forms (if applicable)
- Payment of application fee

When completing the NAHP Certification Application be sure to:

1. Ensure the name on the application matches the name on the identification (ID) to be used for admission to the testing center (see section on Identification Requirements).
2. Sign and date the application in ink.
3. Make copies for your records.
4. Include the correct application fee by referring to the handbook or NAHP website for current examination pricing.
5. Mail the NAHP Certification Application to:

National Association for Health Professionals  
PO Box 459  
Gardner, Kansas 66030

FedEx or UPS use physical address:  
124 S Elm  
Gardner, KS 66030



## Supervisors

Applicants who have successfully fulfilled a minimum of two (2) years professional experience in a credential-relevant field must submit the Supervised Professional Experience Form.

The applicant's direct supervisor or employer is to fill out the form in its entirety. The applicant is required to submit this form with the NAHP certification application. The information contained in this form is considered confidential.

## Application Processing

The NAHP certification application must be submitted no later than two (2) weeks prior to a scheduled test date for applicants testing at an NAHP approved testing center.

Upon receipt of the NAHP certification application, and the required supporting materials and fees, the NAHP staff will begin the exam set up process. An official Authorization to Test packet with examination instructions, location, date, and proctor paperwork information is sent via email approximately three (3) days prior to the examination date.

Candidates will need a hard copy of their government issued identification to be admitted to the testing center at the school on examination day.

## Incomplete and Late Applications

Applications, the **nonrefundable** application fee and all supporting materials must be received by the NAHP no later than the published application deadline. An application will be considered incomplete if any of the required information is missing or illegible, or the appropriate fee has not been paid.

Candidates whose applications have been internally reviewed and deemed incomplete or ineligible will be notified via email. Candidates will be notified of the application's deficiencies and possible remedies. If the candidate does not respond, or cure said deficiency prior to the published deadline, the application cannot be processed.

## Eligibility Appeals

A candidate whose eligibility has been denied by NAHP may appeal the decision to the Certification Director within thirty (30) calendar days after notification of an adverse decision. The candidate must submit the appeal in writing, and explain in detail: 1) The nature of the request and the specific facts and circumstances supporting the request, and 2) all reasons why the action or decision should be changed or modified. The candidate must also provide accurate copies of all supporting documents. Eligibility appeals will be reviewed by the Certification Director and responded to in writing within 15 business days.

If the issue cannot be resolved by the Certification Director, the appeal will be referred to the Certification Council. The decision of the Certification Council is final.





# Scheduling the Examination

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## NAHP Testing Sites

The NAHP examinations are administered at approved educational institutions/testing centers located throughout the United States. Testing centers have been selected to provide accessibility to the most candidates in the most controlled, secure and consistent environments possible.

Testing centers participating with the NAHP offer examinees testing, either through the computer or by traditional paper-pencil means—both in a controlled, proctored environment. The testing centers are under no obligation to deliver all examinations or examination formats.

An official Authorization to Test packet with examination instructions, location, date, and proctor paperwork information is sent via email approximately three (3) days prior to the examination date.

Candidates will need a hard copy of their government issued identification to be admitted to the testing center at the educational institution on examination day.

Individual online testing is available to candidates without access to a test site.

## Cancellation, Rescheduling, and Refund Policy

Candidate application fees are non-refundable/ non-transferable. An application fee is required, *this is not a fee to test*.

If necessary, applicants may change or postpone the scheduled examination date by notifying NAHP no later than fourteen (14) business days prior to the next scheduled exam date. Candidates requesting to change testing dates will incur a nominal administrative fee.

No refunds will be made by NAHP.

## Individual Candidates

Candidates may call NAHP at (913) 856-8534 to discuss individual testing needs.





# Preparing For the Examination

## Examination Content and Format

The NAHP examinations contain multiple-choice, single answer questions. Imbedded in the examination are "pretest" questions, which are included in the examination for statistical purposes only. Pretest questions are placed on the examinations to evaluate the item's difficulty level for possible inclusion as a scored question in the future. Candidates' scores are based upon the number of scored items on the exam — pretest items do not affect the candidates' score. Pretest questions are dispersed throughout the examinations and cannot be identified.

Examination and Format	Maximum Time	Number of Items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified Administrative Health Assistant (NRCAHA)</b>		
paper-and-pencil	2.5 hours	200 items
computer-based	2.0 hours	200 items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified Coding Specialist (NRCSS)</b>		
paper-and-pencil	3.0 hours	200 items
computer-based	2.5 hours	200 items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified EKG Technician (NRCEKG)</b>		
paper-and-pencil	2.5 hours	200 items
computer-based	2.0 hours	200 items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified Medical Assistant (NRCMA)</b>		
paper-and-pencil	2.5 hours	200 items
computer-based	2.0 hours	200 items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified Patient Care Technician (NRCPT)</b>		
paper-and-pencil	2.5 hours	200 items
computer-based	2.0 hours	200 items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified Pharmacy Technician (NRCPhT)</b>		
paper-and-pencil	2.5 hours	200 items
computer-based	2.0 hours	200 items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NRCPT)</b>		
paper-and-pencil	2.5 hours	200 items
computer-based	2.0 hours	200 items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified Surgical Technician (NRCST)</b>		
computer-based only	2.5 hours	250 items
<b>Nationally Registered Certified Dental Assistant (NRCDA)</b>		
paper-and-pencil	2.5 hours	200 items
computer-based	2.0 hours	200 items



All NAHP examinations are offered in both paper-and-pencil and computer-based formats, excluding the NRCST. The testing centers are under no obligation to deliver all examinations or examination formats.

The NAHP examinations, as well as all communications from the NAHP, will be in English. Candidates for whom English is a second language are not permitted to ask Proctors, or anyone else, for assistance with translation or interpretation.

## Tips for Success

- Read through the entire NAHP Candidate Handbook.
- Familiarize yourself with the credential-specific Content Outlines available online at [www.nahpusa.com](http://www.nahpusa.com)
- Know when and where the test will be given, arrive on time, and be ready to be tested.
- During the examination:
  - Pace yourself. Answering the easiest questions first may be helpful - be careful not to spend too much time on one question.
  - Read all questions carefully before choosing the best response.
  - Do not over think your response. Questions are not meant to be tricky, but it is important to read all information in its entirety.
  - Choose one answer for every question. Your score is based on the total number of correct answers.
  - Responses/options are in random order. Do not look for patterns in your responses.

Review material for certification exams is available through the NAHP. Disclaimer: Purchase of any review material does not guarantee a passing score for the certification exam. It is not a requirement to purchase review material to take a certification exam.

## Special Testing Accommodations

NAHP complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with a disability covered by this Act. Candidates requiring special accommodations must complete the Request for Special Examination Accommodations Form and Documentation of Disability-Related Needs Form at [www.nahpusa.com](http://www.nahpusa.com) before scheduling the examination. These forms must be submitted with the certification application to the NAHP. Arrangements for special accommodations may take up to 45 days to coordinate.

Candidates will be contacted by the NAHP to ensure all processes and procedures are explained and that a testing appointment is scheduled to accommodate their needs accordingly, if feasible.





# On Examination Day

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## Testing Sites

The NAHP examinations are administered at approved educational institutions/testing centers located throughout the United States. Testing centers have been selected to provide accessibility to the most candidates in the most controlled, secure and consistent environments possible. To ensure that examination results for all candidates are earned under comparable conditions and represent fair and accurate measurement, testing centers meet the following criteria:

- Examination rooms will be quiet and free of disruption
- Rooms will have adequate and comfortable ventilation, lighting and temperature
- All exam administrations will be monitored by approved proctors
- Entrances/exits will be monitored/controlled and working fire exits will be available
- The testing center will be ADA compliant
- Candidates will have access to restroom facilities

The NAHP maintains examination administration and security standards that are designed to assure that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.

## Examination Procedures

The NAHP authorized proctors and staff adhere to approved procedures to ensure the testing centers meet NAHP's testing criteria. Please review the following information prior to the testing date to ensure familiarity with the procedures.

When arriving at the testing center, candidates will:

- arrive approximately 20 minutes prior to the scheduled test administration time. Candidates who arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time will not be admitted; additional time will not be given to accommodate late examinees.
- present a valid form of primary identification.

Individual lockers are not provided for test-takers at the testing centers, so candidates are encouraged to leave their belongings in the car. Valuables should not be brought into testing centers.

## Identification Requirements

To be allowed to test, candidates must present a valid form of primary identification at the testing center. Acceptable forms of primary identification (photograph and signature required) include:

- government-issued driver's license
- passport or passport card
- permanent resident visa





- military issued identification card

Unacceptable forms of primary identification (photograph and signature required) include, but are not limited to:

- birth certificates
- social security cards
- student IDs
- employee IDs
- marriage certificates

All identification must be valid and must be an original document. Candidates will not be admitted to the examination without proper identification. There will be no refund of the application fee.

## Test Site Restrictions and Misconduct

The following actions by candidates during the examination will constitute misconduct and result in an automatic dismissal from the examination, cancellation of scores, and forfeiture of fees:

- Failure to adhere to testing center examination restrictions
- Creating a disturbance, being abusive, or being otherwise uncooperative
- Bringing restricted materials into the testing area
- Using electronic communications equipment or devices such as cellular phones, PDA's, or communicating calculators.
- Gaining unauthorized admission into the examination testing area
- Attempting to take the examination for another individual
- Possessing books, notes, or other resources and study aids
- Attempting to remove, or removing scratch paper from the testing center
- Recording or attempting to record examination questions or making notes
- Giving help or receiving help or being suspected of doing so during or after the examination
- Eating, drinking, and smoking are prohibited in the testing centers.
- Prohibited items include, but are not limited to, the following: pagers, cell phones, electronic digital devices, recording or photographic devices, weapons, briefcases, computers or computer bags, and handbags or purses.
- Candidates may NOT discuss test questions, topic areas or scenarios, or possible answers, either during or after the test administration, with any other person(s) which includes faculty, other examinees or potential candidates.

## Security

All proprietary rights in the examinations, including copyrights and trade secrets, are held by NAHP. In order to protect the integrity of the examinations and to ensure the validity of the scores reported, candidates must adhere to strict guidelines regarding proper conduct in handling copyrighted proprietary examinations. Any attempt to reproduce all or part of the examinations, including, but not limited to, removing materials from the examination room, aiding others by any means in reconstructing any portion of the examinations, selling, distributing, receiving or having unauthorized possession of any portion of the examinations, is strictly



prohibited by law. Alleged copyright violations will be investigated and, if warranted, prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. It should be noted that all examination scores may be invalidated in the event of this type of suspected breach.

A candidate can be disqualified from taking or continuing to sit for an examination, or from receiving examination results, or the candidate's scores might be cancelled, if through proctor observation, statistical analysis, and other evidence that the candidate's score may not be valid or that the candidate was engaged in collaborative, disruptive, or other unacceptable behavior during the administration of the examination.

### **Cancellation Due to Bad Weather or Other Emergencies**

In the event of bad weather, a natural disaster, or another emergency (for example, a test center power outage), proctors will determine whether circumstances warrant cancellation and rescheduling of examinations at a particular test center.

- Examinations will not be cancelled and rescheduled if the test center proctor can open the testing center.
- Every attempt will be made to administer all examinations as scheduled.
- Every attempt will be made to restart a candidate's examination, if feasible.

However, should examinations at a test center be cancelled, all affected candidates will be notified by the testing center regarding rescheduling.





# After the Examination

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## Notification of Examination Results

Candidates will receive automatic score results at the testing center immediately following the administration of computer-based examinations.

Examination scores will be issued approximately four (4) weeks after paper-and-pencil examinations.

Diagnostic information is provided on score reports for those candidates who were unsuccessful. Diagnostic breakdowns, calculated per domain, are intended to identify content areas by showing areas of relative strength and weakness. Information is provided to assist the candidate in identifying areas of study for purposes of subsequent examination.

## Interpreting Examination Results

A criterion-referenced standard setting process is used to establish the passing point for each examination. Candidate's performance on the examinations are measured against a predetermined standard; candidates are not graded on a curve and do not compete against each other.

The passing points for the examinations are established using a panel of qualified subject matter experts who carefully review each examination item to determine the level of knowledge or skill that is expected. The passing point for each examination is established to identify individuals with an acceptable level of knowledge and skill. To pass each NAHP examination, candidates must meet or exceed the predetermined standard, or passing point.

## Validation of Scores

NAHP and the independent psychometric consultants reserve the right to cancel scores if their validity and integrity is compromised. Discrepancies such as misconduct of a candidate may cause a score to be suspect. NAHP and the independent psychometric consultants will investigate the occurrence and may cancel or withhold the examination results if a violation of regulations is found.

## Reexamination

Candidates that are unsuccessful on the examination may retake the certification examination, for a nominal administrative fee, two (2) times within the one-year candidacy period.

Should a candidate be unsuccessful on a second or subsequent certification examination; the candidate must wait a minimum of 30 days between administrations prior to a subsequent reexamination attempt.

To retake the examination after three (3) unsuccessful unattempts, the candidate must meet the current eligibility requirements and repeat all application processes as outlined in the Candidate Handbook, including the submission of a new application and fee.



## Examination Appeals

Complaints or appeals may be submitted in writing prior to the examination and up until thirty (30) days after examination administration. Written appeals must be submitted with supporting documentation or evidence to the NAHP Certification Director.

The burden of proof for examination appeals is borne by the applicant. The decision of the Certification Council is final. Complaints or appeals will not be considered after the thirty (30) days have expired. Due to the thorough review and analysis of each question during the examination construction procedures, there are no appeal procedures to challenge individual examination questions or answers. Because of the secure nature of these examinations, NAHP will not disclose examination questions prior to, or after, the administration. Candidates responses to particular test questions (correct or not correct) will not be disclosed.

## Certificates

Candidates who complete their NAHP candidacy will receive a certificate specifying that the designation has been awarded; official certificates and wallet cards are sent within 6 weeks of the examination file being completed. The candidate's name will appear on the certificate exactly as requested on the certification application or as entered when beginning the online certification exam. If paper-based testing, information on the admission card will be used when processing the certificate packet.

## Credential Verification

The NAHP Certification Director maintains a database of all active applicants and certificants.

Employers, potential employers or other agencies may check the status of a NAHP certificant on the NAHP website under the verification tab at <http://nahpusa.com> or request verbal verification. A certificant may also purchase a verification letter that can be sent to an employer, potential employer, or agency. Certification status for any individual may be verified by contacting the Verification Department of NAHP.





## Disciplinary and Complaint Policy

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Information regarding the complaint process will be available to the public via the NAHP website or other published documents. A complete copy of this policy will be made available to any individual upon request.

In order to maintain and enhance the credibility of the NAHP's certification programs, the Certification Council has adopted the following procedures to allow individuals to bring complaints concerning the conduct of NAHP certificants to the NAHP Certification Council.

In the event a certificant violates the NAHP Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, certification rules, requirements, and/or policies, the Certification Council may reprimand or suspend the individual or may revoke certification.

The grounds for sanctions under these procedures may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Violation of established NAHP Code of Ethics, rules, requirements, and/or policies.
- Conviction of a felony or other crime of moral turpitude under federal or state law in a matter related to the practice of, or qualifications for, healthcare professionals.
- Gross negligence, willful misconduct, or other unethical conduct in the performance of services for which the individual has achieved NAHP certification.
- Fraud, falsification, or misrepresentation in an initial application or renewal application for certification.
- Falsification of any material information requested by the NAHP or Certification Council.
- Misrepresentation of NAHP certification status.
- Cheating on any certification examination.

Actions taken under this policy do not constitute enforcement of the law, although referral to appropriate federal, state, or local government agencies may be made about the conduct of the certificant in appropriate situations. Individuals initially bringing complaints are not entitled to any relief or damages by virtue of this process, although they will receive notice of the actions taken.



## Complaints

Complaints may be submitted by any individual or entity. Complaints should be reported to the Certification Council in writing and should include the name of the person submitting the complaint, the name of the person the complaint is regarding along with other relevant identifying information, a detailed description of factual allegations supporting the charges, and any relevant supporting documentation. Information submitted during the complaint and investigation process is considered confidential and will be handled in accordance with the Council's Confidentiality policy. Inquiries or submissions other than complaints may be reviewed and handled by the Council Chair or Certification Director at its discretion.

Upon receipt and preliminary review of a complaint involving the certification programs, the Certification Director in consultation with the Council Chair may conclude, in their sole discretion, that the submission:

- contains unreliable or insufficient information, or
- is patently frivolous or inconsequential.

In such cases, the Certification Director and Council Chair may determine that the submission does not constitute a valid and actionable complaint that would justify bringing it before the Council for investigation and a determination of whether there has been a violation of substantive requirements of the certification process. If so, the submission is disposed of by notice from the Certification Director and Council to its submitter.

Preliminary review will be conducted within 15 business days of receipt of the complaint.

If a submission is deemed by the Certification Director and Council to be a valid and actionable complaint, the Council will see that written notice is provided to the certificant whose conduct has been called into question. The certificant whose conduct is at issue will also be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint. The Council will ensure that the individual submitting the complaint receives notice that the complaint is being reviewed by the Council.

## Complaint Review

For each complaint that the Council concludes is a valid and actionable complaint, the Council authorizes an investigation into its specific facts or circumstances to whatever extent is necessary in order to clarify, expand, or corroborate the information provided by the submitter.

The Council appoints a Review Committee of three (3) or more individuals, who may or may not be members of the Council to investigate and make an appropriate determination with respect to each such valid and actionable complaint; the Review Committee may review one or more such complaints as determined by the Council. The Review Committee initially determines whether it is appropriate to review the complaint under these Procedures or whether the matter should be referred to another entity engaged in the administration of law. The timeline for responses and for providing any additional information will be established by the Review Committee. The Review Committee may be assisted in the conduct of its investigation by other members of the Council or by the CEO and/or NAHP staff or legal counsel. The Council exercises general supervision over all investigations.



Both the individual submitting the complaint and the certificant who is the subject of the investigation (or his or her employer) may be contacted for additional information with respect to the complaint. The Review Committee, or the Council on its behalf, may at its discretion contact such other individuals who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances surrounding the complaint.

All investigations and deliberations of the Review Committee and the Council are conducted in confidence, with all written communications sealed and marked "Personal and Confidential," and they are conducted objectively, without any indication of prejudice. An investigation may be directed toward any aspect of a complaint which is relevant or potentially relevant. Formal hearings are not held and the parties are not expected to be represented by counsel, although the Review Committee and Council may consult their own counsel.

Members of the Review Committee will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Committee.

### **Determination of Violation**

Upon completion of an investigation, the Review Committee recommends whether the Council should make a determination that there has been a violation of Council policies and rules. When the Review Committee recommends that the Council find a violation, the Review Committee also recommends imposition of an appropriate sanction. If the Review Committee so recommends, a proposed determination with a proposed sanction is prepared under the supervision of the chair and is presented by a representative of the Review Committee to the Council along with the record of the Review Committee's investigation.

If the Review Committee recommends against a determination that a violation has occurred, the complaint is dismissed with notice to the certificant, the certificant's employer (if involved in the investigation), and the individual or entity who submitted the complaint.

The Council reviews the recommendation of the Review Committee based upon the record of the investigation. The Council may accept, reject, or modify the Review Committee's recommendation, either with respect to the determination of a violation or the recommended sanction to be imposed. If the Council makes a determination that a violation has occurred, this determination and the imposition of a sanction are promulgated by written notice to the certificant, and to the individual submitting the complaint, if the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain in confidence whatever portion of the information is not made public by the Council.

In certain circumstances, the Council may consider a recommendation from the Review Committee that the certificant who has violated the certification program policies or rules should be offered an opportunity to submit a written assurance that the conduct in question has been terminated and will not recur. The decision of the Review Committee to make such a recommendation and of the Council to accept it are within their respective discretionary powers. If such an offer is extended, the certificant at issue must submit the required written assurance within thirty (30) days of receipt of the offer, and the assurance must be submitted in terms that are acceptable to the Council. If the Council accepts the assurance, notice is given to the certificant's employer and to the submitter of the complaint, if the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain the information in confidence.



## Sanctions

Any of the following sanctions may be imposed by the Council upon a certificant whom the Council has determined to have violated the policies and rules of its certification programs, although the sanction applied must reasonably relate to the nature and severity of the violation, focusing on reformation of the conduct of the member and deterrence of similar conduct by others:

- written reprimand to the certificant;
- suspension of the certificant for a designated period; or
- termination of the certificant's credential.

Verification of this information will be made available only after any appeal has either been considered or the appeal period has passed.

Reprimand in the form of a written notice from the Council normally is sent to a certificant who has received his or her first substantiated complaint. Suspension normally is imposed on a certificant who has received two substantiated complaints. Termination normally is imposed on a certificant who has received two substantiated complaints within a two year period, or three or more substantiated complaints. The Council may at its discretion, however, impose any of the sanctions, if warranted, in specific cases.

Certificants who have been terminated will have their certification revoked and may not be considered for NAHP certification in the future. If certification is revoked, any and all certificates or other materials requested by the Council must be returned promptly to the NAHP.

## Appeal

Within thirty (30) days from receipt of notice of a determination by the Council that a certificant violated the certification program policies and/or rules, the affected certificant may submit to the Council in writing a request for an appeal.

Upon receipt of a request for appeal, the Council establishes an appellate body consisting of at least three, but not more than five, individuals. This Appeal Committee may review one or more appeals, upon request of the Council. No current members of the Review Committee or the Council may serve on the Appeal Committee; further, no one with any personal involvement or conflict of interest may serve on the Appeal Committee. Members of the Appeal Committee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Committee.

The Appeal Committee may only review whether the determination by the Council of a violation of the certification program policies and/or rules was inappropriate because of:

- material errors of fact, or
- failure of the Review Committee or the Council to conform to published criteria, policies, or procedures.





Only facts and conditions up to and including the time of the Council's determination as represented by facts known to the Council are considered during an appeal. The appeal will not include a hearing or any similar trial-type proceeding. Legal counsel is not expected to participate in the appeal process, unless requested by the appellant and approved by the Council and the Appeal Committee. The Council and Appeal Committee may consult legal counsel.

The Appeal Committee conducts and completes the appeal within ninety (90) days after receipt of the request for an appeal. Written appellate submissions and any reply submissions may be made by authorized representatives of the member and of the Council. Submissions are made according to whatever schedule is reasonably established by the Appeal Committee. The decision of the Appeal Committee either affirms or overrules the determination of the Council, but does not address a sanction imposed by the Council. The decision of the Appeal Committee, including a statement of the reasons for the decision, is reported to the Council.

The Appeal Committee decision is binding upon the Council, the certificant who is subject to the termination, and all other persons.

## Resignation

If a certificant who is the subject of a complaint voluntarily surrenders his or her certification(s) at any time during the pendency of a complaint under these Procedures, the complaint is dismissed without any further action by the Review Committee, the Council, or an Appeal Committee established after an appeal. The entire record is sealed and the individual may not reapply for certification. However, the Council may authorize to communicate the fact and date of resignation, and the fact and general nature of the complaint which was pending at the time of the resignation, to or at the request of a government entity engaged in the administration of law. Similarly, in the event of such resignation, the certificant's employer and the person or entity who submitted the complaint are notified of the fact and date of resignation and that Council has dismissed the complaint as a result.





# Credential Maintenance

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## Purpose

NAHP supports the ongoing professional development of its certificants. The mandatory renewal process provides certificants with the opportunity to demonstrate the retention, reinforcement and expansion of their knowledge and skills pertaining to new clinical advances as well as state of the art information over the full spectrum of the healthcare arena. Renewal also provides encouragement to, and acknowledgement for, participation in ongoing professional development activities and lifelong learning. To support this purpose, the renewal requirements require continuing education and professional activities that enhance ongoing professional development, recognize learning opportunities, promote continuing competence, and provide a process for both attaining and recording professional development achievements.

## Rationale

To maintain competence and prevent professional obsolescence, the Certification Council requires that each NAHP certificant participate periodically in continuing education to refresh existing knowledge and skills, and to acquire knowledge and proficiency pertaining to new advances as well as state of the art information over the full spectrum of healthcare.

The one-year time period established for renewal is based on both the scope of issues that face healthcare professionals and the Council's belief that new practices, research, and information are introduced in the field with enough frequency that professional development activities should be conducted routinely so that certificants remain current with best practices and emerging knowledge.

To maintain use of the NAHP credentials, certification must be renewed annually.

## Requirements

Certificants who have received a NAHP credential are required to comply with the following annual criteria:

- Current NAHP certification (active status)
- Submission of ten (10) continuing education units that support the NAHP-credential role
- Payment of renewal dues
- A copy of the certificant's current CPR card\* CPR submission is mandatory and 4 credit hours will be awarded towards the total CEU credits due each year.

***\*Online CPR certification will not be accepted by the NAHP.***

Documentation of the continuing education units may be reported on the NAHP Continuing Education Form or copy of certificate of completion may be submitted by mail or email. Certificants are required to report (e.g. name of program, name of the program sponsor, date of program, number of CEUs, and the location of the event) earned continuing education units no later than the end of the year of certification. Continuing education attendance should be listed in chronological order starting from the date of initial certification or



previous recertification to the present. Continuing education units must be obtained within the one (1) year reporting cycle. Continuing education units received before initial certification was earned will not be accepted. Certificates of Attendance may be required in order to substantiate the CEUs and should be maintained for a period of two years if the continuing education form is submitted.

### Multiple Credential Continuing Education Requirements

A total of ten (10) continuing education units are required for NAHP designation(s). Certificants are not required to earn any additional continuing education units.

Reporting cycles for certificants with multiple credentials will be synchronized by NAHP.

### Renewal Fees

- Renewal Dues, Initial Credential:\$55
- Renewal Dues, Each Additional Credential:\$25
- Renewal Form Late Fee:\$25



## Qualifying Continuing Education Activities

The following activities, provided they are relevant to the healthcare arena, are deemed appropriate for receipt of continuing education units:

### Participation in Educational Programs

- a. Educational portions of programs, sessions, or presentations of healthcare and other relevant professional associations | One (1) CEU for each hour of participation
- b. Educational portions of programs, sessions, or presentations sponsored by schools, organizations or vendors on topics, which maintain, update, or enlarge knowledge and/or skills | One (1) CEU for each hour of participation
- c. Telecommunications and web-based communications (e.g. conference calls, webinars, podcasts) | One (1) CEU for each hour of participation

### Participation in Formal Educational Programs of Study

- a. Post-secondary courses **attended for credit**, including guided independent study and regular college or university courses. Courses taken in pursuit of associate, baccalaureate, master, or doctorate degrees are included. All coursework and final exams must be completed by the cycle end date.

*Fifteen (15) CEUs for each completed semester*

*Ten (10) CEUs for each completed quarter credit*

- b. Audit of academic course or relevant **non-credit adult education course**, including attendance at a college or university course with permission and following regulations, without completing necessary requirements for full formal credit. Course must be completed by the cycle end date.

*Six (6) CEUs for each completed semester*

*Four (4) CEUs for each completed quarter credit*

- c. Correspondence and other formal, independent, online, or distance education study programs which consist of readings and exercises submitted to a knowledgeable instructor for evaluation. Courses normally cover several lessons to be completed in a specific time cycle. Certificate of completion must show that all coursework and exams were completed by the cycle end date. Self-study programs are defined as courses completed outside of a classroom environment using printed material, periodicals, audio and/or video cassettes, electronic media or online media.

Credit for self-study programs is determined by the hours of completion time recommended / established by the CE sponsor.

*Programs are accepted for CEUs in an initial unit of at least one hour (minimum of 50 minutes constitutes one class hour).*

### Independent Study Activities

- a. Completion of Class A NAHP publication | (CEUs pre-determined by NAHP) *(3 credit hours each)*



## Renewal Form Processing

NAHP strictly adheres to the standards of maintenance requirements for certification. It is the responsibility of the certificant to comply with all procedures and deadlines in order to maintain their credential. If a candidate renews after the expiration date, a late fee will be enforced.

Throughout the certification period, continuing education reports are available for each certified professional for the current reporting period. The report includes a summary of the CEU records NAHP has on file for the certificant; candidates may request a hard copy from NAHP.

Continuing education credits must be earned through CPR training, continuing education updates provided by the NAHP or through outside continuing education courses. There is no fee for the continuing education units provided by the NAHP. Continuing education must support the NAHP-credential role.

NAHP certificants are responsible for maintaining records of their continuing education credits and may be required to substantiate these units during random audits. Certificants are encouraged to maintain an electronic portfolio. However, documentation may be submitted to the NAHP electronically or in a hard copy format.

## Incomplete and Late Renewal Forms

Renewal forms are considered incomplete if any of the required information is missing and/or illegible, or the appropriate fee is not included.

Candidates will be notified via US mail and/or email that the renewal form is incomplete and what must be done to complete the renewal process. These notices will include a deadline for response.

Renewal payment submitted one (1) day past the published deadline will be considered late and the certificate is listed as "expired" and a late fee will be enforced.

## Failure to Renew

Renewal is mandatory for all certificants. Individuals whose certification has expired or been inactive or revoked may not represent him/herself as an NAHP certificant and may not use the designation until he/she receives official notice that the renewal requirements have been satisfied or that certification status has been reinstated.

## Reinstatement Process

A certificant must complete the required educational courses, pay the balance of the renewal fees, pay a \$25 late fee, and obtain the required number of continuing education units in order to reinstate the NAHP credential.

If the certificant does not comply with the reinstatement requirements within the maximum period of five years, the Council will void the NAHP credential. After 5 years of inactivity an individual who wishes to regain active NAHP-credential status must meet the eligibility.



All expired certificants seeking reinstatement of their NAHP credential must complete and submit the following:

- Submission of ten (10) continuing education units that support the NAHP-credential role for each year of renewal
- Payment of the renewal dues
- Payment of late fee
- A copy of the certificant's current CPR card\*
- Attestation to comply with the NAHP Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
- If applicable, purchase and complete the 5 year recertification exam

***\*Online CPR certification will not be accepted by the NAHP.***

## Audit Process

NAHP reserves the right to verify information supplied by, or on behalf of, a certificant. If selected for a review, the certificant will be asked to submit documentation substantiating eligibility.

The NAHP randomly audits approximately 5% of continuing education forms. An individual selected for review will be required to submit verifiable documentation for each activity listed in the continuing education form. It is recommended that certificants retain all records for at least two (2) years following the cycle end date.

If credit for any program or activity (i.e. for which CEUs are reported is denied as a result of the review, the certificant will be given 60 days to report additional hours to cure the deficiency. The certificant will remain authorized to use the NAHP-credential designation during this 60-day period.

If the deficiency is not cured within the 60-day period, a deficiency notice will be sent. If the necessary hours remain unreported the individual will no longer be certified and will not be authorized to use the NAHP-credential designation.

## Renewal Appeals

Appeals regarding renewal eligibility and status must be submitted in writing to the Certification Director within thirty (30) calendar days after the adverse decision or notification. The candidate must submit the appeal in writing (email is acceptable), and explain in detail: 1) The nature of the request and the specific facts and circumstances supporting the request, and 2) all reasons why the action or decision should be changed or modified. The candidate must also provide accurate copies of all supporting documents. The Certification Director will review the appeal within 15 days. If the issue can be resolved at the staff level, the Certification Director will make a determination and will notify the Council of the result.

If the issue cannot be resolved by the Certification Director he/she will refer the appeal to the Council. The appeal will also be referred to the Council if the candidate does not accept a determination by the Certification Director.





# NAHP Certification Council Policies

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## Proper Use of the Credential

NAHP's certification marks represent the highest standards of excellence in the field of healthcare and are valuable assets of NAHP. Professionals authorized by NAHP to use its certification marks benefit from both our long history of high ethical and educational standards and the public recognition of NAHP's certification marks as symbols of professional accomplishment.

After receiving official notification of the NAHP designation, meeting all eligibility requirements, and passing the examination, individuals may use their credential in all correspondence and professional relations. The credential is typically used after the certificant's name following any academic degrees and licensure (e.g. Mary Smith, BS, NRCMA). If you hold multiple NAHP certifications, list them in order they were obtained, with the most recent first.

## Examples

### *Correct Use:*

- John Doe is a Nationally Registered Certified Medical Assistant® certificant
- John Doe, Nationally Registered Certified Medical Assistant® certificant
- John and Jane Doe are Nationally Registered Certified Medical Assistant® certificants.
- Nationally Registered Certified Medical Assistant®
- John Doe, NRCMA

### *Misuse:*

- ABC employs three Certified Medical Assistant professionals
- John Doe, CMS
- John Doe, RMA
- John Doe, CMA

## Confidentiality Procedures

NAHP is committed to protecting confidential information related to applicants, candidates, and certificants. Confidential materials include, but are not limited to: an individual's application, application status, personal applicant /certificant information, examination items and answers, examination forms, and individual examination scores.

Personal information about a candidate/certificant will only be released to that candidate/certificant if release of the information is authorized in writing by the individual or is required by law. Personal information submitted by applicant /certificants with an application or renewal form is considered confidential. Personal information retained within the applicant/certificant database will be kept confidential.

Examination scores are released only to the examination candidate unless a signed release is provided in writing by the individual or is required by law.



## Release of Information

The names of certified individuals are not considered confidential and may be published by the NAHP.

Aggregate data is sent to NAHP educational faculty contacts. Aggregate exam statistics, studies and reports concerning applicants /certificants will contain no information identifiable with any applicant/certificant.

Application status, information about whether or not an individual has taken the examination, and score information will not be released. Examination scores are released only to the examination candidate unless a signed release is provided in writing to the NAHP by the individual or is required by law.

## Record Retention

NAHP retains all examination forms, examination development documents, examination results, examination items, active certification application information, and active applicant/candidate/certificant data permanently.

