



National
Healthcareer
Association®



CANDIDATE HANDBOOK



Clinical Medical Assistant Certification
CCMA



Phlebotomy Technician Certification
CPT



Medical Administrative Assistant Certification
CMAA



EKG Technician Certification
CET



Electronic Health Record Specialist Certification
CEHRS



Billing and Coding Specialist Certification
CBCS



Patient Care Technician/Assistant Certification
CPCT/A

*All of the above certification programs are accredited by
The National Commission for Certifying Agencies ("NCCA").*

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GETTING CERTIFIED IS AS EASY AS THESE FIVE STEPS

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Check your eligibility



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Certification



This Candidate Handbook provides information about National Healthcareer Association® (NHA) and the certification examinations and credentials it offers in various allied healthcare fields. This Handbook includes information concerning:

- NHA allied health certification examinations and application fees;
- Eligibility requirements;
- Applying and sitting for NHA certification examinations;
- Exam administration and results;
- Rules of conduct and disciplinary action; and
- Awarding of credentials.

NHA's Mission

Together with schools and healthcare providers, NHA is dedicated to improving the quality of patient care through the certification and ongoing development of successful allied health practitioners.

About NCCA and the NHA Certification Governing Board

All of the NHA certification programs discussed in this Handbook are accredited by The National Commission for Certifying Agencies ("NCCA"), a division of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence ("ICE").

The NHA Certification Governing Board is an independent and autonomous board that is responsible for overseeing all allied health certification programs listed herein. The Certification Board sets policy over essential certification activities and oversees certification and recertification decisions, including governance, eligibility standards, disciplinary and appeals actions, and the development, administration and scoring of assessment instruments.

Nondiscrimination

NHA and its designated test vendor, PSI, do not discriminate against any individual because of age, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other protected class. NHA and PSI endorse and adhere to the principles of equal opportunity.



The following lists the NHA national certification examinations addressed in this handbook and associated fees:

Exam	Application Fee
Phlebotomy Technician Certification (CPT)	\$105.00
EKG Technician Certification (CET)	\$105.00
Clinical Medical Assistant Certification (CCMA)	\$149.00
Patient Care Technician/Assistant Certification (CPCT/A)	\$149.00
Medical Administrative Assistant Certification (CMAA)	\$105.00
Electronic Health Record Specialist Certification (CEHRS™)	\$105.00
Billing and Coding Specialist Certification (CBCS)	\$105.00

PLEASE NOTE: NHA also offers the Exam for the Certification of Pharmacy Technicians (ExCPT). For more information about the ExCPT, please see the separate "ExCPT Candidate Handbook".

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Certification Eligibility

To be eligible to sit for an NHA certification examination and receive certification, each candidate must:

- Possess a high school diploma or the equivalent, such as the General Education Development test (GED) or other equivalency test recognized by the candidate's state of residency, or diploma and official transcript reflecting equivalent education as evaluated by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers for secondary education (if documents are not in English, a translation into English from a translation service approved in the United States for legal or government documents must be available upon request).
- Successfully complete a training program or have a minimum of one year of supervised work experience in the health field covered by the NHA certification exam. Evidence of such training or work experience must be available upon request.
- If applicable, meet the program-specific eligibility requirements discussed below.

Additional Program-specific Eligibility Requirements

- **Phlebotomy Technician Certification (CPT):** Each candidate for the CPT certification must be able to provide evidence that he/she has performed a minimum of thirty (30) venipunctures and ten (10) capillary sticks on live individuals.
- **EKG Technician Certification (CET):** Each candidate for the CET certification must be able to provide evidence that he/she has performed a minimum of ten (10) EKGs on live individuals.
- NHA reserves the right to adopt additional practical requirements with respect to specific certification programs or all certification programs.

Provisional Certification

A candidate who is scheduled to graduate from an accredited high school or GED program (or other equivalency test recognized by the candidate's state or residency) may take the certification exam and receive a Provisional Certification up to twelve (12) months before graduation as long as all certification eligibility requirements are met. A "Provisional Certification" is a placeholder and is intended to allow candidates to take certification exams as near to the time they complete their training even though they have not yet met the eligibility requirement of holding a high school diploma or its equivalency needed to receive a standard (full) certification.

It is important to note that the Provisional Certification expires twelve (12) months after the examination date. If the provisional certification lapses before the candidate graduates, the candidate will be required to re-take the NHA certification exam. Accordingly, a candidate seeking a Provisional Certification – any candidate that has not yet obtained a high school diploma, GED certificate or other high school equivalency – is responsible for making sure that his/her examination is scheduled on a date that is no more than twelve (12) months before his/her graduation date.

Each student seeking to obtain a Provisional Certification must sign-on and register for the exam. Registration must be performed by the actual candidate, and thus parents, teachers, other school officials, or other parties are not permitted to register on behalf of a candidate. As noted below, the registration process includes Attestations that each candidate must read and agree to before sitting for an examination and all candidates will be bound by the attestations made at the time of registration.

Additionally, candidates are advised to provide a personal email address at the time of registration, rather than an email address associated with their current school, employer or sponsor, so that NHA is able to provide important information concerning their certification even after the candidate has left his/her current school, employer or sponsor.

A candidate scheduled to graduate from an accredited high school, GED program or other high school equivalency program may receive a provisional certification pursuant to the following conditions:

- A Provisional Certification expires twelve (12) months after the examination date. The provisional certification cannot be renewed or reinstated. It must be converted to a full certification by meeting all certification eligibility requirements, including the requirement to have graduated from high school or other equivalency program.

- A candidate must take and successfully pass the examination no more than twelve (12) months prior to his/her graduation date. For purposes herein, the candidate's "graduation date" is the date officially recognized by the educational institution and displayed on an official transcript, diploma, GED certification or other documentary proof of successful completion of a high school equivalency program. The graduation date must be a date that precedes, or is on or within 30 days following, the expiration date shown on the NHA Provisional Certification.
- Upon graduation, the holder of an active provisional certification must apply to have his/her provisional certification converted to a full certification. If the Provisional Certification lapses before the candidate applies for conversion to a full certificate, the candidate will be required to retake the NHA certification exam.
- When applying for full certification, a candidate is required to provide proof of graduation (high school diploma, GED certification or other documentary proof of successful completion of a high school equivalency program). In addition he/she must be able to provide written proof that they have met the training or work experience eligibility requirement and, if applicable, the program-specific eligibility requirements described in the "Eligibility" section of this Candidate Handbook, upon request. For more information about converting a Provisional Certification, please see the "Converting Provisional Certification to Full Certification" section of this Candidate Handbook.
- Once the Provisional Certification is converted to a full certification, the expiration date will be based on the initial testing date and all requirements for continuing education needed to renew the certification will be required.

Eligibility Exception Requests

Candidates may request an exception to eligibility requirements to sit for the certification exam by completing the appropriate Exceptions Request/Appeals form and submitting supporting documentation. The exception request will be reviewed and decided upon by the Disciplinary & Appeals Committee. The Committee's decision will be provided to the candidate in writing. Decisions of the Committee may be submitted to the Certification Governing Board for reconsideration. Such reconsideration will not occur until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board, which meets approximately three times each year. Decisions of the Board are final. See the "Appeals" section of this Candidate Handbook for more information. NHA reserves the right to uphold eligibility requirements as established by the Certification Governing Board.



State Licensing Eligibility Requirements

The NHA eligibility requirements pertain only to NHA certifications and are separate and distinct from any eligibility to practice requirements set forth under state law, regulation or rule. The laws and regulations governing the practice of an allied healthcare profession, if any, vary by state. Candidates are solely responsible for knowing and understanding the requirements, if any, which govern the practice of their profession in their particular state, including those concerning certification requirements. Candidates are advised to conduct online research to determine the name of the oversight body, if any, for the allied healthcare field in which he/she plans to practice in the state in which he/she wishes to work and to visit the website for, or contact directly, that oversight body to learn the most current requirements for practicing in that state. Because state laws, regulations and rules change often, candidates should visit the website for the oversight body on a regular basis. NHA certification does not guarantee any candidate's ability to meet any or all regulatory requirements pertaining to their profession.

All candidates must complete a two-step process, which consists of (1) creating a candidate profile and (2) applying to sit for one or more certification examinations.

Creating a Candidate Profile

Candidate Profiles are created on the NHA website, www.nhanow.com.

If you are a returning candidate, certificant or previously have created a Candidate Profile, skip this step and "Login" instead. Please do not create another profile.

When creating a Candidate Profile, please be aware of the following:

- Candidate Profiles should be created by the candidate. Candidate Profiles should not be created by a third party such as a parent, teacher, school official, sponsor, case worker, or any other party.
- When creating a candidate profile, the candidate will be required to select an 'Organization Type.' If the candidate is associated with a school, institution, or employer that is an authorized NHA test site, the candidate will select their institution from the drop-down menu in the 'Organization' field. If a candidate is not affiliated with an institution, the candidate should select 'Registering Individually' from the 'Organization Type' menu.

***PLEASE NOTE:** This selection will impact the candidate's registration options. All candidates not affiliated with an NHA authorized testing institution will be required to take their exams at a third party testing center.*

- Candidates are advised to provide a personal e-mail address when they create their candidate profile rather than an e-mail address associated with their current institution. This is requested so that NHA is able to provide important information concerning the candidate's certification after the candidate has left their current school or employer.

Applying/Registering for an Exam

Once the Candidate Profile has been created, each candidate must apply/register for an exam. This can be done immediately following the creation of the Candidate Profile or at a later time.

All candidates affiliated with an NHA authorized testing institution must apply for a specific certification exam date. NHA's step-by-step "How To" for applying for an exam if the candidate's profile is associated with an institution and a helpful video can be found on the NHA FAQ page at www.nhanow.com/faq/student-faq.aspx under the question "How do I register to take a NHA exam at my school?".

If the candidate selected "Registering Individually" during the creation of his/her profile, the candidate will take his/her exam at a PSI test site. Such candidates must complete the NHA application process and then contact PSI to schedule their specific exam date. Information about PSI test locations is available on the NHA FAQ page at www.nhanow.com/faq/student-faq.aspx. Additionally, NHA's step-by-step "How To" for applying for an exam if the candidate registers as an individual and a helpful video can be found on the NHA FAQ page at www.nhanow.com/faq/student-faq.aspx under the question "How do I register to take a NHA exam if my school or employer is not an authorized testing institution with NHA?".

When applying/registering for an exam, please be aware of the following:

- Exam applications must be completed by the candidate. Exam applications are not to be completed by a third party such as a parent, teacher, school official, sponsor, case workers, or any other party. The exam application process includes an attestation that each candidate must read and agree to before sitting for an examination. All candidates will be bound by the attestations made during the exam application process.
- Each candidate must read the Attestation Agreement (see the "Attestation" section of the Candidate Handbook for more information) and select whether they agree or disagree with the attestations. If the candidate does not or cannot agree with the Attestation Agreement, the candidate will be placed in contingent status and will not be able to complete exam application until the status has been removed. When the candidate selects 'Disagree,' he/she will receive a warning message explaining that he/she will be placed in contingency status. If the candidate confirms their selection, it is the responsibility of the candidate to file an exception request, which is reviewed by the Disciplinary & Appeals Committee. To file an exception request, the candidate must complete an Appeals Form found at <http://www.nhanow.com/forms.aspx>, attach any supporting documentation that explains why the candidate cannot agree with the attestation and email, fax or mail the package to the address of the Appeals Form. The candidate will be notified in writing of the decision of the Appeals Committee. For more information, see the "Appeals" section of the Candidate Handbook.
- During the application process, candidates may elect to share their examination scores with their institution. In some cases, based on agreements or arrangements between the candidate and their institution or other third parties, the candidate may be required to share their score.
- Unless sponsored by an authorized testing institution or employer, payment is required when the candidate applies for the examination. The candidate will have two (2) hours to complete the payment process after applying for their certification exam(s). If the payment window closes before payment is finalized, the candidate's application will be voided. The candidate must re-apply for the examination and finalize payment to confirm their application for the exam.

After the application/registration is completed, the candidate will receive a confirmation email.

Attestations

Candidates are required to attest to meeting all eligibility requirements and acknowledge understanding of NHA's confidentiality and testing policies, including policies concerning misconduct, and the disciplinary recourse for violating those policies. Candidates may be expected to re-attest to eligibility requirements at the test site. All candidates will be bound by the attestations made at the time of Registration and/or at the test site. Below are the attestations that each candidate must make at Registration (provided verbatim):

Please read carefully. You **MUST** attest to the following statements in order to sit for this examination:

1. I am the actual candidate registering for the exam(s) and no other person is completing this registration on my behalf.

***PLEASE NOTE:** Registration must be performed by the candidate; parents, teachers, school officials, or any other party are not permitted to register on the candidate's behalf. All candidates will be bound by the attestations made during the exam application process.*

2. I possess either a high school diploma or equivalency, or I expect to earn my high school diploma or equivalency within the next twelve (12) months.
3. Prior to sitting for the exam, I have or will have successfully completed an approved training program, or I have worked in the field in which I am seeking certification for a minimum of one year. (For those candidates taking the Phlebotomy Technician exam: This includes a minimum of thirty (30) venipunctures and ten (10) capillary sticks. These venipunctures and capillary sticks must be performed on live individuals. Candidates are prohibited from using mannequins to meet this requirement. For those candidates taking the EKG Technician exam: This includes performing a minimum of ten (10) EKGs. These EKGs must be performed on live individuals. Candidates are prohibited from using mannequins to meet this requirement.).

***PLEASE NOTE:** If you do NOT meet these eligibility requirements, you must request and receive an official waiver from the NHA Disciplinary & Appeals Committee that specifically allows you to sit for this exam. Answer "I do NOT agree" below and submit an Appeal Form, which can be found under "Forms" at www.nhanow.com.*



4. I have read the Candidate's Handbook for this examination and attest that I meet all of this examination's eligibility requirements.
5. I understand that all assessment questions are the copyrighted property of Assessment Technologies Institute®, LLC. The removal or attempt to remove questions or other assessment material from the test site is prohibited. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or disclose these assessment questions by any means, in whole or in part. A violation of this type can result in civil and criminal penalties.
6. I certify that I will not cheat or violate the confidentiality of the examination. Cheating or violation of confidentiality may be defined as, but not necessarily limited to the following:
 - a. Obtaining help from any other person during the examination
 - b. Communicating with or giving help to another candidate during the examination
 - c. Using notes, books, or any other sources of information during the examination
 - d. Using electronic programmable devices, such as calculators, cell phones, and PDAs during the examination
 - e. Reproducing or making copies of an NHA examination or test questions by any means
 - f. Memorizing and reproducing test questions
 - g. Soliciting test questions from previous candidates
 - h. Discussing or disclosing the contents of the examination by any means, or
 - i. Providing false or purposely misleading information when applying for, registering for, or completing the exam
7. I understand that NHA will publish a list of certified candidates and that my employer and state regulatory board may be notified if my certification expires or is revoked. Unless required by law, my name will not be released to any party in conjunction with my test score without my permission.
8. I understand that any claim I may have related to the good-faith enforcement of these policies or the unintentional damage or loss of my exam records will not exceed the amount of my application fee for this examination.

I attest that by clicking on "I agree", I have read and understand the above, that the information I have provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I further understand that NHA may revoke certification if I provided any false or incomplete information.

Audit of Attestation Responses. NHA reserves the right to audit candidate responses to attestations.



Rescheduling or Cancellation of an Exam

RESCHEDULING AN EXAM. Candidates may reschedule an examination date, without repaying the fee, to a new date within six (6) months of the original scheduled examination date. Information about rescheduling is available on the NHA FAQ page at www.nhanow.com/faq/student-faq.aspx.

- If a candidate had registered to take the exam at a PSI testing site and wants to reschedule to another date without having to repay the fee, the candidate must visit the PSI website (www.psiexams.com) at least 24 hours prior to the originally scheduled appointment in order to reschedule or cancel his/her examination without penalty. If a PSI testing center candidate does not cancel or reschedule his/her exam with PSI at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled time, the cost of the exam is forfeited and the candidate must re-register and repurchase the exam.
- If the candidate is taking the exam at an authorized testing institution or employer, he/she must reschedule his/her examination prior to the start of the actual exam, approval of the rescheduling is at the school's or employer's discretion. Candidates should contact the administering site (e.g., the school, employer or agency) where the examination is scheduled.
- If the candidate does not timely reschedule his/her exam or tries to reschedule to a date more than six (6) months after the original exam date, the examination fees will be forfeited and the candidate will need to reregister and repurchase the exam.

EXAM CANCELLATION BY NHA OR PSI. If an exam date is cancelled by NHA or a PSI testing site and the candidate does not reschedule his/her examination date, the candidate will be entitled to a refund. There are no other circumstances under which refunds are offered.

- In the event that severe weather or other emergency forces the closure of a PSI test site on a scheduled examination date, the examination will be rescheduled by PSI at no additional charge. PSI personnel will attempt to contact candidates who are in this situation. However, candidates may also check the status of their examination schedules by visiting PSI at www.psiexams.com or calling PSI at 1-800-733-9267. Every effort will be made to reschedule the examination at a convenient time.

Accommodation Requests

Accommodations may be available to individuals with documented disabilities pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). NHA provides reasonable testing accommodations to candidates whose documented disabilities or other qualifying medical conditions hinder their ability to take the examination under standard conditions. Examples of requests for special testing accommodations that may be granted include modification of seating or other physical arrangements in the testing facility, or providing for the examination to be taken in an accessible location, providing for a reasonable extension of testing time, providing a sign language interpreter (to assist with audio or spoken components, if any), reader or other auxiliary aid.

To be considered for special accommodations, a candidate must complete the NHA Request for Accommodations Form, located at <http://www.nhanow.com/forms.aspx>, in its entirety. Information about requesting accommodations is available on the NHA FAQ page at www.nhanow.com/faq/student-faq.aspx.

Please be aware that submission of a request for an accommodation does not guarantee testing accommodations. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis considering the information submitted and in accordance with the law.

Requests for accommodations must include either:

1. A letter, written no more than two years earlier than the date of the request accommodation, from an objective physician or healthcare professional qualified to diagnose the disability or medical condition and render an opinion as to the need for an accommodation.
 - a. An "objective" professional cannot be the candidate requesting the accommodation or a relative of the candidate.
2. Or, if the candidate is a high school student, or is within two years of his/her high school graduation, an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) may be used in lieu of the letter provided that the IEP is actively in place, or was actively in place at the time of graduation.
 - a. Older IEPs will be considered, if provided, in any accommodation determination, but cannot be used in lieu of a letter from a qualified healthcare professional.

The letter or IEP MUST include the following:

- a. The specific disability/diagnosis. Mental/emotional disabilities must be accompanied by a numerical DSM-IV classification code.
- b. A brief explanation of how this condition limits the candidate's ability to take the exam under standard conditions.
- c. If this is not a permanent disability or diagnosis, include date first diagnosed, approximate duration, and method used to make the diagnosis.
- d. State specifically the accommodation(s) required. Requested accommodations should be adequate to address the candidate's specific disability or diagnosis without creating an unfair advantage. Please note that candidates who require extra time to complete the exam will be given 150% (or 1½ times) the standard allotted time. If more time is needed, the letter or IEP must specifically state how much time is needed and why that amount of time is required.

Accommodations are provided to qualified candidates with disabilities to the extent that such accommodation does not fundamentally alter the examination or cause an undue burden to the NHA or the testing center. The cost of excessive accommodation requirements is to be borne by the candidate (i.e., electronic communication equipment, etc.).

PLEASE NOTE: *The exam is written and administered in the English language. A lack of facility with the English language is not considered a disability. Exams will not be translated into foreign languages and interpreters are not permitted inside the exam room for the purpose of translating the examination from English into another language for a candidate.*

Exam Preparation Materials

After registering for the examination, the candidate may choose to purchase preparation materials, such as a Study Guide and/or Practice Assessment, offered by ATI Allied Health. The purchase or use of ATI Allied Health preparation materials is not required in order to become eligible to sit for an NHA exam, and does not guarantee a passing score on an examination.

PSI Software Demonstration

Candidates that register to take their exam at a PSI testing center can view a demonstration of the PSI/ software prior to taking the exam. This demonstration is available at <http://candidate.psiexams.com/>. A brief demonstration session is available to candidates prior to the beginning of the examination. This is not a practice examination, but rather a demonstration of the software interface.



Testing Format

All NHA exams are multiple choice exams, administered under proctored testing conditions. Computer-based testing is available at most authorized locations and all PSI testing centers. Paper/pencil testing is available at authorized locations that do not support computer-based testing.

Proctor Policy

All proctors at authorized test locations must complete the NHA proctor training, sign the Proctor Oath and agree to abide by all NHA testing policies and procedures. PSI testing center proctors are trained by PSI and must agree to follow PSI proctor procedures, which have been reviewed and approved by NHA.

Time Limits and Number of Questions for Exams

Time limits for the exam are based on the number of items constituting the exam. The examination times and number of questions is provided in the following table:

Examination	Number of Questions	Exam Time
Phlebotomy Technician Certification (CPT)	110	1 Hr 50 Min
EKG Technician Certification (CET)	110	1 Hr 50 Min
Clinical Medical Assistant Certification (CCMA)	160	2 Hrs 40 Min
Patient Care Technician/Assistant Certification (CPCT/A)	110	1 Hr 50 Min
Medical Administrative Assistant Certification (CMAA)	110	1 Hr 50 Min
Electronic Health Record Specialist Certification (CEHRS™)	110	1 Hr 50 Min
Billing and Coding Specialist Certification (CBCS)	120	1 Hr 55 Min

Proctors will adhere to the time limits set for each examination. If an accommodation for additional time has been requested and approved, Proctors will adhere to the time limit set in the approved accommodation.

Security at Authorized Locations and Test Sites

All candidates must have identification verified with a current government-issued photo-ID before entering the examination room. Proctors are required to verify the candidate's identity as a condition of candidate admittance to the exam. Candidates must present a government-issued ID, such as a driver's license or passport, which should include a current photograph, the candidate's signature, and a permanent address. If the address on the government-issued photo identification is different from that supplied at the time of registration, the candidate must show proof of address, such as a current utility bill. After the verification process is complete, candidates are required to initial the roster next to their name. After the exam, proctors are required to return the roster to NHA, which indicates that all identification was verified according to policy.

Misconduct

NHA does not tolerate cheating or any breach of academic or professional ethics. NHA also does not tolerate activity or conduct that jeopardizes the security or integrity of its certification exams. Accordingly, all candidates are required to (i) provide accurate and truthful information when they register, including responding to the attestations, (ii) abide by the Testing Rules of Conduct and (iii) adhere to NHA's Code of Ethics. Failure to do so is considered Misconduct for which the candidate may be disciplined.

Testing Rules of Conduct

Each candidate must abide by the following NHA Testing Rules of Conduct:

- All exams must be completed within a single, continuous session. Candidates may not stop their exam administration and return to review their answers or continue the exam(s) at a later date or time.
- No reference books will be allowed during any NHA examination administration. Such material and any other papers may not be brought into the examination room. If appropriate for the specific exam, scratch paper and a writing instrument will be provided by the proctor. (Note: Candidates must provide their own #2 pencils for paper/pencil examinations.) All paper – exam booklets, answer sheets, scratch paper – must be returned to the proctor before leaving the examination room.
- Telephones, personal computers, electronic tablets, electronic readers, cameras, MP3 players, pagers, radios, watches, electronic translators, calculators and all other electronic devices are prohibited in the examination room, except to the extent the electronic device is approved pursuant to an accommodation request. Such approved devices are subject to inspection.
- The proctor will not answer any questions pertaining to the examination content.
- Once the candidate has entered the exam room, referencing written materials, using electronic devices, or discussing or reviewing any aspect of the exam with other individuals is strictly prohibited, even during scheduled breaks, if any, until the exam is completed. Where an accommodation has been granted, and such accommodation requires the use of written materials, electronic devices or the assistance of another person, the accommodation will be provided by the proctor (and not the candidate) or, with respect to certain electronic devices that must be supplied by the candidate, the device will be subject to inspection by the proctor. People providing assistance, such as sign language interpreters and test readers, may not assist the candidate with answering the examination and also are subject to these Testing Rules of Conduct.

- Eating or drinking in the examination room will not be allowed unless deemed necessary due to a documented medical condition and the candidate sought and received approval for the accommodation prior to the examination date.
- Leaving the examination room at any time other than at a scheduled break, if any, is not allowed. The proctor is permitted to make an exception to this rule only under specific conditions, which include: (i) a determination by the proctor that the break is reasonably necessary; (ii) only one examinee may be absent from the examination room at any time; (iii) the candidate may not engage in conversation, may not reference any written materials and may not use any electronic devices while outside of the examination room; (iv) the time for taking the exam will not be extended or altered (in other words, break time is counted as test taking time); and (v) any other condition the proctor determines is necessary to protect the integrity of the examination process and the security of the exam.
- Removal of exam content from the examination room is prohibited. All exam booklets, answer sheets and paper used during an exam must be provided by the proctor and returned to the proctor at the end of the exam. Any act to retain exam content for use after the completion of the exam will be deemed a breach of the confidentiality policy and theft of NHA's intellectual property. This includes any effort to copy, photograph, record or memorize exam content.
- Candidates are honor-bound to report any and all suspected cheating or attempts to steal examination content by others that he/she witnesses, hears about or is asked by another to participate in. Failure to alert the proctor or NHA to such activity will be deemed a violation of the Testing Rules of Conduct.

NHA Code of Ethics

NHA has established a code of ethics and guidelines in order to protect the public and the Profession. Candidates are expected and certificants are required to follow the code of ethics stated below (provided verbatim):

As a certified professional through the NHA, I have a duty to:

- To use my best efforts for the betterment of society, the profession, and the members of the profession.
- Uphold the standards of professionalism and be honest in all professional interactions.
- Continue to learn, apply, and advance scientific and practical knowledge and skills; stay up to date on the latest research and its practical application.
- Participate in activities contributing to the improvement of personal health, our society, and the betterment of the allied health industry.
- Continuously act in the best interests of the general public.
- Protect and respect the dignity, privacy and safety of all patients.

Disciplinary Actions for Misconduct

Any misrepresentation of a candidate's eligibility, false attestation, violation of the Testing Rules of Conduct or failure to adhere to the NHA Code of Ethics is considered Misconduct for which NHA may take disciplinary action. Any candidate engaging in any activity that may compromise the security, validity or integrity of an NHA Exam will be subject to disciplinary action, which can include the invalidation of exam scores, revocation of credentials and imposition of a ban from retaking the examination or any other examination offered by NHA.

Misrepresentation of Eligibility/False Attestation

If a candidate provides inaccurate or false information concerning Eligibility requirements or the Attestations, NHA has the right to:

- If discovered before the exam is administered, disallow the candidate from sitting for the exam. No refund will be provided;
- If discovered after the exam was administered but before the exam is scored or before a credential is issued, invalidate the score and/or withhold the certification credential. No refund will be provided. At NHA's sole discretion, NHA has the right to determine that the candidate is ineligible to retake the exam or any other NHA certification exam;
- If discovered after the credential was issued, suspend or revoke certification credential. No refund will be provided. At NHA's sole discretion, NHA has the right to determine that the candidate is ineligible to retake the exam or sit for any other NHA certification exam.

Suspicion of Misconduct Arising At or During the Examination

- If the proctor is unable to verify the identity of the person appearing at the exam, the proctor can deny access to the examination. Under most circumstances, the candidate will be able to reschedule the examination without additional charge to a date on which he/she can present proper verification of identity. NHA reserves the right to determine that the candidate is ineligible to take the exam at a future date in cases of misrepresentation, fraud or other circumstances indicating attempted cheating or exam content theft.
- Proctors are permitted, on NHA's behalf, to enforce the Testing Rules of Conduct. If a candidate violates any of the Rules, the proctor can terminate the exam and remove the candidate from the examination room. The proctor will file a report with NHA and NHA will determine if any further discipline is warranted. Absent a determination that the proctor's concerns were unfounded, no refund will be provided.

Violations of Certain Testing Rules of Conduct

- Violations amounting to cheating: All allegations of cheating will be investigated. NHA has the right to invalidate test scores, suspend or revoke certification credentials, and deem a candidate ineligible to retake the exam or sit for any other NHA certification exam.

- Violations amounting to theft of exam content: All allegations concerning the security of the exams and NHA's intellectual property will be investigated. NHA has the right to invalidate test scores, suspend or revoke certification credentials, and deem a candidate ineligible to retake the exam or sit for any other NHA certification exam.
- NHA reserves the right to report violations of these Rules to concerned third parties, which may include the candidate's school or employer, any regulatory or licensing body, or law enforcement.

Failure to Adhere to the NHA Code of Ethics or Other Unprofessional Conduct

NHA reserves the right to reprimand a candidate or certificant, or suspend or revoke the credentials of a certificant, who fails to adhere to the NHA Code of Ethics or engages in Unprofessional Conduct as described in the "Suspension or Revocation of Credentials (Disciplinary Action)" Section below.

NHA reserves the right to discipline a candidate who engages in illegal, threatening or unprofessional behavior or activity not specifically described above. NHA also reserves the right to report disciplinary actions to concerned third parties, which may include the candidate's school or employer, any regulatory or licensing body, or law enforcement.

Candidates and certificants are entitled to Due Process and have a right to Appeal disciplinary action, as described more fully in the "Due Process" and "Appeals" sections of this Candidate Handbook.



Confidentiality

Confidential information (non-public information including, but not limited to, name, address, social security number, bank account numbers, financial or financial aid information, medical information, etc.) is protected by federal, state and local laws or regulations, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the (FERPA). To protect the privacy of candidates, NHA's database of personal information is accessible only by authorized staff and authorized contractors operating under a nondisclosure agreement. Such confidential information will not be disclosed without the expressed written consent of the candidate in question, unless required by law or court order.

Unless required by law to be provided to a regulating agency, score results are provided only to the candidate either at the conclusion of an examination administered by computer or by mail if the exam was administered by paper/pencil. Test scores are not provided over the phone. At the time of registration, candidates can opt-in to allow individual exam results, including scores, to be shared with their schools or employers. Such information will be shared only if a candidate has selected the opt-in option.

Information that is not considered confidential and may be shared with schools or employers includes certification status, certification number, and the current status of a previously-certified individual's credential. NHA allows any member of the public, including regulatory bodies, employers and schools, to verify credentials of certified candidates through a web application.

Information in the NHA database, such as pass rates, number of certificants, score trends, etc., may be used in aggregate (summarized across all candidates) for the purpose of research reports and other published data. Additionally, schools or employers may be provided aggregate (summarized across all students/employees, provided that there were enough students/employees to assure that individual data cannot be deduced) reports reflecting the Pass/Fail percentage.



Scoring

Computer-based exams are scored by the web-based testing software. Paper/pencil exam answer sheets are scanned upon receipt and software is utilized to score the answer sheets and record the results electronically. The results from the exams will be available on the NHA website (www.nhanow.com) within two (2) business days from completion of scoring..

- Disclosure of Scores to Candidates. Candidates are provided with their exam score online. Exam scores are never provided over the phone.
- Disclosure of Scores to Third-Parties. NHA does not disclose exam scores to third parties unless required by law to provide results to regulating agencies, or if permission has been granted by the candidate. Candidates may elect to grant permission to release their scores to their school or employer during the registration process.

NHA examinations are currently using a scaled score method.* Scaled scores can range from 200 to 500 and represent a conversion of the candidate's raw score to allow for comparison between different forms of the same examination. The use of a scaled score provides consistency in reporting passing standards by accounting for the difficulty level of the examination form. The same level of performance is required to meet the scaled passing score of 390 regardless of which form of an assessment a candidate takes. A candidate must achieve a scaled score of 390 or higher in order to pass any examination covered in this Handbook.

***PLEASE NOTE:** Although scores may be released immediately, all data subsequently will be analyzed for anomalies. If anomalies that impact the scoring are found, the exam will be rescored and the candidate will be advised if the rescore impacts whether he/she passed or failed the exam.*

Candidates achieving a passing score will receive a formal certificate and wallet card. Upon passing the certification exam, the candidate will receive, via US mail, an official certificate and wallet card within approximately 7 to 10 business days from the date your exam was scored.

Candidates not achieving a passing score will receive a letter that specifies the score achieved, diagnostic information on content areas requiring improvement and instructions for retaking the exam.

** In California only, the Phlebotomy Technician Certification (CPT) is scored using the percent correct method with a passing score of 70%. A percent correct score is calculated by dividing the number of items the candidate answers correctly by the total number of items on the examination.*

Retaking the Exam

Candidates who wish to re-take an examination must go to the NHA website and log in as a returning candidate to schedule the examination and submit the appropriate fee. Candidates who do not pass the certification exam on the first attempt will be allowed to retake the exam after a 30-day waiting period. Candidate will be allowed three attempts to successfully pass the exam, with a waiting period of a minimum of 30 days between each examination attempt. For each repeated failure after the third attempt, the candidate will be required to wait a year before attempting to take the exam again. For each retake attempt, the candidate must re-register and pay the full examination price.

Exam Challenges

RESCORING REQUESTS. Candidates may request a hand scoring of their exam by submitting a written request. NHA has the right to assess a fee for any rescoring requests. Scoring requests must be received within sixty (60) days of the examination date. All rescoring determinations are final.

APPEALS. Candidates may request an appeal of their final exam score. Requests must be received in writing on the official NHA Appeals forms, which can be found under "Forms" at www.nhanow.com, within thirty (30) days of the examination date. Decisions will be communicated in writing only. All decisions are final.



Awarding of Credential

Only candidates who achieve a passing score on the exam will be allowed to use the certification program credential. Certifications are valid for two (2) years and expire on the date provided on the certificate, except that Provisional Certifications expire twelve (12) months after the examination date. (For more information concerning the expiration of Provisional Certifications, please refer to the “Converting Provisional Certification to Full Certification” section of this Candidate Handbook.)

Credential Use

Candidates who achieve a passing score on the exam and have a current valid credential are allowed to include the certification credential (the NHA program abbreviation) behind their name. The use of the certification credential should always be in a context and using media consistent with demonstrating professional credentialing, including but not limited to: office signage, resumes, websites, business cards, presentations, introductions, and electronic signatures. NHA credentials may not be used to endorse any product, service or company; or as a company, product or brand name.

Recertification

NHA certificants are required to keep their certification current through fulfilling continuing education requirements every two years. This is referred to as “recertification.” The purpose of recertification is to assure that professionals holding NHA credential stay current with best practices in their fields and demonstrate a continued investment in their professions. The failure to meet the recertification requirements before the expiration date of the certification will nullify the credential.

RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS. A certification is valid for two years following the issue date of the certification and expires on the date noted on the certificate. During each two-year certification cycle, certificants are required to complete and submit to NHA appropriate documentation evidencing the completion of a minimum of ten (10) continuing education credits relevant to their professional field. Continuing education credits may be acquired through the NHA Continuing Education Program or through other outside educational programs or institutions. NHA reviews credits based on the following criteria: current events, industry trends, and relevance to the allied healthcare field. Each hour of attendance at a qualified continuing education program is equal to two (2) continuing education credits. Excess credits achieved in a certification cycle cannot be applied to the next cycle.

SUBMISSION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION DOCUMENTATION. Certificants are responsible for obtaining a certificate of completion or other official document from each continuing education course attended. Only official documentation will be accepted for recertification. Certificants are responsible for submitting documents reflecting ten (10) continuing education credits and the appropriate recertification fees to NHA either annually or all at once before the expiration of their certifications. NHA allows a one month grace period. Information concerning how to submit documents and the amount of the recertification fee is available online at www.nhanow.com.

PLEASE NOTE: *Recertification is not applicable to holders of Provisional Certifications. Provisional Certifications are valid for only one year and must be converted to NHA's full standard certification before the one year expiration of the Provisional Certification. For more information about converting a Provisional Certification, see the "Converting Provisional Certification to Full Certification" section of this Handbook.*

Reinstatement

Should a certification expire, reinstatement (recertification) is permitted within one year of the expiration date. If reinstatement is initiated within one year of the expiration date, the certificant must submit:

- evidence of 15 continuing education credits;
- appropriate recertification fees; and
- reinstatement fees.

After one year from the expiration date, reinstatement is not permitted. Instead, the candidate must re-register, retake the examination and pay the full examination price in order to become certified again.

PLEASE NOTE: *Reinstatement is not applicable to holders of Provisional Certifications.*

Converting Provisional Certification to Full Certification

A "Provisional Certification" is a placeholder and is intended to allow candidates to take certification exams as near to the time they complete their training even though they have not yet met the eligibility requirements needed to receive a standard (full) certification (high school diploma, GED certificate or other equivalency). It is important to note that the Provisional Certification expires twelve (12) months after the examination date. If the provisional certification lapses before the candidate graduates or before the holder of the Provisional Certification converts the Provisional to a standard (full) certification, the candidate will be required to re-take the NHA certification exam.



Accordingly, upon graduation, the holder of an active Provisional Certification must apply to have his/her Provisional Certification converted to a standard (full) certification. When applying for full certification, a candidate is required to provide:

- A letter stating his/her name, current address, current email address and either the number located on his/her Provisional Certification certificate or enclose a copy of the certificate or wallet card;
- Proof of graduation (high school diploma, GED certification or other documentary proof of successful completion of a high school equivalency program);
- Written proof that they have met the training or work experience eligibility requirement; and
- If converting a Provisional Certification for Phlebotomy Technician, evidence that he/she has performed a minimum of thirty (30) venipunctures and ten (10) capillary sticks on live individuals; or
- If converting a Provisional Certification for EKG Technician, evidence that he/she has performed a minimum of ten (10) EKGs on live individuals.

NHA reserves the right to reprimand, suspend or revoke a certification holder's credentials who has violated the NHA Code of Ethics or for unprofessional conduct as described below.

NHA Code of Ethics

NHA has established a code of ethics and guidelines in order to protect the public and the Profession. The NHA Code of Ethics is provided in the "Exam Administration Section" of this Candidate Handbook.

Unprofessional Conduct

Certificants holding NHA credentials serve the public in essential healthcare fields. NHA requires all certificants to behave professionally and reserves the right to suspend or revoke credentials for any of the following reasons:

- Acts of dishonesty, misrepresentation or fraud.
- Behavior that disregards the dignity, safety or privacy of the patient or anyone under the certificant's care.
- Unlawful activity, particularly such activity that jeopardizes the life, safety or health of others or calls into question the certificant's ability to practice as a competent healthcare professional.
- Conduct that is discriminatory or harassing, including acts of sexual harassment.
- Denial or revocation of licensure, registration or approval by a state board or agency or membership organization with oversight responsibilities for the profession on grounds of gross misconduct or gross negligence of duties.
- Unauthorized use of NHA's proprietary materials and or copyright infringement with regards to exams, study guides and any other materials distributed as property of the NHA.
- Material misrepresentation or fraud in any statement to NHA, including but not limited to statements made to assist the applicant, certificant, or another to apply for, obtain, or retain certification.
- Violation of the Testing Rules of Conduct, even if not discovered until after the issuance of NHA certification credentials.

NHA reserves the right to discipline a certificant who engages in illegal, threatening or unprofessional behavior or activity not specifically described above. NHA also reserves the right to report disciplinary actions to concerned third parties, which may include the certificant's school or employer, any regulatory or licensing body, or law enforcement.

Due Process

Due process is afforded to any individual involved in a reported violation of Misconduct, the NHA Code of Ethics or Unprofessional Conduct, as described herein. Similarly, due process is afforded organizations whose test administration privileges have been suspended or revoke due to testing improprieties. These procedures involve: (1) determining the existence of a possible violation; (2) investigating the suspected violation; and (3) communicating the findings and sanctions imposed, if any, to the affected parties.

If a proctor, candidate, consumer or other party makes a complaint to NHA, the charged person will be notified of the complaint by traceable mail, such as registered mail or Federal Express. A written response concerning the complaint will be considered if submitted within ten (10) days following the delivery of the complaint to the accused individual. The complaint and response, if any, will be reviewed by a three-member Disciplinary & Appeals Committee.

Upon review of the complaint and the evidence, the Disciplinary & Appeals Committee will determine if a further investigation is warranted. Based on its review after the deliberation results/outcome, and upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Committee, this Committee shall determine whether any disciplinary action already taken by NHA needs to be revised or enhanced and, in cases where disciplinary action has been taken, whether grounds for disciplinary action exist and, if so, what disciplinary action should be taken. The Committee shall notify the charged member of their decision within thirty (30) business days by traceable mail.



Appeals of Disciplinary Actions

As described above in the Due Process Section, the first recourse for a candidate or certificant who wishes to appeal a disciplinary action is to file a complaint with the Disciplinary & Appeals Committee. The Committee will review the complaint, evidence, the investigation that was done by NHA and the disciplinary action taken. If the Committee affirms the disciplinary action or if the Committee imposes its own disciplinary action, the individual may file an appeal for reconsideration by the Certification Governing Board. The Board will review the appeal at the next scheduled board meeting. The Board typically meets three times a year. Decisions of the Board are final. All decisions of the Committee or the Board are communicated in writing only.

Exception Requests

As noted in the "Eligibility" and "Recertification" sections of this Candidate Handbook, candidates must meet certain requirements in order to be eligible to sit for a certification exam or to obtain recertification. Candidates seeking exceptions to these requirements may do so as described below.

ELIGIBILITY EXCEPTION REQUESTS. Candidates may request an exception to eligibility requirements to sit for the certification exam by completing the appropriate Appeals/Exceptions request form. NHA reserves the right to uphold eligibility requirements as established by the Certification Governing Board. Decisions concerning exception requests will be communicated in writing only. Candidates may appeal the exception request decision to the Board. The Board will review the appeal at their next scheduled board meeting. Decisions of the Board are final.

RECERTIFICATION EXCEPTION REQUESTS. Certificants may request an exception to attestations required for recertification by completing the appropriate NHA Appeals/Exceptions request form. NHA reserves the right to uphold recertification requirements as established by the Certification Governing Board. Decisions concerning exception requests will be communicated in writing only. Certificants may appeal the exception request decision to the Board. The Board will review the appeal at their next scheduled Board meeting. Decisions of the Board are final.

DUE PROCESS. Decisions about how to respond to exception requests are made by the Disciplinary & Appeals Committee. If the Committee has considered substantially similar cases, their decision in those prior cases will be considered precedent for future cases and NHA staff will apply the prior decision where appropriate. Under those circumstances, NHA staff will send a decision letter that is consistent with the Committee's earlier decisions. Candidates/certificants may appeal the precedent-based determination to the Certification Governing Board within 30 days of receiving the decision letter. If the Committee has not considered substantially similar cases and there is no determinative precedent, the request and supporting evidence will be reviewed by the Committee, and NHA staff will communicate the decision to the candidate/certificant. Candidates/certificants may appeal the Committee's decision to the Certification Governing Board within 30 days of receiving the decision letter. The Board will hear the appeal at the next scheduled Board meeting.



ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NHA EXAMS

NHA is committed to providing the highest quality certification examinations through continuous development and psychometric review. The examination development process begins with a job analysis. This is an industry-accepted process for determining the competencies that are required for safe and effective practice in the tested field. Subject matter experts representing both practitioners and educators work with NHA's psychometricians to define the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for safe and effective practice in the field covered by the exam. The results of this job analysis are then used to form the examination blueprint; every question written for the examination must address one of the specified tasks on this blueprint. Regular assessment of the profession and the conduct of the job analyses allow the examination to remain a current assessment of the competencies a practitioner in the field must possess. Prior to the release of any new exam form, it is reviewed and approved by the Certification Governing Board. Once a new exam form is implemented, the psychometric team evaluates the statistical properties throughout the life of that exam form, as well as the quality of pretest items used to develop future exam forms.

About Cut Scores

A cut score is the minimum score needed to pass an examination. Criterion-referenced cut scores are set to establish minimum levels of competency for the NHA examinations. A modified version of the standard setting method presented by Angoff (1971) is used to establish cut scores for each assessment. These cut scores are established by panels of subject matter experts who evaluate whether a minimally qualified candidate would correctly respond to each item on the examination, rating those items accordingly.

About Pilot Scoring

When new exams are released, NHA employs a pilot scoring period. During the pilot scoring period, the new test is released but there is a brief delay in the release scores or pass/fail results. This allows NHA psychometricians to ensure candidates are scored appropriately and pass/fail scores are set fairly when compared to the prior version of the exam, to make any necessary scoring adjustments and to conduct cut score studies. Once the scoring adjustments are complete and the pass/fail scores are set, NHA progresses to full release and candidates receive their results upon initial scoring.



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