

# CMHC Endorsement Discussion:

## Executive Summary of Exams

### CRC

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#### Eligibility

For a degree to meet the educational requirements for certification eligibility, the granting college or university must have been accredited at the time the degree was conferred by one of the national or regional accrediting associations accredited by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

#### Category 1:

Student in or Graduate of a master's level rehabilitation counseling (RC) or clinical rehabilitation counseling (CLRC) program accredited by CACREP. If graduation occurred prior to July 1, 2017, the program must have been accredited by CORE.

#### *Additional Requirements:*

Must submit evidence of 600 clock hour internship supervised by an on-site CRC or by a faculty member who is a CRC. At least 240 clock hours must be direct rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities.

#### Category 2:

Student in or Graduate of a master's level rehabilitation counseling (RC) or clinical rehabilitation counseling (CLRC) program that is not or was not accredited by CACREP or CORE at the time the degree is or was conferred. Degree must be from a national or regional accrediting body accredited by CHEA at the time the degree is/was conferred. The program must be a minimum of 48 semester credit hours or 72 quarter hours.

Program must require the following graduate-level courses as defined by CRCC:

- Professional Orientation & Ethics in Rehabilitation Counseling
- Medical & Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities
- Assessment
- Career Development Theories & Job Development and Placement Techniques
- Case Management & Community Partnerships
- Theories & Techniques of Counseling
- Research, Methodology, & Performance Management
- Practicum of a minimum of 100 clock hours over a full academic term supervised by a faculty member who is a CRC. The student must have a minimum of 40 clock hours providing direct rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities.

#### *Additional Requirements:*

Must submit evidence of 600 clock hour internship supervised by an on-site CRC or by a faculty member who is a CRC. At least 240 clock hours must be direct rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities.

#### Category 3:

Graduate of a master's or doctoral program in a related field of study with course content that emphasizes rehabilitation, counseling, disability, therapy, health, employment, wellness, or human

development. Degree must be from a national or regional accrediting body accredited by CHEA at the time the degree is/was conferred.

Must submit evidence of having taken or taught the following graduate-level courses as defined by CRCC:

- Professional Orientation & Ethics in Rehabilitation Counseling
- Medical & Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities
- Assessment
- Career Development Theories & Job Development and Placement Techniques
- Case Management & Community Partnerships
- Theories & Techniques of Counseling
- Research, Methodology, & Performance Management

*Additional Requirements:*

One of the following:

- Must submit evidence of 600 clock hour graduate level internship supervised by an on-site CRC or by a faculty member who is a CRC. At least 240 clock hours must be direct rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities.
- 12 months of acceptable work experience under the supervision of a CRC.
- 24 months of acceptable work experience.
- 24 months of full-time employment teaching in a rehabilitation counseling or clinical counseling program.

\*Note: Acceptable work experience is defined as time spent working as a counselor in a setting that provides rehabilitation counselling services. At least 50% of the time must be providing direct rehabilitation services. At least 10% must be spent in the area of counseling, which is defined as: The application of cognitive, affective, behavioral, and systemic counseling strategies that include developmental, wellness, and multicultural principles of human behavior. Such interventions are specifically implemented in the context of a professional counseling relationship and may include, but are not limited to: vocational, individual, group, marriage, and family counseling and psychotherapy; the diagnostic assessment and treatment of persons with mental, emotional, and behavioral impairments or disabilities; guidance and consulting to facilitate educational and career development; the utilization of functional assessments and career counseling for persons requesting assistance in adjusting to a disability assessment; referrals; consulting; and research.

**Exam:**

**Structure:**

Computer-based, 175 multiple-choice questions drawn from the CRCC item pool. Actual test is 150 scored questions, with 25 field test questions.

Questions encompass the laws, public regulation, and existing delivery systems for rehabilitation services in the U.S. The exam is divided into two parts. One-part tests knowledge with regard to counseling and the other part tests knowledge with regard to rehabilitation and disability issues. Applicants must achieve a passing score on both parts on a single exam administration in order to pass the examination as a whole.

**Content:**

- Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice, 9%
- Counseling Theories, Techniques, and Evidence-Based Practice, 16%
- Group and Family Counseling, 3%
- Crisis and Trauma Counseling and Interventions, 4%
- Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Chronic Illness and Disability, 11%

- Assessment, Occupational Analysis, and Service Implementation, 15%
- Career Development and Job Placement, 9%
- Demand-Side Employer Engagement, 6%
- Community Resources and Partnerships, 9%
- Case Management, 7%
- Health Care and Disability Management, 5%
- Research, Methodology, and Performance Management, 6%

*For details on content in each section, see Knowledge Domains beginning on pg. 18 of the CRCC Exam Bulletin.*

## NCE

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### Eligibility

Graduated from or is a well-advanced graduate student in a counseling program\* that has been accredited by the CACREP or housed within a regionally accredited institution.

The counseling program must contain courses in the following content areas:

- Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice
- Social and Cultural Diversity
- Human Growth and Development
- Career Development
- Counseling and Helping Relationships
- Group Counseling and Group Work
- Assessment and Testing
- Research and Program Evaluation
- Counseling Field Experience

\*States may choose to allow candidates of comparable education levels from other related helping degrees to sit for the exam for licensure.

### Exam

#### Structure:

The exam consists of 200 multiple choice questions, of which 160 are scored and 40 unscored statistical items to be used for future examinations. The test is timed, and must be completed in 3 hours and 45 minutes.

#### Content:

The exam is intended to test ##

- Professional Practice and Ethics, 12%
- Intake, Assessment, and Diagnosis, 12%
- Areas of Clinical Focus, 29%
- Treatment Planning, 9%
- Counseling Skills and Interventions, 30%
- Core Counseling Attributes, 8%

*For details on content in each section, see Knowledge Domains beginning on pg. 3 of the NCE Bulletin.*

## **NCMHCE**

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### **Eligibility**

NBCC has two forms of eligibility for this exam, both for licensure and for certification. The exam content is the same; however, when taking the exam for the purpose of licensure eligibility is set by the state for which the exam is being taken. For the purpose of this review, 5 states that use the NCMHCE were reviewed. All indicate the requirement is based on education requirements for licensure.

Information regarding eligibility based on certification is not included in this summary; however, information can be found in the appendix of this report.

### **Exam**

#### **Structure:**

The National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE) consists of 10 simulated clinical mental health counseling cases delivered via computer.

The simulations assess clinical problem-solving ability, including identifying, analyzing, diagnosing and treating clinical issues. Each simulation is divided into approximately five to eight sections that are classified as either information gathering or decision making. Each simulation begins with a scenario. The scenario provides the setting and introductory client information (e.g., age, gender, presenting problem(s)). In the information gathering section, applicants are required to gather all relevant information for answering the questions, which may include family background, status of physical health, previous experience in counseling, etc. During the decision making section, applicants are required to make clinical judgements based on the scenario and information gathering completed.

#### **Content:**

Each of the 10 scenarios will include content on in the following areas:

- Assessment and Diagnosis
- Counseling and Psychotherapy
- Administration, Consultation and Supervision

*For details on content in each section, see *Examination Content* on pg. 6 of the NCMHCE Bulletin.*

# **Appendix of Detailed Exam Information**

**Exam Requirements by Jurisdiction**

CRC Exam Bulletin

NCE Exam Bulletin

NCMHCE State Licensure Exam Bulletin

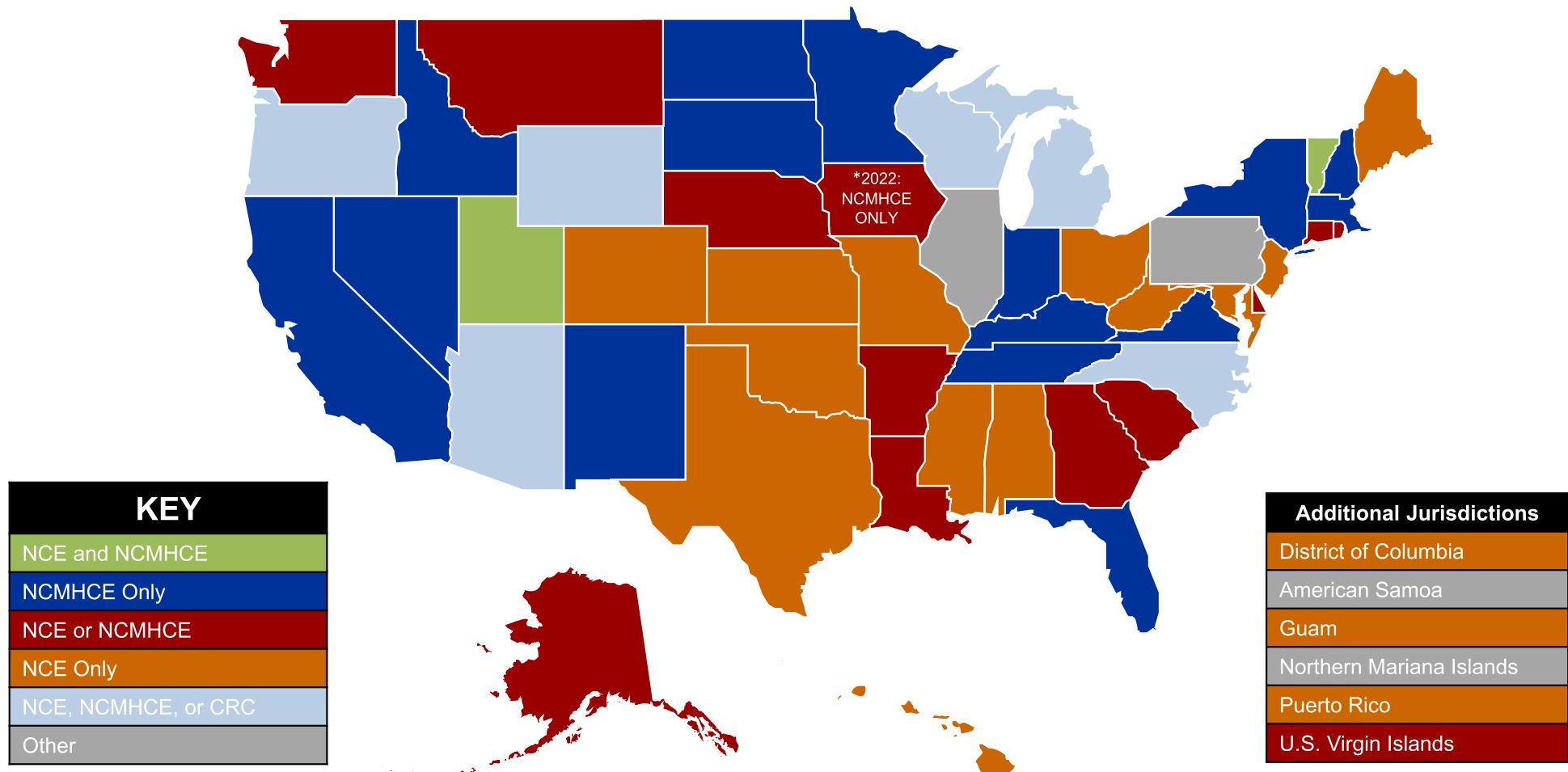
CCMHCE Overview

NCMHCE Certification Exam Bulletin

CCMHC Required Coursework

NCC Requirements

## Exams Required for Licensure





COMMISSION ON REHABILITATION  
COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION

# CRC® Certification Guide

## Certified Rehabilitation Counselor

Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC®)  
847-944-1325  
[www.crccertification.com](http://www.crccertification.com)



Accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies

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## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND INQUIRIES**

Thank you for your interest in the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor certification process. The acronym CRC® is used throughout this guide to refer to the designation Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. CRCC® is used to refer to the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. If you pursue certification, please refer to this guide as it contains information to help you through the application and examination processes. As information in this guide is updated periodically, we suggest you access the guide from our website to make certain you have the most recent edition. Please be sure to read carefully before completing an application.

CRCC uses email and first-class mail to maintain contact with all applicants. It is the applicant's responsibility to update his/her contact information, making any changes necessary.

**Inquiries:** If you have additional inquiries, please contact Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.

Phone: (847) 944-1325  
Email: [info@crccertification.com](mailto:info@crccertification.com)

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The CRC certification mark must be used consistent with the scope for which the certification was granted and in accordance with all applicable use policies of CRCC. Unauthorized, fraudulent or misleading use of the CRCC or CRC marks may result in legal or other actions, which may include but are not limited to, revocation of CRC certification.

**PUBLICATION DATE:** April 1981

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**UPDATED:** December 2, 2020

## **SECTION 2: THE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

The purpose of certification is to assist in the assurance that professionals engaged in rehabilitation counseling meet acceptable standards of quality in practice. The existence of acceptable standards is considered to be in the best interest of consumers of rehabilitation counseling services and the general public. Through participation in both the certification and certification renewal programs, rehabilitation counselors are also able to bring about a higher level of performance and qualification throughout the profession.

The certification program is an outgrowth of the professional concerns of two organizations: The American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) and the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association (NRCA). These organizations deemed it desirable to establish standards for the profession of rehabilitation counseling in order to enhance the quality of service delivery to persons with disabilities. These two associations created a Joint Committee on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification, which was chartered as a nonprofit organization in 1974 and renamed the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

Persons who earn the designation of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) have demonstrated they possess at least an acceptable minimum of knowledge (as determined by CRCC) with regard to the practice of their profession. The initial certification is valid for five years. It is achieved by satisfying specific educational/employment requirements and then passing the CRC examination. The examination is based on a body of knowledge that encompasses laws, public regulations, and the delivery of rehabilitation services as practiced in the United States. CRCC conducts a role and function study of the rehabilitation counseling field approximately every five years; the results of this study are used to update the examination and ensure other elements of the CRC certification process accurately reflect the practice of rehabilitation counseling.

CRCC requires individuals who are applying for or renewing the certification to respond to questions related to any adverse actions taken by a licensing or certifying entity, reprimand or discharge by an employer for dishonesty, and convictions for violating any laws, statutes, or ordinances. This information is used to ascertain whether such prior history provides sufficient reason to preclude the individual from certification. It is not CRCC's intent to imply that any individual is suitable for employment or to impose staffing requirements on any agency. The intent is to establish a nationwide measure of professional standards that may be used by any interested parties with regard to rehabilitation counseling. Employers and consumers should not rely solely on CRC certification as a basis for employing or selecting a rehabilitation counselor.

Rehabilitation counseling is a dynamic profession that is constantly evolving. Therefore, CRCC has a certification renewal program under which designation holders are required to demonstrate their continuing professional development. Certification renewal, required at five-year intervals, is considered an essential part of an effective credentialing process, and is intended to help practitioners keep abreast of current trends and new technologies, and to enhance critical skills.

Acknowledging the evolving state of rehabilitation counseling, CRCC encourages CRCs to continuously build on the demonstrated specified levels of knowledge, skills, and ability addressed by the education/employment requirements and the initial certification examination. CRCs are also required to provide evidence of continuing competence through the completion of courses and other activities that will help them more effectively serve their clients.

### SECTION 3: THE CERTIFICATION CALENDAR

The CRC examination is administered three times a year. This calendar provides important dates for the certification program.

Registration Opens	Application Deadline	Testing Dates	Mailing of Examination Results Packet
September 1, 2020	December 31, 2020	March 5-13, 2021	April 15, 2021
January 1, 2021	April 30, 2021	July 9-17, 2021	August 27, 2021
May 1, 2021	August 31, 2021	October 1-9, 2021	November 9, 2021
September 1, 2021	December 31, 2021	March 4-12, 2022	April 15, 2022
January 1, 2022	April 30, 2022	July 8-16, 2022	August 16, 2022
May 1, 2022	August 31, 2022	October 7-15, 2022	November 15, 2022

Examinees will receive a “Grade” of “pass or fail” at the completion of their exam. Within 24 hours after the completion of the CRC exam, examinees will receive a follow-up email with a link to Pearson Vue website to access their exam results. Examinees who pass will receive a preliminary score report. Examinees who fail the exam will receive a final score report.

### SECTION 4: CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

CRCC does not condone or engage in discrimination based on age, arrest record (including expunged criminal history), citizenship, color, disability (mental or physical), ethnicity/ancestry, genetic information, language (if unrelated to their duties), marital status, military status (including unfavorable discharge), national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex/gender, sexual orientation (including gender identity), or any other additional class protected by applicable law, including applicable County or City ordinances.

CRCC respects the privacy of its applicants. The CRCC Privacy Policy is available on CRCC’s website at [www.crcertification.com/privacy-policy](http://www.crcertification.com/privacy-policy).

CRC eligibility is determined by CRCC after its review of an application for the CRC credential. As described in Section 2, CRCC requires individuals to respond to various questions relating to character and violations of the law. A prior conviction for violating any law, statute, or ordinance will not automatically preclude an individual from being determined eligible to seek certification. However, CRCC will deem an individual to be ineligible to seek certification if he/she has not completed parole, probation, or any other terms or conditions imposed by any court in conjunction with a conviction, a suspended imposition of a sentence, or other sentencing alternative. Convictions include guilty pleas and pleas of “no contest.”

If an applicant discloses violations of laws, statutes, or ordinances, CRCC requires court documentation or a criminal background check identifying the charges raised and sentencing status/disposition of those charges. Severity of the crime and length of time since the incident are all taken into consideration. The documentation must address whether the individual has met all conditions imposed by the court and paid all fees, if applicable. **Individuals currently on parole or probation or who have not completed other terms of conditions imposed by the court in conjunction with a conviction will be automatically deemed ineligible for certification.**

If court documentation is not available, the applicant is required to submit to a criminal background check through CRCC's authorized provider, *Global Investigative Services*, with all fees paid by the applicant.  
<https://www.crccertification.com/background-check>

To be eligible to sit for the CRC examination, an applicant must be deemed fit to pursue CRC certification by CRCC and must meet **EVERY** requirement in **ONE** of the three categories described in this section.

**ALL** education and employment requirements must be fully satisfied by the application deadline. Those applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria for **ONE** of the following categories upon submission of an application will be automatically denied. At the time the applicant exhausts the appeal option or signifies that he/she does not wish to appeal, a refund of \$100 will be issued. Individuals who exhaust or do not exercise the appeal option and who choose to continue to seek certification will be required to re-apply, meet the criteria in effect at the time of re-application and pay the required certification fee.

### **Earned Degree Requirements: All Applicants**

To verify your educational background, CRCC requires an official transcript that shows the granting of your degree. A transcript will be considered official only if it bears the seal of the college or university and the signature of the school's registrar. If your degree was granted under a name other than the one that appears on your certification application, the institution should be asked to include your present name with the transcript.

If you are a **student** applying under Categories 1 or 2, CRCC requires you to submit your official transcript once your degree has been granted.

**Please note: Digital transcripts can be submitted via email to CRCC at [transcripts@crcertification.com](mailto:transcripts@crcertification.com)**

If a digital version of the transcript is not available, please mail the transcript directly to CRCC:

CRCC  
1699 E. Woodfield Road, Suite 300  
Schaumburg, IL 60173

For a degree to meet the educational requirements for certification eligibility, the granting college or university must have been accredited at the time the degree was conferred by one of the national or regional accrediting associations accredited by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

Applications that have been "submitted" (waiting for required documentation will need to be completed), will remain open for a period of 18 months from the initial application date. Once application has been closed, a new application and documentation will need to be submitted.

### **International Degrees**

If your degree is from another country, CRCC will allow you to submit your transcripts along with an evaluation report from either of the following sources:

- American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO)/Office of International Education Services, [www.aacrao.org/international](http://www.aacrao.org/international), (202) 296-3359.

- World Education Services (WES)/International Academic Credential Evaluation, [www.wes.org](http://www.wes.org), (212) 966-6311.

CRCC will not accept evaluations completed by other sources. The evaluation report must be sent from the source directly to CRCC postmarked by the application deadline date and must include recognition status of foreign institution, level of education completed by student, U.S. degree comparability, field of study, courses, credits or units, individual grades or overall grade average, and course content. The applicant is responsible for all fees associated with the evaluations and it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the evaluations reach CRCC by the deadline date. CRCC will evaluate the courses, units, and/or degrees on a course-by-course basis.

#### **Category 1 – Student in or Graduate of a CACREP-Accredited Program**

Student in or Graduate of a master's level rehabilitation counseling (RC) or clinical rehabilitation counseling (CLRC) program accredited by CACREP. If graduation occurred prior to July 1, 2017, the program must have been accredited by CORE.

*Additional Requirements:*

1. Students and graduates must submit evidence of an internship of 600 clock hours supervised by an on-site CRC or by a faculty member who is a CRC. The internship must have been in rehabilitation counseling and the intern must have a minimum of 240 clock hours providing direct rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities.
2. Students must submit evidence of enrollment in a master's degree program in rehabilitation counseling or clinical rehabilitation counseling program. **The Student Enrolled in a CACREP-Accredited Master's Program Verification Form** must be completed and submitted with the application; this form is available on the CRCC website (see the Application, Forms & Fees page in the Applicants section).
  - Students must have completed 75% of the course work toward the master's degree by February 1 (for the March test), June 1 (for the July test), or September 1 (for the October test) in order to be deemed eligible to take the CRC exam.

Students must graduate within 12 months of their examination date and must submit their official transcript reflecting the granting of the degree and successful completion of the internship. Those who achieved a passing score on the exam will be eligible to use the CRC designation only after the applicant's receipt of the official CRC certificate. Official, **digital transcripts can be submitted via email directly to CRCC at [transcripts@crcertification.com](mailto:transcripts@crcertification.com)**

#### **Category 2 – Student in or Graduate of a Non-CACREP (or CORE) Accredited Program**

Student in or Graduate of a master's level rehabilitation counseling (RC) or clinical rehabilitation counseling (CLRC) program that is not or was not accredited by CACREP or CORE at the time the degree is or was conferred.

*Additional Requirements for the Degree Program:*

3. The degree must have been granted by a college or university accredited by a national or regional accrediting body accredited by CHEA at the time the degree is/was conferred.
4. The degree program must be a minimum of 48 semester credit hours or 72 quarter hours.

5. The degree program must require the following graduate-level courses as defined by CRCC:

- Professional Orientation & Ethics in Rehabilitation Counseling
- Medical & Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities
- Assessment
- Career Development Theories & Job Development and Placement Techniques
- Case Management & Community Partnerships
- Theories & Techniques of Counseling
- Research, Methodology, & Performance Management

*CRCC also recommends programs provide content addressing social and cultural diversity; healthcare systems and services; disability management; crisis and trauma counseling; family counseling; and group counseling.*

6. The degree program must require the following experiential components:

- Practicum of a minimum of 100 clock hours over a full academic term supervised by a faculty member who is a CRC. The student must have a minimum of 40 clock hours providing direct rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities.
- Internship of 600 clock hours supervised by an on-site CRC or by a faculty member who is a CRC. The internship must have been in rehabilitation counseling and the intern must have a minimum of 240 clock hours providing direct rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities. Graduate credit must be awarded and must appear on an official transcript. **The Internship Verification Form** must be submitted with the application. This is available on the CRCC website (see the Application, Forms & Fees page in the Applicants section).

*Additional Requirements for Students:*

7. Students must submit evidence of enrollment in a master's degree program in rehabilitation counseling or clinical rehabilitation counseling program. **The Student Enrolled in a Non-CACREP Accredited Master's Program Verification Form** must be completed and submitted with the application. This form is available on the CRCC website (see the Application, Forms & Fees page in the Applicants section).

- Students must have completed 75% of the course work toward the master's degree by February 1 (for the March test), June 1 (for the July test), or September 1 (for the October test) in order to be deemed eligible to take the CRC exam.
- Students must graduate within 12 months of their examination date and must submit their official transcript reflecting the granting of the degree and successful completion of the internship. Those who achieved a passing score on the exam will be eligible to use the CRC designation only after the applicant's receipt of the official CRC certificate. Official, digital **can be submitted via email directly to CRCC at [transcripts@crcertification.com](mailto:transcripts@crcertification.com)**

If a digital version of the transcript is not available, please mail the transcript to:

CRCC

1699 E. Woodfield Road, Suite 300

Schaumburg, IL 60173

### **Category 3 – Graduate of a Master’s or Doctoral Program in Related Field of Study**

Graduate of a master’s or doctoral program in a related field of study with course content that emphasizes rehabilitation, counseling, disability, therapy, health, employment, wellness, or human development.

**Examples** of acceptable degrees include, but are **not** necessarily limited to:

- Addictions Counseling
- Behavioral Health
- Behavioral Science
- Blindness Rehabilitation
- Child/Family Studies
- Communication Disorders
- Counseling
- Counseling Psychology
- Deaf Education
- Disability Studies
- Educational Psychology
- Guidance and Counseling
- Health Services
- Health Studies
- Human Development
- Human Relations
- Human Resources
- Human Services
- Marriage and Family Therapy
- Mental Health Counseling
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Psychology
- Rehabilitation Services
- School Counseling
- School Psychology
- Social Work
- Special Education
- Substance Use Disorders Counseling
- Vision Rehabilitation Studies
- Vocational Assessment
- Vocational Evaluation

**Note:** All academic and work requirements stated below must be completed prior to submitting the CRC Category 3 application. All application fees are non-refundable.

*Additional Requirements for Category 3 Degree Program are:*

1. The degree must have been granted by a college or university accredited by a national or regional accrediting body accredited by CHEA at the time the degree

is/was conferred. An official, digital transcript showing the graduate degree program and date the degree was conferred can be submitted to [transcripts@crccertification.com](mailto:transcripts@crccertification.com)

2. **Graduates** must submit evidence of having taken or taught (instructor of record) each of the following graduate-level courses where the course objectives reflect content defined by CRCC (see Section 5: Required Body of Knowledge Areas Descriptions). No more than two (2) courses may be used to satisfy one (1) CRCC knowledge area.

An official transcript must be submitted/uploaded to CRCC that provides evidence of successfully completing courses covering the required body of knowledge.

If you taught or are teaching the course(s) a course syllabus must be submitted/uploaded with your name of instructor of record.

- Professional Orientation & Ethics in Rehabilitation Counseling
- Medical & Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities
- Assessment
- Career Development Theories & Job Development and Placement Techniques
- Case Management & Community Partnerships
- Theories & Techniques of Counseling
- Research, Methodology, & Performance Management

CRCC also recommends candidate seeks courses addressing social and cultural diversity; healthcare systems and services; disability management; crisis and trauma counseling; family counseling; and group counseling.

***Pre-review: If you are not sure if you have met the body of knowledge requirement to qualify as a Category 3 applicant, you may contact Alicia Osborne ([aosborne@crccertification.com](mailto:aosborne@crccertification.com)) for a pre-review of your transcript and work experience. There is a non-refundable fee of \$75 for this review. [Download and complete this Pre-Review form](#) also available in the CRCC website.***

***Internships, practicum courses, and CRCC eUniversity course may not be used as evidence of completing or teaching the foundational disability courses.***

3. Candidates must submit evidence of one of the following experiential requirements:
  - A graduate-level internship of 600 clock hours supervised by an on-site CRC or by a faculty member who is a CRC. The internship must have been in rehabilitation counseling and the intern must have a minimum of 240 clock hours providing direct rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities. Graduate credit must be awarded and must appear on an official

transcript. **The Internship Verification Form** must be submitted with the application. This is available on the CRCC website (see the Application, Forms & Fees page in the Applicants section).

- Twelve (12) months of acceptable work experience under the supervision of a CRC. (See Section 6). **The Employment and/or Supervision Verification Form** must be submitted with the application. This is available on the CRCC website (see the Application, Forms & Fees page in the Applicants section).
- Twenty-four (24) months of acceptable work experience. (See Section 6). **The Employment and/or Supervision Verification Form** must be submitted with the application. This is available on the CRCC website (see the Application, Forms & Fees page in the Applicants section).
- Twenty-four (24) months of full-time employment teaching in a rehabilitation counseling (RC) or clinical rehabilitation counseling (CLRC) program subsequent to earning the master's or doctoral degree. Full-time employment is defined as 6 semesters, 8 quarters, or 2 contractual periods of 12 months and must include the supervision of students and/or direct clinical work with a population of individuals with disabilities. **The Educator/Employment Verification** must be submitted with the application. This is available on the CRCC website (see the Application, Forms & Fees page in the Applicants section).

## **SECTION 5: REQUIRED BODY OF KNOWLEDGE AREAS DEFINITIONS**

If you are applying in Category 2 or 3, you must document specific course work at the graduate or post-graduate level to satisfy the educational requirements.

CRCC defines the required body of knowledge areas as follows:

**Professional Orientation & Ethics in Rehabilitation Counseling** focuses on the history and philosophy of rehabilitation counseling, noting federal legislation concerning vocational rehabilitation and independent living mandates. Content must also focus on ethical issues in rehabilitation counseling. Further, rehabilitation counseling services provided in various settings and career options for rehabilitation counselors must also be explored.

**Medical & Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities** focuses on the medical aspects of a variety of disabilities, medical terminology, and functional implications of a variety of disabling conditions, as well as the psychological and social implications of a variety of disabilities on individuals with disabilities, family members, other individuals, and society. The nature of disability and related functional implication explored in the course must include a broad range of disabilities such as: a) cognitive; b) hearing; c) orthopedic or physical; and d) visual.

**Assessment** focuses on individual appraisal and standardized testing. Content must encompass the use of standardized tests in areas such as achievement, aptitude, interests, personality, situational testing, behavior observation. Further, content must include instruction in the interpretation and application of assessment data.

**Career Development Theories & Job Development and Placement Techniques** focuses on career education, career development, career exploration, and job placement. Further, content must include career development theories (e.g., Holland, Super, Roe, Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment, etc.); the use of occupational information and labor market trends in career counseling; and job development and placement strategies, including placement of personnel, special populations, and employer considerations.

**Case Management & Community Partnerships** focuses on the applied principles of case and caseload management; delivery systems that encompass public, private for-profit, and private not-for-profit settings; and community partnerships, including educational and vocational programs and assistive technology solutions, offered in diverse settings to a variety of populations with disabilities.

**Theories & Techniques of Counseling** focuses on the study and application of a broad range of counseling theories and techniques. Acceptable theories include but are not limited to: a) cognitive [reality, cognitive-behavioral, cognitive-processing, rational-emotive, Gestalt]; b) behavioral; c) psychoanalytic; d) client-centered; e) narrative; f) feminist; g) solution-focused; and h) systems theories.

**Research, Methodology, & Performance Management** focuses on systematic investigation, procedures and/or approaches in research, including collecting and analyzing data using a variety of research designs. Content must also focus on the use of research in evidence-based practices and performance management, including program evaluation, quality assurance, and continuous improvement, in order to demonstrate effectiveness of rehabilitation counseling programs and services. Further, content must also provide an orientation to test and measurement principles such as norms, reliability, and validity.

## **SECTION 6: ACCEPTABLE EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE**

CRCC will accept full-time paid employment (or its equivalent in part-time work) and as a valid fulfillment of the experience criteria. All part-time employment will be pro-rated based on a 35-hour work week.

For any employment to qualify as acceptable, the required employment verification form must provide evidence that 100% of your time (at each position) has been spent working as a counselor in a setting that provides rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities as defined by CRCC. All claims of employment must be verified by your current and

former employers/supervisors. Employers and/or supervisors must have been directly involved with overseeing the professional work experience of the applicant. Furthermore, at least 50% of your activities must involve providing the **DIRECT** rehabilitation counseling services listed in this section. The term “individuals with disabilities” is interpreted by CRCC to include persons who have limitations in life functioning (e.g., school, work, independent living, mobility) as a result of conditions such as sensory impairments, mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, neurological disorders, chemical dependencies, and/or physical disabilities. Each claim of employment must reflect professional experience as defined in Areas I and II which follow. Your employment verifications must include evidence of job activities in both areas. The minimum percentage of time allotted to each area must be at least 10%, while the combined time spent on both must be no less than 50%.

#### **AREA I. Counseling.**

The application of cognitive, affective, behavioral, and systemic counseling strategies that include developmental, wellness, and multicultural principles of human behavior. Such interventions are specifically implemented in the context of a professional counseling relationship and may include, but are not limited to: vocational, individual, group, marriage, and family counseling and psychotherapy; the diagnostic assessment and treatment of persons with mental, emotional, and behavioral impairments or disabilities; guidance and consulting to facilitate educational and career development; the utilization of functional assessments and career counseling for persons requesting assistance in adjusting to a disability assessment; referrals; consulting; and research.

#### **AREA II. Planning and delivery of rehabilitation counseling services for individuals with disabilities as shown below.**

**NOTE: Your employment must reflect sufficient activity in at least *three (3)* of the seven areas, ONE of which must be either a) case management, b) client assessment, c) service planning for individuals with disabilities, or d) rehabilitation services coordination.**

- a) **Case management:** This is the process of analyzing, planning, supervising, and administering the sequential flow of rehabilitation services to the clients for whom the counselor has responsibility as well as coordinating the services of other professionals and resources as required.
- b) **Client assessment:** Assessment is the process of collecting in-depth information about a client’s situation and functioning, to include information pertaining to vocational, medical, psychological, social, functional, and environmental factors, in order to identify the client’s needs and develop a comprehensive rehabilitation plan that will address those needs. The continual assessment and synthesizing of this information are the basis of a plan for rehabilitation services.
- c) **Service planning for individuals with disabilities:** Service planning is the process of determining specific objectives, goals, and actions designed to meet the client's needs as

identified through assessment results. The plan that is developed should be measurable, action-oriented and time-specific.

- d) **Rehabilitation services coordination:** The counselor uses client assessment information to coordinate required rehabilitation services. The assessment results are used to determine the need for specific services and to make referrals to appropriate providers. Other activities involve assessing the client's progress toward rehabilitation goals, determining the financial resources/obligations related to the required services, and providing feedback to all appropriate parties.
- e) **Job analysis:** Job analysis provides systematic and detailed information about a job: what the worker does in relation to data, people, and things; the environmental and physical demands of the job; the methodology and techniques employed; the machines, tools, equipment, and work aids used; the materials, products, subject matter or services that result; and the traits required of the worker.
- f) **Job development/placement:** Job development refers to the process of consultation with employers and the development of job opportunities in a comprehensive, professional manner. The intent is to establish continuing and mutually beneficial relationships with potential employers through selective placement, job modification, and adjustment counseling. Job development activities should provide clients with an opportunity to reach their employment potential. Job placement refers to the professional activities involved in assisting persons with disabilities to seek, obtain, and maintain appropriate employment. It may include guidance in vocational decision-making; training in job-seeking skills; supportive counseling; identifying job leads; conducting labor market surveys; negotiating with employers, supervisors and co-workers; and providing post-employment and follow-up services.
- g) **Advocacy:** The process of working to reduce attitudinal and environmental barriers in society and facilitating the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities in their communities. The process may include advocacy on the individual or systems levels, benefits counseling, or supporting self-advocacy efforts of individuals with disabilities.

For employment to be considered for an eligibility review, each position must be verified on the Employment Verification Form. This form must be completed and signed by the appropriate supervisor/employer. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all required documentation is submitted to CRCC as part of the completed application. Applications missing any required documentation will not be considered for eligibility.

## **SECTION 7: INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE FOR CATEGORIES 2 AND 3**

If you are applying in category 2 or 3, you must provide documentation of successfully completing an internship. The internship needs to include a minimum of 10% of the time performing counseling activities.

You must have *minimally provided services* in three (3) of the following seven (7) activities:

- Case Management
- Client Assessment
- Service Planning for Individuals with Disabilities
- Rehabilitation Services Coordination
- Job Analysis
- Job Development/Placement
- Advocacy

**The combination of the time spent in these SEVEN activities must be no less than 40%.**

In addition, services must include one (1) of the following four (4) activities:

- Case Management
- Client Assessment
- Service Planning for Individuals with Disabilities
- Rehabilitation Services Coordination

## **SECTION 8: APPLICATION PROCESS**

See the CRCC website for step-by-step instructions for completing the application process. Once you are on the CRCC website, click **Applicants** and click the navigation option for **Application, Forms, & Fees**.

## **SECTION 9: ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

An applicant who does not meet the CRCC eligibility requirements will receive a notification explaining the reason and a notice of their right to appeal. CRCC's Executive Director will review the appeal and may send the appeal to CRCC's Standards and Examination Committee. If the Standards and Examination Committee recommends denying the appeal, the CRCC Executive Committee will make the final decision regarding the applicant's eligibility.

Materials submitted by the applicant, including as any new evidence the applicant wishes to submit, will be considered during the appeal process.

Although **not** an all-inclusive list, the following may constitute grounds for immediate discontinuation of application processing or, if the individual becomes certified, revocation of an individual's certification:

- Falsification of the certification application.
- Falsification of the verification forms.
- Falsification of any information requested by CRCC.
- Failure to maintain eligibility requirements once certified.
- Misrepresentation of CRC status.
- Misleading or fraudulent use of the CRC certification mark.
- Cheating on the certification exam.
- Egregious, unprofessional, dangerous, and/or fraudulent acts or behavior.

### **Re-Application Following Discontinuation of Application Processing or Revocation of Certification**

Applicants or certificants who engaged in action that caused CRCC to terminate application processing or revoke an individual's certification may re-apply after 18 months have elapsed. Re-application does not guarantee a determination of eligibility. CRCC welcomes the submission of a personal statement and/or documentation of affirmative educational or corrective measures taken to address the concern(s) that initially led to termination of application processing or revocation of certification.

### **SECTION 10: APPEALS PROCESS**

CRCC's appeals process is available to any denied applicant who feels the eligibility criteria for certification have been inaccurately, inconsistently, or unfairly applied by the Standards and Examination Committee. As previously stated, materials reviewed by the Standards and Examination Committee as well as any new evidence the applicant wishes to submit will be considered by the Executive Committee.

#### **The appeals process is designed to provide:**

- Complete reviews of the facts at issue.
- A second, independent evaluation of the material presented to the Standards and Examination Committee.
- Due process.
- Fair and consistent application of eligibility criteria.
- A method to appeal certain aspects of the examination process.

#### **The appeals Education and Experience review process does NOT provide:**

- Additional time to acquire the education, employment experience, or supervision required for certification.
- Additional time to submit the documentation required for certification.

#### **Category 3 Appeal Process:**

Category 3 applicants are encouraged to conduct the Pre-application review process described in Section 4. Based on the feedback received from the pre-review process, applicants choose to pursue the educational requirement to complete the eligibility requirements before starting the CRC Category 3 application process. **Note: the pre-review process is not considered an official application. The Category 3 appeal process can only occur after the candidate has submitted all the documentation to CRCC and was deemed ineligible to sit for the exam.**

Candidate's application is reviewed by staff, and if additional review is needed, they are submitted to the Standards and Examination Committee for second review level. Candidates whose applications have been denied are provided with an opportunity to appeal for reconsideration of their application.

At the time the applicant is informed of their denial by the Standards and Examination Committee, they will also receive information on their right to appeal as well as the procedures, instructions, and time schedules for making such an appeal. A request for such an appeal must be sent to CRCC in writing within 30 days of the decision by the Standards and Examination Committee. The appeal process can take up to 90 days for the final decision by the Executive Committee.

The options are:

- If applicant chooses to pursue the educational requirement, CRCC will keep the CRC application open for one year and applicant will waive their right to the \$100 refund.  
OR
- If applicant does not reply within the 30 days of the date of the letter, applicant will be issued a refund of \$100 due to being deemed ineligible for certification and their application will be closed.

An applicant who chooses to exercise this right to appeal will have their complete file presented to the Executive Committee during the **next examination cycle**. None of the members of the Executive Committee will have taken part in the decision-making process of the Standards and Examination Committee, thus ensuring a second, objective review of each applicant's file. However, members of the Executive Committee will have the report of the Standards and Examination Committee to study before making their decision.

#### **Appeal post CRC Examination:**

Also, if an applicant who has taken the examination feels there was an error or omission in the process or if that person questions any aspect of the examination procedure, an inquiry may be directed to CRCC's Standards and Examination Committee. Should the applicant disagree with the findings of this committee, a second determination may be requested from the Executive Committee. The decision of the Executive Committee is final. This process can take up to 90 days for the final decision by the Executive Committee.

An applicant who subsequently remedies the default that caused the initial denial of their eligibility must re-apply and will be subject to the standards and criteria in effect at the time of their re-application.

## **SECTION 11: THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION**

### **Examination Structure**

The certification exam is a computer-based exam and consists of 175 multiple-choice questions drawn from CRCC's item pool. Anyone seeking certification must take this exam, which is based on a body of knowledge encompassing the laws, public regulations, and existing delivery systems for rehabilitation services in the U.S. Each exam includes 150 scored items and 25 field test questions that will not be used in the scoring of the exam. Sample questions are included in Section 13.

The exam is constructed to ensure that it is consistent with minimal competency requirements and criteria-referenced testing concepts. Standards for item selection include item difficulty (between .39 and .95 with a median in the .60-.70 range); a positive point biserial; and appropriate content distribution. Using an intensive field-testing process, CRCC has developed a pool of questions that contains a comprehensive selection of statistically validated exam items. A task force of rehabilitation counseling professionals is charged with continually adding to and upgrading this "item pool."

The exam is scored using a conjunctive scoring model whereby the exam is divided into two parts. One-part tests knowledge with regard to counseling and the other part tests knowledge with regard to rehabilitation and disability issues. Applicants must achieve a passing score on both parts on a single exam administration in order to pass the examination as a whole.

### **Examination Content**

The certification examination is comprised of questions across twelve (12) knowledge domains underlying rehabilitation counseling. Additionally, each of the twelve domains are further defined into subdomains. The titles of the domains and subdomains are as follows:

<u>CRC Exam Knowledge Domains</u>	<u>% of Questions</u>
<u>Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice</u>	9%
• Risk management and professional ethical standards for rehabilitation counselors	
• Laws and public policy affecting individuals with disabilities	
• Ethical decision-making models and processes	
• Diversity and multicultural counseling issues	
• Rehabilitation terminology and concepts	
• Professional roles, functions, and relationships with other human service providers	

- Credentialing issues related to the rehabilitation counseling profession
- Organizational structure of rehabilitation counseling practice settings (e.g., public, private-for-profit, and not-for-profit service delivery systems)
- Historical and philosophical foundations of rehabilitation counseling

Counseling Theories, Techniques, and Evidence-Based Practice 16%

- Clinical problem-solving and critical-thinking skills
- Rehabilitation techniques for individuals with psychological disabilities
- Individual counseling practices and interventions
- Establishing and maintaining effective working alliances with the clients we serve
- Individual counseling theories
- Behavior and personality theory
- Substance use and treatment
- Counseling/training to help clients develop workplace socialization skills
- Motivational Interviewing
- Treatment planning for clinical problems (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Human growth and development
- Evidence-based psychosocial and vocational interventions in rehabilitation counseling practice
- Evidence-based psychiatric rehabilitation practices
- Evidence-based counseling/therapy for clients with PTSD
- Evidence-based counseling/therapy for clients with alcohol and other drug use problems
- Theories and techniques of clinical supervision
- Evidence-based practice and research utilization

Group and Family Counseling 3%

- Family counseling practices and interventions
- Family counseling theories
- Group counseling practices and interventions
- Group counseling theories

Crisis and Trauma Counseling and Interventions 4%

- Assessment of client risk and development of a safety plan
- Effective rehabilitation counseling services for individuals with polytrauma injuries
- Impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on people with disabilities
- Use of principles of crisis intervention for people with disabilities during crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events
- The emergency management system within rehabilitation agencies and in the community

<u>Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Chronic Illness and Disability</u>	11%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The psychosocial and cultural impact of disability on the individual</li> <li>• Medical aspects and implications of various disabilities</li> <li>• Environmental and attitudinal barriers for individuals with disabilities</li> <li>• Medical terminology</li> <li>• Implications of medications as they apply to individuals with disabilities</li> <li>• The psychosocial and cultural impact of disability on the family</li> <li>• Individual and family adjustment to disability</li> <li>• Human sexuality and disability issues</li> </ul>	
<u>Assessment, Occupational Analysis, and Service Implementation</u>	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocational implications of functional limitations associated with disabilities</li> <li>• The functional capacities of individuals with disabilities</li> <li>• Interpretation of assessment results for rehabilitation planning purposes</li> <li>• Occupational and labor market information</li> <li>• The tests and evaluation techniques available for assessing clients' needs</li> <li>• Ergonomics, job accommodations, and assistive technology</li> <li>• Transferable skills analysis</li> <li>• Job modification and restructuring techniques</li> <li>• Job analysis</li> <li>• Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5 (DSM-5)</li> <li>• Computer-based job-matching systems</li> <li>• Methods and techniques used to conduct labor market surveys</li> </ul>	
<u>Career Development and Job Placement</u>	9%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career development and job placement strategies</li> <li>• Job readiness including seeking and retention skills development</li> <li>• School to work transition for students with disabilities</li> <li>• Employer development for job placement</li> <li>• Supported employment strategies and services</li> <li>• Dual diagnosis and the workplace</li> <li>• Theories of career development and work adjustment</li> <li>• Work conditioning or work hardening resources and strategies</li> <li>• Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model – evidence-based supported employment</li> <li>• Social media as a networking tool</li> </ul>	
<u>Demand-Side Employer Engagement</u>	6%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisting employers with job accommodation issues for their employees with disabilities (e.g., assistive technology, workspace modifications)</li> <li>• Consultation process with employers related to management of disability</li> </ul>	

- issues in the workplace
- Educating employers on disability-related issues (e.g., ADA, compliance, disability law)
  - Human resource practices, diversity in the workplace, and workplace supports for people with disabilities
  - Diversity training related to disability issues for employers
  - Demand-side employment issues related to hiring, return to work, and retention
  - Marketing strategies and techniques for rehabilitation services

Community Resources and Partnerships 9%

- The services available for a variety of rehabilitation populations, including persons with multiple disabilities
- Community resources and services for rehabilitation planning
- Social Security programs, benefits, work incentives, and disincentives
- Financial resources for rehabilitation services
- Programs and services for specialty populations (e.g., school-to-work transition, SCI, TBI, mental health, ID/DD, substance abuse, corrections)
- Independent living services
- Financial literacy and benefits counseling and linkages to asset development resources
- Services available through client advocacy programs (e.g., Client Assistance Programs [CAP], legal aid)
- Services available from one-stop career centers
- Life-care planning and life-care planning services

Case Management 7%

- The case management process, including case finding, planning, service coordination, referral to and utilization of other disciplines, and client advocacy
- Case recording and documentation
- Negotiation, mediation, and conflict resolution strategies
- Principles of caseload management
- Techniques for working effectively in teams and across disciplines
- Advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients
- Techniques for working with individuals with limited English proficiency
- Principles, models, and documentation formats for biopsychosocial case conceptualization and treatment planning

Health Care and Disability Management 5%

- Appropriate medical intervention resources
- Healthcare benefits and delivery systems
- Health promotion and wellness concepts and strategies for people with chronic illness and disability
- Insurance programs (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, group and individual,

- short- and long-term disability, personal injury no-fault liability)
- Disability prevention and management strategies
- Workers' compensation laws and practices
- Managed care concepts

<u>Research, Methodology, and Performance Management</u>	6%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program evaluation procedures for assessing the effectiveness of rehabilitation services and outcomes</li> <li>• Rehabilitation research literature related to evidence-based practice</li> <li>• Effective management of rehabilitation services and programs, including areas such as administration, finance, benefit systems, and accountability</li> <li>• Psychometric concepts related to measurement (e.g., reliability, validity, standard error of measurement)</li> <li>• Strategic planning techniques and budget planning</li> <li>• Research methods and statistics</li> <li>• Systematic review, meta-analysis</li> <li>• Research databases (e.g., Cochrane Collaboration, PsycINFO, MEDLINE)</li> <li>• Concepts and principles of organizational development and stakeholder management</li> </ul>	

### Schedule Your Exam Early

CRCC cannot guarantee seating at the testing centers and recommends that you schedule the exam as soon as you receive your eligibility notification "Authorization to Test Letter".

#### **Failure to Schedule Exam Appointment:**

Applicants are allowed to start their application six (6) months prior to the examination window. Applicants that complete their application and are approved, will receive an Authorization to Test (ATT) letter with instructions to schedule their examination with Prometric. The ATT letter only applies to the upcoming examination window. **If the applicant does not schedule the exam appointment after receiving the ATT letter by the final exam date, the applicant will forfeit sitting during that examination window. The applicant will be charged a \$75 deferral transfer fee to schedule in the next subsequent exam window. If the applicant fails to reschedule at the next subsequent exam window, they will need to submit a new application and pay a new application fee.**

Note: Applications that have been "submitted" and are pending required documentation to be uploaded, will remain open up to one year from the initial application date. Upon application closing all information will be removed.

### Examination Schedule

The total time set aside for an examination is four hours, which includes time set aside for check-in, instructions, and a practice session on the computer. The actual time allotted for the test is 3.5 hours, unless ADA accommodations are requested and approved by CRCC. Before starting the test, applicants will take a tutorial that allows them to become familiar with the computer system. After finishing the test, applicants will be given an opportunity to record comments on particular exam items and will be requested to complete a brief survey.

## **Examination Sites**

Candidates have the option to take the exam in person at a testing center or online.

### **Testing Center**

Applicants will be able to choose from approximately 380 test administration centers in the U.S. and Canada. Because the location of test sites can change slightly from time-to-time, CRCC does not maintain information regarding test sites. At the time applicants are notified of their eligibility to take the exam, they will be provided complete instructions regarding how to schedule their time and location among one of the approximate 380 test sites in the U.S. and Canada. It is advisable for applicants to schedule as early as possible in order to obtain a preferred location, date, and time. Extensions will not be granted due to delays in scheduling an appointment.

Test administration centers are designed to provide standardized test administration. Test center personnel will guide applicants through the check-in process and will be available throughout the test administration in the event an applicant has a question related to the administration of the exam. Test center personnel cannot, however, respond to questions relating to the content of the examination. Test center personnel will verify required forms of identification. A photo of the applicant will also be taken.

All personal belongings must be placed in a locker available at the test center. Personal belongings also include tissues and any self-administered medication, whether over-the counter or prescription medication. Books, paper, and other resources are not allowed, although test center personnel will provide scrap paper that must be turned in at the end of the test session. No food or drink, including water, may be taken into the testing room.

Applicants will be required to remove eyeglasses for close visual inspection during check-in and again upon return from breaks. Hair accessories are subject to inspection. Jewelry aside from wedding and engagement rings is prohibited in the testing room. Applicants should refrain from wearing other jewelry or hair accessories.

Applicants are not permitted to leave the test center facility during the examination. Applicants may take a break as needed to attend to personal health and care issues, including restroom breaks, but will need to sign out according to the instructions that will be explained at the test

center. If an applicant chooses to take breaks, the time allotted for the examination will not increase and the examination timer will not stop during breaks.

Any violation of the policy will be reported to CRCC for further investigation. An applicant, who for medical reasons cannot comply with these rules, must apply for testing accommodations as described in Section 12.

Applicants who attempt to violate exam security in any way will be dismissed from the test center and may forfeit their right to seek certification. Applicants will also be required to respond in the affirmative to full compliance with a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement that will appear on the computer monitor prior to accessing the exam.

### **Invalid Identification, Late Arrival, or Failure to Show**

It is recommended that applicants arrive thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled appointment time in order to complete the check-in process. One form of valid, government-issued photo identification with the applicant's signature will be required.

#### **Acceptable Forms of Non-Expired Government-Issued ID, with signature and photo**

- Driver's license
- Valid Passport
- Military ID card
- National or State ID card
- US Government-issued permanent resident card (commonly known as the green card, formerly known as the alien registration card, permanent resident, visa).

While every effort will be made to seat applicants who arrive after the scheduled appointment time, late seating will be subject to the overall availability of seating at the test center.

- Those with invalid identification or who arrive late and cannot be seated will be subject to a \$200 re-examination fee in order to reschedule (Refer Section 17 Fees schedule).
- Applicants who are unable to sit for a scheduled examination for any reason in the initial exam (first window within the current application) are permitted only one deferral to the next subsequent scheduled testing window.
- CRCC charges \$75 for this change (effective January 1/2021)

### **Admission Policy:**

Please arrive at the test center thirty (30) minutes before your scheduled appointment. This will allow you enough time to complete the check-in procedures before beginning your exam. You will be required to bring with you one (1) valid form of ID. This ID must be a current (non-expired) official government issued ID bearing your name, signature, and photograph.

### **Late Arrivals:**

If you arrive more than fifteen (15) minutes after your appointment time and are refused admission, your application exam fees are not refundable under any circumstance.

### **Acceptable Forms of Non-Expired Government-Issued ID, with signature and photo**

Acceptable forms of non-expired, government-issued ID, with signature and photograph:

- Driver's license/Universal Driver's License
- Valid Passport
- Military ID card
- State ID card
- US Government issued permanent resident card (commonly known as the green card, formerly known as the alien registration card)

You will not be allowed to take any personal items with you into the testing room. This includes all bags, books not authorized by the testing program, notes, cell phones, pagers, watches and wallets.

### **Reschedule Policy**

To reschedule your exam appointment within the current exam window, you must notify Pearson VUE at least 48 hours prior to your appointment. Note: candidates rescheduling are subject to site availability. Please contact Pearson VUE's customer service if you have questions about this policy. Failure to reschedule in time or failure to appear (No-Show) for your appointment will result in the forfeiture of your application exam fee. **Note:** Applicants may change their time or location for taking the examination within the assigned testing window.

### **Cancellation Policy**

To cancel your exam appointment, you must notify Pearson VUE at least two (2) business days prior to your appointment. Please contact Pearson VUE's customer service if you have questions about this policy.

If you do not cancel your appointment two business days prior to your scheduled appointment time, you will forfeit your application exam fee. For further information please refer to the CRC Certification Guide.

### **CRC Online Testing:**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CRCC's accreditation body NCCA has temporarily approved Live Remote Online Proctoring for the March 2021 Exam Window (March 5-13, 2021.) Candidates who apply and are approved to test during the March testing window, will have two options to take their exam: at a Pearson VUE test center (see above) or via On VUE Live Online Proctoring. On VUE allows you to take your exam from the comfort of your own home or location of your choosing on your own computer while being monitored live by an offsite proctor through your webcam. It is recommended that candidates choosing the On VUE option be comfortable with technology and familiar with their own computer equipment.

Testing sessions are available 24 hours a day and seven days a week, based on seating availability. Your computer must have webcam capability as well as a microphone and speakers, and you should be in a quiet environment to avoid distractions and to ensure that the online proctor can hear everything in your location. You must also have a strong internet connection and updated software installed on your computer. A full listing of the technical requirements is posted on Pearson VUE's website.

### **CRCC Deferral Policy**

This policy only applies to a new candidate application. If you are unable to sit for your initial exam, you will only be allowed one deferral to the next subsequent testing window. There is only one deferral per application.

If you wish to defer (move or reschedule) your exam to the next consecutive exam window, you will need to contact CRCC at [ContactUs@crccertification.com](mailto>ContactUs@crccertification.com) to receive information about this process. Candidates are responsible for cancelling their appointments with PearsonVue at least 48 hours in advance, prior to deferring. Refer to Section 17 for deferral fees.

Applicants who are unable to sit for the second scheduled exam will not be issued a refund and will not be able to use the initial fees for anything else. Applicants who wish to continue to pursue certification will be required to submit a new application, along with payment of the certification fee, to continue their pursuit of the CRC designation. Such new applications will be subject to all criteria in effect at the time of the new application.

### **Applicants Who Do Not Achieve a Passing Score**

As certification criteria as well as exam content can change over time, CRCC's policy requires re-examination to occur in the next exam window after the original examination. Thus, applicants who do not achieve a passing score on the certification exam on the first (initial) exam window are allowed to re-take the exam at the next subsequent testing window only.

Note: Deferrals are not allowed for candidates that are retaking the CRC exam.

<b><u>Retake CRC Examination Schedule</u></b>		
<b><u>Application Deadline</u></b>	<b><u>Testing Dates</u></b>	<b><u>Mailing of Examination Results</u></b>
<b><u>Packet</u></b>		
December 31, 2020	March 5-13, 2021	April 15, 2021
April 30, 2021	July 9-17, 2021	August 27, 2021
August 31, 2021	October 1-9, 2021	November 9, 2021
December 31, 2021	March 4-12, 2022	April 15, 2021
April 30, 2022	July 8-16, 2022	August 16, 2022

August 31, 2022

October 7-15, 2022

November 15, 2022

Applicants who do not achieve a passing score on their second attempt or who are unable to sit again during the window dates as for any reason and who wish to continue to pursue certification will be required to submit a new application, together with the certification fee, to continue their pursuit of the CRC designation. Such reapplications will be subject to all criteria in effect at the time of reapplication.

**Note:** If candidate deferred on the first (initial) window and failed in the second window, the candidate will need to start a new application and remit a new application fee if they wish to pursue the CRC.

## **SECTION 12: TEST ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **Non-discrimination Policy for Individuals with Disabilities**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, and other applicable laws in the United States, CRCC does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities in providing access to its examination program. CRCC provides appropriate accommodations for its examination for individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodations. The ADA and accompanying regulations define a person with a disability as someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as walking, seeing, hearing, or learning. The purpose of documentation is to validate the applicant is covered under the ADA or other applicable laws. Comprehensive information by a qualified professional is necessary to allow CRCC to understand the nature and extent of the applicant's disability and the resulting functional impairment that limits access to its examinations. Documentation also allows CRCC to provide appropriate ADA accommodations for such a disability.

No applicant shall be offered an ADA accommodation that would compromise the certified rehabilitation counselor examination's ability to test accurately the skills and knowledge it purports to measure. Similarly, no auxiliary aid or service will be provided that will fundamentally alter the examination.

### **Confidentiality**

CRCC strictly adheres to a policy of confidentiality and does not disclose names of applicants with disabilities or information concerning the application or accompanying documentation. Examinations administered with ADA accommodations are not identified to third party score recipients.

### **Available Accommodations**

CRCC offers a wide variety of ADA accommodations to those individuals with a documented disability. Requests for accommodations are reviewed by CRCC on a case-by-case basis, without penalty. You

CRCC's certification examination has been validated in a multiple-choice format; therefore, alternative versions of the exam can only be provided in that format. However, various accommodations may be provided by CRCC to afford access to the exam for individuals with disabilities who qualify for accommodations. These accommodations may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Adjustable Work Station (Adjusted Height Table)
- Beverage (Applicant-supplied)
- Enlarged Font
- Extra Time (\*)
- JAWS
- Reader
- Adjustable Contrast
- Screen Magnifier
- Scribe
- Separate Room
- Sign Language Interpreter \*\* (to facilitate communication with test center personnel)
- Touch Pad Mouse
- Track Ball Mouse

*\* Extra time can only be granted if documentation provided is from a college instructor who can show this accommodation was provided for exams of same or similar type. To be of same or similar type, means the exam must have been a computerized, multiple choice, time-limited exam where no exam taker was allowed to ask questions. The exam did not have any essay or discussion questions.*

*\*\*The ADA allows for comparable accommodations in place of an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter. The environment for this exam has minimal contact with any other person. The only time communication between a candidate and another person should occur during the test period is:*

1. *Check-in: Upon entry to the testing center to notify the staff you are present.*
2. *If you experience the need for computer assistance or to take a break.*
3. *To find the restroom.*
4. *To notify staff you have completed the exam.*

*All of the above can be done via a notepad or the candidate may bring a family member to wait in the test center reception area and provide the minimal translation that may be needed.*

**View of an Authorized Testing Center Tour:**

<https://www.pearsonvue.co.uk/Test-Owner/Deliver/Test-center/PPC-photo-tour.aspx>

The space in a typical testing center shows the separations in cubes and spread-out seating compared to standard classroom settings. The testing room is quiet (no speaking is allowed), and noise cancellation phones are provided when requested in advance.

Individuals may request accommodations beyond those shown above by selecting “Other” on the Test Accommodation Request Form, noting the accommodation(s) requested. This selection should also be used to indicate a need to bring medical devices into the testing room, or to bring food or drink into the testing room when it is medically necessary to do so, and when documentation from a qualified professional is provided to support such requests.

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and who do require assistance in communicating with test center personnel via sign language, must request a sign language interpreter to facilitate communication at the test center. However, CRCC does not allow sign language interpreters to translate the examination.

### **Examination Breaks for Individuals Who are Granted Extra Time**

Candidates requiring extra time are allotted a 60-minute scheduled break, which occurs between the two sections of the examination. Applicants are ONLY permitted to leave the test center facility during the 60-minute scheduled break. Applicants may choose to use all or part of the 60-minute scheduled break. Applicants may take unscheduled breaks as needed to attend to personal health and care issues, including restroom breaks. However, the time allotted for the examination will not increase and the examination timer will not stop during unscheduled breaks. Any violation of the policy will be reported to CRCC for further investigation.

### **How to Request Test Accommodations**

1. Read the Guidelines for Documenting a Request for Test Accommodations and share them with the qualified professional who will be preparing your documentation.
2. As part of the application process, you will be given the option of requesting an accommodation.
3. Download the ADA [Test Accommodations Request Form](#) available in the CRCC website.
4. Upload supporting documentation related to your accommodation request, including the completed Test Accommodation Request Form, and documentation from a qualified professional. If you are unable to upload the documentation, you may mail to CRCC by selecting that option. Compare your documentation with the information listed in the documentation guidelines to ensure a complete submission. **If all required information is not submitted with your application or before the application deadline, your file will be incomplete. Therefore, you will not be eligible to sit for the examination for which you applied. You will be given an opportunity to complete your file in order to be considered during the next test cycle.**

### **Guidelines for Documenting a Request for Test Accommodations**

The following guidelines will assist an applicant in documenting a need for an accommodation based on an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

To request accommodations, complete the Test Accommodation Request in the application process.

1. Obtain a detailed, comprehensive written letter or report signed by a qualified professional. A qualified professional is defined as an individual who is licensed by a state or is certified nationally, has had contact with the applicant and is able to substantiate a record of diagnosis. The letter or report should describe your disability and its severity and explain the need for the requested accommodations. The report must:
  - State a specific diagnosis of a disability.
  - Be current. The provision of accommodations is based on the current impact of the disability on the testing activity. The most recent documentation, preferably within the last five (5) years, should be provided. For physical conditions that are obvious and permanent, the currency requirement for the evaluation does not apply, but the most recent evaluation documentation available is still required and must be submitted.
  - Give a detailed description of the applicant's current functional limitations due to the diagnosed disability.
  - Recommend specific accommodations, including assistive devices, related to test taking needs. Provide a detailed explanation of why these accommodations or devices are needed and how they will reduce the impact of the identified functional limitations on the examination for which they are requested.
  - Report any past accommodations the applicant received on examinations because of the disability.
  - Provide contact information and credentials of the qualified professional that qualifies him/her to make the diagnosis, including information about professional license or certification and training in the area of the diagnosis. The dated report must be written on the qualified professional's letterhead and clearly indicate the name, address, telephone number and qualifications of the professional. If requested by CRCC, the qualified professional must present evidence of comprehensive training and direct experience in the diagnosis and treatment of adults in the specific area of disability.
  - A prior history of accommodation, without demonstration of a current need, does not in and of itself warrant the provision of a similar accommodation. **If no prior accommodations have been provided, the qualified professional should include a detailed explanation as to why no accommodations were given in the past and why accommodations are needed now.**
2. Upload the completed Test Accommodation supporting documentation related to your accommodation request, including documentation from a qualified professional.

**Please note:** Problems such as test anxiety, English as a second language (in and of itself), slow reading without an identified underlying cognitive deficit, or failure to achieve a desired outcome on a test are not learning disabilities and are not covered under the ADA. Pregnancy

in and of itself is not considered a disability although pregnancy-related impairments may be covered under the ADA.

### **Appeal Process**

Any applicant who is denied ADA accommodations may appeal this decision by submitting the following materials to CRCC:

- A written request for a formal appeal of the denial of accommodations. The request should describe the rationale for the appeal based on additional information not previously provided to CRCC or clarify other reasons justifying reconsideration.
- Additional written information in support of the appeal, such as new diagnostic or treatment information from the treating professional.

The appeal materials must be sent together in a single mailing and sent to CRCC within 30 days of the date indicated on the letter of denial of accommodations. During the next test cycle, the CRCC Executive Director will review the appeal and accompanying materials and make a determination prior to the next administration of the exam. The decision of the Executive Director is final. Note: the accommodations appeal may delay and you may need to wait to test at the next consecutive exam window.

## **SECTION 13: PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION**

### **CRC Interactive Practice Test**

The CRC Interactive Practice Test consists of one set of 50 multiple-choice questions representative of content on the actual CRC Exam.

These questions have been specifically selected to be reasonably representative of the content and statistical properties of the actual CRC Exam.

The practice test items span all 12 domains or content areas covered in the CRC Exam as well as the two sections of counseling and rehabilitation/disability.

The CRC Interactive Practice Test may be taken in 2 modes:

- **Test Mode**

This mode automatically advances to the next question in the CRC Interactive Practice Test as soon as an answer is selected. The feedback provides information whether the answer selected is correct or incorrect. A pass or fail status is not provided.

- **Study Mode**

This mode provides the option of receiving immediate feedback about the question.

The domain area is identified and the rationale behind the correct answer is also provided. Each question includes a list of references for further study on the general content area of the question.

Respondents are encouraged to take the CRC Interactive Practice Test in both modes. Begin by taking in test mode to determine overall performance. Next, take in study mode to identify the domain content areas to focus studies. Retake in test mode to gauge improvement in identified domain content areas.

For more information on the CRC Interactive Practice Test, go to the CRCC website at [www.crccertification.com/pages/crc\\_exam\\_preparation/72.php](http://www.crccertification.com/pages/crc_exam_preparation/72.php).

To maximize your study preparation, purchase the [CRC Interactive Practice Test](#) today.

*NOTE: Use of the CRC Interactive Practice Test is not required to pursue or obtain CRC Certification and does not guarantee success on the CRC Exam. Furthermore, CRCC does not endorse or recommend other study guides or CRC Exam preparation materials that may be available on the market, as we have not been involved in their development and therefore cannot attest to the accuracy or comprehensive nature of the content contained in those materials.*

### **Sample Exam Questions**

In addition to the CRC Interactive Practice Test, the following sample exam questions and reading list, along with a review of the test content outlined in Section 11, should be of assistance as you prepare to take the exam.

1. The obligation for rehabilitation counselors to teach advocacy skills to their clients stems from the belief that:
  - a. clients have the right to self-determination of choice.
  - b. clients require intervention by counselors to achieve full inclusion in society.
  - c. counselors have the specific training needed for advocacy efforts to be successful.
  - d. counselors have the best understanding of client needs and what is required to meet those needs.
2. Cognitive-Dissonance Theory is based on the:
  - a. assumption that when an individual has contradictory thoughts or ideas within an established behavior pattern, discord occurs.
  - b. individual's attraction to a particular role demand of an occupation that meets his/her needs and provides him/her with satisfaction.
  - c. assumption that individuals choose occupations that are person-oriented or non-person-oriented.
  - d. assumption the need structure of the individual is greatly influenced by early childhood frustrations and satisfactions.

3. The group counseling theory based on the holistic view of the individual is:
  - a. behavioral.
  - b. psychoanalytic.
  - c. Adlerian.
  - d. Freudian.
4. A judge subpoenas a rehabilitation counselor to provide a copy of a client's psychological evaluation that was performed by an independent psychologist. The rehabilitation counselor should:
  - a. submit the report only with the client's consent.
  - b. submit the report even if the client refuses consent.
  - c. refuse to submit the report under any circumstances.
  - d. direct the court to obtain the report directly from the psychologist.
5. When developing a rehabilitation plan for a client who has recently been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, the rehabilitation counselor should consider that:
  - a. muscles will progressively atrophy without evidence of neural degeneration.
  - b. symptoms can abate and recur with increasing frequency and severity for many years.
  - c. physical symptoms are debilitating, while mental and emotional states remain stable.
  - d. with the proper orthopedic devices, a client will be able to overcome most problems associated with the disability.
6. The assessment techniques commonly used to evaluate adults with specific learning disabilities fall into these three categories:
  - a. medical tests, psychological tests, and work evaluations.
  - b. neurological tests, adaptive behavior scales, and personality tests.
  - c. blood tests, Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS-IV) scores, and functional assessment tests.
  - d. informal tests and observational measures, standardized psychological tests, and neuropsychological test batteries.
7. Krumboltz's theory suggests the four factors that influence career decisions are genetic endowment, environmental conditions, learning experiences, and:
  - a. task approach skills.
  - b. personal financial assets.
  - c. physical appearance.
  - d. physical environment.
8. An important service rehabilitation counselors can provide to employers is:
  - a. actuarial assessment.
  - b. compensation insurance brokering.

- c. employee performance evaluation.
  - d. post-placement follow-up.
  - e.
9. Which program allows individuals to work with Social Security to set aside income and/or resources for a specified period of time to pursue a work goal?
- a. Trial Work Period (TWP).
  - b. Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE).
  - c. Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS).
  - d. Ticket to Work (TTW).
10. In the state/federal rehabilitation program, the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is guided primarily by:
- a. agency regulations.
  - b. the client's objectives.
  - c. labor market surveys.
  - d. local employment opportunities.
11. In the private sector, workers' compensation is regulated by:
- a. the federal government.
  - b. a regional board of directors.
  - c. each state.
  - d. the insurance commission.
12. The method by which the impact of rehabilitation services can be assessed is a:
- a. key assessment.
  - b. vocational evaluation.
  - c. comprehensive needs assessment.
  - d. program evaluation.

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Correct responses are:

- 1a
- 2a
- 3c
- 4d
- 5b
- 6d
- 7a
- 8d
- 9c
- 10b

11c  
12d

## **Reading List**

These resources that may be of help to applicants in preparation for the CRC examination. The list contains texts used by various master's programs in rehabilitation counseling, many of which contain similar content. It is not meant to be considered required reading. Instead, the list provides resources that applicants may reference after identifying examination content areas, as noted in Section 11, with which they feel less familiar or lack a strong knowledge base. Please be aware that this reading list does not comprise all knowledge areas covered in the examination. It is strongly recommended that applicants also be familiar with government publications, such as the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*, legislative acts, and other similar information that is in the public domain.

Andrew, J. D. & Faubion, C. W. (2014). *Rehabilitation services: An introduction for the human services professional*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Linn Creek, MO: Aspen Professional Services.

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Text Revision. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association.

Balcazar, F. E., Suarez-Balcazar, Y., Taylor-Ritzler, T., & Keys, C.B. (2010). *Race, culture, and disability: Rehabilitation science and practice*. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

Rumrill, P.D. & Bellini, J. L. (2018). *Research in rehabilitation counseling: A guide to design, methodology, and utilization*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.) Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Ltd.

Bolton, B. F. & Parker, R. M. (Eds.). (2008). *Handbook of measurement and evaluation in rehabilitation*. (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Austin, TX: Pro Ed, Inc.

Brodwin, M. G., Siu, F. W., Howard, J., Brodwin, E. R., & Du, A. T. (Eds.). (2014). *Medical, psychosocial, and vocational aspects of disability*. (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Athens, GA: Elliott & Fitzpatrick, Inc.

Brown, D. (2015). *Career information, career counseling, and career development*. (11<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Bryan, W. V. (2010). *Sociopolitical aspects of disabilities: The social perspectives and political history of disabilities and rehabilitation in the United States*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Ltd.

Capuzzi, D., Gross, D. R., & Stauffer, M. D. (2010). *Introduction to group work*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Denver, CO: Love Publishing Company.

Chan, F., Berven, N. L., & Thomas, K. R. (2015). *Counseling theories and techniques for rehabilitation and mental health professionals*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

- Corey, G. (2017). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy*. (10<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
- Corey, G., Corey, M. S., & Callanan, P. (2019). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions*. (10<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
- Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2018). *Groups: Process and practice*. (10<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA, CA: Cengage.
- Cottone, R. R. & Tarvydas, V. M. (2016). *Ethics and decision making in counseling and psychotherapy*. (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company
- Crimando, W. & Riggan, T. F. (2005). *Community resources: A guide for human service workers*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Doweiko, H. E. (2015). *Concepts of chemical dependency*. (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
- Falvo, D. R. & Holland, B. E. (2018). *Medical and psychosocial aspects of chronic illness and disability*. (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- Forsyth, D. R. (2019). *Group dynamics*. (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Gladding, S. T. (2019). *Family therapy: History, theory, and practice*. (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Goldenberg, I., Stanton, M., & Goldenberg, H. (2017). *Family therapy: An overview*. (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
- Gysbers, N. C., Heppner, M. J., & Johnston, J. A. (2014). *Career counseling: Holism, diversity, and strengths*. (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Hays, D. G. (2017). *Assessment in counseling: Procedures and practices*. (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Jackson-Cherry, L. R. & Erford, B. T. (2018). *Crisis assessment, intervention, and prevention*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). New York, NY: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Lee, C.C. (2018). *Multicultural issues in counseling: New approaches to diversity*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Levers, L. L. (Ed.). (2012). *Trauma counseling: Theories and interventions*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Tarvydas, V. M. & Hartley, M.T (2018). *The Professional Practice of Rehabilitation Counseling*, (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, LLC.
- Marini, I., Millington, M. J., & Graf, N. M. (2017). *Psychology aspects of disability: Insider perspectives and counseling strategies*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, LLC.

- Marini, I. & Stebnicki, M. A. (Eds.). (2017). *The psychological and social impact of illness and disability*. (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- McGuire-Kuletz, M., Otto, B., & Diehl, B. (Eds.). (2015). *Understanding the affordable care act: A toolkit for VR counselors*. (Institute on Rehabilitation Issues Monograph No. 37). Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education.
- McGuire-Kuletz, M., Tomlinson, P., & Siblo, M. (Eds.). (2010). *Vocational rehabilitation and corrections: Achieving successful employment outcomes for persons with disabilities and criminal history*. (Institute on Rehabilitation Issues Monograph No. 35). Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education.
- McGuire-Kuletz, M., Shivers, S., & Anderson, P. (Eds.). (2009). *When Johnny (or Jeannie) comes marching home ...and back to work: Linking Veterans Affairs and state vocational rehabilitation services for service men and women*. (Institute on Rehabilitation Issues Monograph No. 34). Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education.
- Moroz, A., Flanagan, S. R., & Zaretsky, H. H. (Eds.). (2017). *Medical aspects of disability for the rehabilitation professional*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, Inc.
- Morton, D. A. (2016). *Nolo's guide to Social Security disability: Getting & keeping your benefits*. (8<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Berkeley, CA: Nolo.
- Mpofu, E. & Oakland T. (2010). *Assessment in rehabilitation and health*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Niles, S. G. & Harris-Bowlsbey, J. (2017). *Career development interventions*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Parker, R. M. & Patterson, J. B. (Eds.). (2012). *Rehabilitation counseling: Basics and beyond*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed, Inc.
- Power, P. W. (2013). *A guide to vocational assessment*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed, Inc.
- Roessler, R. T. & Rubin, S. E. (2017). *Case management and rehabilitation counseling: Procedures and techniques*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed, Inc.
- Rubin, S. E. & Roessler, R. T. (2016). *Foundations of the vocational rehabilitation process*. (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed, Inc.
- Scherer, M. J. (Ed.). (2012). *Assistive technologies and other supports for people with brain impairment*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Social Security Administration.Official Website: <http://www.ssa.gov/>

- Stebnicki, M. A. (2017). *Disaster mental health counseling: Responding to trauma in a multicultural context*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Sue, D. W. & Sue, D. (2016). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice*. (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Szymanski, E. M. & Parker, R. M. (Eds.). (2010). *Work and disability: Contexts, issues, and strategies for enhancing employment outcomes for people with disabilities*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed, Inc.
- University of Arkansas Currents. (2015). *Assume nothing! A monograph from the 38<sup>th</sup> Institute of Rehabilitation Issues to address underserved populations, including individuals who are deaf-blind*. (38<sup>th</sup> Institute on Rehabilitation Issues). Hot Springs, AR: University of Arkansas Currents.
- University of Arkansas Currents. (2011). *Performance management: Program evaluation and quality assurance in vocational rehabilitation*. (36<sup>th</sup> Institute on Rehabilitation Issues). Hot Springs, AR: University of Arkansas Currents.
- Venes, Donald, M.D. (Ed.). (2017). *Taber's cyclopedic medical dictionary*. (23rd Ed.). Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis Company.
- Webber, J. & Mascari, J. B. (Eds.). (2010). *Terrorism, trauma, and tragedies: A counselor's guide to preparing and responding*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Weed, R. O. & Field, T. F. (2012). *Rehabilitation consultant's handbook*. (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Athens, GA: Elliott & Fitzpatrick, Inc.
- Weed, R. O. & Berens, D.E. (Eds.). (2019). *Life care planning and case management handbook*. (4th Ed.). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
- Welfel, E. R. (2013). *Ethics in counseling and psychotherapy: Standards, research, and emerging issues*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
- Zunker, V. G. (2016). *Career counseling: A holistic approach*. (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

## **SECTION 14: EXAMINATION SCORES, RESULTS, CERTIFICATES, AND INQUIRIES**

### **Examination Scores**

The examination is scored using a conjunctive scoring model whereby the examination is divided into two parts. One of the parts tests knowledge with regard to counseling and the other part tests knowledge with regard to rehabilitation and disability issues. Applicants must achieve a passing score on both parts on a single exam administration in order to pass the examination as a whole.

A panel of experts arrived at recommended passing scores for each part of the exam using a method called the modified-Angoff approach. In this method, each expert considered examination questions individually and made a judgment about the probability that a minimally competent applicant would answer the questions correctly. The overall passing scores were then computed as the average of the predicted probabilities for all individual questions. This panel then recommended the passing scores for each part of the exam to CRCC, which set the passing scores. These passing scores represent the minimum level of knowledge that must be demonstrated to pass the examination as a whole.

Because of the need for security, multiple forms of examinations, each containing a different combination of questions, are used. The passing scores cannot be set as specific raw scores, or numbers of questions answered correctly, because some of these forms may be slightly easier or more difficult than others. Therefore, requiring the same raw scores to pass the different forms would not be fair to all applicants. A statistical procedure called equating is used to adjust for any differences in the level of difficulty among examination forms. Once the examination forms have been equated, a procedure called scaling is used to convert the actual number of correct answers, or raw scores, to a uniform scale. These converted scores are called scaled scores. Scaled scores ensure that all applicants demonstrate the same level of ability in order to pass the examination.

CRCC states its disapproval of the use of test results for any purpose other than the use for which the examination is developed and conducted. This warning includes using the test results for employment selection. In addition, test results are not to be used to compare educational programs. Certification tests are mastery tests and are not to be used as achievement or selection instruments.

### **Examination Score Report and Results**

A score report indicating a “Grade” of “pass or fail” is provided to examinees at the test site upon completion of the CRC examination. **Scores are not provided to examinees.**

Approximately one week after the closing of the CRC exam window, examinees will receive a follow-up email. Examinees who pass will receive a preliminary score report. Examinees who do not pass will receive a final score report profile including diagnostic information. This information can be used for further study.

Approximately four weeks following the close of the test administration window, applicants will be mailed their examination results.

#### **Category 1 and 2**

An applicant who applies as a student (under Category 1 or 2) will be required to submit the official transcript emailed **to CRCC at [transcripts@crcertification.com](mailto:transcripts@crcertification.com).** Candidate's transcripts must reflect the granting of their Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling **before CRCC is able to release their examination results packet and officially award the CRC certification to applicants who obtained a passing score on the**

**examination. This transcript must also reflect the successful completion of a 600-hour internship in rehabilitation counseling.** If an electronic version not available, the transcript may be mailed to CRCC, 1699 E. Woodfield Road, Suite 300, Schaumburg, IL 60173. In order to protect the privacy of the applicant, results are confidential and will **ONLY** be released to the applicant **IN WRITING BY FIRST CLASS MAIL.** Examination results cannot be released over the phone or by electronic communication.

### **Certificates**

Each individual who receives a passing score and completed all the requirements for the CRC will receive a final email confirmation. The CRC certificate which will be sent via US mail to the address in CRCCconnect database. Individuals are entitled to begin using the designation "CRC" after their names as soon as they receive the CRC certificate. Duplicate or replacement certificates can be requested from CRCC (refer to Section 17 Fees). All certificates remain the property of CRCC. Individuals who do not receive their original certificate within eight weeks of their examination should contact CRCC immediately.

### **Examination Inquiries**

Applicants who feel an error or omission occurred during the examination process or those who question any aspect of the examination procedure may address an inquiry in writing to the CRCC Standards and Examination Committee. If the applicant disagrees with the committee's findings, a further appeal may be made to the Executive Committee.

## **SECTION 15: USE OF THE CRC DESIGNATION**

### **CRC Certified Rehabilitation Counselor**

### **CRC/Retired Certified Rehabilitation Counselor/Retired**

The CRC designation must be used consistent with the scope for which the certification was granted and in accordance with all applicable use policies of CRCC. Use of the CRC designation is strictly limited to those individuals who:

1. Have met all the criteria of CRCC and have taken part in the certification examination, either during the grandfathering period (1974-1975) or by achieving a passing score.
2. Have been officially notified by CRCC through the receipt of an examination results inclusive of a certificate and a score report indicating a passing status.
3. Have subsequently renewed their certification as required under CRCC's certification renewal plan.

No one may use the CRC designation or otherwise represent themselves as being certified without first having fulfilled these requirements. Individuals who improperly use the CRC

designation without having fulfilled the requirements who later seek CRC certification may be denied certification as a result of such improper use. Such individuals may also be subject to legal action. Additionally, individuals who have earned the use of the CRC designation and fail to act in accordance within the CRCC Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors may be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including revocation of certification.

## **SECTION 16: CERTIFICATION RENEWAL**

Applicants who pass the certification examination and achieve CRC certification will be provided information about certification renewal criteria. CRCC believes CRCs should continue to expand their skills in order to enhance the quality of the services they provide. CRCs are encouraged to build on the demonstrated specified levels of knowledge, skills, and ability addressed by the education/employment requirements and the initial certification examination. They are also required to provide evidence of continuing competence through the completion of courses and other activities that will help them more effectively serve their clients.

CRCC requires all CRCs to renew their certification at five-year intervals. Participation in continuing education throughout the five-year intervals is expected; participation in courses and programs sponsored by recognized continuing education providers affords a credible mechanism to support continuing competence and acceptable standards of quality in practice. The continuing education clock hour credits associated with these activities must align with the knowledge, skills, and ability addressed by the certification examination. All CRCs must document 100 clock hours of approved continuing education, 10 of which must be in the area of ethics, during the period of their current certification or re-take the certification examination and achieve a passing score.

CRCC will make every reasonable effort to send notification of a certificant's ability to begin the renewal process. However, it is the individual's responsibility to re-certify at the appropriate time. Failure to receive notification of renewal is not considered grounds for an extension. **CRCC urges all certificants to update their contact information making any changes necessary to ensure prompt delivery of communications (electronic and/or mail). CRCC's primary method of communication is electronic via email.**

## **SECTION 17: FEES**

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**All fees are non-refundable, unless otherwise noted.**

**Note that all fees are subject to change without notice.**

**CERTIFICATION FEE**      **\$410**

The certification application fee, which includes the cost of the examination, is submitted at the time of application. A refund of \$100 will be issued to applicants deemed ineligible. The candidate must sit the exam during the exam window on their application, or the window immediately following it.

**Note:** If the applicant deferred on their initial application, they must take the exam at the next consecutive window.

**RE-EXAMINATION FEE**      **\$225**

This fee must be paid by applicants who do not achieve a passing score on the certification exam on the **first exam** window. Applicants are allowed to re-take the exam once during each exam window. Additionally, retakes can only occur at the next subsequent exam window date. The re-examination fee must also be paid by applicants who are not seated for a scheduled appointment due to invalid identification, late arrival, or who do not appear for their appointment or applicants who cancel a scheduled appointment 48 hours or less prior to their scheduled appointment.

**ADDITIONAL EXAMINATION FEE INFORMATION:**

Refer to **Section 11** in this CRC Certification Guide for detailed information regarding:

**Exam Deferral/Transfer Fee**      **\$ 75**

- Only initial applicants are allowed to defer or transfer and only to the next exam window.

**Rescheduling, Cancellations**

**Failure to Schedule Exam Appointment or “no-show” to schedule appointment**

**Applicants Who Do Not Achieve a Passing Score**

**CERTIFICATION RENEWAL FEE**      **\$405**

See certification renewal guide for more information.

**CRC/RETIRED DESIGNATION FEE**      **\$100**

See certification renewal guide for more information.

**Handling Fee for Returned Checks**      **\$ 35**

Must be paid for checks returned for non-sufficient funds (NSF) or closed accounts.

**Certification Verification Fee**

For use in documenting certification status for other organizations/agencies.

**e-Mail Verification**      **\$ 30**

Written (via US Mail)	\$ 40
Expedited	\$ 55

**Replacement Certificate**

(Except at renewal time.) \$ 30

Please send a written request to CRCC along with payment.



# Candidate Handbook for National Certification with the National Counselor Examination (NCE)

3 Terrace Way  
Greensboro, NC 27403-3660  
Tel: 336-547-0607 • Fax: 336-547-0017  
[nbcc@nbcc.org](mailto:nbcc@nbcc.org) • [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org)



NBCC and CCE value diversity.  
There are no barriers to credentialing on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation or national origin.

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# FOR MORE INFORMATION

All questions and requests for information about **NBCC certification and the NCE** should be directed to:

NBCC  
Certification Department  
3 Terrace Way  
Greensboro, NC 27403  
Voice: 336-547-0607  
Fax: 336-547-0017  
Web site: [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org)

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# INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides information about the examination and registration process for the National Counselor Examination (NCE). It outlines the design and content of the examination and guides candidates through the examination process, from registration through test-taking. For your convenience, this handbook may be downloaded from [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org).

## ABOUT NBCC

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) is internationally recognized as a leading provider of national counselor certification. Additionally, 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia administer NBCC examinations as part of their counselor credentialing requirements. Based on its reputation for excellence in the examination field, NBCC has provided consultation services for examination and credential development to many other organizations in the United States and abroad, including NBCC's affiliate the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE). NBCC has contracted with CCE to oversee the certification examination process.

## NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

NBCC and CCE do not discriminate against candidates on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation or national origin.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Only applicants who have applied for certification are eligible to take the NCE for this purpose.

## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

**The examination is delivered in a pencil and paper format at more than 75 national sites and 350 campuses located throughout the United States.** NBCC has contracted with Pearson VUE to assist in the electronic administration of the examination delivered either on college campuses or at Pearson VUE test centers. The examination is administered twice a year, in April and October. The examination is usually held on the third Saturday of the month.

# REGISTERING FOR AN EXAMINATION

## FEES AND REFUND POLICY

Candidates must submit the appropriate fee with the registration form. Payment may be made by credit card (VISA, MasterCard or American Express). **Application fees are not refundable or transferable.**

## SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

NBCC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and strive to ensure that no individual with a disability is deprived of the opportunity to take an examination solely by reason of that disability. NBCC will provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with disabilities.

Special examination accommodation can be provided for candidates with visual, sensory or physical disabilities that would prevent them from taking the examination under standard conditions; candidates with diagnosed learning or emotional challenges; and candidates for whom English is a second language. Candidates who are Sabbath-observant can also request a non-Saturday examination date. All special examination accommodation requests must be submitted at least 45 days before the exam date and must be on letterhead and signed by the appropriate authority.

## EXAMINATION DEFERRALS

You may postpone or defer your examination date to the next available administration without penalty as long as you contact NBCC more than 30 days prior to the exam date. If your request is less than 30 days prior to the exam or if you do not take the exam on your scheduled date, you will pay a \$150 reregistration fee to take it on the next administration date. If an emergency (illness, accident, death in the family, etc.) prevents you from taking the exam on your scheduled date, you may be eligible for a waiver of the reregistration fee, depending on your specific circumstances.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER, POWER FAILURE OR EMERGENCY

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies at the examination location, NBCC will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation and subsequent rescheduling of an examination. The examination will usually be rescheduled if the testing center personnel are unable to open the facility. If power to a testing location is temporarily interrupted during an administration, your examination will restart where you left off and you may continue the examination.

Every attempt is made to administer the examination as scheduled; however, should an examination be cancelled at a testing location, all scheduled candidates will receive notification by e-mail or telephone regarding rescheduling or reregistration procedures.

# EXAMINATION CONTENT

The National Counselor Examination (NCE) is a 200-question, multiple-choice, nonsectioned examination. The NCE represents each of the original eight CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs) content areas, with question content also emerging from the five work behaviors determined by NBCC's national job analysis. Thus, the content validity of the NCE is anchored on the five empirically validated work behaviors determined to be most relevant for competent counseling practice and the eight CACREP curriculum educational standards.

A different form (version) of the NCE is compiled for each administration of the examination. Each form's questions, which are drawn from the item pool for the NCE, have undergone extensive review and field-testing.

Although each form of the NCE contains different questions, the content areas and the respective numbers of questions representing those areas are consistent. Within the set of 200 questions on each form of the NCE, 160 of the questions are counted for the purpose of determining whether you surpass the minimum criterion (i.e., "passing") score for that form. Thus, the maximum possible score a respondent can achieve is 160.

The remaining 40 items are unscored field-test items. Field-test items are included on the exam to gather item statistics to evaluate their performance for use on future exams.

The following is an outline of the eight CACREP domains on which the examination questions are based:

1. **Human Growth and Development** — Studies that provide an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels.
2. **Social and Cultural Diversity** — Studies that provide an understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society.
3. **Counseling and Helping Relationships** — Studies that provide an understanding of counseling and consultation processes.
4. **Group Counseling and Group Work** — Studies that provide an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches.
5. **Career Counseling** — Studies that provide an understanding of career development.
6. **Assessment and Testing** — Studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.
7. **Research and Program Evaluation** — Studies that provide an understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal considerations in research.
8. **Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice** — Studies that provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning, including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards and credentialing.

The following is an outline of the five work behavior domains derived from a job analysis of professional counselors. The descriptions of the work behaviors are intended to be broad examples and are not exhaustive.

1. **Fundamental Counseling Issues** — Theory and application of counseling clients with conditions that may be a focus of clinical attention, and clients with various disorders including but not limited to neurocognitive, personality, anxiety and depressive disorders.
2. **Counseling Process** — Assessing a client's course of development or one's appropriateness for working with a specific client. Conducting diagnostic interviews, distance counseling and school/community outreach.
3. **Diagnostic and Assessment Services** — Assessing clients' educational preparation and potential for harm to self and others. Conducting biopsychosocial interviews, initial assessments and custody evaluations.
4. **Professional Practice** — Advocating for client needs and the profession of counseling. Applying career counseling interventions, current counseling and multicultural counseling models.
5. **Professional Development, Supervision and Consultation** — Communicating with credentialing boards and consulting with the justice system, peers or other professionals, prescribers of medications, and professional organizations.

NBCC has developed a preparation guide for the NCE that includes general information about the exam, a practice test, tips and strategies for test-taking, and additional references. This is the only guide that includes actual retired test items. This guide can be purchased for \$34.95 at [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org).

## NCE SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

Following are sample questions in the same style and with similar content as will be on your examination. Use the sample questions to verify your understanding of the topics on the examination. Answers are provided for the sample questions.

1. In attempting to understand the life perspectives and characteristics of their clients, some counselors use Kohlberg's theory of moral development as a theoretical framework. These counselors know that Kohlberg's theory includes three progressive levels culminating in
  - A. self-actualization, wherein the individual is fully humanistic.
  - B. principled thought, wherein the individual adopts a self-accepted set of standards of behavior.
  - C. androgyny, wherein the individual exhibits both male and female stereotypic behaviors.
  - D. personhood, wherein the individual is free from moral dilemmas.
2. A professional counselor determines fees for monthly consultation services on a job- by-job basis. This is an example of which of the following types of reinforcement schedules?
  - A. Variable interval
  - B. Fixed interval
  - C. Variable ratio
  - D. Fixed ratio
3. Research on the development of a person in a so-called "humanistic life outlook" has shown that it is facilitated by what?

- A. Formal educational experiences
  - B. Observational learning experiences
  - C. Diverse interpersonal interactions
  - D. All of the above
4. When persons who are characteristically shy and withdrawn participate in “assertiveness training,” initially they experience uncertainty and self-doubt. Counselors refer to this social psychological concept as
- A. cognitive dissonance.
  - B. dissociation.
  - C. individuation.
  - D. acculturation.
5. “Men [used here to mean all people] are disturbed not by things, but by the view which they take of them.” This quote, attributable to Epictetus, most closely describes the counseling theory developed by
- A. Rogers.
  - B. Carkhuff.
  - C. Freud.
  - D. Ellis.
6. The counseling technique in which the counselor intensifies the client’s emotional state in order to help the client understand the irrationality of the emotional reaction is known as
- A. confrontation.
  - B. paradoxical intention.
  - C. systematic desensitization.
  - D. reconfiguration.
7. Counselors know that groups are formed for different purposes. For example, in some groups the primary goal is to yield some specified outcome, or “product,” while in others the primary goal is to focus on the “process” of interaction within the group. Which of the following types of groups is more product- than process- oriented?
- A. Behavioral
  - B. Transactional-analysis
  - C. Adlerian
  - D. Client-centered
8. In the context of group counseling, members that are high in conformity also tend to be high in
- A. independence.
  - B. authoritarianism.
  - C. intelligence.
  - D. superiority.
9. A counselor who structures a career counseling group to help group members understand a “fields and levels” approach to careers is following the theory of
- A. Super.
  - B. Roe.
  - C. Holland.
  - D. Tiedeman.

10. The concept of “career maturity” has been described and researched most extensively by
- A. Crites.
  - B. Hoyt.
  - C. Tiedeman.
  - D. Ginzberg.
11. Person A and Person B both took the same test. Person A got a score of 100 while Person B got a score of 75. In order for a counselor to determine whether the difference between their scores was because of “chance,” the counselor would need to know which of the following characteristics of the test?
- A. Mean
  - B. Standard deviation
  - C. Standard error of measurement
  - D. Standard error of the mean
12. A counselor conducted a study intended to evaluate the effectiveness of ongoing group career counseling on the vocational maturity of high school sophomores. The study was begun in September and continued until June. This study is particularly susceptible to which of the following threats to the validity of an experiment?
- A. Regression
  - B. Maturation
  - C. Reactive effects of experimentation
  - D. Multiple treatment interference
13. A counselor designs a study where two experimental groups and one control group complete pre- and post-experiment measures of self-concept. The subjects were not randomly assigned to the groups because of scheduling problems. Which of the following techniques is MOST appropriate for analyzing the resultant data?
- A. Analysis of covariance
  - B. Correlated t-tests
  - C. Analysis of variance
  - D. Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test
14. You have been providing career counseling to a client who is seeking employment. Concurrent with the counseling, and with your knowledge, the client has made application for employment with several employers. A potential employer calls you and asks for your opinion as to your client’s suitability for the employer’s job opening. Under which of the following conditions are you free (i.e., not in violation of professional ethics), to provide the information requested?
- A. When it is clear that the client will not get the job unless the information is given
  - B. When you are certain that the information you would provide would assure that the client would get the job
  - C. When in your best judgment you believe the information would enhance the client’s chances for getting the job
  - D. None of the above
15. As applied to professional licensure of counselors, the term “reciprocity” means that
- A. one licensing agency agrees to accept the licensing standards of another as sufficient for its own.
  - B. a licensed counselor may legally perform the functions of a licensed psychologist.

- C. certification is synonymous with licensure.
- D. graduation from a fully accredited counselor education program automatically constitutes eligibility for licensure.

## Sample Answer Key

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. B  | 11. C |
| 2. C | 7. A  | 12. B |
| 3. D | 8. B  | 13. A |
| 4. A | 9. B  | 14. D |
| 5. D | 10. A | 15. A |

## PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

Developing an effective study plan is essential for successfully passing the NCE. A good study strategy includes preparation. To prepare, first determine what you need to learn by reviewing the content areas for the NCE (CACREP areas and work behavior areas). Choose your study materials and select a quiet, comfortable place that allows you to focus. Before you begin, check to make sure you have everything you need. Try to avoid interruptions.

Developing a study plan will allow you to learn the most as you study. Include setting goals in your study plan. Review what you have studied as often as possible. Study guides are available in the ProCounselor online store.

## TAKING THE EXAMINATION

Approximately 10 days before the examination, you will receive an exam admission letter that will provide specifics regarding when and where to report and what to bring with you.

**A candidate who arrives more than 15 minutes after the scheduled report time will not be admitted.**

## IDENTIFICATION

To gain admission to the examination room, you must present two forms of identification, one with a photograph. The name on your registration and on your photo ID **must** be identical. Both forms of identification must be current and include your current name and signature. You will be required to sign a roster for verification of identity. Bring your exam admission letter with you as it includes your NBCC ID number, which you will need to sign in.

Acceptable forms of photo identification include a current driver's license, a current state identification card, a current passport, or a current military identification card. Employment ID cards, student ID cards and any type of temporary identification are **not** acceptable as the primary form of identification.

You must have proper identification to gain admission to the examination room. Failure to provide appropriate identification at the time of the examination is considered a missed appointment and a refund of your examination fee will not be granted.

## **SECURITY**

NBCC maintains examination administration and security standards so that all candidates have the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. The testing location is manned by an examination administrator and a proctor.

The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- No cameras, notes, tape recorders, personal digital assistants (PDAs), pagers or cellphones are allowed in the examination room.
- No calculators are permitted.
- No guests, visitors or family members are allowed in the examination.
- Except for keys and wallets, no personal items, valuables or weapons should be brought to the examination room. NBCC is not responsible for items left outside the examination room.

## **EXAMINATION RESTRICTIONS**

- Writing materials will be provided during check-in. You must return the writing materials to the proctor at the completion of testing, or you will not receive a score report. No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the examination room.
- No questions concerning the content of the exam may be asked during the examination.
- You may take a break when you wish, but you will not be given additional time to test.

## **MISCONDUCT**

Individuals who engage in any of the following conduct will be dismissed from the examination and will forfeit their scores and fees:

- Creating a disturbance or being abusive or otherwise uncooperative;
- Displaying and/or using electronic communications equipment such as pagers, cellphones or PDAs;
- Giving or receiving help or being suspected of doing so;
- Attempting to record examination questions or make notes;
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else; or
- Being observed with notes, books or other aids.

## **COPYRIGHTED EXAMINATION QUESTIONS**

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of NBCC. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Those who do so will be subject to severe civil and criminal penalties.

## **EXAMINATION PROCESS**

After your identification has been confirmed, you will be directed into the examination room. Following the examination instructions, you will begin the timed examination.

You will have three hours and 45 minutes to complete this examination. You may take periodic breaks, although you will not receive extra time for the exam.

# FOLLOWING THE EXAMINATION

Within a month after the examination, you will receive notification that your exam score has been uploaded to your ProCounselor account. The score report you will have access to is an unofficial score report for your records. After NBCC has received and verified a final, official transcript of your graduate degree, you can order an official score verification report to be sent to third parties (such as licensure boards) through the ProCounselor online store. Passing the examination does **not** guarantee certification. NBCC reserves the right to withdraw or void official scores if it is found a candidate engaged in misconduct, wrongfully sat for the examination, or violated the conditions of their certification application.

## PASS/FAIL SCORE DETERMINATION

The examination score is determined only by your performance on the NCE. Work history, quality of work, or other personal or professional variables do not constitute or otherwise substitute exam performance.

The methodology used to determine the passing point for the NCE is a modified Angoff method.

Identified subject matter experts who make up the NCE examination committee formulate responses and, through review of numerical data, unanimously determine the appropriate passing score. The subject matter experts evaluate each question on the examination to determine how many correct answers are necessary to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to pass the examination.

It is important to note a candidate's ability to pass the examination depends on the knowledge and skill of the candidate and not on the performance of other test takers.

The passing score and score you received on the version of the examination you were administered will be provided as a score report. Passing scores may vary slightly for each version of the examination. To ensure fairness to all candidates, a process of statistical equating is used to determine the cut score for each version of the examination. This involves selecting an appropriate mix of individual questions for each version of the examination that meets the content distribution requirements of the examination content blueprint. Because each question has been pretested, a difficulty level can be assigned.

The process then considers the difficulty level of each question selected for each version of the examination, attempting to match the difficulty level of each version as closely as possible. To ensure fairness, slight variations in difficulty level are addressed by adjusting the passing score up or down, depending on the overall difficulty level statistics for the group of scored questions that appear on a particular version of the examination.

## EXAMINATION REREGISTRATION

If you were unsuccessful in your examination attempt, you may retake the exam on the next available date by and reregistering through ProCounselor. Your application provides for three attempts to pass the exam before the application closes. There is a fee for reregistration.

## SCORES CANCELLED BY NBCC

NBCC is responsible for the validity and integrity of the scores it reports. On occasion, occurrences such as misconduct by a candidate may cause a score to be suspect. NBCC reserves the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, violation of its regulations is discovered.

# APPEALING EXAMINATION RESULTS

Examinees may appeal exam score results. To be considered, appeals must follow the guidelines below.

## Administration Appeals

Candidates may base their appeal on:

- Proctoring errors (e.g., proctor failed to check in candidates properly, improper materials in the testing area).
- Site conditions (e.g., distractions, lighting failures).
- Computer failure (e.g., error messages, screen failures).

In order to submit an administration-based appeal, the candidate must immediately report the issue to the exam administrator or proctor and file an incident report while on site. Before considering the appeal, CCE must be able to confirm the issue was filed in a report through the exam administration staff. If properly submitted, examinees should expect to receive a decision regarding administration errors within 60 days.

## Special Examination Accommodation Appeals

An individual can only submit an appeal of accommodations if initially approved for them. For the appeal to be considered, the candidate must file a detailed incident report while at the testing location, showing that the approved accommodations were not provided. If properly submitted, examinees should expect to receive a decision regarding special exam accommodations within 60 days.

## Content Appeals

In order for the appeal to be considered, the candidate must provide a summary of the item in question and complete primary or secondary references (citations are not sufficient) to support the appeal. Primary or secondary source data comes from the pool of knowledge generally acknowledged by counseling professionals (e.g., commonly referenced research or textbooks). All content appeals must be reviewed by subject matter experts during secure committee meetings; therefore, content appeal decisions may take up to eight months.

## Filing an Appeal

To be considered, an exam score appeal must:

- Be submitted within one week of the exam
- Be e-mailed to [appeal@cce-global.org](mailto:appeal@cce-global.org). (Appeals are not accepted by telephone or other e-mail addresses.)
- Include the candidate's full legal name, NBCC ID number, Pearson candidate ID number (if applicable), test date, and test location.

In addition, administration appeals must be accompanied by an Exam Incident Report submitted by the exam administrator or proctor. Administration appeals will not be considered without a properly filed report.

## **Issues Not Valid for Appeal**

Examinees are not eligible to appeal exam results based on the following:

- Testing errors on the part of the candidate;
- Test anxiety;
- Late arrival for the testing appointment;
- Failure to follow examination instructions as provided;
- Cut score determination; and
- The construction or criterion-related validity of the examination.

## **FAILING TO REPORT FOR AN EXAMINATION**

A candidate who fails to report for an examination forfeits the registration and all fees paid to take the examination. A completed registration form with examination fee is required to reregister for the examination.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information about candidates for testing and their examination results are considered confidential. Studies and reports concerning candidates will not contain personally identifiable information unless authorized by the candidate.



## Examination Incident Report

Complete this document in its entirety to report any irregularities you experienced during the administration of the examination. You have five days from the time of the examination to submit this document. If it is submitted after five days, you will not be able to appeal your exam score results. Submit this document by giving it to the proctor or scanning and e-mailing it to [appeal@cce-global.org](mailto:appeal@cce-global.org).

### EXAMINATION DETAILS

Examination: \_\_\_\_\_ Examination Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Administration Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify the reason for the report and include a description of what took place, who was involved, where, what time, how the issue was addressed, etc.

### Description of Irregularity (Please select the reason for your submission below.)

- Specific complaint regarding lack of special examination accommodation
- Physical environment (Electrical outage, room temperature, noise, lighting problems, etc.)
- Printing error (Questions omitted, missing pages, blurred ink, numeration errors, etc.)
- Proctoring error: (Improper test instruction, improper timekeeping, lack of presence, inattentive, etc.)
- Other:

*Please use the space below to describe in detail the irregularities that took place during the examination.*

### TO BE COMPLETED BY EXAMINEE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NBCC ID: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

*My signature below is verification that I experienced the events described in this document.*

Examinee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ University \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### TO BE COMPLETED BY PROCTOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

*My signature below is verification that I have witnessed or confirmed the events described in this document.*

Proctor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Position/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Candidate Handbook for State Credentialing

for the  
National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination  
**(NCMHCE)**



The Center for Credentialing & Education, Inc. (CCE) values diversity.  
There are no barriers to credentialing on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, or national origin.

3 Terrace Way Greensboro,  
NC 27403-3660

**Tel:** 336-482-2856 • **Fax:** 336-482-2852  
[cce@cce-global.org](mailto:cce@cce-global.org) • [www.cce-global.org](http://www.cce-global.org)

revised 11-2018

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

All questions and requests for information about state licensure requirements should be directed to the state credentialing board to which you are applying. (Refer to insert for state-specific information.)

All questions and requests for information about the **NBCC examination program** should be directed to

### Center for Credentialing & Education

3 Terrace Way  
Greensboro, NC 27403

**Voice:** 336-482-2856  
**Fax:** 336-482-2852  
**Website:** [www.cce-global.org](http://www.cce-global.org)

All questions and requests for information about **examination scheduling** should be directed to

### Pearson VUE

5601 Green Valley Dr.  
Bloomington, MN 55437

**Voice:** 866-904-4432  
**Website:** [www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com)

# **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook provides information about the examination and registration process for the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE). It outlines the design and content of the examination and guides candidates through the examination process, from registration through test-taking. For your convenience, this handbook can be downloaded from [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org).

## **ABOUT NBCC**

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) is internationally recognized as a leading provider of counselor credentialing examinations. All 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia administer NBCC examinations as part of their counselor credentialing requirements. Based on its reputation for excellence in the examination field, NBCC has provided consultation services for examination and credential development to many other organizations in the United States and abroad, including NBCC's affiliate the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE). NBCC has contracted with CCE to oversee the examination process.

## **INDEPENDENT TESTING AGENCY**

CCE has contracted with Pearson VUE to assist in the administration and scoring of the NCMHCE. Pearson VUE is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with regional offices in Australia, China, Dubai, India, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

NBCC, CCE, and Pearson VUE do not discriminate against candidates on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, or national origin.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Please check with your state board for specific information about licensure application procedures and any additional requirements. If you have previously achieved a passing score on an NBCC examination, contact your state board to determine if you are exam-exempt. You may be required to apply to your state board prior to sitting for the NCMHCE. Candidates may not schedule an examination with Pearson VUE until they have registered with CCE.

## **EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION**

The examination is delivered by computer at more than 250 Pearson VUE testing centers located throughout the United States. Generally, there are no application deadlines and a candidate may submit a registration form and fee at any time. Testing is normally during the first two full weeks of each month. The examination is administered by appointment only on dates authorized by CCE, Monday through Saturday beginning at 8 am with the last appointment at 5:30 pm. Please contact Pearson VUE for particular locations and details. Available dates will be indicated when scheduling your examination. Candidates are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Therefore, candidates are advised to submit registration material approximately 60 days prior to the desired exam period.

## **HOLIDAYS**

Examinations are not offered on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
- Christmas Eve Day (Limited hours)
- Christmas Day

## REGISTERING FOR AN EXAMINATION

Examinees have the option to register online or via a paper registration form. Online registration is the preferred method, as it requires a shorter processing time.

To begin the online registration process, go to <http://www.cce-global.org> and choose the “**ProCounselor**” tab. Candidates cannot schedule an examination appointment with Pearson VUE until CCE has processed their registration. Pearson will send email notification to registered candidates with examination scheduling procedures.

To instead request a paper registration form, email [paperreg@cce-global.org](mailto:paperreg@cce-global.org). Be aware that a paper registration will require an extended processing time.

## REGISTRATION EXPIRATION

A candidate who fails to test within six months after registering with CCE forfeits the registration and all fees paid to take the examination.

## EXAMINATION REREGISTRATION

If you are unsuccessful in your examination attempt, you may reregister by following the same registration process; however, you will not be able to retest until you have completed a three month waiting period. The actual retest date will depend on the monthly testing schedule and site availability. A separate fee is required each time you register for the exam.

## FEES AND REFUND POLICY

Candidates must submit the appropriate fee to register. Online payment must be made by credit card (VISA, MasterCard or American Express). Paper registration forms must include a cashier’s check or money order payable to NBCC. (Personal checks are not accepted.) Examination fees are not refundable or transferable and expire if the registration process is not completed within one year.

## SCHEDULING AN EXAMINATION

After you have completed the registration process and are approved to schedule your examination, you will receive an email from Pearson VUE with your candidate ID number. There are two ways to schedule an appointment for the examination:

1. Online scheduling is the **preferred** method. To use this service:
  - Retrieve your candidate ID number from the email.
  - Go to [www.pearsonvue.com/cce](http://www.pearsonvue.com/cce) and select “Create Account.”
  - Follow the simple, step-by-step instructions to select your examination program and register for an examination.

**Or**

2. Telephone: Call Pearson VUE at 866-904-4432 to schedule an examination appointment. This toll-free number is answered from 7 am to 7 pm. Central time Monday through Friday. **You may experience extended hold times.**

When scheduling an examination, be prepared to confirm a location and a preferred date and time for testing, and to provide your client candidate ID number. Pearson VUE uses this number only for identification in maintaining your record. When you contact Pearson VUE to schedule an examination appointment, you will be notified of the time to report to the testing center. Please make a note of it, because you will **not** receive additional communications confirming your scheduled appointment.

## TESTING CENTER LOCATIONS

Pearson VUE testing centers have been selected to provide accessibility to most candidates in all states and major metropolitan areas. A current listing of Pearson VUE testing centers, including addresses and driving directions, is available at Pearson VUE’s website ([www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com)). Specific address information will also be provided when a candidate schedules an examination appointment.

## **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES**

CCE and Pearson VUE comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and strive to ensure that no individual with a disability is deprived of the opportunity to take an examination solely by reason of that disability. With supporting documentation, CCE and Pearson VUE will provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with permanent or temporary disabilities or for whom English is a second language. Please note that accommodations must be pre-approved by your state board and/or CCE. Visit [www.nbcc.org/directory](http://www.nbcc.org/directory) for state-specific information on special accommodations.

Candidates testing with approved special accommodations must schedule their examination via Pearson VUE's toll-free number (800-466-0450) and inform Pearson VUE of the need for special accommodations. Please note, in order for an accommodation to be approved, the candidate must submit supporting documentation to [accommodations@cce-global.org](mailto:accommodations@cce-global.org). Supporting documentation must be submitted on letterhead; dated within five years of the request; include the candidate's full name, date of birth, diagnosis, and recommended accommodation(s); and be signed by a licensed, qualified professional.

Candidates should not schedule the exam without confirmation of the approved special accommodations. Candidates who schedule their examination date prior to confirmation of the approved special accommodations will forfeit the scheduled exam and the exam date will be rescheduled.

## **EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT CHANGES**

You may reschedule an examination appointment by calling Pearson VUE at 866-904-4432. There is a **\$50** fee to reschedule within seven days of your original appointment. You cannot reschedule less than 24 hours prior to your appointment.

## **MISSED APPOINTMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS**

A candidate forfeits the examination registration and all fees paid to take the examination when he or she:

- Intends to reschedule an examination but fails to contact Pearson VUE at least 24 hours before the examination appointment.
- Arrives more than 15 minutes late for an examination.
- Fails to report for an examination appointment for **any reason**.

A separate registration and examination fee are required to reregister for the examination.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER, POWER FAILURE, OR EMERGENCY**

Candidates should call in emergencies that occur the day of testing and qualification for a retest will be considered on a case-by-base basis

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, Pearson VUE will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation and subsequent rescheduling of an examination. The examination will usually be rescheduled if the testing center personnel are unable to open the facility. If power to a testing center is temporarily interrupted during an administration, your examination will restart where you left off and you may continue the examination.

Every attempt is made to administer the examination as scheduled; however, should an examination be cancelled at a testing center, all scheduled candidates will receive notification by e-mail or telephone regarding rescheduling or reregistration procedures. You may appeal a power outage only if you are not returned to where you left off prior to the power outage.

# EXAMINATION CONTENT

The simulations on the NCMHCE are designed to sample a broad area of competencies, not the recall of isolated facts. Therefore, the simulations assess clinical problem-solving abilities including conducting empirically supported and professionally indicated assessments and formation of symptom-based DSM diagnoses and clinically aligned treatment plans. The examination consists of 10 clinical mental health counseling cases. Each case is divided into five to 10 sections classified as either Information Gathering (IG) or Decision Making (DM). One of the 10 simulations is included for field-test purposes; it is not scored and only used to generate item statistics for future simulations.

The examination covers the following areas:

## Assessment and Diagnosis

Example assessment and diagnosis work behaviors include the following:

- Integrate client assessment and observational data.
- Identify precipitating problems or symptoms.
- Identify individual and/or relationship functioning.
- Identify relevant family issues.

## Counseling and Psychotherapy

Example counseling and psychotherapy work behaviors include the following:

- Inform client about ethical standards and practice.
- Clarify counselor/client roles.
- Implement individual counseling in relation to a plan of treatment.
- Evaluate referral information.

## Administration, Consultation, and Supervision

Example administration, consultation and supervision work behaviors include the following:

- Maintain case notes, records, and/or files.
- Determine if services meet clients' needs.
- Conduct professional communication.
- Assist clients with obtaining services.

# EXAMINATION FORMAT

A clinical mental health counselor is required to make important clinical decisions regarding the well-being of clients. Therefore, a clinical simulation examination more realistically assesses knowledge of such decision-making.

The NCMHCE is a clinical simulation examination. Each simulation consists of three components: a scenario, Information Gathering (IG) sections, and Decision Making (DM) sections. The scenario provides the setting and introductory client information (e.g., age, gender, presenting problem[s]).

In Information Gathering (IG) sections, you are expected to gather all relevant information for diagnosis and treatment of your client. This might include family background, status of physical health, previous experience in counseling, etc. Be sure to read all options before submitting any selections. To make a selection, click the circle next to a response and then click the corresponding "submit" button to obtain feedback. You should select all options that are appropriate. If you select more or fewer options than are appropriate, this will adversely impact your Information Gathering score.

Decision Making (DM) sections provide opportunities for making clinical judgments or decisions. IG and DM sections may be formatted in one of two ways:

1. **Single Best Option**—There may be more than one acceptable option, but one option is generally regarded as most acceptable.
2. **Multiple Options**—Several options are considered appropriate. These sections address decisions in which a combination of actions is required.

In the Decision Making section described as "Single Best Option," the instructions are to "CHOOSE ONLY ONE" option. You should not assume that your response is incorrect if you are directed to make another selection. The simulation examination format sometimes uses this direction. The "Multiple Options" type of Decision Making section will have instructions to "SELECT AS MANY AS INDICATED." When making a selection, click the circle next to a response and then click the corresponding "submit" button to obtain feedback. If you fail to click the circle and submit button, you will not receive information to determine whether to proceed to the next section.

The procedure for taking the NCMHCE is different from that of multiple-choice examinations. Each simulation is identified by a number and the client's name, and each section by a letter.

## SAMPLE CLINICAL SIMULATION

The following is an example of an IG and DM section as it might appear in a problem on the NCMHCE. Remember that in an actual problem, there will be five to 10 sections and four to 14 selections per section (depending on the nature of the section). The responses in the shaded right-hand column are uncovered here. In the actual examination, you will not be able to see the response unless you select and submit the corresponding option.

**Simulation 1- Ms. Wagner:** You are a clinical mental health counselor in a small group private practice. Ms. Wagner is a 37-year-old female who has scheduled an appointment with you. She states, "My primary care physician said you probably could help me." For the past three months, Ms. Wagner has been feeling stressed, had problems sleeping, and has not been able to focus on her work.

### Section A-Ms. Wagner

During the first session, which of the following would be most important to assess in order to formulate a *DSM* diagnosis? (**SELECT AS MANY** as you consider indicated in this section.)

A-1. Mental status	A-1.	Unremarkable **
A-2. Stressors	A-2.	Single parent of a 10-year-old girl, elementary teacher at a new school, and father had a heart attack 3 months ago**
A-3. Previous counseling	A-3.	None**
A-4. Recreation activities	A-4.	Not relevant at this time**
A-5. Family history of mental illness	A-5.	None**

*Seven to nine more choices would appear here on a complete simulation.*

## Section D-Ms. Wagner

Based on the information obtained about Ms. Wagner, what is the *DSM* diagnosis?

(**CHOOSE ONLY ONE** unless you are directed to “Make another selection in this section.”)

D-1. Generalized anxiety disorder	D-1.	Not indicated. Make another selection in this section.**
D-2. Major depressive disorder, single episode	D-2.	Not indicated. Make another selection in this section.**
D-3 Adjustment disorder with depressed mood	D-3.	Indicated.**
D-4. Persistent depressive disorder (dysthymia)	D-4.	Not indicated. Make another selection in this section.**

*This section might have one to two more alternatives on a complete simulation.*

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### PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

Your primary objective in preparing for the examination is to pass. Other objectives such as learning new material and reviewing old material are critical to this objective. Begin by developing your strategy for success.

A good study strategy includes preparation. To prepare, determine first what you need to learn, choose your study materials, and select a quiet, comfortable place that allows you to focus. Before you begin, check to make sure you have everything you need. Try to avoid interruptions.

Developing a study plan will allow you to learn the most as you study. Include setting goals in your study plan. Review what you have studied as often as possible. The more you review, the more you will retain.

### TAKING THE EXAMINATION

Your examination will be delivered by computer at a Pearson VUE testing center. You do not need advanced computer experience or typing skills to take the examination. (You will be required to select answer choices and in some instances scroll to the end of the current page using a mouse.) On the day of your examination appointment, please plan to arrive at the testing center early. Prior to testing at the Pearson VUE testing center you are required to read the Pearson VUE Candidate Agreement. You will be required to sign this agreement before you are allowed into the testing center. The document outlines what test takers should do if they need help with the examination and other policies. A sample of the agreement is found in the appendix of this handbook.

For your convenience, signs indicating Pearson VUE testing center check-in will be posted at the testing center.

**A candidate who arrives more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time will not be admitted and will forfeit their registration fee.**

## **IDENTIFICATION**

To gain admission to the testing center, you must present two forms of identification, one with a photograph. The name on your registration and on your photo ID **must** be identical. Both forms of identification must be current and include your current name and signature. You will be required to sign a roster for verification of identity.

Acceptable forms of photo identification include a current driver's license, a current state identification card, a current passport or a current military identification card. Employment ID cards, student ID cards, and any type of temporary identification are **not** acceptable as the primary form of identification.

You must have proper identification to gain admission to the testing center. Failure to provide appropriate identification at the time of the examination is considered a missed appointment, and a refund of your examination fee will not be granted.

## **SECURITY**

NBCC, CCE, and Pearson VUE maintain the highest degree of administration and security standards. The testing center is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes.

The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- No cameras, notes, tape recorders, personal digital assistants (PDAs), pagers or cell phones are allowed in the testing room.
- No calculators are permitted.
- No guests, visitors, or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.
- No personal items, valuables, or weapons should be brought to the testing center. A locker is provided for storing keys, wallets, and cell phones. Pearson VUE is not responsible for items left in the reception areas.

## **SCREENING**

Prior to entering the testing center Pearson VUE test administrators security screen you to make sure you do not have notes or cameras. You may be asked to:

- roll up your sleeves.
- pull up pant legs to show that no notes are taped to the legs.
- turn out your pockets.
- pull back your hair to examine ears for earphones or microphones.
- scan palms on a scanner.

## **EXAMINATION RESTRICTIONS**

- Writing materials will be provided during check-in.
- You must return all writing materials to the proctor at the completion of testing, or you will not receive a score report. No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the examination room.
- No questions concerning the content of the exam may be asked during the examination.
- You may take a break when you choose, but you will not be given additional time to test.
- Eating, drinking, or smoking is not permitted in the testing center.

## **MISCONDUCT**

Individuals who engage in any of the following conduct may be dismissed from the examination and forfeit their scores and fees:

- Creating a disturbance or being abusive or otherwise uncooperative.
- Displaying and/or using electronic communications equipment such as pagers, cell phones, or PDAs.
- Giving or receiving help or being suspected of doing so.
- Attempting to record examination questions or make notes.
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else.
- Being observed with notes, books, or other aids.

## **COPYRIGHTED EXAMINATION QUESTIONS**

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of NBCC. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, display, or share these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Those who do so may be subject to severe civil and criminal penalties.

## BEGINNING THE EXAMINATION

After your identification has been confirmed, you will be directed to a testing carrel. The system will monitor you via video throughout your examination session.

Following the examination instructions, you will begin the timed examination. When you begin the exam, the first page displayed is the nondisclosure agreement (NDA). Candidates must agree to the terms of the agreement to proceed with the exam.

Please read carefully and click “Yes” if you agree to the terms of the NCMHCE. You will have five minutes to agree to the NDA, or the examination will terminate.

## INSTRUCTIONS

After you agree to the terms of the NDA, you will click the “Next” button and arrive at the tutorial for the examination. You have 10 minutes to review how to navigate and respond to the examination items. When you finish the tutorial, you may begin the exam. You will have three hours to complete this examination.

## EXAMINATION SCREEN

Two windows appear on the screen, the simulation and options windows. A scroll bar is available when necessary to view all text in either window. The **scenario window** displays the current simulation on the left side of your screen. Scenarios are brief paragraphs that provide preliminary information about a client. The **options window** on the right side of your screen displays the current IG or DM section, which is composed of an item and four to 14 selections (options). Each options window will also provide the candidate with specific instructions about whether to “CHOOSE ONLY ONE” response in the section or to “SELECT AS MANY” responses as appropriate to gather information about the client.

The **case progress review screen** is located in the top right-hand part of the screen. Selecting this box opens a window to review previous sections and feedback provided for previously selected options.

After a candidate selects and submits an option, he or she cannot reconsider and “unselect” it, since the information from that option has been revealed.

In sections where a candidate is instructed to “SELECT AS MANY,” the candidate should select all of the options believed appropriate or necessary. Click the corresponding “Submit” button, read the feedback for each of the submitted options, then click “Next” at the bottom right of the screen to continue to the next section. A dialog box will appear requesting that the candidate confirm he or she wishes to continue to the next section and warning that returning to this section to make additional submissions will not be possible. Selecting “Yes” takes the candidate to the next section of the client simulation.

In sections where a candidate is instructed to “CHOOSE ONLY ONE unless directed to make another selection,” the candidate should carefully review each option and then choose the best option following the procedure described above. A dialog box will then appear presenting the results for the choice. The result will either request that the candidate select another response or move to the next section or simulation.

## FOLLOWING THE EXAMINATION

After completing the examination, candidates are asked to complete a short evaluation of their examination experience. Then, candidates are instructed to report to the examination proctor to receive their unofficial score report. Your score report will indicate “pass” or “fail.”

The unofficial score report will include your name, examination identification number, and a report of your score and how you performed on Information Gathering and Decision Making sections of the test.

After verifying that you have abided by testing policies and procedures during the administration of your exam, CCE will report your official scores to your licensing organization. Passing the examination does not guarantee licensure. NBCC, CCE, and Pearson VUE reserve the right to withdraw or void official scores if it is found a candidate engaged in misconduct, wrongfully sat for the examination, or violated the regulations of the respective organizations. Scores are reported in written form only and not over the telephone, by email or fax.

## PASS/FAIL SCORE DETERMINATION

Examination scores are only determined by an individual's performance on the exam. Neither individual scores nor passing scores are compared or influenced by the performance of other test takers. Test scores will not be modified based on work history, quality of clinical work, or other personal or professional variables (e.g., taking the test multiple times, belonging to honor societies, or holding other professional credentials).

The passing score for the version of the examination you were administered was established prior to administration of the examination. The IG and DM passing scores for each form of the NCMHCE were set by subject matter experts. The exact passing score may vary from one form of the examination to another depending on the scored simulations included. The examination committee follows predetermined guidelines when selecting the simulations for each examination form.

In order to assist candidates to evaluate their performance on the examination, score reports display an examinee's total scores for both IG and DM sections. Examinees must obtain a passing score on both the IG and DM areas of the examination.

The total score for Information Gathering and Decision Making represent the sum correct points for IG and DM for all nine scored simulations on your examination. As previously discussed in this handbook, this examination includes one unscored (field-test) simulation used to generate item statistics.

## SCORES CANCELLED BY NBCC, CCE, OR PEARSON VUE

NBCC, CCE, and Pearson VUE are responsible for the validity and integrity of the scores they report. NBCC, CCE, and Pearson VUE reserve the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, violation of regulations is discovered.

## IF YOU PASS THE EXAMINATION

Your official scores will be forwarded to your state licensure board within 30 days of the end of the testing cycle. Candidates who pass the examination should follow their state board requirements for licensure.

## IF YOU DO NOT PASS THE EXAMINATION

Candidates may take the examination once every three months. You can reregister by submitting a new examination registration with the appropriate fee.

## APPEALING EXAMINATION RESULTS

Examinees may appeal exam score results. To be considered, appeals must follow the guidelines below.

### Administration Appeals

Candidates may base their appeal on:

- Proctoring errors (e.g., proctor failed to check candidates in properly, improper materials in the testing area).
- Site conditions (e.g., distractions, lighting failures).
- Computer failure (e.g., error messages, screen failures).

In order to submit an administration-based appeal, the candidate must immediately report the issue to the testing center staff and file an incident report while on site. Before considering the appeal, CCE must be able to confirm the issue filed in the report through system logs or Pearson staff. If properly submitted, examinees should expect to receive a decision regarding administration errors within 60 days. If an incident report was not created at the testing site during the time of testing, the administration appeal will not be considered.

## **Special Exam Accommodations Appeals**

An individual can only submit an appeal of accommodations if initially approved for them. For the appeal to be considered, the candidate must file a detailed incident report while on site at the Pearson Testing Center, showing that the approved accommodations were not provided. If properly submitted, examinees should expect to receive a decision regarding special exam accommodations within 60 days.

## **Content Appeals**

In order for the appeal to be considered, the candidate must provide a summary of the item in question and complete primary or secondary references (citations alone are not sufficient) to support the appeal. Primary and secondary source data comes from the pool of knowledge generally acknowledged by counseling professionals (e.g., commonly referenced in research or textbooks). All content appeals must be reviewed by subject matter experts during secure committee meetings; therefore, content appeal decisions may take up to eight months.

## **Filing an Appeal**

To be considered, an exam score appeal must:

- Be submitted within one week of the exam. Be emailed to [appeal@cce-global.org](mailto:appeal@cce-global.org). (Appeals are not accepted by telephone or other e-mail addresses.)
- Include the candidate's full legal name, NBCC/CCE ID number, Pearson candidate ID number, test date, and testing center location.

In addition, administration appeals must be accompanied by a Pearson Incident Report. Administration appeals will not be considered without a properly filed Pearson Incident Report.

## **Issues Not Valid for Appeal**

Candidates are not eligible to appeal exam results based on the following:

- Failing the exam by one or two points. All examinations are carefully reviewed for accuracy.
- Sound. Noise-cancelling headphones and ear plugs are provided at each testing center. Pearson VUE will give each examinee the option to test if construction noise is detected in the area.
- Candidates cannot appeal if Pearson VUE grants them the chance to reschedule when test taking is not optimal.
- Testing errors on the part of the candidate (e.g., failing to scroll through all possible alternatives or unintentionally clicking an item).
- Test anxiety.
- Late arrival for the testing appointment.
- Failing to submit test selections before moving to the next page.
- Failure to follow examination instructions as provided.
- Cut score determination.
- The construction or criterion-related validity of the examination.

## **FAILING TO REPORT FOR AN EXAMINATION**

A candidate who fails to report for an examination forfeits the registration and all fees paid to take the examination. A completed registration form and examination fee are required to reregister for the examination.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information about exam candidates and their examination results are considered confidential. Studies and reports concerning candidates will contain no personally identifiable information unless authorized by the candidate.

## **SCORE VERIFICATION**

Candidates may request score verification for themselves or a third party by submitting a completed Score Verification Request form and payment. This form is available at [www.cce-global.org](http://www.cce-global.org).

# SELECTED REFERENCES

NBCC does not endorse any particular study materials for the NCMHCE. The following references are presented as potentially helpful options in preparing for the NCMHCE. NCMHCE performance enhancement is neither implied nor expressed.

American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA Code of ethics*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.) Washington, DC: Author.

Corey, G. (2012). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy* (9th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Hood, A.B., & Johnson, R.W. (2014). *Assessment in counseling: A guide to the use of psychological assessment procedures* (5th ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Wiger, D. E. (2012). *The psychotherapy documentation primer* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons.

NBCC has developed a preparation guide for the NCMHCE that includes a five-simulation sample examination with directions for scoring, explanations for each choice, and additional references. This guide can be purchased for \$44.95 at [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org).

# Pearson VUE Candidate Rules Agreement

Please review and sign the following exam rules, and ask the administrator if you have questions.

- I will not take the following types of personal items into the testing room: cellular phones, hand-held computers/personal digital assistants (PDAs) or other electronic devices, pagers, watches, wallets, purses, hats, bags, coats, books and notes. Studying is not allowed in the test center.
- I will store these items in a secure area indicated by the administrator. Cellular phones, pagers, and other electronic devices must be turned off prior to placing them in the designated secure area. The testing center is not responsible for lost, stolen or misplaced personal items.
- If I am given an erasable noteboard or exam-specific materials, I will not use them until after the exam has started. I will not remove these items from the testing room at any time during the exam, and I will return them to the administrator immediately after the exam.
- The administrator will log me in to my assigned workstation, verify that I am taking the intended exam and start the exam. I will sit in my assigned seat. I understand that eating, drinking, smoking, chewing gum and making noise that creates a disturbance for other candidates are prohibited during the exam.
- The administrator will monitor me continuously while I take my exam. The session may be videotaped or otherwise recorded for security or other purposes.
- If I experience problems that affect my ability to take the exam, I will notify the administrator **immediately**.
- The administrator cannot answer questions related to exam content. If I have questions of this nature, I will contact the exam sponsor after I leave the testing center.
- Break policies are established by the exam sponsor. Some exams may include **scheduled breaks**, and instructions will appear on the computer screen at the appropriate time; whether or not the exam timer stops depends on the sponsor's policy. If I take a break at any other time, the exam timer will **not** be stopped. The administrator will set my workstation to the break mode, and I will take my ID with me when I leave the room. The administrator will check my ID before I return to my seat and will then restart my exam.
- While I am taking a break, I am permitted to access personal items that I stored during the exam only if necessary—for example, if I need to take medication at a specific time. I am NOT allowed access to other items, including cellular phones, exam notes and study guides, unless the exam sponsor specifically permits this.
- I will not try to remove copies of exam questions and answers from the testing center, and I will not share the questions or answers seen in my exam with other candidates.
- After the exam ends, the administrator will come to my workstation and ensure my exam has ended properly. The exam sponsors **may** display my score on the screen after the exam or **may** provide a printed score report. If a printed score report is provided, I will receive it **after** returning the erasable noteboard and other materials to the administrator.

**Your Privacy** – Your exam results will be encrypted and transmitted to Pearson VUE and to the exam sponsor. The testing center does not keep any information other than when and where your exam was taken. The Pearson VUE Privacy Policy Statement provides additional information regarding this; you can obtain this by visiting the Pearson VUE Web site ([www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com)) or by contacting a Pearson VUE Call Center.

**Candidate Statement:** *By signing below or providing a digital signature, I give Pearson VUE my explicit consent to retain and transmit my personal data and test responses to Pearson VUE and to the exam sponsor (either of which may be outside of the country in which I am testing). I understand the information provided above and agree to follow the Rules. If I do not follow the Rules, or I am suspected of cheating or tampering with the computer, this will be reported to Pearson VUE and the exam sponsor, my exam may be invalidated, the sponsor may take other action such as decertifying me, and I will not be refunded my exam fee.*

Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Exam: \_\_\_\_\_

# Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor Requirements

Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselors (CCMHC) have earned their board certification and offer the highest standards of practice in clinical mental health counseling because they have met stringent education, examination, supervision, experience, and ethical requirements.

## Prerequisite

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The National Certified Counselor (NCC) is a prerequisite for the CCMHC specialty.

## NCC Eligibility Requirements

You must meet the following requirements in order to obtain certification as an NCC. See "National Certified Counselor" for requirements.

## Education

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You must have completed a total of at least 60 semester or 90 quarter hours of graduate-level academic credit in counseling from a regionally accredited program.

### Coursework

All courses used to fulfill the coursework content areas, with the exception of supervised field experience, must carry at least two semester or three quarter hours of graduate-level credit. No course may be used to fulfill more than one content area. You must have taken a course covering Clinical Diagnosis and Treatment and also must have taken courses covering at least three of the following six content areas:

- Advanced Clinical Skills
- Family or Couples Counseling
- Addictions or Substance Abuse Counseling
- Human Sexuality Counseling
- Counseling for Trauma, Violence or Abuse
- Clinical Counseling for Special Populations

In addition, you must have completed nine semester or 15 quarter hours of clinical training in supervised field experience. If you do not have nine semester or 15 quarter hours of supervised field experience, you may make use of one of the following alternative options:

- Six semester or 10 quarter hours of clinical training in supervised experience and a full state license
- Six semester or 10 quarter hours of clinical training in supervised experience and an additional 120 hours of direct supervision
- Three semester or five quarter hours of clinical training in supervised experience and 10 continuous years as a fully state-licensed counselor

## Supervision

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You must document at least 100 hours of postgraduate clinical supervision. The individual verifying supervision cannot be related to the applicant and cannot be the same individual providing the professional endorsement.

## Professional Endorsement

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You must obtain endorsement from a professional colleague who holds a master's degree or higher in a mental health field. The individual providing endorsement cannot be related to the applicant and cannot be the same individual verifying supervision.

## Work Experience

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You must document at least 3,000 hours of postgraduate clinical client work experience.

## Ethics

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Since you must be an NCC in order to apply for this specialty, you are required to adhere to NBCC's ethical policies, including the Code of Ethics, the Policy Regarding the Provision of Distance Professional Services.

## Examination Requirement

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You must have a passing score on the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE). You can register for the exam as part of the application for the CCMHC or can document a passing result gained through a state licensure process or other administration.



# Applicant Handbook for National Certification

## with the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE)

3 Terrace Way  
Greensboro, NC 27403-3660  
Tel: 336-547-0607 • Fax: 336-547-0017  
[nbcc@nbcc.org](mailto:nbcc@nbcc.org) • [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org)



NBCC and CCE value diversity.

There are no barriers to credentialing on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation or national origin.

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# FOR MORE INFORMATION

All questions regarding national certification and the NCMHCE should be directed to:

NBCC  
Certification Department  
3 Terrace Way  
Greensboro, NC 27403  
Voice: 336-547-0607  
Fax: 336-547-0017  
Web site: [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org)  
[certification@nbcc.org](mailto:certification@nbcc.org)

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# **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook provides information about the examination process for the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE) when taken for the purposes of national certification. It outlines the design and content of the examination and guides applicants through the examination process, from registration through test-taking. For your convenience, this handbook may be downloaded from [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org).

## **ABOUT NBCC**

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) is internationally recognized as a leading provider of counselor certification. Additionally, fifty states, Puerto Rico, Guam and the District of Columbia administer NBCC examinations as part of their counselor credentialing requirements. Based on its reputation for excellence in the examination field, NBCC has provided consultation services for examination and credential development to many other organizations in the United States and abroad, including NBCC's affiliate the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE). NBCC has contracted with CCE to oversee the examination process.

## **INDEPENDENT TESTING AGENCY**

NBCC has contracted with Pearson VUE to assist in the administration and scoring of the NCMHCE. Pearson VUE is headquartered in suburban Minneapolis, Minnesota, with regional offices in Australia, China, Dubai, India, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

NBCC and Pearson VUE do not discriminate against applicants on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation or national origin.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants for national certification through NBCC may be registered for the NCMHCE based on established eligibility review policies and procedures. Please refer to the NBCC web site for detailed information regarding certification eligibility requirements.

## **EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION**

For purposes of certification, the NCMHCE is administered twice a year, in April and October. It is delivered by computer at more than 900 Pearson VUE testing centers located throughout the United States.

The examination is administered by appointment only on dates authorized by NBCC, Monday through Saturday, beginning at 8 a.m. with the last appointment starting at 5:30 p.m. Applicants will be contacted by Pearson VUE to schedule their examination date, time and location.

# REGISTERING FOR AN EXAMINATION

The registration process is one element of the national certification application. Applicants cannot schedule an examination appointment with Pearson VUE until the application has been submitted and approved by NBCC. Pearson VUE will then send e-mail notification to registered applicants with examination scheduling procedures.

## FEES AND REFUND POLICY

Applicants must submit the appropriate fee with the application. Payment may be made by credit card (VISA, MasterCard or American Express). **Application fees are not refundable or transferable.**

## SCHEDULING AN EXAMINATION

After you have submitted your application and are approved to schedule your examination, you will receive an e-mail from Pearson VUE with instructions on how to schedule your exam. There are two ways to schedule an examination appointment:

1. Online scheduling is the **preferred** method. To use this service:

- Retrieve your applicant ID number from the e-mail you received from Pearson VUE.
- Go to [www.pearsonvue.com/cce](http://www.pearsonvue.com/cce) and select “Create Account.”
- Follow the simple, step-by-step instructions to select your examination program and register for an examination.

OR

2. Telephone:

- Retrieve your applicant ID number from the e-mail you received from Pearson VUE.
- Call Pearson VUE at 866-904-4432 to schedule an examination appointment. This toll-free number is answered from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Central time Monday through Friday. You may experience extended hold times.

When scheduling an examination, be prepared to confirm a location and a preferred date and time for testing, and to provide your applicant ID number. Pearson VUE will use this number as an identification number in maintaining your record. When you contact Pearson VUE to schedule an examination appointment, you will be notified of the time to report to the testing center. Please make a note of it, because you will **not** receive an admission letter.

## TESTING CENTER LOCATIONS

Pearson VUE testing centers have been selected to provide accessibility to most applicants in all states and major metropolitan areas. A current listing of Pearson VUE testing centers, including addresses and driving directions, is available at Pearson VUE’s website ([www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com)). Specific address information will also be provided when an applicant schedules an examination appointment.

## **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITIES**

NBCC and Pearson VUE comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and strive to ensure that no individual with a disability is deprived of the opportunity to take an examination solely by reason of that disability. With supporting documentation, CCE and Pearson VUE will provide reasonable accommodations for applicants with disabilities, applicants who have temporary conditions that may prevent them from testing under standard conditions and applicants for whom English is a second language.

Applicants testing with approved special accommodations must schedule their examination via Pearson VUE's toll-free number and inform Pearson VUE of the need for special accommodations. Please note, in order for an accommodation to be approved, the applicant must contact CCE's special examination coordinator at [accommodations@cce-global.org](mailto:accommodations@cce-global.org) to submit supporting documentation for an accommodation request. Applicants should not schedule the exam without confirmation of the approved special accommodations. Applicants who schedule their examination date prior to confirmation of the approved special accommodations will forfeit the scheduled exam and the exam date will be rescheduled.

## **MISSED APPOINTMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS**

An applicant forfeits the examination registration and all fees paid to take the examination when he or she:

- Intends to reschedule an examination but fails to contact Pearson VUE at least 24 hours before the examination appointment.
- Arrives more than 15 minutes late for an examination.
- Fails to report for an examination appointment for any reason.

Applicants who need to reregister will do so through their ProCounselor account.

## **EXAMINATION DEFERRALS**

You may postpone or defer your examination date to the next available administration without penalty as long as you contact NBCC more than 30 days prior to the exam date. If your request is less than 30 days prior to the exam or if you do not take the exam on your scheduled date, you will pay a reregistration fee to take it on the next administration date. If an emergency (illness, accident, death in the family, etc.) prevents you from taking the exam on your scheduled date, you may be eligible for a waiver of the reregistration fee, depending on your specific circumstances.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER, POWER FAILURE OR EMERGENCY**

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, Pearson VUE will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation and subsequent rescheduling of an examination.

The examination will usually be rescheduled if the testing center personnel are unable to open the facility. If power to a testing center is temporarily interrupted during an administration, your examination will restart where you left off and you may continue the examination.

Every attempt is made to administer the examination as scheduled; however, should an examination be cancelled at a testing center, all scheduled applicants will receive notification by e-mail or telephone regarding rescheduling or reregistration procedures.

# **EXAMINATION CONTENT**

The simulations on the NCMHCE are designed to sample a broad area of competencies, not the recall of isolated facts. Therefore, these simulations assess clinical problem-solving ability, including identifying, analyzing, diagnosing and treating clinical problems.

The examination consists of 10 clinical mental health counseling cases. Each case is divided into five to 10 sections classified as either Information Gathering (IG) or Decision Making (DM). The examination covers the following areas:

## **ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSIS**

Example assessment and diagnosis work behaviors include the following:

- Integrate client assessment and observational data;
- Identify precipitating problems or symptoms;
- Identify individual and/or relationship functioning; and
- Identify relevant family issues.

## **COUNSELING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY**

Example counseling and psychotherapy work behaviors include the following:

- Inform client about ethical standards and practice;
- Clarify counselor/client roles;
- Implement individual counseling in relation to a plan of treatment; and
- Evaluate referral information.

## **ADMINISTRATION, CONSULTATION AND SUPERVISION**

Example administration, consultation and supervision work behaviors include the following:

- Maintain case notes, records and/or files;
- Determine if services meet clients' needs;
- Communicate orally with others to maintain professional communications; and
- Assist clients with obtaining services.

# EXAMINATION FORMAT

A clinical mental health counselor is required to make important clinical decisions regarding the well-being of clients. Therefore, a clinical simulation examination is used to more realistically assess knowledge in such decision-making.

The NCMHCE is a clinical simulation examination. Each simulation consists of three components: scenario, Information Gathering (IG) sections and Decision Making (DM) sections. Each simulation begins with a scenario. The scenario provides the setting and introductory client information (e.g., age, gender, presenting problem(s)).

In Information Gathering (IG) sections, you are expected to gather all relevant information for answering the questions. This might include family background, status of physical health, previous experience in counseling, etc. Read all information items before choosing the responses you consider necessary for responding to the simulation item. When making a selection, click the circle next to a response and then click the corresponding “submit” button to obtain feedback.

You should select all options that are appropriate. If you select more or fewer options than are appropriate, this will adversely impact your InformationGathering score.

Decision Making (DM) sections provide opportunities for making clinical judgments or decisions. IG and DM sections may be formatted in one of two ways:

1. Single Best Option—There may be more than one acceptable option, but one option is generally regarded as most acceptable.
2. Multiple Options—Several options are considered appropriate. These sections address decisions in which a combination of actions is required.

In the Decision Making section described as “Single Best Option,” the instructions are to “CHOOSE ONLY ONE” option. You should not assume that your response is incorrect if you are directed to make another selection. The simulation examination format sometimes uses this direction. The “Multiple Options” type of Decision Making section will have instructions to “SELECT AS MANY.” When making a selection, click the circle next to a response and then click the corresponding “submit” button to obtain feedback. If you fail to click the circle and submit button, you will not receive information to determine whether to proceed to the next section.

The procedure for taking the NCMHCE is different from that of the more common multiple-choice examinations. Each simulation is identified by a number and the client’s name, and each section is identified by a letter.

# SAMPLE CLINICAL SIMULATION

The following is an example of an IG and DM section as it might appear in a problem on the NCMHCE. Remember that in an actual simulation, there will be five to 10 sections and four to 14 selections per section (depending on the nature of the section). The responses in the shaded right-hand column are uncovered here. In the actual examination, you will not be able to see the response unless you select and submit the corresponding option.

**Simulation 1 - Ms. Wagner:** You are a clinical mental health counselor in a small group private practice. Ms. Wagner is a 37-year-old female who has scheduled an appointment with you. She states, "My primary care physician said you probably could help me." For the past three months, Ms. Wagner has been feeling stressed, had problems sleeping, and has not been able to focus on her work.

## Section A - Ms. Wagner

During the first session, which of the following would be most important to assess in order to formulate a *DSM* diagnosis? (**SELECT AS MANY** as you consider indicated in this section.)

A-1. Mental status A-1.

Unremarkable \*\*

A-2. Stressors A-2.

Single parent of a 10-year-old girl, elementary teacher at a new school, and father had a heart attack three months ago\*\*

A-3. Previous counseling A-3.

None\*\*

A-4. Recreation activities A-4.

Not relevant at this time\*\*

A-5. Family history of mental illness A-5.

None\*\*

**Seven to nine more choices would appear here on a complete simulation.**

## Section D - Ms. Wagner

Based on the information obtained about Ms. Wagner, what is the *DSM* diagnosis?

(CHOOSE ONLY ONE unless you are directed to "Make another selection in this section.")

D-1. Generalized anxiety disorder      D-1.

Not indicated.  
Make another selection in this section.\*\*

D-2. Major depressive disorder,      D-2. single episode

Not indicated.  
Make another selection in this section.\*\*

D-3 Adjustment disorder with      D-3. depressed mood

Go to Section \_\_\_\_\_.\*\*

D-4. Persistent depressive disorder      D-4. (Dysthymia)

Not indicated.  
Make another selection in this section.\*\*

This section might have one to two more alternatives on a complete simulation.

## PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

Your primary objective in preparing for the examination is to pass. Other objectives such as learning new material and reviewing old material are critical toward this objective. Begin by developing your strategy for success.

A good study strategy includes preparation. To prepare, determine first what you need to learn, choose your study materials, and select a quiet, comfortable place that allows you to focus. Before you begin, check to make sure you have everything you need. Try to avoid interruptions. NBCC has several study guides available that can be accessed through the online store.

# TAKING THE EXAMINATION

Your examination will be delivered by computer at a Pearson VUE testing center. You do not need computer experience or typing skills to take the examination. On the day of your examination appointment, please plan to arrive at the testing center early. For your convenience, signs indicating Pearson VUE testing center check-in will be posted at the testing center.

**An applicant who arrives more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time will not be admitted.**

## IDENTIFICATION

To gain admission to the testing center, you must present two forms of identification, one with a photograph. The name on your registration and on your photo ID **must** be identical. Both forms of identification must be current and include your current name and signature. You will be required to sign a roster for verification of identity.

Acceptable forms of photo identification include a current driver's license, a current state identification card, a current passport or a current military identification card. Employment ID cards, student ID cards and any type of temporary identification are **not** acceptable.

You must have proper identification to gain admission to the testing center. Failure to provide appropriate identification at the time of the examination is considered a missed appointment, and a refund of your examination fee will not be granted.

## SECURITY

NBCC and Pearson VUE maintain examination administration and security standards so that all applicants have the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. The testing center is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes.

The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- No cameras, notes, taperecorders, personal digital assistants (PDAs), pagers or cellphones are allowed in the testing room.
- No calculators are permitted.
- No guests, visitors or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.
- No personal items, valuables or weapons should be brought to the testing center. Only keys and wallets may be taken into the testing room. Pearson VUE is not responsible for items left in the reception areas.

## EXAMINATION RESTRICTIONS

- A dry-erase board will be provided during check-in. You must return all writing materials to the proctor at the completion of testing, or you will not receive a score report. No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the examination room.
- No questions concerning the content of the exam may be asked during the examination.
- Eating, drinking or smoking is not permitted in the testing center.
- You may take a break whenever you wish, but you will not be given additional time to test.

## MISCONDUCT

Individuals who engage in any of the following conduct will be dismissed from the examination and will forfeit their scores and fees:

- Creating a disturbance or being abusive or otherwise uncooperative;
- Displaying and/or using electronic communications equipment such as pagers, cellphones or PDAs;
- Giving or receiving help or being suspected of doing so;
- Attempting to record examination questions or make notes;
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else; or
- Being observed with notes, books or other aids.

## COPYRIGHTED EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of NBCC. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Those who do so may be subject to severe civil and criminal penalties.

## BEGINNING THE EXAMINATION

After your identification has been confirmed, you will be directed to a testing carrel. The system will monitor you via video throughout your examination session.

Following the examination instructions, you will begin the timed examination. When you begin the exam, the first page displayed is the nondisclosure agreement (NDA). Applicants must agree to the terms of the agreement to proceed with the exam. Please read carefully and click "Yes" if you agree to the terms of the NCMHCE. You will have five minutes to agree to the NDA, or the examination will terminate.

## INSTRUCTIONS

After you agree to the terms of the NDA, you will click the "Next" button and arrive at the tutorial for the examination. This section is timed. You have 10 minutes to review how to navigate and respond to the examination items. Please make sure to read each question carefully and to select items for feedback that will help either form a better clinical impression or make an accurate clinical decision. When you finish the tutorial, you may begin the exam. You will have three hours to complete this examination.

## EXAMINATION SCREEN

Two windows appear on the screen, the simulation and options windows. A scroll bar is available when necessary to view all text in either window. The scenario **window** displays the current scenario on the left-side of your screen. Scenarios are brief paragraphs that provide preliminary information about a client. The **options window** on the right-side of your screen displays the current IG or DM section, which is composed of an item and four to 14 selections (options). Each options window will also provide the applicant with specific instructions about whether to "CHOOSE ONLY ONE" response in the section or to "SELECT AS MANY" responses as appropriate to gather information about the client.

The **case progress review screen** is located in the top right-hand part of the screen. Placing the cursor on this box and clicking with the mouse opens a window to review previous sections and feedback provided for previously selected options.

After an applicant selects and submits an option, he or she cannot reconsider and “unselect” it, since the information from that option has been revealed.

In sections where an applicant is instructed to “SELECT AS MANY,” the applicant should select each of the options believed appropriate at the time, click the corresponding “Submit” button, read the feedback for each of the submitted options, then click “Next” at the bottom right of the screen to continue to the next section. A dialog box will appear requesting that the applicant confirm he or she wishes to continue to the next section and warning that returning to this section to make additional submissions will not be possible.

Selecting “Yes” takes the applicant to the next section of the client simulation.

In sections where an applicant is instructed to “CHOOSE ONLY ONE unless directed to make another selection,” the applicant should carefully review each option and then choose the best option following the procedure described above. A dialog box will then appear presenting the results for the choice or requesting that the applicant select another response.

## FOLLOWING THE EXAMINATION

After completing the examination, applicants are asked to complete a short evaluation of their examination experience. Then, applicants are instructed to report to the examination proctor to receive their score report. Your score report will indicate “pass” or “fail.”

The score report you will receive is an unofficial score report. This unofficial score report will have your photograph on it. To order an official score verification report that can be sent to third parties, such as licensure boards, NBCC must have a copy of your final, official transcript showing degree conferral. After the transcript has been reviewed and verified, a score report can be requested through the ProCounselor online store. Passing the examination does **not** guarantee certification. NBCC reserves the right to withdraw or void official scores if it is found an applicant engaged in misconduct, wrongfully sat for the examination, or violated the regulations of the respective organizations. Scores are reported in written form only and are not reported by telephone, e-mail or fax.

## PASS/FAIL SCORE DETERMINATION

The examination score is determined only by your performance on the NCMHCE. Work history, quality of work, or other personal or professional variables do not substitute exam performance.

The passing score for the version of the examination you were administered and the score you received will only be provided as a printed score report. The IG and DM passing scores for each form of the NCMHCE was set by subject matter experts using a criterion-referenced method (Angoff method). The exact passing score may vary from one form of the examination to another, depending on the scored problems included. The examination committee follows strict guidelines in selecting the problems for each examination form and uses linear equating to ensure that version of the examination are comparable.

To assist applicants in evaluating their performance on the examination, scores are provided for both IG and DM sections. It is the total raw score for IG and DM on the entire examination that determines whether you pass or fail the examination. Applicants must achieve total raw passing scores in both IG and DM to successfully complete the NCMHCE.

The total raw score is based on the nine scored simulations on your examination. The examination includes one unscored simulation that is being field-tested for future use.

# **EXAMINATION REREGISTRATION**

If you were unsuccessful in your examination attempt, you may retake the exam on the next available date by and reregistering through ProCounselor. Your application provides for three attempts in a two year period to pass the exam before the application closes. There is a fee for reregistration.

## **SCORES CANCELLED BY NBCC, CCE OR PEARSON VUE**

NBCC is responsible for the validity and integrity of the scores it reports. On occasion, occurrences such as computer malfunction or misconduct by an applicant may cause a score to be suspect. NBCC reserves the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, violation of its regulations is discovered.

## **APPEALING EXAMINATION RESULTS**

Examinees may appeal exam score results. To be considered, appeals must follow the guidelines below.

### **Administration Appeals**

Applicants may base their appeal on:

- Proctoring errors (e.g., proctor failed to check in applicants properly, improper materials in the testing area).
- Site conditions (e.g., distractions, lighting failures).
- Computer failure (e.g., error messages, screen failures).

In order to submit an administration-based appeal, the applicant must immediately report the issue to the exam administrator or proctor and file an incident report while on site. Before considering the appeal, CCE must be able to confirm the issue was filed in a report through the exam administration staff. If properly submitted, examinees should expect to receive a decision regarding administration errors within 60 days.

### **Special Examination Accommodation Appeals**

An individual can only submit an appeal of accommodations if initially approved for them. For the appeal to be considered, the applicant must file a detailed incident report while at the testing location, showing that the approved accommodations were not provided. If properly submitted, examinees should expect to receive a decision regarding special exam accommodations within 60 days.

### **Content Appeals**

In order for the appeal to be considered, the applicant must provide a summary of the item in question and complete primary or secondary references (citations are not sufficient) to support the appeal. Primary or secondary source data comes from the pool of knowledge generally acknowledged by counseling professionals (e.g., commonly referenced research or textbooks). All content appeals must be reviewed by subject matter experts during secure committee meetings; therefore, content appeal decisions may take up to eight months.

### **Filing an Appeal**

**To be considered, an exam score appeal must:**

- Be submitted within one week of the exam
- Be e-mailed to [appeal@cce-global.org](mailto:appeal@cce-global.org). (Appeals are not accepted by telephone or other e-mail addresses.)

- Include the applicant's full legal name, NBCC ID number, Pearson applicant ID number (if applicable), test date, and test location.

In addition, administration appeals must be accompanied by an Exam Incident Report submitted by the exam administrator or proctor. Administration appeals will not be considered without a properly filed report.

## **Issues Not Valid for Appeal**

Examinees are not eligible to appeal exam results based on the following:

- Testing errors on the part of the applicant;
- Test anxiety;
- Late arrival for the testing appointment;
- Failure to follow examination instructions as provided;
- Cut score determination; and
- The construction or criterion-related validity of the examination.

## **FAILING TO REPORT FOR AN EXAMINATION**

An applicant who fails to report for an examination forfeits the registration and all fees paid to take the examination. A completed registration form with examination fee is required to reregister for the examination.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information about applicants for testing and their examination results are considered confidential. Studies and reports concerning applicants will contain no personally identifiable information, unless authorized by the applicant.

## Examination Incident Report

Complete this document in its entirety to report any irregularities you experienced during the administration of the examination. You have five days from the time of the examination to submit this document. If it is submitted after five days, you will not be able to appeal your exam score results. Submit this document by giving it to the proctor or scanning and e-mailing it to [appeal@cce-global.org](mailto:appeal@cce-global.org).

### EXAMINATION DETAILS

Examination: \_\_\_\_\_ Examination Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Administration Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify the reason for the report and include a description of what took place, who was involved, where, what time, how the issue was addressed, etc.

### Description of Irregularity (Please select the reason for your submission below.)

- Specific complaint regarding lack of special examination accommodation
- Physical environment (Electrical outage, room temperature, noise, lighting problems, etc.)
- Printing error (Questions omitted, missing pages, blurred ink, numeration errors, etc.)
- Proctoring error: (Improper test instruction, improper timekeeping, lack of presence, inattentive, etc.)
- Other:

*Please use the space below to describe in detail the irregularities that took place during the examination.*

### TO BE COMPLETED BY EXAMINEE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NBCC ID: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

*My signature below is verification that I experienced the events described in this document.*

Examinee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ University \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### TO BE COMPLETED BY PROCTOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

*My signature below is verification that I have witnessed or confirmed the events described in this document.*

Proctor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Position/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



NATIONAL BOARD FOR  
CERTIFIED COUNSELORS®

# Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC) Required Coursework

The Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC) certification requires that all applicants must currently hold the National Certified Counselor (NCC). Applicants must have completed a total of at least 60 semester or 90 quarter hours of graduate-level academic credit in counseling from a regionally accredited program.

The descriptions below will help you determine which classes from your graduate program fulfill the coursework content areas required for the CCMHC. All courses except supervised field experience must carry at least two semester or three quarter hours of graduate-level credit. Please note that a single course cannot fulfill two content areas, and the courses must not have been applied to your NCC coursework requirement.

Counseling field experience, which includes your internship/practicum, must total at least nine semester or 15 quarter hours of graduate-level credit. If you do not have nine semester or 15 quarter hours of clinical training in supervised field experience, you may make use of one of the following alternative options:

- Six semester or 10 quarter hours of clinical training in supervised experience and a full state license.
- Six semester or 10 quarter hours of clinical training in supervised experience and an additional 120 hours of direct supervision.
- Three semester or five quarter hours of clinical training in supervised experience and 10 continuous years as a fully state-licensed counselor.

## COURSEWORK CONTENT AREAS

### **Clinical Diagnosis & Treatment** - You must have taken a course in this content area as outlined below.

*Studies in this area provide an understanding of the following elements:*

- a. Evolution of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and the interface between the DSM and International Classification of Diseases (ICD).
- b. Use of the DSM decision trees for various diagnostic subgroups.
- c. Accepted principles and practices of the diagnostic process, including differential diagnosis, and the use of current diagnostic tools, such as the current edition of the DSM.
- d. Role of psychopharmacology in diagnosis and treatment planning; the association of specific categories of mental illnesses to pharmacological agents used for treatment.
- e. Treatment planning and methodologies associated with various diagnostic categories.
- f. Structuring and conducting psychosocial evaluations and mental status exams.
- g. Ethical considerations related to clinical diagnosis.

### **Additionally, you must have taken courses covering at least three of the following six content areas listed below:**

#### **1. Advanced Clinical Skills**

*Studies in this area provide an understanding of the following elements:*

- a. Advanced skills such as immediacy, challenge, and self-disclosure.
- b. Counseling skills and paradigms.
- c. Approaches to intake formats and the criteria for their appropriate use.
- d. Intake interviewing, mental status evaluation, and biopsychological and mental health history.
- e. Psychological assessment for treatment planning; strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling.
- f. Caseload management.
- g. Interfacing with integrated behavioral health care professionals and the legal system; personal and professional options in working within the current managed care framework.
- h. Ethical considerations.

## **CERTIFIED CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR (CCMHC) REQUIRED COURSEWORK continued**

### **2. Human Sexuality**

*Studies in this area provide an understanding of the following elements:*

- a. Psychological, social, and emotional issues for individuals and couples associated with sexual functioning.
- b. Expression of human sexuality and intimacy across the lifespan.
- c. Issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity; gender differences specific to sexual functioning and the impact of gender role expectations on sexual functioning.
- d. Sexual myths, variations in sexual behavior, and common sexual and relationship concerns/disorders; various therapeutic approaches.
- e. Common questions and treatment issues that helping professionals encounter in practice related to sexuality issues.
- f. Systemic interactions and main treatment approaches to sex counseling and therapy with special problems.
- g. Ethical considerations.

### **3. Clinical Counseling with Special Populations**

*Studies in this area provide an understanding of the following elements:*

- a. Needs of and treatment for special consumer populations such as persons of diversity, children and families, couples, the elderly, persons with physical disabilities, sexual minorities, developmental disabilities, and cultural and ethnic minorities.
- b. Role of ethical and culturally competent counseling with special populations in schools, agency, and other clinical settings.
- c. Reporting expectations of mandated reporters.
- d. Impact of stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, the dynamics of power and privilege, and interlocking systems of oppression on clients/students and the counseling process.
- e. Treatment issues for special populations; unique problems of populations at risk.
- f. Risk factors, protective factors, warning signs, chronic risk, emergency risk, and demographic markers.
- g. Ethical considerations.

### **4. Family/Couples Counseling**

*Studies in this area provide an understanding of the following elements:*

- a. Design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of comprehensive developmental school counseling programs, including awareness of various systems that affect students, school, and home.
- b. Theory and practice of consultation specific to school counselors; implementation and evaluation of specific strategies that meet program goals and objectives.
- c. Consultation/collaboration methods and current research regarding the delivery of indirect (consultation) services; systems theories and models and processes of consultation.
- d. Skills necessary in counseling, consulting, advocacy, and collaboration; an awareness of common consultation issues associated with different professional team members and how to build effective teams of school staff, parents, and community members to promote the academic, career, and personal/social development of students.
- e. Consultation and collaboration models for individuals, groups, and programmatic assessments; functional differences between the consultation models.
- f. Ethical and legal considerations in consultation and collaboration.

## CERTIFIED CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR (CCMHC) REQUIRED COURSEWORK continued

### 5. Addictions/Substance Abuse Counseling

*Studies in this area provide an understanding of the following elements:*

- a. Historical development in addictions counseling; issues related to the etiology and treatment of substance use disorders.
- b. Theories and models of addiction counseling; implementing a multi-modal/multi-method approach to diagnosing and assessing addictive and comorbid disorders.
- c. Major classifications of psychotropic drugs of abuse, typical routes of administration, and brief descriptions of effects.
- d. Principles and philosophies of addiction-related self-help.
- e. Principles, models, and documentation formats of biopsychosocial case conceptualization and treatment planning; identification of sociocultural impacts upon the development and implementation of treatment models.
- f. Etiological models of substance abuse and dependence, including genetic and biological models, psychological models, sociocultural models, and the biopsychosocial model.
- g. Neurological, behavioral, psychological, physical, and social effects of psychoactive substances and addictive disorders on the user.
- h. Psychological tests and assessments specific to addiction counseling; the use of alcohol and other drug abuse screening and assessment tools and procedures.
- i. Professional issues in addictions counseling.
- j. Ethical considerations.

### 6. Counseling for Trauma, Violence, or Abuse

*Studies in this area provide an understanding of some of the following elements:*

- a. Impact of crises, disasters, sexual assault, and other trauma-causing events on individuals and communities.
- b. Treatment of trauma-related disorders.
- c. Examination of trauma through the impact on the brain regions and on memory, as well as variations of emotional regulation and somatic responses.
- d. Counseling perspectives and practices for children and adolescents experiencing trauma, violence, or abuse.
- e. Counseling perspectives and practices for families experiencing trauma, violence, or abuse.
- f. Function and operations of emergency management systems within clinical mental health agencies and in the community.
- g. Legal considerations in dealing with children, adolescents, and/or families experiencing trauma, violence, or abuse.
- h. Ethical considerations.



## National Certified Counselor<sup>TM</sup> (NCC<sup>®</sup>) Certification Eligibility Policy

### A. POLICY INTRODUCTION.

The National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. (NBCC) administers a rigorous, examination-based, professional certification program titled as the NBCC National Certified Counselor (NCC) Program. Professional counselors, who wish to be granted the NCC credential, must show that they have completed specific educational and training requirements, and demonstrate an ongoing professional commitment to the field of counseling by satisfying the other requirements of this Program.

Effective as of October 13, 2020, this Policy establishes and explains the NCC eligibility rules, which must be satisfied in order to obtain certification, including the relevant NBCC certification standards, policies, and procedures (NCC Certification Program). Questions concerning this Policy or the certification process should be directed to the Director of Certification and Credentialing Services.

### B. POLICY PURPOSES.

The purpose of this Policy is to define the National Certified Counselor (NCC) certification eligibility requirements. Among other rules, the NCC Certification Program establishes valid and appropriate eligibility requirements concerning: professional education necessary for competent practice as a counselor; professional knowledge demonstrated by the completion of a comprehensive examination; and, the reporting of ethics-related matters.

Applicants for NCC certification understand and agree that their professional qualifications, including their education, clinical knowledge, and ethical standing, will be objectively and appropriately evaluated by the National Board for Certified Counselors, and that such NBCC eligibility determinations are final. NBCC has the exclusive authority to make and issue all certification eligibility decisions.

### C. CERTIFICATION EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

In order to qualify for NCC certification eligibility, the applicant must satisfy certain education and training rules, which include specific requirements relative to: educational degree attainment; credit/semester hour fulfillment; counseling-related content completion; and, supervised counseling field experience. Consistent with the terms of this Policy, applicants must complete the following educational requirements in order to be eligible for certification.

1. Degree Requirement: A Masters, Education Specialist/Educational Specialist, Certificate of Advanced Study (CAS), or Doctoral Degree (graduate degree) in counseling from either a CACREP Accredited degree program or a counseling program administered by a regionally accredited educational institution is required for eligibility for NCC certification.

[NOTE: Graduate degrees, other than Masters, Education Specialist/Educational Specialist, Certificate of Advanced Study, and Doctoral Degrees in counseling, may not qualify for NCC certification eligibility, and will be subject to NBCC review and approval. Such degree reviews will determine whether the degree is properly aligned with approved graduate-level counseling program content. NBCC has the exclusive authority to make all decisions concerning the eligibility of non-counseling degrees for NCC certification.]

2. Credit/Semester Hours Requirement: The successful completion of at least forty eight (48) semester hours or seventy two (72) quarter hours of graduate-level coursework taken from a CACREP Accredited program, or a counseling program administered by a regionally accredited institution.
3. Counseling-Specific Content Requirement: The submission of a qualified institution verified transcript from a qualifying institution showing the completion of graduate-level courses addressing the following nine (9), required content areas:
  - (a). Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling
  - (b). Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling
  - (c). Helping Relationships in Counseling
  - (d). Group Counseling Theories and Processes
  - (e). Career Counseling and Lifestyle Development
  - (f). Assessment in Counseling
  - (g). Research and Program Evaluation
  - (h). Professional Orientation to Counseling
  - (i). Counseling Field Experience

[NOTE: All courses, except Counseling Field Experience, must carry (include) at least two (2) semester or three (3) quarter hours of graduate-level credit. The transcript must document the completion of at least six (6) semester or ten (10) quarter hours of graduate degree-related supervised counseling field experience.]

4. Professional Endorsement Requirement: The submission of a positive endorsement from a professional colleague, who holds a graduate degree in a mental health field. The individual providing the endorsement cannot be related to the applicant by blood or marriage.
5. Supervised, Post-Masters Counseling Work Experience Requirement: The successful completion of: at least three thousand (3000) hours of documented, supervised post-graduate counseling work (clinical) experience over a period of at least twenty four (24) months; and, at least one hundred (100) hours of supervision over a minimum period of

twenty four (24) months. The applicant's completion of this experience requirement must be verified by the applicant's supervisor(s).

[NOTE: This requirement may be waived where the applicant: is a graduate of a CACREP Accredited program; is a professional counselor fully licensed by a State licensure agency; or, holds a Doctoral degree in counseling from a regionally accredited educational institution.]

6. **Verification of Educational Requirements:** Educational requirements must be verified by NBCC through the review of an official graduate transcript(s), sealed by the college or university (educational institution), which shows the conferral of a Masters, Education Specialist/Educational Specialist, or Doctoral Degree from a qualifying counseling program. Digital transcripts submitted by the educational institution and bearing the educational institution's digital seal are preferred. Non-degree educational credits related to qualifying counseling program courses must be verified by the submission of an official transcript sealed by the college or university showing the successful completion of such graduate credits in counseling. NBCC also may require the submission of qualifying course syllabi necessary to verify course alignment with the counseling-specific content areas.
7. **Certification Educational Eligibility Appeals:** Under certain, limited circumstances, an applicant, who is denied eligibility for the NCC certification concerning educational eligibility, may submit an appeal and request for reconsideration of his/her eligibility with respect to the education and training requirements in this Policy Section. All such appeals must be submitted consistent with the requirements of the Application and Certification Appeals Procedures, which is published at: <https://www.nbcc.org/Assets/Certification/appealsprocedures.pdf>.

#### D. CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS.

In order to be eligible for the NCC certification, a passing score on the National Counselor Examination (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examinations (NCMHCE) is required. Complete information about the Examinations is published in the relevant Examination Handbooks, which are published at: <https://www.nbcc.org/exams>.

1. **Examination Requirements:** NCC certification applicants must successfully complete either the National Counselor Examination (NCE), or the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE), to fulfill the examination requirement for certification.
  - a. **NCE:** The NCE measures an applicant's knowledge and understanding of theoretical and skill-based tenets necessary to practice safely and competently as an entry-level counselor. The Examination is composed of two hundred (200) multiple choice questions.

- b. **NCMHCE**: The NCMHCE measures an applicant's ability to apply professional knowledge and skills with respect to the evaluation of specific client cases. The Examination assesses an entry-level clinical mental health counselor's ability to use theoretical and skill-based tenets through responses to clinical case simulations. The Examination is composed of ten (10) clinical mental health counseling cases.

[NOTE: Applicants for State licensure taking the NCE or the NCMHCE must satisfy the educational, examination, and other requirements of the relevant State agency, which may be different from the certification requirements in this Policy.]

2. **Special Examination Accommodations**: NBCC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and ensures that no applicant with a qualified disability is deprived of the opportunity to take an Examination solely by reason of that disability. NBCC will provide reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. A complete explanation of the NBCC disability accommodations rules and procedure is provided in the relevant Examination Handbooks, which are published at: <https://www.nbcc.org/exams/accommodations>.
3. **Examination Retest Policy**: An applicant who fails to pass the NCE or the NCMHCE on the first attempt may schedule a retest on the next available administration date by re-registering for the Examination, including the payment of a fee. Such an applicant is permitted to retest up to two (2) additional test administrations through the certification process within two (2) years of his/her original application date. If an applicant fails the Examination for certification three (3) times, or when two (2) years have passed since submission of the certification application, the application will be closed, and a new NCC application must be submitted if the applicant seeks to be certified by NBCC.
4. **Examination Appeals**: Under certain, limited circumstances, applicants, who fail to pass the NCE or NCMHCE, may submit an appeal and request another test administration without a re-registration fee. The permitted reasons or grounds for appeal are explained in the **NBCC Examination Appeals Policy**, and are summarized as follows:
  - a. **Examination Administration Appeals**: The applicant claims that a test administration condition negatively affected his/her ability to complete or pass the Examination, including certain appeals related to: physical test site problems; test computer equipment problems; test administration issues; or, conduct issues concerning test center personnel or others present during the test administration.
  - b. **Special Examination Accommodation Appeals**. The applicant claims that he/she was not provided with an approved special examination accommodation during the test administration, or alleges that another problem existed with respect to a disability accommodation during an Examination administration. An applicant cannot submit an appeal concerning a special disability accommodation that was not previously approved by NBCC.

- c. Examination Content Appeals. The applicant claims that one (1) or more specific Examination items and/or answers are inaccurate or incorrect, and that his/her failure to receive credit for such items and/or answers caused the applicant to fail the Examination.
- d. Unacceptable Grounds For Examination Appeals. As established and explained in the NBCC Examination Appeal Policy, applicant claims and issues concerning a variety of test-related circumstances cannot be the subject of an Examination appeal, including, but not limited to: lack of understanding of test administration policies, instructions, and requirements; test anxiety or nervousness; a personal situation that may have negatively affected the applicant, such as illness, injury, or family problem; errors related to understanding or recording test questions; computer-related problems that are not promptly reported to a proctor, or do not significantly affect the test administration; reasonable and commonly occurring sounds in the testing location; late test arrival; the general validity of the Examination; the Examination passing score; and, a belief that the applicant should have received a passing score on the Examination.

#### E. CERTIFICATION ETHICS REQUIREMENT.

- 1. Ethics Requirement: NCC applicants and certificants must ensure that their professional and public behaviors are consistent with the conduct standards set forth in the NBCC Code of Ethics, the Certification Eligibility Ethics Policy, and the Ethics Case Procedures. These important policies are published at: <https://www.nbcc.org/ethics/certification>.
- 2. Ethics Disclosure Requirement: As a condition of certification eligibility, an applicant must accurately and fully complete the required NCC Application Sections titled Ethics Attestation and Applicant Agreement and Release Authorization, which require the disclosure of all prior legal, criminal, and disciplinary matters related to the applicant. All such Application ethics-related disclosures are reviewed by NBCC in accordance with the NBCC Certification Eligibility Ethics Policy, which is published at: <https://www.nbcc.org/ethics/certification>.