



National Council for Prescription Drug Programs, Inc.

**NCPDP Certification Program
Applicant Handbook**

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General Information

What is Certification?

Certification is the formal recognition of specialized knowledge and skills and meeting certain standards which have been established and verified by a third party organization.

Why YOU Should be Certified

- Validate your specialized knowledge.
- Increase confidence in your abilities.
- Demonstrate your commitment to your specialty.
- Increase professional opportunities.

NCPDP’s Certifications are designed to help professionals achieve and showcase industry-recognized levels of proficiency and mastery of specific NCPDP standards. The NCPDP Certification Program provides members and “qualifying” non-members, an opportunity to obtain a distinguished certification based on the ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of implementing NCPDP Standards accurately and effectively.

Who Can be Certified?

- Any current member of NCPDP in good standing.
- Any “qualifying” non-member* (*See Eligibility section.*)

About NCPDP and the NCPDP Standard Certification Program

NCPDP is a not-for-profit, multi-stakeholder forum for developing and promoting industry standards and business solutions that improve patient safety and health outcomes, while also decreasing costs. NCPDP is an ANSI-accredited Standards Development Organization (SDO) that uses a consensus-building process to create national standards for real-time, electronic exchange of healthcare information.

The Standard Certification Program will provide exams focused on specific NCPDP standards. The purpose of the Certification Program is to provide NCPDP’s members and “qualifying” non-members an opportunity to obtain a distinguished achievement based on the ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of specific NCPDP Standards and how to implement them.

Kryterion – NCPDP’s Testing Partner

The Certification Exam will be administered by Kryterion, a third party vendor and trusted partner of NCPDP. Kryterion is a full service test development and delivery company that provides world-class, secure testing solutions. Kryterion provides computer-based solutions for the administration and delivery of certification exams. Kryterion’s Webassessor™ is the exam management platform used and is the industry’s first SaaS (software as a service). Kryterion offers nationwide testing centers and state-of-the-art technologies to deliver secure exams.

NCPDP Certified – Standards Certification

Eligibility Requirement

Any NCPDP member in good standing or any “qualifying” non-member* is eligible to take the Certification Exam and become NCPDP Certified. *To be considered a “qualifying” non-member, there must be another individual within the non-member’s company who is a current member in good standing. All non-members will be vetted once they have registered for the exam. Once this is completed, a confirmation email will be sent.

Certification applicants must apply online at <http://www.ncdp.org/Education/Certification-Program>. Select the specific exam from the top right side of the page. Complete the registration form in its entirety and submit. Full payment must accompany the registration form and voucher code and further instructions will be sent via email.

NCPDP does not discriminate against candidates based on race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Certification Exam Fees

- NCPDP Member – \$325 per exam
- “qualifying” non-member – \$575 per exam

Renewal vs. New Certification of NCPDP Certified

NCPDP Certified is designated for a specific standard and is valid until a new, updated version has been released and “mandated” for use for a minimum of three months. At that time, existing NCPDP Certified holders and the general membership will be notified of the updated standard and when the new Certification Exam is available.

There is NO renewal of an existing NCPDP Certification. NCPDP Certifications are valid only for the standard and version stated.

The Certification Exam

The NCPDP Certification Exam is based on the use and practice of current standards. The exam scope will consist of a mixture of 70 questions, predominately in multiple choice format. Other formats used are multiple selection and true/false. Each test taker will have 90 minutes to complete the exam. Exams will be given in a randomized testing format resulting in a unique exam each and every time. **A passing score for the exam is 76.66%.**

Exam Preparation

Begin by reviewing the Standard that the exam is based on, along with the Implementation Guide, XML Files and XML Standard, and the Data Dictionary. Certification Exams are based on actual implementation of the standard and best practices so the more experience you have implementing the standard the more prepared for the exam you will be. *Specific exam study guides may be available for purchase at a later date. Please check the [NCPDP website](#) for updated information.*

New Versions of the Standards

As new versions our standards are released, each person must retake the exam to be certified in the latest version. However, these subsequent exams will have a reduced set of questions that ONLY test over the new version.

Certification Exam Options

Exam Taking Experience

When taking NCPDP's Certification Exam you will have options on how and where the exam will be administered.

NCPDP Proctored Exam

The primary and preferred delivery of NCPDP examinations is the NCPDP Proctored format. These exams are provided at NCPDP work group meetings and will be proctored by NCPDP Certification Program staff. This delivery option will require you to **bring a laptop that meets specific requirements** (see the [Certification page](#) of our website). IF you do not have a laptop that meets these requirements but still would like to take the exam at work groups please notify the NCPDP Certification Manager. You will log in through a secure website to take the exam but the software does not require the invasive lockdown that it does if you take the exam online away from a live proctored session. Test-takers will be required to show one government-issued form of identification (driver's license or passport).

Online Proctored Exam

This exam format is offered anywhere there is a high-speed internet access. It is taken on a personal computer or laptop monitored by webcam by Kryterion. Authentication is achieved using facial recognition and keystroke analytics. Secure software is downloaded, which creates a locked-down testing environment on your computer preventing you from gaining access to the Internet and documents or files on your computer. This ensures the integrity and security of the testing session.

The software will be removed after completion of the exam. For information on this software and the process, visit the [Certification page](#) of our website. You will need to create a Biometric Profile to confirm who you are. The webcam on your computer will assist the proctor in verifying your identify and monitoring your actions while you take the exam. This method requires that you be at your computer 15 minutes prior to your scheduled exam time.

Kryterion Testing Center

This exam format requires the test taker to actually visit a Kryterion testing center. There are more than 800 locations to ensure a professional, convenient, distraction-free exam environment. Find a location near you at www.kryteriononline.com. Kryterion Certified Proctors are at each testing center to direct you, answer questions and assist with the testing experience. You should plan to arrive 30 minutes in advance of your scheduled exam time. Be prepared to show two forms of identification: One **MUST** be government-issued and the second must be a credit or debit card or an employee identification card that shows your signature. **Remember to bring your Test Taker Authorization Code.** Without this code, the proctor cannot load your exam and you would need to reschedule.

Certification Exam Application and Scheduling

Scheduling Your Exam

When you are ready to schedule your exam, you will navigate to NCPDP's [Certification Program webpage](#) and access the specific exam link to register. After your payment is processed you will receive an email with a voucher code and a link to Webassessor™ to schedule your exam. You will need to create a "New Account" on this page and will enter your personal information, select the exam of your choice and use the voucher code to schedule. You will be able to login here to see notifications, scheduled exams, and any exam results; so be sure to book mark this page.

Once your registration has been confirmed you will receive an email from NCPDP confirming that you are scheduled to sit for the exam.

Rescheduling or Canceling Your Exam

Once scheduled, it is important to take your exam on the scheduled date. Test takers who are a no – show will forfeit the exam fee.

Information regarding rescheduling or canceling your exam date or time is as follows:

- Cancellation or changes must be "made and confirmed" in your Webassessor™ account.
- Cancellation or changes must be made at least **72 hours** prior to your currently scheduled exam.
- If the cancellation or change is made within the allowable timeframe, a full credit or refund will be processed.
- If changes are made *less than 72 hours* from the scheduled exam, a \$100 administration fee will be assessed.
- If you do not attend your scheduled exam, you are considered a "no-show" and will forfeit all monies paid.
- Special circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case situation.
- Any refunds will be mailed to the address on file within 30 days of the originally scheduled exam, unless you desire it to be credited to a future exam.

Change or cancel exam:	Fee:
72 hours prior notification	Full refund; no fee
Less than 72 hour prior notification	\$100 administrative fee
No Show	Exam fee forfeited

Please Note: If you have registered and scheduled an exam at a Kryterion testing site, you cannot transfer the appointment to another Kryterion testing site that is not served by the same regional center.

Special Testing Accommodations:

If you require special testing accommodations for a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, provide your request to NCPDP **at least 30 days prior** to your exam date. Two forms to be completed are the [Request for Accommodations](#) (by test taker) and [Documentation of Special Exam Accommodations](#) (by a healthcare professional/provider). Information provided will only be used in the determination regarding the special request.

Certification Exam Experience

Payment Options

For credit card payments, enter all necessary data when registering online for your exam. You will receive a confirmation email when your registration is completed.

For check payments, mail the completed registration form, along with your check, to NCPDP. Please allow 10-12 days for your payment to be received and confirmed in your Webassessor™ account.

If you need another type of payment option please contact Brian Goerlich at 480-477-100 Ext. 109.

Getting Your Results

Scoring will be available on your Webassessor™ account immediately after completing the exam. Results will also be mailed. Your results will only state PASS/FAIL. If you failed, your results will illustrate your performance shown in a percentage of each subject area listed on the blueprint you incorrectly answered. This will assist you if you decide to retake the exam.

Passing Your Exam

Successful applicants will be mailed the Certification Kit that contains a personalized certificate and holder, a lapel pin, and a congratulatory letter from the NCPDP President.

Failing Your Exam

Applicants not successful in passing the exam will be allowed to take it again “immediately following notification” of their exam results. The registration process will be the same. If the exam was taken at a work group or annual conference, you may choose to attend a Kryterion Testing Center or take the Online Proctored option if you do not want to wait until the next work group to retake the exam.

Taking the Exam Again

There is no limit to the number of times an applicant may take the NCPDP Certification Exam. Please note that payment is due each time an applicant wishes to take an exam.

General Exam Information

Confidentiality

The computer-based test delivery system, tutorial, exam content, and survey are the unpublished, confidential, and proprietary materials of NCPDP. Communicating, publishing, reproducing, or transmitting any part of the exam in any form, by any means or for any purpose is strictly prohibited.

Non-Disclosure

Before the test session begins, you will be presented and asked to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement regarding test content. Applicants who do not agree to the terms of the Non-Disclosure Agreement will have their test session terminated and will forfeit all monies paid.

Test Taker Conduct and Items Prohibited During Exam

For NCPDP proctored exams, all exam takers must comply with the following rules during the Certification Exam. Please see a Test Center Administrator (TCA) if you have any questions.

- No weapons are permitted in any NCPDP testing areas.
- Eating, drinking (with the exception of water), chewing gum, smoking, or making noise that creates a disturbance for other candidates is prohibited during the exam.
- Unauthorized personal items may be brought into the test room and must be set aside. Such items include, but are not limited to food, purses, briefcases, notebooks, cell phones, recording devices, and photographic equipment.
- No written notes, published materials or other testing aids are permitted.
- Only soft ear plugs (with no wires/cords attached) are permitted in the test room.
- Talking to other candidates in the test room, or referring to their screens, testing materials, or written notes is prohibited.
- There are no scheduled breaks during NCPDP examinations. If you must take one, the test clock will not stop. You must inform the TCA before accessing a stored item during a break. You may not access any notes or electronic devices during a break, including cell phones.
- If you are taking the test at a Kryterion Testing Center, please see the following link for preparation: <https://www.kryteriononline.com/test-taker/testing-center-support>.

Appeals Process

A test taker who disagrees with the results of the Certification Exam and challenges the scoring, or believes they were unjustly denied access to the Certification Exam, may request reconsideration of the decision by submitting a written appeal to NCPDP c/o Manager, Certification, 9240 E. Raintree Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85260. The written letter must provide satisfactory evidence that the test taker was at a severe disadvantage during administration of the exam or the denial for access to the exam or the test taker's final scoring.

The appeal must be made within 45 days of receipt of a test taker's score report or any other official correspondence related to certification, denial or scoring from NCPDP or its agent. The written appeal must also indicate the specific relief requested. A \$100 filing fee (made payable to NCPDP), along with the written appeal, is required to activate the appeals process. This fee will be refunded to the test taker if deemed justified through action of the Appeal Board. For additional regulations related to the appeal process, contact NCPDP, Manager, Certification Program at 480-477-1000 Ext. 109.