BCHH-C CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

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The National Credentialing Board of Home Health and Hospice

Our mission is to enhance the competency of home health and hospice professional staff coders. We do this by providing certification programs that respond to the unique skills needed by the home health and hospice professionals to improve patient care by promoting excellence in the home health and hospice industry. We do this through national programs that are recognized as the hallmark of quality.

National Credentialing Board of Home Health and Hospice is composed of industry representatives, representatives of the certified population, and a public member.

How to Apply to Take the Exam

Eligibility

There are no eligibility requirements to register for the Board Certified Home Health – Coding Exam. It is, however, recommended that candidates have two years of experience coding in home health prior to taking the exam.

Application Process

Candidates may submit their application form online through WebAssessor using the National Credentialing Board of Home Health and Hospice WebAssessor Portal. Candidates can select their preferred test date and location through the WebAssessor scheduler. All fees must be paid online with a credit card at the time the exam is scheduled. When candidates submit their application, they must attest that they have reviewed the information in the candidate handbook including confidentiality, test security, disciplinary policies, and test center procedures. Confirmation will be given by selecting the “submit” button in the online application.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The NCBHH does not discriminate in administration of its programs based on race, sex, religion, ethnicity, ancestry, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or age. The NCBHH complies with the American with Disability Act (ADA) by providing reasonable testing accommodations to qualified individuals. The NCBHH does not discriminate among candidates on any basis that would violate applicable laws.

Special Accommodations

Most Kryterion HOST Centers are ramp or elevator accessible. Candidates with mobility accessibility needs who are not requesting any additional accommodation may simply contact NCBHH to indicate that they require a mobility aid-accessible test center at the time of their application and do not need to submit an Accommodation Request Form or any additional documentation.

All other testing accommodations must be requested 30 days in advance of the desired exam date by submitting an Accommodation Request Form to NCBHH (see NCBHH website for forms). Candidates must submit their Accommodation Request form with any relevant, recent medical documentation supporting their request within one week of their application date.
Requested testing accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- A reader
- “Zoom Text” or other visual enhancements
- Additional exam time

Medical documentation will be reviewed by an NCBHH representative, and the candidate will be informed of the status of the request within one week after the Accommodation Request Form submission date, unless additional documentation is needed.

The NCBHH strives to meet candidates’ requests for all reasonable testing accommodations.

All forms, medical documentation, and other personal information related to accommodations requests will be kept strictly confidential and only accessed by authorized personnel.

**Fees**

Initial Certification Fee: $289

Recertification Fee: $149

**Scheduling an Exam**

All exams are scheduled online through the candidate’s WebAssessor dashboard. Candidates will receive an email confirmation of their registration with a Test Taker Authorization Code. It is recommended that you print this email to bring with you to the exam site.

**Rescheduling an Exam and No-Shows**

Exams may be rescheduled through the candidate’s WebAssessor dashboard up to 72 hours prior to the scheduled test time. Candidates wishing to reschedule exams with less than 72 hours notice must contact NCBHH directly, and may be charged an additional fee at the discretion of the credentialing organization. No-shows will not be refunded and may be charged an additional fee.

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**Preparing for the Exam**

**Exam Development Process**

The first step in the development of the Board Certified Home Health Coding Exam (BCHH-C) was the Job Practice Analysis. A group of subject matter experts worked together to create a comprehensive list of all of the tasks, skills, and knowledge areas required to be a home health coder. This list was refined over several meetings. Then, this list was distributed as a survey to solicit feedback from over 1,000 home care coding professionals. 275 coders responded to contribute valuable insights into the type of content necessary to create a certifying exam for their profession. The Job Practice Analysis Summary Report can be found on the NCBHH website.

Using the Job Practice Analysis and Survey, an Exam Blueprint was developed with help from a psychometric consultant. Then, trained subject matter experts developed test questions, or “items,” according to the areas outlined on the Exam Blueprint.
The item pool for the BCHH-C is constantly growing with submissions from NCBHH subject matter experts and BCHH-C coders.

Each version of the exam is constructed by an Exam Development Committee of subject matter experts according to the specifications of the Exam Blueprint, and then pilot tested. The results of the Pilot Test are used to review exam item performance, and develop the passing score.

The NCBHH uses the Angoff Method to set passing scores. In this method, a group of subject matter experts reviews each exam item to determine its difficulty. The difficulty ratings are then used to set the score that indicates the minimum level of exam performance needed to demonstrate competence.

**Exam Description**

The BCHH has a time limit of **four hours**.

The BCHH-C contains 100 randomized multiple choice exam items covering four content domains:

- Health Information Documentation
- Diagnosis Coding
- OASIS
- Regulatory Compliance and Reimbursement

See ncbhh.com for exam outline and sample questions.

**Taking the Exam**

**What to Expect on Exam Day**

Candidates should arrive at least fifteen minutes prior to their exam start time. At the test site, they will meet with their proctor, provide required identification, have their exam materials inspected (if applicable), fill out necessary paperwork, and receive additional instructions.

**Identification**

Candidates will be required to present their Test Taker Authorization Code, and two forms of identification upon their arrival at the test site. The first form of identification must be a government-issued photo ID. The secondary form of identification may be either a second photo ID, or one of the other forms listed below.

Acceptable forms of primary government-issued photo identification include:

- Driver’s license or learner’s permit including a valid expiration date
- Military identification for members, spouses, or dependents
- Passport or passport card
- Green card or permanent resident visa

Acceptable secondary forms of identification include:

- Any second form of identification listed above
- Debit/ATM or credit card
- Birth certificate
- Employee or student identification card

Please note that a Social Security card is **not** considered an appropriate secondary form of identification.

If you have a form of identification not on this list, please contact the NCBHH prior to your testing date to inquire whether it will be accepted at the test site.

*Candidates without all required identification will not be allowed to test.*
Test Security

Candidates will also be required to sign a statement verifying their identity, accepting all test security policies, and acknowledging potential consequences for violation of security policy.

Violations of security policy include, but are not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized materials or devices
- Unauthorized communication with other candidates or with the proctor
- Giving false identification information
- Attempting to reproduce, remove, report, or distribute examination materials
- Creating a disturbance

Candidates may not communicate with each other in the testing area. Candidates may not request any information regarding exam content from the proctor. Failure to comply will result in the candidate being disqualified from taking the exam, and may result in score cancelation for the candidate’s entire test group.

Allegations of candidate or proctor misconduct will be investigated. Any evidence of unacceptable behavior may result in score cancelation and other disciplinary measures as determined by the NCBHH.

In order to provide a consistent and fair experience for all test takers, protect the integrity of the examinations, and to ensure the validity of certification examination scores, candidates must adhere to the guidelines established by the NCBHH in the handling of examination materials. Candidates may not remove, reproduce, report, or distribute exam materials in any part and by any means, including electronic, manual, and verbal. Failing to comply is a copyright violation and will result in disciplinary measures including score cancelation, revocation of other NCBHH credentials, and prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

What to Bring and What Not to Bring

Candidates for the BCHH-C may bring their own International Classification of Disease Coding Manual with normal tabulations and notations. All loose materials, including Post-It notes, must be removed prior to entering the testing area. The testing center staff maintains the right to deny the use of coding manuals that they determine to contain excessive writing and information.

No communication or other electronic devices will be permitted in the testing area. Cell phones or other handheld electronic devices must be turned completely off and placed with the candidate’s other belongings in a secure area in the testing center until the candidate has completed and returned all exam materials.

Candidates will not be permitted to bring any items into the exam area other than their inspected ICD-9 Coding Manual, and their two forms of personal identification. No food or drink is allowed in the exam area.

No weapons are permitted at any NCBHH testing site.

Exam Conduct

It is the responsibility of all candidates to keep all certification exam content confidential.

Candidates will treat others with courtesy and respect during the exam process.

Candidates will ask any questions related to exam administration procedure prior to the start of the exam.

Candidates will carefully read and listen to instructions prior to the start of the exam.
Candidates will leave quietly after submitting their exam either when they are finished, or at the end of the exam time limit.

Unforeseen Circumstances

If due to extreme weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances at the test site (for example a utilities outage) the Kryterion HOST Center determines it is necessary to close and postpone a scheduled exam date, all candidates scheduled for the dates affected will be contacted by phone and email to inform them of the decision. NCBHH and Kryterion HOST Network will work with affected candidates to reschedule the exam at their convenience.

If candidates experience a test disruption due to power outage at the test center or other unforeseen circumstances, NCBHH and Kryterion HOST Network will work with the candidate to schedule the completion of their exam. The candidate will be able to begin their exam at the place where it was disrupted and will be given an amount of time to be determined by NCBHH to finish their exam.

After the Exam

Results

BCHH-C Exam results will be distributed directly to the candidates, either by email or by post depending on the candidate’s indicated preference. The candidate will typically receive results within two weeks of the test date.

The NCBHH reserves the right to withhold examination results for the duration of an investigation of candidate misconduct, or internal errors.

Understanding Your Exam Score

Your Percentage Score will be given on a scale of 1 – 100. Your score is a representation of the percentage of all items answered correctly.

Domain Scores will inform you of the number of questions you answered correctly in each of the four domains. You will be given the total number of questions in each domain, and the number correct. This information will help you determine your areas of strength and weakness.

Certificant Directory

Passing candidates’ names and states of residence will be published on the NCBHH website in the Certificant Directory. Candidates may choose to opt out of the Certificant Directory by contacting the NCBHH in writing.

Certificates

Passing candidates will receive a certificate by mail within two months of receiving their score report. Each candidate's name will appear on their certificate exactly as written on their initial application.

Candidates wishing to replace a lost certificate, update the name displayed on their certificate, or inquire about the status of their new certificate should contact the NCBHH in writing.
Re-testing

Candidates may take the BCHH-C a total of two (2) times annually. Candidates who do not pass the BCHH-C may not register to take the exam a second time for a minimum of 30 days after their first test date. Candidates who fail the exam twice within a calendar year must wait until the next calendar year to register for the exam.

Complaints, Conduct Violations, and Appeals

Complaints

Grounds for complaint may include, but are not limited to:

- Violations of identity verification policy during testing
- Violations of test security policy at or away from the test site
- Violations of Federal or State law governing the practice of the certified profession
- Violations of established NCBHH policies, rules, and requirements
- Conviction of a felony or other crime of moral turpitude under federal or state law in a matter related to the practice of, or qualifications for, home care and hospice
- Gross negligence, willful misconduct, or other unethical conduct in the performance of services for which the individual has achieved NCBHH certification
- Fraud or misrepresentation in an initial application or renewal application for NCBHH certification

Certificants and members of the public may submit complaints regarding the conduct of individuals certified by NCBHH programs in writing. Complaints must include:

- Name of certificant
- Name of individual filing complaint
- Reason for complaint
- Date of conduct violation
- Names of any witnesses to conduct violation
- Any relevant supporting documentation

Examination Complaints

Candidates must report any complaints regarding their test center, proctor, or testing misconduct to NCBHH in writing within twenty-four hours of their test time.

Candidates who fail the exam and believe irregular testing conditions were a contributing factor may file an appeal. Candidates who fail the exam and believe there has been a scoring error may request a hand-scoring of their exam. Appeals regarding the content of the exam, including specific exam questions, will not be considered.
Disciplinary Action

Complaints will be reviewed by the NCBHH Disciplinary Committee and all complaints judged to have merit will be investigated by the Committee. Members of the committee found to have a personal or familial relationship to the certificant in question will recuse themselves.

Candidates under investigation will be notified regarding the nature of the complaint and will have the opportunity to submit a written statement. Notification will include a copy of the disciplinary and appeals policy. The Disciplinary Investigation Committee may contact the individual for additional information as needed.

The Disciplinary Committee will submit recommendations to the NCBHH, and the Board will determine what, if any, disciplinary actions will be taken. Disciplinary actions may include:

- Implementation of a probationary period
- Asking certificant to re-test
- Revocation of credentials
- Legal action if applicable

Certificants will be notified in writing of the decision.

Appeals

If candidates wish to appeal a disciplinary decision, they must submit a written request for appeal within 30 days of receiving the disciplinary decision.

Candidates may only appeal on the grounds of material errors of fact or a procedural violation in their original disciplinary investigation.

The Appeals Committee will review the appeal and notify the candidate of their decision within 30 days.
## Other Certification Policies

### Confidentiality
Candidate information, including scores, will remain confidential. The NCBHH will never distribute information to a third party. Individual results will only be distributed to authorized parties for the purposes of: scoring, and investigations of misconduct or internal error. Exam performance and candidate demographic information will be used and distributed in aggregate form for purposes including but not limited to: required reporting, exam development and improvement, and research.

### Use of the Credential
Passing candidates are authorized to use the related credential (for example: BCHH-C for those candidates passing the Board Certified Home Health – Coding Exam) following their names as long as certification remains valid and in good standing.

### Records Retention
Certificant information including, but not limited to: applications, test scores, and continuing education documentation will retained throughout the duration of the individual’s certification. If the candidate allows their certification to lapse, their records will be retained for a one year grace period after the date of lapse. Disciplinary and appeals records will be retained permanently.

### Recertification
Please see BCHH-C Recertification Manual for policies and requirements for maintaining your credential.