



# **Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality**

2024 Recertification Handbook

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## **It is the candidate's responsibility to read and understand the contents of this handbook before applying for recertification.**

This handbook contains current information about the Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality® (CPHQ) recertification developed by the Healthcare Quality Certification Commission (HQCC). It is essential that you keep it readily available for reference. All previous versions of this handbook are null and void.

For address changes, requests for a current candidate handbook, and information about the development and administration of the CPHQ examination, certification program, and recertification, direct correspondence to:

### **Certification/Recertification**

HQCC Headquarters  
8600 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue, Suite 710N  
Chicago, IL 60631, USA

For general inquiries and questions about the exam or recertification, contact HQCC:

**Phone:** 847.375.4720      **E-mail:** [info@nahq.org](mailto:info@nahq.org)

Candidates can apply for the examination and recertification online at [NAHQ.org](http://NAHQ.org). It is the candidate's responsibility to have the most up-to-date email address and home address on file.

### **Affiliation**

HQCC, previously known as the Healthcare Quality Certification Board (HQCB), is the certifying arm of the not-for-profit National Association for Healthcare Quality® (NAHQ), which was formed in 1976 to advance the profession of healthcare quality through the development of a certification program. HQCC establishes policies, procedures, and standards for certification and recertification in the field of healthcare quality. The granting of CPHQ status by HQCC recognizes professional and academic achievement through the individual's participation in this voluntary certification program.

### **Accreditation**

The CPHQ certification program is fully accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the accrediting arm of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE), Washington, DC.

### **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

The certification examination is offered to all eligible candidates, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability. Neither NAHQ nor AMP, a PSI business, the examination service provider, discriminates on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.

# RECERTIFICATION PROGRAM

## Introduction to the CPHQ Program

Certification in the healthcare quality field promotes excellence and professionalism. The Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality® (CPHQ) program validates individuals who demonstrate their knowledge and expertise in this field by passing a written examination. The CPHQ credential provides the healthcare employer and public with the assurance that certified individuals possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience in healthcare quality to perform competently.

The high standards of the certification program are ensured by the close working relationships among the National Association for Healthcare Quality (NAHQ), Healthcare Quality Certification Commission (HQCC), healthcare quality professionals, and testing experts. HQCC adheres to standards of the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) in the development and implementation of its certification program, as well as guidelines issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999) prepared by The Joint Committee on the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the American Psychological Association (APA), and the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME).

## Recertification Requirements

Following successful completion of the CPHQ examination, the certificant is required to maintain certification by fulfilling continuing education (CE) requirements, which are reviewed and established annually by HQCC. The recertification requirements are as follows:

- Obtaining and maintaining documentation of 30 CEs over the 2-year recertification cycle.
  - CE must be earned during your recertification cycle and cannot be earned during the grace period.
  - CE cannot be earned for activities completed as part of your job-related functions. This includes full-and-part-time employment as well as contract work.
- Current employment in the quality management field is not required to maintain active CPHQ status.

Although NAHQ does send out communications to candidates that are eligible to recertify, it is the candidate's responsibility to know their deadline for their recertification of the CPHQ. An overview of the process for maintaining your certification can be found on the NAHQ website at <https://nahq.org>.

## Recertification Cycle

Each recertification cycle is 2 years in length, beginning Jan. 1 of the year following completion of the certification examination or prior to the recertification cycle. The cycle

ends Dec. 31 of the second year, and your recertification application is due by that day. If you do not recertify by the deadline, you can recertify by Jan. 31 of the following year with a late fee. However, CE cannot be earned during this timeframe.

For example:

IF YOU:	YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO RENEW BY:
Sat for exam in 2023	Dec. 31, 2025 (Recertification opens July 1, 2025.)
Last recertified in 2023	Dec. 31, 2025 (Recertification opens July 1, 2025.)
Sat for the exam in 2024	Dec. 31, 2026 (Recertification opens July 1, 2026.)
Last recertified in 2024	Dec. 31, 2026 (Recertification opens July 1, 2026.)

## Recertification Fees

	ADVANCED PRICING: BEFORE SEPT. 30	OCT. 1 – DEC. 31	GRACE PERIOD: JAN. 1 - 31
NAHQ Member	\$175	\$225	\$275
Nonmember	\$230	\$280	\$330

\*Though all candidates must attest to meeting the requirements of recertification online, candidates may choose to pay the recertification fee by check rather than by credit card. An additional \$25 processing fee must be included if payment is made by check. Please fill out [this form](#) and mail it along with your check to NAHQ, 8600 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue, Suite 710N, Chicago, IL 60631, USA.

## No Refunds or Transfers

Fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable. Declined credit cards will be subject to a \$25 handling fee. A certified check or money order for the amount due, including the handling fee, must be sent to HQCC/NAHQ to cover declined credit card transactions.

## Ways to Earn CE

All CE must relate to at least **one** area included in the most current examination content outline and be earned during your recertification cycle dates. CE cannot be earned during the Grace Period.

The following are acceptable CE activities for CPHQ recertification.

### Conferences

Calculate 60 minutes of education equals 1 CE hour. This can be for both in-person and online attendance. If the conference offered any poster views, you can count every 1 poster for .15 CE.

### Webinar, Workshop and Other Professional Development Courses

Calculate 60 minutes of education equals 1 CE hour. This can be for both in-person and online attendance. If you attended a review course or workshop I preparation for earning a certification during your recertification cycle, this may be awarded towards CE. However, earning a certification cannot be applied towards your CPHQ recertification.

### Professional Assessment

Complete NAHQ's Professional Assessment and its supporting evaluation and earn 2 CEs. The professional assessment can be completed every 12 months and can be accessed through your NAHQ account under My Professional Assessment.

### Speaking Engagements and Workshop Presentations

Examples include presentations and abstracts made by you to your state or local quality association or as a guest speaker at a college course in healthcare. Presentations given as part of your job or work responsibilities are not accepted for recertification. 4 CE hours are awarded per 1 hour of presentation. Presentations given more than once with the same content may be claimed only once during each cycle.

### College Coursework

Calculate 15 CE hours for each semester credit hour and 10 CE hours for each quarter hour. Courses with general education are NOT accepted. For example, if you attended a 3-semester college credit course on Integrated Health Leadership, you designate 45 CEs (15 CEs x 3 Credit Hours) towards your recertification.

### CE Article Quizzes

Read the designated CE article in NAHQ's *Journal for Healthcare Quality*. One CE hour can be earned for passing the CE article quiz. Visit NAHQ's catalog to access the CE article quizzes.

### Formal Publication of Articles or Books

Formal publication of articles or books relevant to the CPHQ content outline are accepted for 4 CE hours per each full published page. Poster presentations at conferences are

recognized for 4 CE hours for the author.

# RECERTIFICATION PROCESS

## How to Attest and Recertify

The recertification application is only available online at [nahq.org](http://nahq.org).

### 1. LOG IN.

To access the recertification application, log in to your [NAHQ](http://nahq.org) [account](#).

All active certificants already have an account in our database. If you need assistance with accessing your account, contact Member Services at [info@nahq.org](mailto:info@nahq.org) or 847.375.4720. Please do not create a new account if you cannot log into your old account.

### 2. ATTESTATION

Once your recertification application has opened, you can select **Recertify Now\*** to complete the attestation process which states that you have met all of the recertification requirements.

*\*You will only see the **Recertify Now** button once recertification is open. Recertification opens up on July 1 on the second year of your recertification cycle.*

Once you complete the attestation, you will also need to agree to the declaration and submit the recertification fee\*. This will complete your recertification application. Within a few minutes, you will receive a confirmation e-mail.

*\*Credit card is the primary payment method, but you may opt to pay by check. If paying by check, complete the application at the end of this handbook and mail it in with your check. Please note there is a \$25 processing fee for paying by check. See page 5 of this handbook for recertification fee rates and add \$25 to the total amount owed.*

The screenshot shows the NAHQ website interface. At the top, it says "Welcome" and "Please log in or create an account to continue." Below this is a section for "IMPORTANT LOGIN INFORMATION" with a "Watch Video" button. The "Log In" section contains fields for "Email\*" and "Password", a "Log In" button, and links for "Forgot your password?" and "Don't have an account?". Below the login section is a "Certification" section with a summary of the current CPHQ status. A table shows "CPHQ Recertification 2017-2018" with a status of "Enrolled", a start date of "1/1/2017", and an end date of "12/31/2018". There is a "Recertify Now" button and a "My Certification" button at the bottom.

CPHQ Recertification 2017-2018	
Status	Enrolled
Start Date	1/1/2017
End Date	12/31/2018

If you return to your Personal Snapshot page and scroll down to the Certification card, you will see that the status of your recertification is now Completed.

Certification	
A summary of your current CPHQ status.	
<b>CPHQ Recertification 2017-2018</b>	
Status	Completed
Start Date	1/1/2017
End Date	12/31/2018

[My Certification](#)

Each certificant will have access to a digital badge for the CPHQ. Information on how to access your digital badge and a PDF copy of your certificate, can be found on [NAHQ's website](#). CPHQs in the United States can purchase a copy of their certificate within the course catalog.

Please contact the NAHQ customer service team at [info@nahq.org](mailto:info@nahq.org) or 847.375.4720 if you experience any issues with this process.

## APPLICATION AUDITS

Each year, the HQCC randomly selects a percentage of applications to be audited. If your application is selected for audit, you will receive an e-mail with detailed instructions on how to complete the audit process.

You will be required to upload your CE activity along with supporting documentation within 14 days of being notified of the audit. You will not need to upload documentation for CEs earned directly from NAHQ. You will only need to upload documentation for Non-NAHQ CEs.

For your Non-NAHQ CEs, be prepared to submit the following:

- A photocopy of your CE certificates or written documentation of activities for which a CE certificate was not provided (e.g., a journal's table of contents showing you as author of an article, school transcript, etc.).
- If a CE program you attended does not meet the definition of an approved program, submit a copy of the behavioral objectives and an outline of the content (e.g., a program brochure) in addition to a copy of the CE certificate.

If we do not receive your documentation by the stipulated deadline, or if your documentation does not support 30 hours of continuing education, your certification will lapse and you must cease using the credential. In order to regain your certification after this date, you will be required to pay for and sit for the CPHQ examination again.



Recertification fees are nonrefundable, even if you fail the audit process.

## **CPHQ STATUS**

### **Application Refusal**

Applications may be refused, candidates may be barred from future examinations, or certificants may be sanctioned, including revocation of the CPHQ designation, for the following reasons:

- Attesting to false information on the application, on recertification documents, or during the random audit procedure
- Unauthorized possession or distribution of any official testing or examination materials
- Representing oneself falsely as a designated CPHQ

### **Credential Revocation**

If you do not recertify by your expiration date, your certification will be revoked for failure to comply with recertification requirements. Individuals whose credentials have been revoked may not use the CPHQ credential when representing themselves. HQCC does not approve any appeals for missed deadlines. You will be required to sit for and pass the examination to begin using the credential again.

### **Inactive Status Policy**

Because the field of healthcare quality is ever-evolving, the CPHQ must pursue ongoing education to stay current. For this reason, an inactive path or waiver of the recertification requirement is not available.

### **CPHQ-Retired Status**

HQCC developed the CPHQ-Retired status to recognize CPHQs who have retired from their professional healthcare quality career but wish to maintain their credential. To be eligible for CPHQ-Retired status, you must:

- Retire from the healthcare quality profession with no plans to return or to renew your CPHQ certification
- Be a current CPHQ at the time of retirement

The CPHQ-Retired status is 2 years in length, beginning Jan. 1 of the year following the certification expiration date. The cycle ends Dec. 31 of the second year, and your recertification application is due by that day.

An individual who has been granted CPHQ-Retired status may use the designation CPHQ-Retired. The CPHQ-Retired designation may be used below the name but not after a signature nor on a professional name badge. If you have been granted CPHQ-Retired status, you may not represent yourself as a CPHQ.

If you are a CPHQ-Retired and re-enter the workforce, you may no longer use the retired designation and can regain the CPHQ credential only by meeting the current eligibility criteria, paying the examination fee, and passing the CPHQ examination.

**Application Procedure:**

- To obtain the CPHQ-Retired status, you must complete the [CPHQ-Retired application](#) process during your current recertification cycle. CPHQ-Retired status will not be granted once certification has lapsed.
- A CPHQ wishing to retire the professional credential will notify the HQCC of this intent in writing by completing the application for CPHQ-Retired status (form can be found on the [here](#)) and paying the associated fee.
- The HQCC staff will acknowledge the change to CPHQ-Retired status in the database.

## CONTENT OUTLINE

The content validity of the CPHQ examination is based on a practice analysis that surveyed healthcare quality professionals on the tasks they perform. Each question on the examination is linked directly to one of the tasks listed on the following pages. In other words, each question is designed to test whether the candidate possesses the knowledge necessary to perform the task and has the ability to apply it to a job situation.

Each of the tasks was rated as significant to practice by healthcare quality professionals who responded to the survey. One rule used by the examination committee requires that a task be significant to practice in the major types and sizes of healthcare facilities, including those employed in managed care. Thus, the examination content is valid for this segment of healthcare quality professionals, as well as those employed in hospitals, clinics, home care, behavioral and mental health centers, or other care settings.

The [content outline](#) is a list of tasks that forms the structure of the CPHQ examination and to which the examination questions are linked.