



# **Certification Recertification Policy Manual**

## **Purpose of the Manual**

The Competency and Credentialing Institute (CCI) conducts a voluntary certification and recertification program for registered nurse first assistants. This Manual has been prepared to furnish essential and useful information about these programs and processes.

The Manual is organized according to the certification/recertification processes. Policies and procedures pertaining to the various steps and information designed to aid in accomplishing the processes are included.

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By

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## Certification

### Definition of Certification

CRNFA certification is a voluntary recognition program designed for nurses who practice in the expanded role of registered nurse first assistant. Certification recognizes the professional achievement demonstrated when an individual nurse's performance in the first assistant role exceeds that which is necessary for competency in practice. CRNFA certification is defined as:

The documented validation of the professional achievement of identified standards of practice by an individual registered nurse first assistant providing care before, during and after surgery.

### Purposes of Certification

- Demonstrates concern for accountability to the general public for nursing practice.
- Enhance quality patient care.
- Identify RNFAs who have demonstrated professional achievement in providing care for patients during surgical intervention
- Provide employing agencies a means of identifying professional achievement of an individual RNFA
- Identify professional nurses practicing in an expanded role.

### Objectives of the Certification Program

- Recognize the individual registered nurse first assistant who is proficient in practice.
  - Strengthen conscious use of theory in assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating patient care.
  - Enhance professional growth through continued learning that results in greater depth of knowledge and expanded skills.
- ❖ An applicant's nationality, race, creed, life-style, color, sex or age is not a factor in determining eligibility for certification or recertification.

## Certification Process

### Examination

An examination shall be the method whereby eligible registered nurses can demonstrate professional achievement in an expanded role. The examination consists of 150 multiple choice questions and is intended to be completed in no more than three hours. The examination is constructed to reflect the professional actions taken by RNFAs in providing care for patients during the preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative period. Questions will test a candidate's ability to apply knowledge and skills to practice.

The CCI has contracted with Prometric™, a professional testing company, to administer the CRNFA examination at over 300 Prometric Testing Centers throughout the U.S. and Canada. Candidates may take the examination Monday through Saturday, except holidays, year round.

The computerized format of the examination requires no previous computer experience. An optional pre-examination tutorial will provide instructions on how to take the examination on the computer. It will also provide examples on how to select answers and how to mark any questions you may want to return to and review before finishing the exam.

Your score on the examination is the total number of questions you answer correctly. It is to your advantage to answer each item even if you are not certain of the correct response. Because Prometric™, our testing agency, score the exam twice and verify CCI test results for accuracy, **hand scoring of the CRNFA test is not available.**

## **Test Center Regulations**

### **Security Measures**

Several security measures will be enforced during the test administration to ensure the integrity of the programs. Be aware that you will be observed at all times while taking the examination. This observation may include direct observation by test center staff, as well as video recording of your testing session.

Examinations cannot be viewed, copied, or studied by any individuals. Copying or retaining test questions or transmitting the test questions in any form to other individuals, organizations, or study groups will result in forfeiting your right to have your examination scored and may result in civil prosecution and disciplinary action by CCI.

### **Misconduct**

No personal belongings are permitted in the test center except for the pencils and scratch paper you have been given by the test center administrator. The computer will keep the official time. You may not eat, drink, or use tobacco in the testing room. The test center administrator is authorized to dismiss you from the test session for any of the following reasons, and to notify Chauncey and CCI of the action taken:

- Failure to follow the test center administrator's directions
- Creating a disturbance of any kind
- Giving or receiving assistance of any kind
- Using prohibited aids, such as reference materials, mechanical listening devices, and recording or photographic devices
- Removing or attempting to remove test questions and/or responses (in any format) from the testing room
- Removing or attempting to remove scratch paper from the test center
- Attempting to take the test for someone else
- Attempting to tamper with the operation of the computer
- Leaving the testing room without permission
- Leaving the test center/building at any time
- Using electronic communications or recording equipment such as Palm Pilots, pagers, cellular phones, etc;
- Using notes, books, or other aids
- Bring any materials to the test center that may compromise the administration
- Share information about the test and test questions with any unauthorized persons

If a proctor witnesses what may be believed to be a security breach, the exam is stopped immediately; all related materials are retained and an incident report is generated and routed to Prometric™. The Prometric™ Security Office makes a copy of the video and reviews it for quality and to determine if there was any inappropriate action requiring follow-up with the test center personnel. The copy of the video and any related materials would then facilitate delivery to CCI.

If it is believed that an applicant or certificant violates the Misconduct Policy, breaches security or fails to follow test center directions the CCI may render sanctions against the individual that may include but not be limited to:

- Suspension from the examination for an indefinite or specified period of time
- At the Boards discretion, notify the State Board of Nursing, employer, insurance company, or other public health agency

## Group Irregularities

Unlike cases of individual candidate misconduct, occasionally testing irregularities occur that affect a group of test takers. Such problems include, without limitation, administrative errors, defective equipment or materials, improper access to test content and/or the unauthorized general availability of test content, as well as, other disruptions of test administrations (e.g. natural disasters and other emergencies). When group testing irregularities occur, Prometric™ will conduct an investigation to provide information to CCI. Based on this information, CCI may direct Prometric™ either not to score the test or to cancel the test score. When it is appropriate to do so, the Board will arrange with Prometric to give affected test takers the opportunity to take the test again as soon as possible, without charge. Affected test takers will be notified of the reasons for the cancellation and their options for retaking the test. The appeal process does not apply to group testing irregularities.

## Preparing for the Examination

The last section of this Manual contains “A Job Analysis.” This document defines the tasks performed by RNFA's and lists the knowledge and skills required to complete those tasks. It is intended as a guideline for the candidate preparing for the examination.

A study guide is also available to assist in preparing for the CRNFA certification examination. The ***CRNFA Study Guide and Practice Resource*** is available through CCI.

**The following sample questions are representative of actual test content and question format. An answer key to these questions appears at the end of this section.**

1. The tough, fascia-like tissue over the cranium that connects muscles of the temples, forehead, and base of the skull is the:
  - A. dura mater
  - B. subcutaneous fascia
  - C. galea
  - D. periosteum
2. In a normal Babinski reflex, the big toe demonstrates:
  - A. no movement
  - B. plantar flexion
  - C. abduction toward the other toes.
  - D. distinctive dorsal movement.
3. Which of the following sutures has the lowest tensile strength and should not be used for tissue that heals slowly and requires support?
  - A. Plain surgical gut
  - B. Polyester fiber
  - C. Multifilament
  - D. Surgical cotton
4. The olecranon process is part of the:
  - A. radius
  - B. occipital bone
  - C. humerus
  - D. ulna

5. A normal lab value for Sodium (Na+) is:

- A. 125 – 135 mEq/L
- B. 135 – 145 mEq/L
- C. 145 – 155 mEq/L
- D. 155 – 165 mEq/L

**Answer Key:**

- 1. C
- 2. B
- 3. A
- 4. D
- 5. B

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

Whenever possible, the Competency and Credentialing Institute is committed to providing reasonable accommodation in its examination processes to otherwise qualified individuals with physical or mental disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Pursuant to the ADA, accommodations will be provided to qualified candidates with disabilities to the extent that such accommodation does not fundamentally alter the examination or cause an undue burden to the agency. Candidates with disabilities must notify the CCI in writing no later than 60 days prior to the examination testing window stating the specific type of accommodation needed and providing appropriate documentation of the disability. Once a person is diagnosed as having a qualified learning disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act the disability is normally viewed as life-long. Although the learning disability will continue, the severity of the condition may change over time. Because the provision of all necessary and reasonable accommodations is based upon an assessment of the current impact of the individual's disabilities, the candidate must provide recent and appropriate documentation based on an evaluation within the past five years.

Candidates who submit documentation that is not within the past five years, or that does not address the candidate's current need for accommodation(s) will be required to update the evaluation report. The purpose of an update is to determine the candidate's current need for accommodation(s). The documentation provided should include correspondence from a healthcare provider who has first-hand knowledge of the disability that describes the nature of the disability and specific recommendations regarding the type accommodation required to address the disability. The letter should be on that professional's letterhead stationery and include his or her title, address, phone number, and original signature. Examples of requests for special testing accommodations that may be granted include modification of seating or other physical arrangements in the examination facility or providing for the examination to be taken in an accessible location, providing for a reasonable extension of testing time. Examples of requests for special testing accommodations that may be denied include modification of the content of an objective multiple-choice examination, providing for unlimited testing time, permitting a reader to paraphrase test material or translate the material into another language. All accommodation determinations will be made by the Competency and Credentialing Institute at its discretion.

**Job Analysis**

A Job Analysis and Test Blueprint were developed by the Test Specifications Committee of the CCI, in cooperation with the Testing Agency. The job analysis describes the overall functions and responsibilities as well as the underlying knowledge and skills that are essential to ensure proficiency as a registered nurse first assistant. The test specifications were developed on the basis of external ratings and constitute a plan upon which the job-related certification examination was constructed for nurses functioning in the role of an RNFA.

CCI intends this document to act as a guideline for development of the certification examination. It is recognized that the Job Analysis may not reflect all of the specific tasks performed by a registered nurse first assistant. The test consists of 150 test questions.

## Scale Scores

Failing candidates will have their test score reported as a scale score. A scale score is a transformed raw test score (the number of test questions answered correctly given the length of the test taken). The raw score has been transformed into other measurement units, a scale score, something like transforming height (your test performance) from centimeters (your raw score) into inches (your scale score). A scale score of at least **620** is required to pass. **PLEASE NOTE THAT A SCALE SCORE IS NEITHER THE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS YOU ANSWERED CORRECTLY NOR THE PERCENTAGE OF QUESTIONS YOU ANSWERED CORRECTLY.**

The passing score was established via a systematic procedure (Cut-Score Study) that employed the judgment of a representative group of CRNFAs from across the country with the assistance of staff from Prometric™. This group recommended a standard of what a minimally competent CRNFA needs to know about the tested content to obtain a passing score. The decision regarding the passing score was made by CCI and was transferred through use of statistical procedures to the test you are administered.

If you are not successful in passing the CRNFA exam, your score will tell you how far away from 620 – or passing - you are. If you receive a numerical score, you have not mastered the knowledge that is required to become certified at a level judged to represent the minimum to receive the credential. Your numerical score is reported along with a diagnostic message for each of the content area included in the examination: Pre-operative, intraoperative, and postoperative.

Passing candidates will receive a letter and a congratulatory packet of information from CCI, a scale score will not be reported.

## Domains and Phases

### Task Domains

1. Preoperative Patient Care
2. Intraoperative Patient Care
3. Postoperative Patient Care
4. Factors Influencing Professional Practice

### Knowledge/Skills Domains

1. Basic Sciences
2. Assessment Techniques
3. Intraoperative
4. Professional Practice

Task and knowledge/skill linking provides guidance for item-writing activities. When item writers develop questions for specific areas, they have a listing of tasks that relate to the knowledge/skill statement. This provides context for developing examination questions and assists the item writer in question design. Test specifications for the CRNFA examination allocates test weights to domains on the basis of a combination of importance and time requirements.

Domain	Target Percentage Weight
1. Basic Sciences	18%
2. Assessment Techniques	20%
3. Intraoperative	53%
4. Professional Practice	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Notification

- Candidates **not** successful in passing the exam will receive notification of their examination score within 4-6 weeks of the examination.
- Candidates successful in passing the exam will be mailed their certificates and wallet cards by CCI. Please allow 4-6 weeks of the examination.
- **The CCI will provide two letters for successful candidates who request verification of their certified status within a five year recertification period.** Contact CCI to request a verification letter.
- Certification status is granted for a period of five years. Certification will expire on December 31 of the 5<sup>th</sup> year.

### Certification Process Policies

1. Refunds are made at the discretion of the CCI.
2. \$125 of the registration fee constitutes a nonrefundable processing charge.

To receive a partial refund, you **MUST DO BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Request in writing, to the CCI, to withdraw registration prior to 3 working days before the end of the scheduled examination window.
2. Cancel by calling **Prometric** at least 48 hours in advance of your scheduled appointment time as shown below: **THESE TIMES ARE EASTERN STANDARD TIME.**

<b>If Examination is Scheduled for:</b>	<b>You <u>MUST</u> Cancel By:</b>
Monday	Noon on previous Friday
Tuesday	Noon on previous Saturday
Wednesday	Noon on Monday (same week)
Thursday	Noon on Tuesday (same week)
Friday	Noon on Wednesday (same week)
Saturday	Noon on Thursday (same week)

The entire registration fee will be forfeited if:

1. The candidate fails to cancel an appointment with Prometric within the required time as shown above, or
2. The candidate fails to appear as scheduled to take the examination, or
3. The candidate arrives at Prometric for the examination without proper identification, or
4. The candidate fails to achieve a passing score on the examination.

In all the above circumstances, the applicant must complete the registration process in its entirety, including payment of the registration fee, in order to take the examination at a future time.

**Note:** If your examination is interrupted due to an equipment malfunction, for more than 30 minutes, you will be rescheduled at no additional charge.

5. Registration and fee may be transferred once from one test period to the **next** test period **only**. Only one transfer of registration and fee will be permitted. Request for transfer must be in writing and must reach our office no later than the transfer deadline stated in the application booklet. A transfer fee of \$125 must accompany the request.

**THE REFUND POLICY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE**

## Withdrawal From or Non-Completion of Process

- Persons who withdraw their application or who do not pass the examination must repeat the certification process in its entirety.
- The certification process, including examination, may be repeated as often as necessary. However, a new application must be submitted each time as forms, policies and procedures change.
- The appropriate fee must accompany the application each time one is submitted.
- Candidates **may not** take the exam **twice** in one quarter.

## Review Process

### *Request for Amendment*

- A process is available to an individual seeking amendment of a CCI policy. Supporting documentation must accompany the written request before it will be considered by CCI.
- Mail request for amendment, by certified mail, to the Competency and Credentialing Institute, 2170 South Parker Road, Suite 295, Denver, CO 80231.

### *Appeal Process*

- There shall be a Board of Appeals, external to the CCI, available to a CRNFA candidate seeking appeal of decisions made by the CCI. A written request for review by the Board of Appeals and supporting documentation must be received within 30 days after receipt by the candidate of CCI's initial decision to a request for amendment. Decisions of the External Board of Appeals shall be final and binding.
- **All requests for amendment or appeal will be heard in accordance with the CCI policies in effect at the time.**

## General Information

### *Confidentiality*

- A system of safeguarding confidential information provided by certification applicants/candidates will be maintained.
- No outside agency or persons shall have access to individual certification files/records unless permission is granted in writing by the applicant/candidate. In the event of legal proceedings, records will have to be requested in writing by the court or the applicant/candidate's legal counsel.

### *Verification*

- Information on applications may be verified. Authorized personnel will check applications for accuracy of information. Information may be verified by telephone and/or letter. All information gained through verification procedures will be confidential except in instances where the law demands disclosure of facts. Should any information on the application be found false, the applicant will be notified and declared ineligible to continue in the certification process.

### *Use of CRNFA*

- CRNFA is the designation recognizing the nurse who has been certified as a registered nurse first assistant. The CRNFA mark is federally registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Reg. No. 3564062, and may only be used in accordance with CCI policy by those who have achieved and maintain the designation. CRNFA stand for Certified Registered Nurse First Assistant. Use of the R in a circle symbol is legal and appropriate for use with the CRNFA mark when used in a trademark sense. It is not necessary or desirable to use the R in a circle symbol in connection with every use of the CRNFA mark. If on letterhead, signs, advertisements, or clothing, the R in a circle symbol may be used in connection with the CRNFA mark, but it is not necessary or desirable to use the symbol in text, on business cards, or name badges.
- In writing, proper usage is without punctuation as follows: Jane A. Doe, RN, CNOR, CRNFA, or Jane A. Doe, RN, CRNFA.

### *Revocation of CRNFA*

- The CCI reserves the right to revoke the certified status conferred by them through this program. Revocation may occur upon receipt of information verifying that a registered nurse has:
  1. Falsified information on the certification application.
  2. Had her/his current RN license revoked by a state board of nursing.
  3. Had her/his current RN license suspended by a state board of nursing.
  4. Been placed on probation by a state board of nursing.
  5. Has not paid all outstanding debts to CCI.
- Certified nurses will be informed by letter of the CCI's decision to revoke the CRNFA status.
- There will be no refund if, for any reason, the CRNFA status is revoked.

### *Misuse or misrepresentation of the CRNFA credential*

Any misuse or misrepresentation of the CRNFA credential by those not currently holding the credential shall be subject to legal action by CCI. CCI may render sanctions against the individual that may include but not be limited to:

- Suspension from the examination for an indefinite or specified period of time.
- At the Boards discretion, notify the State Board of Nursing, employer, insurance company, or other public health agency.

### *Publicity*

The CCI reserves the right to designate and approve national publicity concerning the certification program.

- National publicity may be authorized by the CCI for purposes of marketing the program.
- AORN Headquarters, AORN chapters, and the *AORN Journal* may appropriately recognize AORN members who become certified.

### *Replacement of Certificates (While Supplies Last)*

A replacement certificate will be issued, if available, at a cost of \$10, upon submission of a request to CCI.

### *Recertification*

- The certified status of an individual RN is conferred by the CCI for a period of five years, at which time a CRNFA may seek recertification. **JULY 1** is the application deadline for recertification.
- The recertification process will require a CRNFA to complete the method of recertification in effect at the time recertification is due.

THE CCI HAS THE PREROGATIVE TO ESTABLISH AND REVISE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFICATION/RECERTIFICATION AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE.

## **Recertification**

### **Definition of Recertification**

The continued documented validation of the professional achievement of identified standards of practice by an individual registered nurse first assistant providing care before, during and after surgery.

### **Purpose of Recertification**

CRNFA certification is a voluntary recognition program designed for nurses who practice in the expanded role of registered nurse first assistant. Certification recognizes the professional achievement demonstrated when an individual nurse's performance in the role exceeds that which is necessary for competency in practice. If certification provides some assurance to employers and to the public of the achievements of those certified, it is only reasonable to expect that there be a basis for providing that

assurance at more than one time in an individual's career. Recertification is a necessary component of the certification process.

### **Objectives of Recertification**

- Recognize the individual registered nurse first assistant who is proficient in practice.
- Strengthen conscious use of theory in assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating nursing care.
- Enhance professional growth through continued learning that results in greater depth of knowledge and expanded skills and practice.

**Note:** Certification is conferred for a period of five years. Application for recertification **MUST** be made by **JULY 1** of the year the certification expires using the recertification process in effect at the time recertification is due.

## **Recertification Process**

### **Eligibility**

Any CRNFA who meets the following requirements may apply for recertification. EVERY REQUIREMENT MUST BE MET AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION.

1. The applicant must be currently certified as a CNOR.
  2. The applicant must be currently certified as a registered nurse first assistant.
  3. The applicant must be currently licensed, without provision or condition, as a registered nurse in the country where currently practicing.
  4. The applicant must have practiced, at sometime, as an RNFA within the two years immediately prior to application.
- ❖ An applicant's nationality, race, creed, life-style, color, sex or age is not a factor in determining eligibility for certification or recertification.

### **Application Process**

#### **1. Obtain Application**

An application for recertification will be mailed to you in January of the year in which your certification expires. If you do not receive an application by early March, contact:

Competency and Credentialing Institute  
2170 South Parker Road, Suite 295  
Denver, Colorado 80231  
(303) 369-9566 • (888) 257-2667

#### **2. Submit Completed Application**

COMPLETED APPLICATION INCLUDES:

- Application Form with Contact Hour Record Form (if applicable)
- Application Fee

**NOTE:** The application, as described above, **MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE JULY 1**. If an applicant fails to meet the specified deadline date, a late filing period (July 2 – December 31) will apply. A penalty fee of \$75 will be assessed for applications postmarked with those dates and **must** accompany the completed application and fee. Applications received after December 31 will not be accepted under **any** circumstances.

*A. Complete Application Form*

- Complete all of the personal information sections on the application form.
- Complete the Contact Hour Record Form (if applicable).
- Read and sign the Statement of Understanding.

**NOTE:** All applications are confidential and only those persons directly involved with the processing will have access to them.

Information on applications may be verified. Authorized personnel will check applications for accuracy of information. Information may be verified by telephone and/or letter. All information gained through verification procedures will be confidential except in instances where the law demands disclosure of facts. Should any information on the application be found false, the applicant will be notified and declared ineligible to continue in the recertification process.

*B. Obtain Verification of Practice Requirements*

Request that a nurse administrator, OR director, or nurse manager of any facility where the applicant currently practices sign the application form. In addition, a surgeon that is currently working with the applicant must sign the application form. These signatures shall attest to the applicant having met the eligibility requirement of employment full or part-time, at some time within the two years immediately preceding date of application.

**Practice Hour Requirement**

Recertification requirements will require CRNFAs to have practiced as an RNFA in addition to the method of recertification chosen. The minimum number of clinical hours that will be required during the five and one-half year recertification cycle, in relation to the method chosen are listed below.

*For contact hour recertifiers:* If you submit 1,000 clinical practice hours – you will need 200 contact hours.  
If you submit 500 clinical practice hours – you will need 300 contact hours.

*For point recertifiers:* If you submit 1,000 clinical practice hours – you will need 400 points.  
If you submit 500 clinical practice hours – you will need 500 points.

*For exam recertifiers:* You will need 1,000 clinical practice hours to recertify by exam.

*If you submit 1,000 practice hours, at least 700 hours must be intraoperative care.  
If you submit 500 practice hours, at least 350 hours must be intraoperative care.*

*C. Select Method of Recertification*

1. Examination (testing for recertification is in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters).
2. Continuing Education.
3. Points.

*D. Pay Fee*

The applicant fee for recertification is \$425 for AORN members, \$550 for non-AORN members for contact hours and points. If recertifying by examination, the fee is \$425 for AORN members and \$550 for non-AORN members.

1. The appropriate fee must be submitted with the application form.
2. The fee may be paid by personal check, cashier's check or money order made payable to the CCI or by MasterCard or VISA.
3. No application will be processed without the accompanying fee. All outstanding debts to the CCI **must** have been paid.

*E. Submit Completed Application*

- Send to: Competency and Credentialing Institute  
2170 South Parker Road, Suite 295  
Denver, Colorado 80231

- Fax to: 303-695-8464 \*\*Please call CCI at 888-257-2667 to confirm that your application was received.
- Apply on line: [www.cc-institute.org](http://www.cc-institute.org)

### 3. Notification of Status

- Acknowledgment of receipt of your application will be sent by the CCI **only** if you included a postage-paid return postcard.
- All information on the application may be verified and may include verification of:
  - Original certification date
  - Applicant's RN license through state boards of nursing
  - Current employment through contact with employer/employing institution
  - Professional nursing history through contact with past employers
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to furnish any information found missing on the application.
- If recertifying by examination, candidates will receive further information on testing sites from the testing agency.

### Audit Process

A predetermined percentage of recertification applications will be randomly selected for audit. However, if there is reason to believe there has been a breach in the integrity of the process by an individual seeking recertification through the continuing education or points method, staff will also select those individuals for audit.

Those applicants chosen for the audit process will be required to submit **copies** of the certificates of attendance listed on the contact hour record form sent with their application by the deadline date specified on the form. Those selected for audit will also need to send proof of their practice hours in accordance with the policy in effect at the time of recertification.

### Procedure for Recertification by Examination

The CCI has contracted with Prometric™, a professional testing agency, to administer the CRNFA examination at over 300 Prometric™ test centers throughout the U.S. and Canada. Candidates may take the examination Monday through Saturday, except holidays, year round.

The computerized format of the examination requires no previous computer experience. An optional pre-examination tutorial will provide instructions on how to take the examination on the computer. It will also provide examples on how to select answers and how to mark any questions you may want to return to and review before finishing the exam.

The recertification examination period is in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters. The fee to recertify by exam is \$425 for AORN members and \$550 for non-AORN members.

### Procedures for Recertification by Continuing Education

Recertification by continuing education requires 200 contact hours offered by approved providers accrued within the five year period preceding application deadline for recertification. Contact hours may be from January 1 of the year of certification to June 30 of the year of recertification.

The fee to recertify by contact hours is \$425 for AORN members and \$550 for non-AORN members.

The following list provides a guideline for determining RNFA specific subject matter and is not intended to be all inclusive.

**Courses or programs which fall under categories from the *RNFA Core Curriculum*:**

- Scope of Practice
- Nursing Process for RNFAs
- Asepsis, Infection Control and Epidemiology
- Surgical Anatomy and Physiology
- Intraoperative RNFA Nursing Behaviors
- Assisting Considerations and Procedure Management (including specific surgical procedures and assisting techniques)
- Surgical Hazard recognition and intervention (including lab values and EKG interpretation)
- Communication Skills (including professional writing and presentation)

**Other Topic Headings Include:**

- Professional Development (Ethics, Mentoring and Precepting, Leadership Skills, Self-Care Issues, Critical Thinking Skills, Practice Management, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Reimbursement Issues, Negotiation and Contract Skills)
- Pre and Post-op Patient Care (Rounding, Patient Education, etc.)
- Trauma Assessment and Interventions
- History and Physical Assessment
- Pharmacology
- Pathophysiology
- Discharge Planning
- Medical Record Dictation
- Legal, Policy and Practice Issues
- Home Healthcare Relating to RNFA Practice
- Technology Changes/Advances and Their Effect on the RNFA Role
- Healthcare Reform
- CRNFA Review
- Managed Care (Critical Pathways, Utilization Review, Outcomes)
- Invasive and Non-Invasive Diagnostic Procedures
- Surgical Complications
- Anesthesia Considerations

**To be acceptable, contact hours MUST be approved by one of the following:**

1. American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)
2. An agency, organization, or educational institution accredited by ANCC
3. State boards of nursing in: CA, FL, KS, KY, IA, NV, AL, OH, LA, WV
4. American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)
5. Any state nurses' association
6. American Association of Neuroscience Nurses (AANN)
7. Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN), formerly NAACOG
8. American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA)
9. Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN)
10. American Academy of Family Practitioners (AAFP)
11. American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
12. American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
13. American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM)
14. National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)
15. National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners (NAPNAP)

The candidate must maintain a copy of the certificate of attendance for each approved program attended and submit **if audited**. Every certificate of attendance must have an accreditation statement and/or provider number.

\* If a candidate attended a program and did not receive or lost the certificate of attendance, the program sponsor must be contacted by the applicant for a duplicate.

Candidates cannot recertify until the year of certification expiration.

The following DO NOT meet the criteria for recertification and are, therefore, not acceptable:

1. Any program approvers or providers not listed above in Acceptable Providers.
2. Handwritten accreditation statements or provider numbers.
3. Certificates of attendance without an appropriate accreditation statement and/or acceptable provider number.
4. Contact hours earned prior to January 1 of the year certified.
5. Provider numbers that do not state *Board of Registered Nursing*.

### **Academic Credits for Recertification**

CRNFAs may use academic credits in partial fulfillment of the requirements for recertification through the contact hour method. All academic credits MUST meet the following criteria in order for them to be acceptable for use toward CRNFA recertification.

One half (100) of the 200 contact hours required for recertification may be earned through academic credits. Academic credits will be converted to contact hours using the following calculation:

$$\begin{array}{l} \mathbf{1 \text{ semester hour}} \quad = \quad \mathbf{15 \text{ contact hours}} \\ \mathbf{1 \text{ quarter hour}} \quad \quad = \quad \mathbf{10 \text{ contact hours}} \end{array}$$

Courses must be those that are required for a baccalaureate or higher degree. Although courses must be taken for credit, CRNFAs do not need to be enrolled in a formal degree program at the time the course is taken. To be acceptable, a grade of C or better must be achieved for each course, and courses must be sponsored by an accredited educational institution.

### **CME Credits**

CRNFAs may submit CME (continuing medical education) units in partial fulfillment of the contact hour requirements. Each CME is worth 1 contact hour. One half (100) of the required number of contact hours may be those earned through CMEs. You are responsible for converting CME credits into contact hours using the ANCC conversion of:

$$\mathbf{1 \text{ CME credit}} \quad = \quad \mathbf{1 \text{ contact hour}}$$

### **Recertify by Points**

The point system recognizes that you learn and maintain competency in a variety of ways and that learning is achieved through successful participation in various professional activities. You may acquire the required 300 points through any of the following activities: a minimal number of continuing education credits, unlimited academic study toward degree completion, publishing, giving presentations, teaching in an academic setting, serving as a board or committee member for any professional healthcare organization, cross training in a new area, and precepting.

### **If Certification Expires**

- Contact hours or points will NOT be accepted to regain certified status.

- The only way to be reinstated as a CRNFA is to meet all the eligibility requirements in effect at that time, enter a future certification cycle, and successfully complete the examination.

## **Inactive Status**

CRNFA Inactive Status provides CRNFAs with a 3-year period to meet the recertification eligibility requirements. Inactive Status is available to CRNFAs who do not meet the recertification eligibility requirements but do not wish to lose their certification status. During the time of Inactive Status, you may NOT use the CRNFA credential. The fee for Inactive Status is \$95 for AORN Members and \$175 for non-AORN members.

## **Structure of the Certification Program/Test Development Process**

### **Certification Board**

The Competency and Credentialing Institute conducts a voluntary certification/recertification program for nurses. CCI was established for the purpose of developing, implementing, administering and evaluating these programs and is accountable for the process. CCI shall confer the certified status and may revoke it in specified cases.

The Competency and Credentialing Institute is composed of 8 CNOR members (one of which is a CRNFA), representing different areas of practice and positions within perioperative nursing, and one public member.

Test specifications present the content outline of examination subject matter from which questions (items) for the examination are written. Test specifications for the certification examination are derived from the analysis of performance tasks in which perioperative nurses are engaged. The test specifications are presented in a grid format with job domains and phases of surgical intervention as the basic elements.

The Test Specifications Committee is composed of CRNFAs involved on a daily basis with direct patient care during intraoperative intervention. Members represent different areas of practice insofar as possible.

### **Item Writers**

Item writers are responsible for constructing questions specific to each section of the test specifications. The testing agency furnishes each writer with instructions on how to write multiple choice questions along with appropriate reference materials. Item writers are CRNFAs who volunteer to serve on this committee.

### **Item Review Committee**

The Item Review Committee reviews all usable questions and selects items for each examination form by using the test specifications. Such matters as correctness of answers, prevention of geographic bias, clarity of language, and appropriateness of items are considered during item selection. The edited copy of the final form of each examination is reviewed and approved by the Item Review Committee. The Committee review constitutes a final check and balance system on the reliability of the examination. The Item Review Committee consists of CRNFAs currently practicing as a registered nurse first assistant.

### **Testing Agency**

The testing agency is responsible for accomplishing the following functions: assist in developing measurement tools; administer and score examinations; report results in such examinations; and maintain an item bank. Prometric™ is the agency currently under contract for these services.

## **Job Analysis Glossary of Terms**

**Ambulatory Surgery:** For purposes of this document: outpatient surgery, same-day surgery, day surgery, etc., are included on the term ambulatory surgery.

**Certification:** The documented mastery of the knowledge base and standards underlying the professional practice of an individual nurse providing perioperative patient care.

**Community Resources:** An agency or organization whose role is to provide services to the patient throughout the perioperative continuum.

**Family:** In this document, the terms significant others and extended family are included in the term family.

**Health-Care Team Members:** The providers of patient care services, which are required to provide a patient with an optimal outcome. Health-care team members can include, but are not limited to pharmacy, radiology, blood bank, etc.

**Intraoperative Phase:** Begins when the patient enters the operating room/surgical environment and ends when the patient is transferred to the post-anesthesia care unit or other designated patient care area.

**Knowledge:** Defined as an organized body of information, usually of a factual or procedural nature, which, if applied, makes adequate performance of a job possible. Possession of knowledge does not ensure its proper application.

**Patient:** The recipient of perioperative care. In some instances, the patient includes the family, legal guardian, caregiver and others.

**Patient's Rights:** Every patient has the right to seek and receive health care administered regardless of his/her race, religion, culture, gender, or infirmity; and with respect for the individual's self-image, privacy, and other such considerations, in accordance with the Patient's Bill of Rights.

**Postoperative Phase:** Begins with admission of the patient to the post-anesthesia care area and ends with the resolution of the surgical sequelae.

**Preoperative Phase:** Begins when the decision for operative and/or invasive procedure is made and ends when patient is transferred to the operating room/surgical environment.

**Professional Achievement:** The attainment of a measurable level of performance. In the context of RNFA certification, the level of professional achievement is set on a continuum between minimum competence and mastery of nursing practice as a first assistant. Professional achievement affirms that the RN First Assistant demonstrates consistent application of the nursing process and the identified specialty standards of practice.

**Regulatory Standards and Voluntary Guidelines:** Center for Disease Control (CDC), Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations and standards, and federal, state and local laws/regulations which govern practice.

**Safe Environment:** The setting in which the physical and psychological aspects of the environment are controlled for the purpose of presenting the least possible hazard to the patient, staff members, and community.

**Skill:** Defined as the proficient manual, verbal, or mental manipulation of data, people or things. Skill embodies observable, quantifiable, and measurable performance parameters.

**Standard Precautions:** As used in the job analysis, this term refers to the Standard Precaution Policy and Procedure Guidelines as developed by CDC and OSHA.

**Sterile Field:** The immediate area surrounding the operative site(s) and specified areas of materials, equipment, and personnel in direct contact with the operative site(s).

**Support Services:** Those services which are utilized for the individual patient to provide optimum patient care, i.e., pharmacy, radiology, blood bank, laboratories, housekeeping, organ procurement, auxiliary services, etc.

**Surgical Intervention:** The activities surrounding the operative and minimally invasive procedures performed on a patient.

**Surgical Procedure:** The technical aspects and anatomical approach used during surgical intervention.

**Teaching Techniques:** Those aids and approaches that facilitate learning (e.g., audiovisual tools, return demonstration).

**Universal Precautions:** As used in the job analysis, this term refers to the Universal Policy Procedure Manual as developed by CDC and OSHA.

## **A Job Analysis**

NOTE: Although the Committee recognizes that ethical behavior is not a task or a domain per se, but rather an integral part of our profession, we believe it should be incorporated throughout the job analysis. The RN First Assistant performs his/her duties in an ethical manner to engender the confidence of the health care consumer; to best serve and respect the interests and goals of the consumer, the nursing profession, the specialty of perioperative nursing, and the perioperative nursing expanded role of first assisting, and to maintain the respect of health care team members. This is accomplished by demonstrating accountability, integrity and technical competence in practice; and by maintaining a current knowledge base.

### **Domain 1: Basic Science**

- A. Anatomy and physiology (e.g., contrast of normal and abnormal; application of "book learning")
- B. Chemistry (application as affect operation or post-operation)
- C. Microbiology (as it relates to infection control; foundational in what is involved to respond to microbiological problem; surgical setting emphasis)
- D. Pathophysiology (e.g., immunosuppressive problems; relation to other disease process such as diabetes, cardiovascular)
- E. Pharmacology (e.g., effects of drugs, anesthesia; when to use and when not to use; both drug classes (e.g., blood thinners) and specific drugs, e.g. Lidocaine; alternative medicines and herbs)
- F. Psychology (e.g., dealing with wide range of people, age-specific, mental illness; managing conflict with individuals)
- G. Sociology (groups of people such racial/ethnic, socioeconomic status, education levels)
- H. Nutrition (interaction with surgery, e.g., wound healing; prevent surgical complications)

### **Domain 2: Assessment Techniques**

- A. Normal and abnormal laboratory values
- B. Diagnostic procedures (e.g., imaging studies, invasive/non-invasive procedures; information provided by these procedures to plan surgery)
- C. Hemodynamic monitoring

- D. Nursing assessment skills (e.g., focus on interpretation of assessment findings)
- E. History and physical examination (interpret and relate information to surgery; determination if HPI is complete)
- F. Environmental safety of patient care areas (e.g., operating room suite, home environment)
- F. *Psychosocial issues (e.g., support systems, financial resources; insurance implications)*

### **Domain 3: Intraoperative**

- A. Surgical procedures
- B. Patient positioning principles
- C. Draping principles
- D. Interdisciplinary resource utilization (e.g., X-ray, lab)
- E. Exposure techniques
- F. Hemostatic techniques
- G. Handling of instruments
- H. Suture selection, suturing and knot-tying techniques
- I. Tissue-handling and dissection techniques
- J. Wound closure techniques including wound healing
- K. Surgical dressing applications
- L. Supportive/immobilization devices

### **Domain 4: Professional Practice**

- A. Legal, regulatory, and policy guidelines (e.g., scope of practice; HIPAA; Joint Commission; OSHA; state departments of health; CMS regulations)
- B. Research application to practice (e.g., interpretation of reports; evidence-based practice)
- C. Ethics (e.g., implications of a DNR; application of the Code of Ethics)
- D. Risk management, liability, and malpractice issues (e.g., scope of practice; delegation of duties; reporting and followup on near misses such as a mistake that almost happened and/or no injury to patient incident)
- E. Leadership, collaborative relationships, and mentoring (e.g., leadership role in operating room; communication among team members)
- F. AORN Standards, recommended practices and guidelines as apply to RNFA