Visit www.nursecredentialing.org/cert to get more information and to download application forms for ANCC Certification.
The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) is the largest and most prestigious nurse certification organization in the world, recognizing individuals whose nursing skills and knowledge meet pre-determined standards of excellence. More than a quarter million nurses have been certified by ANCC since 1990, and more than 75,000 advanced practice nurses currently hold ANCC certification.

Nursing professionals know that ANCC certification is widely accepted evidence to the public and the profession of the quality of their nursing skills. Not only does it validate the strength of their nursing abilities and boost their self-assurance, but certification also contributes to better patient outcomes. In fact, the American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN) has linked certification to fewer medical errors, increased job satisfaction, and greater professional confidence among nurses.¹

ANCC’s rigorous and extensive in-house test-development process ensures certification exams that are fair and accurate measures of professional competency. As a result, ANCC certification is highly regarded nationally and internationally, earning recognition from all state boards of nursing, the U.S. military, and public and private reimbursers.
ANCC offers board certification in dozens of specialties and advanced practices—from Ambulatory Care to Family Nurse Practitioner to Nursing Administration. Specific requirements vary by certification type, but generally require nurses to hold an active RN license, have the appropriate educational credentials, obtain a certain amount of experience in the specialty area, and demonstrate proficiency on the applicable ANCC certification exam. This enables nurses in a variety of specialty areas and with a wide range of experience levels to achieve their personal best through ANCC board certification.

What is Certification?

Certification is the process by which a nongovernmental agency or an association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications. Certification can be used for entry into practice, validation of competence, recognition of excellence, and/or for regulation. It can be mandatory or voluntary. Certification validates an individual’s knowledge, skills, and abilities in a defined role and clinical area of practice, based on pre-determined standards.

How to Get Certified

To achieve ANCC certification, healthcare professionals first must meet certain eligibility requirements specific to their specialty and then pass the applicable certification exam. Most ANCC certification exams are computer-based and are available year-round at more than 300 test sites (primarily in the U.S. and Canada). Paper-and-pencil exams—available for some specialties—are administered in May and October at locations around the world.

ANCC certification provides nationally recognized credentials akin to the board certification of physicians. This board certification is an expectation of doctors, and more than 90 percent of U.S. licensed physicians are Member Board certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). It shows that physicians have the expertise to practice in their particular specialty area. Nursing certification also shows a level of specialty knowledge and ANCC credentials represent this board certification for nursing specialties.

Please refer to the specific eligibility requirements listed on the front cover of your specialty certification application. Visit www.nursecredentialing.org/cert for the most recent information.
A Wide Range of Certifications

ANCC certification currently is offered in the following specialties and advanced practice areas. Full descriptions are available at www.nursecredentialing.org/cert

ADVANCED PRACTICE CERTIFICATION

Nurse Practitioners
>> Acute Care
>> Adult
>> Adult Psychiatric & Mental Health
>> Diabetes Management, Advanced
>> Family
>> Family Psychiatric & Mental Health
>> Gerontological
>> Pediatric

Clinical Nurse Specialists
>> Adult Health
>> Adult Psychiatric & Mental Health
>> Diabetes Management, Advanced
>> Child/Adolescent Psychiatric & Mental Health
>> Public/Community Health
>> Gerontological
>> Pediatric

Other Advanced Specialties
>> Diabetes Management Dietician, Advanced
>> Diabetes Management Pharmacist, Advanced
>> Nursing Administration, Advanced

SPECIALTY NURSING CERTIFICATION

>> Ambulatory Care
>> Cardiac Vascular
>> Gerontological
>> Informatics
>> Medical-Surgical
>> Nursing Administration
>> Nursing Case Management
>> Nursing Professional Development
>> Pain Management
>> Pediatric
>> Psychiatric & Mental Health

All certification exams are continually refined and updated to reflect the current practice in the specialty and incorporate the scope and standards of practice approved by the American Nurses Association’s Congress on Nursing Practice and Economics or those of other national specialty nursing organizations. ANCC certification exams are accredited by the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) and/or the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA).
ANCC board certified nurses are in the greatest demand and command the highest salaries.

Nurse managers surveyed by American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) overwhelmingly prefer to hire board certified nurses because certification attests to an individual’s knowledge base and documents experience in a given specialty. In fact, 90% said they clearly prefer to hire certified nurses.  

Further, ANCC certification opens doors to higher-paying positions. Nurses who are board certified in a specialty area earn an average of $9,000 more than their counterparts who aren’t board certified. What’s more, nurses report that certification increases their job satisfaction and confidence.

ANCC certification exams are a fair and accurate measure of professional competency.

Thanks to an extensive test-development process, ANCC’s certification examinations are considered the truest gauge of a nurse’s ability to provide excellent care.

It all starts with highly qualified, currently practicing, ANCC board certified nurses who serve on Content Expert Panels (CEP) representing their specialty. ANCC chooses a representative sampling of individual nurses to serve on these panels based on their education, experience, and comprehensive knowledge of their specialty. Using this expert knowledge—along with standards from the American Nurses Association’s Congress of Nursing Practice and Economics or those of other national specialty nursing organizations—ANCC conducts role delineation studies (job analyses) to determine the professional skills and abilities required to fulfill the specialty role. Using the results from the role delineation studies, the CEPs then develop test content outlines for the examinations.

Next, a separate group of volunteer expert nurses write certification exam questions (items), employing both their professional experience and special ANCC training. These test items are reviewed by ANCC staff and the CEP, and then pilot-tested to ensure validity and psychometric soundness.

Finally, ANCC staff, in cooperation with the appropriate CEP, assembles the actual examination. ANCC measurement professionals guide the entire process to ensure that all examinations are psychometrically sound and legally defensible.

To further ensure their relevance, ANCC continually refines and updates all certification examinations to follow the latest scope and standards of practice and role delineation studies. ANCC also subjects these examinations to outside scrutiny, obtaining accreditation by two different national organizations: the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) and the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA).
ANCC certification expands career opportunities and boosts individual salaries.
ANCC board certified nurses must meet strong professional development requirements.

By keeping abreast of the latest developments in healthcare and making continuing education a priority, ANCC board certified nurses not only maintain their competence to practice, but also boost their professional self-confidence.

Nurses who make continuing professional development a priority assure the public and employers that they have the knowledge, skills, and experience to effectively and safely deliver top-notch care. In a survey by the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS), nurse managers noted that they believe certification validates specialized knowledge, indicates a level of clinical competence, and enhances professional credibility.

Even more noteworthy, nurse certification has been linked to better patient outcomes, according to the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN), which found that certification is tied to a reduction in medical errors, among other benefits.

ANCC certification is accepted by governing boards.

ANCC certification is valued domestically and internationally by national and local agencies, including recognition by all state boards of nursing and the U.S. military. In addition, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as well as all major third-party reimbursers accept ANCC certification for billing purposes.

Far-Reaching Benefits
ANCC certification offers advantages throughout the healthcare system—benefiting patients and their families, nurses and their colleagues, and the medical practices and facilities that employ these certified professionals. It is, quite simply, an asset to the entire nursing field and the healthcare delivery system.
ANCC certification provides nationally recognized credentials akin to the board certification of physicians.
Preparing for ANCC Certification Exams

ANCC offers a variety of affordable, flexible resources to support nurses on their path to certification. These include manuals, seminars, and on-line courses that are designed to serve not only as study guides in preparation for specific certification exams, but also as valuable clinical practice resources and convenient sources for continuing education contact hours.

**Test Content Outlines, Sample Questions, and Reference Lists**

For every certification exam offered by ANCC, candidates are able to access the following preparation materials free of charge at [www.nursecredentialing.org/cert](http://www.nursecredentialing.org/cert)

Test Content Outlines. ANCC outlines provide an overview of the material covered for each test. You may find this information useful in exam preparation.

Sample Exam Questions. To help candidates prepare for the certification exams, ANCC provides short, interactive online sample tests. The sample questions are similar to those on the exams, but do not represent the full range of content or levels of difficulty.

Reference Lists. ANCC uses a number of authoritative texts to develop its certification exams. These lists are provided as a guide to help you prepare for the exams, but they are not intended to be all-inclusive.

**ANCC also offers a variety of optional study materials to help nurses prepare for exams:**

Review & Resource Manuals. Written by nursing experts in each specialty, these manuals enable candidates to enhance their critical thinking skills and identify their professional strengths and weaknesses. Continuing nursing education contact hours for independent study of any of these manuals are available on-line through ANCC.

Review Seminars. ANCC certification review seminars allow participants to immerse themselves in expert presentations—plus take home comprehensive written materials, including copies of all the slides used during the seminar. Participants are eligible for continuing nursing education contact hours.

Study Groups. For those who enjoy the interactive approach of a seminar, but prefer to learn from home, ANCC’s certification study groups are a great option. Featuring content from the seminars, and led by the same expert faculty, study groups “meet” via weekly telephone conference calls scheduled over the course of several weeks. Like the review seminars, study group programs offer continuing nursing education contact hours.

On-Line Courses. These web-based courses present the same slides used in the review seminars, along with the voice-over narration of an instructor who talks participants through the material. Registrants have access to the on-line course for three months after registration and can receive continuing nursing education contact hours.

Test-Taking Techniques. ANCC offers the Test-Taking Techniques Review & Resource Manual, plus a new web-based course covering the same vital content. These resources have helped hundreds of nurses feel more comfortable and confident during the certification exam process, providing them with exam preparation ideas, critical test-taking skills, and practice questions.
The Basics of Certification Renewal

ANCC’s certification renewal program offers nursing professionals the opportunity to maintain their commitment to nursing excellence and preserve their credentials at the end of the five-year certification period. Certification renewal, like initial certification, demonstrates an individual’s dedication to providing top-notch care and is an asset to the entire healthcare profession. For complete renewal eligibility requirements, visit www.nursecredentialing.org/cert

Certification Reactivation

Nurses may reactivate lapsed certifications after the expiration date by paying an additional fee and completing the regular renewal requirements. Visit www.nursecredentialing.org/cert for full reactivation requirements.

Reciprocity

Are you already certified with your specialty nursing organization?

If so, you may qualify for reciprocity from ANCC, the most prestigious and well-known nurse certification body in the world. Reciprocity allows you to add certification by ANCC to your credentials, without the requirement for testing. For more information about which specialties offer reciprocity and to complete your application visit www.nursecredentialing.org/cert

To order manuals, view the current event schedule, register for seminars, and see an up-to-date list of available publications, visit www.nursecredentialing.org/cert

Sources
The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) provides individuals and organizations throughout the nursing profession with the tools they need on their journey to excellence. ANCC’s internationally renowned credentialing programs certify nurses in specialty practice areas, recognize healthcare organizations for nursing excellence through the Magnet Recognition Program®, and accredit providers of continuing nursing education. In addition, ANCC offers an array of informational and educational services and products to support its core credentialing programs.

ANCC is the largest and most prestigious nurse credentialing organization in the world. ANCC certification exams validate nurses’ skills, knowledge, and abilities. More than a quarter million nurses have been certified by ANCC since 1990. More than 75,000 advanced practice nurses are currently certified by ANCC.

The ANCC Magnet Recognition Program recognizes healthcare organizations that provide the very best in nursing care and professionalism in nursing practice. The program also provides a vehicle for disseminating best practices and strategies among nursing systems. The ANCC Magnet Recognition Program is the gold standard for nursing excellence.

ANCC Accreditation of a continuing nursing education program is the hallmark of quality. ANCC is the nation’s leader in accreditation of continuing nursing education programs.

ANCC produces a variety of educational services and products to support those seeking certification, Magnet recognition, or accreditation. Review and resource manuals, review seminars, and web-based learning all support individuals who are on the path to certification. ANCC’s National Magnet Conference™, workshops, and consulting services support organizations on the Journey to Nursing Excellence. Consultants are available to assist organizations that provide continuing nursing education accreditation programs in achieving the highest caliber education.

ANCC is passionate about helping nurses on their journey to nursing excellence.

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) is a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA).

ANA is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by ANCC’s Commission on Accreditation.

ANA is approved as a provider by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider number 6178.