

CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND POLICIES
INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION ON ALLIED HEALTH PERSONNEL IN
OPHTHALMOLOGY (IJCAHPO®)

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1. About this Handbook

This handbook provides an overview of the International Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (IJCAHPO) certification and recertification processes and procedures.

2. IJCAHPO Purpose

IJCAHPO's purpose is to determine through examination if an individual has acquired both theoretical and practical knowledge of allied ophthalmic care. In addition, through the acquisition of continuing education credits or through re-examination, all IJCAHPO certificants are required to stay relevant with the ongoing changes in the field of ophthalmology.

3. What is Certification?

Certification is the process by which a nongovernmental agency or 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 and skills in defined content areas based on predetermined standards.

4. Statement of Non-Discrimination

IJCAHPO does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. IJCAHPO is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for certificants, non-certificants, members of the staff, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, and vendors.

5. About IJCAHPO Examinations

IJCAHPO certification examinations are in a multiple-choice format, and some examinations include the successful completion of the computer-simulated Skill Evaluation and Performance Test. IJCAHPO examinations are designed to objectively assess entry-level competency of Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP).

IJCAHPO accredits specific examinations with the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

6. Special Testing Accommodations

The purpose of special accommodations is to provide candidates equal access to IJCAHPO's examinations. Accommodations are matched with the identified functional limitation so that the area of impairment is relieved with an auxiliary aid or an adjustment to the testing procedure. Functional limitation refers to the aspect of a disability that interferes with an individual's ability to function; that is what someone cannot do on a regular and continual basis due to their disability.

IJCAHPO and its test vendors do not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and make every effort to reasonably accommodate candidates with documented disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability as defined under the ADA, you must notify IJCAHPO by submitting a report regarding your request from your physician or a qualified healthcare professional. The information must be on the physician's or other qualified healthcare professional's letterhead, typed, dated, and signed by the healthcare professional.

The report must document the following information to be considered:

- A specific diagnosis and date of diagnosis.
- Specific and current findings that support your diagnosis (relevant medical history, tests administered, and date of the most current evaluation, within the last 3 years).

- A description of substantial day-to-day functional limitations resulting from stated disabilities.
- Specific recommendations for testing accommodation(s) including a detailed explanation why the accommodation is needed. If the accommodation includes extra time, please indicate the amount of time requested.

ADA Confidentiality: IJCAHPO strictly adheres to a policy of confidentiality and does not disclose names of applicants with disabilities or information concerning the application or accompanying documentation. Examinations administered with accommodations are not identified to third-party score recipients and are scored no differently than examinations of other certification candidates

7. Examination Development

The IJCAHPO multiple-choice certification examinations are developed by the Certification Examination Committee, which includes ophthalmologists and job incumbents who are certified AOP and serve as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). A variety of reference materials are used to create examination questions.

The Committee analyzes professional skills and abilities from role delineation studies, that provide the evidence for the test content outline or blueprint. Items are reviewed by the Examination Development Task Force and pilot-tested to ensure validity and psychometric quality before being used as scored items on actual examinations. IJCAHPO adheres to specific educational and psychological testing standards regarding the development of items, ensuring the items are appropriate for the level of candidates being tested. This includes editing, coding, and referencing items to the approved test content outlines and reference books, and screening items for bias and stereotypes.

Items for the examination content are selected that reflect the test content areas and item distributions. The validity of and reliability of the examinations are monitored by IJCAHPO.

8. Examination Content Outline

For each certification examination, IJCAHPO provides an Examination Content Outline that identifies the areas included on the examination. This is the roadmap to the examination. The percentage and number of questions in each of the major categories of the scored portion of the examination are indicated.

9. Examination Scoring

The examination passing score is set by the Committee working with a psychometrician, using a modified Angoff method that is nationally accepted for professional examinations. This method allows the Committee to determine the minimum standard of knowledge and skill necessary to perform the AOP's job. Passing scores are confidential and not released. The passing score is not based on a straight percentage or a curve, nor does the performance of other test-takers affect how a candidate's performance will be judged. Certification examinations are updated every five years.

10. General Requirements for Initial Certification

IJCAHPO candidates must meet the eligibility requirements for the certification examination that is being sought. If the candidate does not meet the eligibility requirements when they apply, they will not be permitted to take a certification examination.

11. Special Considerations

If an applicant does not meet the IJCAHPO eligibility criteria, but believes that their education, training, and/or experience are equivalent, they may request special consideration. People who received ophthalmic training outside the United States and Canada may be among those qualifying for special consideration.

The special consideration process is designed to serve an applicant who's educational and/or employment background is different from the established eligibility criteria but may be deemed equivalent. Contact the

IJCAHPO Certification Department for information on the documentation required to support special consideration requests. Each request is examined on an individual basis and the determination process may take six to eight weeks. Special consideration is not offered to candidates who qualify under the established criteria but have chosen not to do so.

12. Certification Examination Preparation

IJCAHPO examinations are designed to cover the knowledge and skills needed by Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) in a variety of settings.

Study Resources

IJCAHPO uses multiple reference sources in the design of its examinations, so it is beneficial to study from multiple sources. IJCAHPO offers a variety of examination study materials and review courses for purchase.

References

Multiple texts and resources are used to develop the certification examinations. The list of resources is located on IJCAHPO's website and is provided to aid in the preparation of the examination. It is not intended to be inclusive.

Study Guides and Quick Study Cards

IJCAHPO offers study guides and quick study cards for the Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA), Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT), and the Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist (COMT) certifications. The materials are available for purchase on IJCAHPO's website and Bookstore.

Please note: Purchasing these products is not a requirement to sit for the actual certification examinations. Completion of these or any other sample questions does not imply eligibility for certification or successful performance on any certification examination.

Study Plan

- Approximately 6 months before you take your examination, develop a plan of formal study.
- Include topics for study, a timetable, resources, and methods of study that work for you.
- Schedule regular times to study. Avoid cramming as it is counterproductive.
- Try to schedule your study periods in one-hour increments.
- The key is to have a study plan that works for you and follow through on it.
- Refer to your study plan regularly.
- Stick to your schedule.
- Take breaks when you get tired.
- If you start procrastinating, seek help from a friend or reorganize your study plan.
- It is not necessary to follow your plan rigidly. Adjust as you learn where you need to spend more time.

Study Recommendations

You must have basic content knowledge. In addition, you must be able to use this information to think critically and make decisions based on facts. Learn the basics of the content areas you will be required to know.

- Taking a review course is an excellent way to assess your knowledge of the examination content. Take the course well before your examination date so you have ample time to master any areas of weakness that the course uncovers. Candidates tend to study what they know. This will not aid in mastery of unfamiliar content. Concentrate on those areas where your knowledge is not as strong.
- Don't expect to know everything in every content area. Use the percentage and number of questions in each of the content areas to further refine what to focus on. Common clinical knowledge questions will appear on the examination rather than rare or atypical clinical outcomes.

- Stop studying for the examination when you start to feel overwhelmed and look at what is bothering you. Make changes to your study plan when you start to feel this way.
- Break overwhelming tasks into smaller tasks that you know you can do.
- Stop and take breaks while studying.

Examination Tips

- Thoroughly read each question, and answer it, before looking at choices.
- Conserve mental energy.
- Never assume information that is not given.
- All information needed to answer the questions is provided.
- Each examination includes 10 unscored questions that may be used on future examinations. You will not know which questions are unscored.
- Answer questions that you are confident in the answer first and return to those that you feel less confident about later.
- Answer ALL examination questions.

Day Before the Examination

- Don't study.
- Review the test center or online proctored (whichever is applicable) examination guidelines.
- Take time for yourself.
- Eat properly throughout the day.
- Get a good night's rest.
- Be sure you have the appropriate identification for the test center or online proctor.

Day of the Examination

- Eat a nutritious meal.
- Confirm the test center location or online proctoring connection requirements.
- Give yourself adequate time to drive to the test center if applicable.

13. Test Center Examination Procedures

Appointments

Candidates may schedule their examination at a Pearson VUE test center upon receipt of the confirmation notice. Candidates may use the toll-free number (888) 231-1929 or go online to www.pearsonvue.com/jcahpo to schedule their examination. A current list of test sites may also be viewed at www.pearsonvue.com/jcahpo by selecting "Find a Test Site."

IJCAHPO does not control test site availability or examination scheduling. To avoid scheduling complications, schedule examination times promptly after receiving the confirmation notice.

Failure to Schedule

Candidates who fail to schedule an appointment within the 90-day eligibility period indicated on the confirmation notice will forfeit their application fee and a new application and fee will be required to reapply for the examination.

Identification

Admission to the test center requires two forms of approved identification. The first and last name that the candidate uses to register must match exactly the first and last name on both IDs that are presented on the day of their examination. All IDs required must be issued by the country in which the candidate is testing. If

the candidate does not have a qualifying primary ID issued from the country they are testing in, an International Travel Passport from their country of citizenship is required, along with a secondary ID. The candidate is required to present two forms of original (no photocopies or digital IDs), valid (unexpired) IDs; one form as a primary ID (government issued with name, recent recognizable photo, and signature) and one form as a secondary ID (with at least a name and signature, or name and recent recognizable photo). All expired forms of ID are unacceptable unless accompanied by valid renewal papers.

1. After identification has been confirmed, the candidate will be escorted into the testing room and assigned a testing station. Candidates may not bring any personal items with them into the testing room. A virtual tour showing candidates what to expect upon arrival at the Pearson VUE test center can be viewed at www.pearsonvue.com.
2. The test center proctor will provide candidates with a white board for use during testing. The white board must be returned to the test proctor upon completion of the examination.
3. Candidates have two minutes to respond to the non-disclosure agreement.
4. If the candidate has any computer-related questions or concerns during the examination, test center proctors are available for assistance. Proctors will not answer specific test questions.
5. Test center proctors will not answer questions related to the examination content areas or specific items.
6. One question at a time will appear on the computer screen during the multiple-choice examination. Candidates will have the option to answer the question or mark the question for review.
7. At the end of the multiple-choice examination, candidates may return to the examination items that were marked for review, provided there is time remaining.
8. Candidates must finish the examination within the time allowed. An onscreen timer will display in the upper right corner of the examination and an onscreen warning will appear when there is five minutes remaining.
9. After completing the examination, candidates will be asked to complete a short online survey about their testing experience. Comments are routinely reviewed to continuously improve the examination process.

Appointment Changes, Cancellations, or Eligibility Extensions

- Requests to cancel an application (prior to scheduling an appointment with Pearson VUE) must be received in writing before the end of the 90-day eligibility period and a processing fee is retained.
- To cancel a scheduled examination appointment without a fee, candidates are required to contact Pearson VUE at least 30 business days prior to the scheduled appointment. If cancellation is 5–29 business days before the appointment, Pearson VUE will collect a \$25 fee.
- If cancellation is within the allowed time-period, candidates may either reschedule with Pearson VUE or request a refund in writing from IJCAHPO. All requests for refunds must be received within the 90-day eligibility period and a processing fee is retained. No refunds will be issued for cancellations that do not conform to this policy.
- Failure to appear for the examination or arrival more than 15 minutes late for a scheduled appointment will result in the inability to test and payment of a no-show fee prior to rescheduling.
- Candidates who are unable to take the examination within the 90-day eligibility period may apply for a one-time 30-day eligibility extension by submitting a written request to IJCAHPO and extension fee prior to the end of the 90-day eligibility period.
- Candidates who are unable to take the examination and cannot cancel or reschedule within the required time period due to a personal emergency, may request consideration to reschedule the examination without paying an additional fee by contacting IJCAHPO in writing. A description of the emergency must be included in the written request, and supporting documentation (e.g., doctor's note) must be included. Rescheduling without an additional fee is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Termination of Examination Administration/Grounds for Dismissal

Candidates are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional manner at the test center. Any person who violates the Examination Confidentiality Policy will be subject to review and possible disciplinary action(s). The test center proctor is authorized to dismiss candidates from an examination administration and the candidate's results may be canceled, or other appropriate action will be taken, when there is a reasonable basis for concluding that the candidate has engaged in any of the following conduct:

1. Using or attempting to use someone else to take the examination.
2. Failing to provide acceptable personal identification.
3. Having access to or using notes or any prohibited aid related to the examination.
4. Creating a disturbance (disruptive behavior in any form will not be tolerated; the test center proctor has sole discretion in determining whether specific conduct constitutes disruptive behavior).
5. Communicating, in any manner, with another person other than the test center proctor about the examination during the administration, including attempting to give or receive assistance.
6. Eating or drinking in the testing room.
7. Leaving the testing room or test center vicinity without permission.
8. Removing or attempting to remove any items, including examination-related material or portions of a test in any format from the testing room.
9. Attempting to tamper with a computer.
10. Engaging in any dishonest or unethical conduct.
11. Failing to follow any examination administration regulations set forth in this procedures and policy documentation, instructions given by the test center proctor, or specified in any examination materials.

14. Online Proctored Examination Procedures

IJCAHPO offers select certification examinations in an online proctored environment. Online proctoring allows candidates to take examinations at their convenience while ensuring the integrity of examination results.

Authorization

Specific IJCAHPO examination candidates who have paid the appropriate fees and have met the examination eligibility criteria will be authorized to sit for their certification examination in an online proctored environment.

Scheduling

Once a candidate is authorized by IJCAHPO to sit for an online examination, they are notified via email to schedule a proctoring appointment within their 90-day eligibility period. Candidates can select a date and time that accommodates their schedule. Once the examination is scheduled, a confirmation is sent by email that confirms the appointment and includes further instructions.

Taking the Examination

To ensure a smooth examination experience, candidates are required to consult the technical requirements before taking an online proctored examination. Refer to "What do I need to take an online proctored examination?" (<https://support.questionmark.com/content/technical-requirements-online-proctored-exam>) for more information.

Candidates will need to ensure the following are functional and enabled for real-time communication via Zoom with the exam proctor.

- A browser with pop-up blocker disabled.
- A built-in or external webcam and microphone.
- Internet speed must be at least 2 Mbps download and 2 Mbps upload.

Testing of real-time communication components:

- The candidate will be required to test real-time communication components and band-width.
- Online proctoring uses Zoom, a web-conferencing application for real-time communication. You will be prompted to install or run it in the process of connecting with the proctor. Candidates do not have to install Zoom ahead of time.
- Once connected to the examination, further guidance will be provided from the proctor.

At the time of a candidate's appointment, they will be required to log into the QuestionMark portal, and click their My Assessments tab. The candidate's appointment will appear on their My Assessment page. A launch link will be enabled 15 minutes prior to the candidate's appointment and until 30 minutes after the scheduled appointment.

Clicking the "Launch" link will initiate the examination appointment and the proctoring system will launch in a new window and will begin the "Authentication" process.

At this point, candidates will be expected to follow the onscreen prompts, which allow connection to the proctor. The proctor will expect a candidate to use their webcam for the proctor to inspect the test-taking environment and ensure the security and integrity of the examination. A secure testing environment means:

- Candidate is alone in the room.
- Candidate's desk and work area are clear.
- Candidate is connected to a power source.
- Candidate cannot leave their seat.
- No phone or headphones.
- No dual monitors.
- No talking.
- Webcam, speakers, and microphones must remain on throughout the examination.
- Candidate must be visible to the proctor for the duration of the examination.

The candidate will be presented with examination agreements. The proctor will not release examination content unless the candidate answers "yes" to the examination agreements.

After consenting to the candidate agreements, the candidate is prompted to begin their examination. The proctor will unlock the examination, allowing the candidate to proceed. The proctor will monitor the candidate through real-time audio/video through the entire examination process. The proctor can pause or terminate an examination if a candidate is not following the rules. The candidate may speak to the proctor, if necessary, at any time during the examination, however they will not answer questions regarding the examination content.

Failure to Schedule

Candidates who fail to schedule an appointment within the 90-day eligibility period indicated on the confirmation notice will forfeit their application fee and a new application and fee will be required to reapply for the examination.

Identification

The candidate is required to present two forms of original (no photocopies or digital IDs), valid (unexpired) IDs; one form as a primary ID (government issued with name, recent recognizable photo, and signature) and one form as a secondary ID (with at least a name and signature, or name and recent recognizable photo). All expired forms of ID are unacceptable unless accompanied by valid renewal papers.

Appointment Changes, Cancellations, or Eligibility Extensions

- Online proctored examination candidates may change their appointment dates without a fee within their 90-day eligibility period.

- Candidates may cancel their examination appointment without a fee anytime during the 90-day eligibility period. (Online proctored examinations ONLY)
- Failure to appear for the examination or arrival more than 15 minutes late for a scheduled appointment will result in the inability to test and payment of a no-show fee prior to rescheduling.
- Candidates who are unable to take the examination within the 90-day eligibility period indicated on the confirmation notice may apply for a one-time 30-day eligibility extension by submitting a written request to IJCAHPO and extension fee prior to the end of the 90-day eligibility period.
- Candidates who are unable to take the examination and cannot cancel or reschedule within the required time period due to a personal emergency, may request consideration to reschedule the examination without paying an additional fee by contacting IJCAHPO in writing. A description of the emergency must be included in the written request, and supporting documentation (e.g., doctor's note) must be included. Rescheduling without an additional fee is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Potential Termination of Examination Administration/Grounds for Dismissal

- Candidates speaking aloud during the examination.
- Candidate looking off screen repeatedly.
- Candidate is not alone in the room.
- Candidate interrupted by another person during the examination.
- Candidate accessing forbidden items such as: papers, phone, recording devices, etc.
- Candidate's webcam or audio feed is terminated during the examination.
- Candidate loses connection the proctor.

15. Consenting Agreements

All IJCAHPO examinations include: A Verification of Examination, Audio Visual Recording Acceptance, and Non-Disclosure Agreement, which are included in the overall examination time-period.

16. Skill Evaluations and Performance Tests

The COT Skill Evaluation and COMT Performance Test are delivered remotely via Zoom. Appointments are scheduled Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Central time.

Candidates are required to have a computer/laptop with a camera, microphone, and reliable internet access to test. The examination is not deliverable via Chromebook, tablet, or phone. Candidates are also required to use a mouse and not the tracking pad on the computer while testing. Candidates will be required to show valid identification to the camera prior to testing.

After the examination appointment is scheduled, candidates will receive a Zoom invitation as well as a Rules agreement and Disclaimer/Waiver to sign and return to IJCAHPO. The signed agreements must be received prior to the date of the examination. The examination may be terminated if the rules provided are not followed.

Tutorials

The Skill Evaluation and Performance Test tutorials are developed to provide candidates an opportunity to become familiar with how to maneuver through the simulation and offer important notes to remember while testing. IJCAHPO strongly recommends that all candidates spend a minimum of one hour reviewing the information contained in these tutorials. The tutorials are available online and must be viewed through IJCAHPO's Flash Player. Instructions will be sent to candidates regarding the applicable tutorial prior to testing.

Checklists

Candidates are provided a checklist for either the Skill Evaluation or the Performance Test that contains a detailed list of steps needed to perform each examination task correctly. The checklist outlines which steps must be performed in a specific order. IJCAHPO acknowledges that there are multiple techniques that can be used; however, the Skill Evaluation and Performance Test are based on industry standard practices.

Computer-Simulated Practical Examination Construction and Scoring

The computer-simulated practical examination scoring system is based on performance steps and the candidate is evaluated on how well each task is performed. The system includes these elements:

- Each skill is scored independently.
- Each skill is scored on two components: technique and accuracy of results. To determine the technique score, each skill is divided into steps. Each step is assigned a weighted value based upon its level of importance to the overall process, as determined by a panel of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). Points are assigned for correct responses based upon the weight value of the step. A minimum has been established for achieving a “satisfactory” score. If this established minimum is not met, a “non-satisfactory” score will be assigned. Note: Only technique is scored for Visual Fields on the Skill Evaluation since the candidate is not required to report results for this skill.
- To evaluate the accuracy of results, a panel of SMEs established tolerance ranges for each of the required categories. To receive a “satisfactory” score on accuracy of results, all required results must fall within the tolerance ranges. Otherwise, a “non-satisfactory” score will be assigned.
- A satisfactory score in all seven tasks is needed to successfully complete the Skill Evaluation and a satisfactory score in all five tasks is needed to successfully complete the Performance Test.
- There are three possible outcomes for the initial Skill Evaluation and Performance Test:
 - Pass – Candidate successfully completes all skills on the examination.
 - Conditional Pass – Candidate successfully completed some, but not all, of the skills on the examination. In this case, you receive a “conditional” pass and will have the opportunity to retest in the areas that were not successfully completed, provided they are within the required time-period and have not completed the examination more times than allowed.
 - Fail – Candidate did not successfully complete any of the skills on the examination. In this case, the candidate must reapply and repeat the entire examination, provided they are within the required time-period and have not completed the examination more times than allowed.

Candidates Pending Successful Completion of Practical Examinations

Non-certified candidates, who have passed the COT multiple-choice examination but have conditionally passed, failed, or chosen to delay the COT Skill Evaluation, may be granted a certificate at the COA level if they submit a written request to IJCAHPO. If a COT candidate is currently certified as a COA, they must maintain their COA certification while pursuing their COT certification.

Non-certified candidates, who have passed the COMT multiple-choice examination but have conditionally passed, failed, or chosen to delay the COT Skill Evaluation and COMT Performance Test, may be granted certification at the COA level if they submit a written request to IJCAHPO. Candidates who have passed the COMT multiple-choice examination and the COT Skill Evaluation, but conditionally passed, failed, or have chosen to delay the COMT Performance Test, may be granted certification at the COT level if they submit a written request to IJCAHPO. If a COMT candidate is currently certified as a COT, the COT certification must be maintained while pursuing the COMT certification.

17. Official Examination Results

After the examination, a printed Performance Report, indicating whether you passed or failed the examination and the percentage of questions that were answered correctly in each content area, will be provided to you upon completion of your examination.

A printed copy of your unofficial pass/fail result is available upon completion of your examination. You should carefully review the document and expect to receive official examination results within 4 weeks after the examination. Official results are sent by mail only.

It is important to know that preliminary results are not official and candidates who use the preliminary Performance Report or any other documentation other than the formal certificate as evidence to their employers that they passed an IJCAHPO certification examination do so at their own risk.

18. Performance Report

In addition to indicating whether a candidate has passed or failed an examination, the Performance Report provides indicators on each of the content areas (the high-level topics of the examination plan) covered by the examination. The specific content areas for each of IJCAHPO's certification examinations can be found in the Criteria for Certification and Recertification handbook.

The percentages indicated in the content areas reflect the number of items (questions) that were passed in that content area. The content area information is designed to provide you with feedback about how you performed in each of the examination content areas. If you did not pass the examination, you can use this feedback to determine how to best spend your time reviewing and preparing for a retest examination. If you passed the examination, you may still use this feedback to help improve your knowledge or skill in a particular area where the percentage was less than satisfactory.

It is important to note that the level a candidate received in each content area on one examination will NOT guarantee that the candidate will receive the same or higher level on any examination retest. The percentages indicated are indicative of the candidate's results for the specific examination associated with the Performance Report. Each examination administration may use a different examination form and it is unlikely that a retest examination will be the same as the prior examination.

It is important to note that the percentages of the content areas on the Performance Report cannot be "added" up to the overall outcome of the examination.

The Performance Report as a Study Guide

If you are preparing to retake an IJCAHPO certification examination, you should spend time reviewing the performance report content area tasks for which the percentages were less than adequate. IJCAHPO does not require candidates to use IJCAHPO study materials, however you may be able to better prepare to retest by using these materials and to measure your understanding of the tasks associated with the examination content area where your percentage results were lower than expected.

While you should spend time focusing study time on content areas that were lower than expected, you should not exclude the content areas where the percentage was adequate. Utilizing the practice tests will allow you to check your content area performance.

It is important to understand that achieving a high score on the practice test does not guarantee a passing score on the actual examination. The questions are not the same questions on the certification examinations, but like the certification examination, practice items are linked to the examination content areas.

Some IJCAHPO certification examinations are comprised of a relatively low number of questions, and it is possible that a candidate's mistake on one or two examination questions will have an adverse effect on their Performance Report and could reflect a lower percentage that may not accurately reflect the candidate's knowledge of the subject.

19. Validation of Results

IJCAHPO provides valid and high integrity of reported examination results. On rare occasions, occurrences such as a computer malfunction or misconduct by a candidate may cause an examination result to be suspect.

Examination result data may be analyzed for anomalies, errors, and if any incidents are reported for test misconduct. If anomalies or errors that impact scoring are found, the examination will be re-scored, and the candidate will be advised if the re-score impacts whether the candidate passed or failed the examination. If

misconduct is suspected, an investigation will be launched. A finding of misconduct may invalidate examination results. IJCAHPO reserves the right to invalidate and/or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, violations of IJCAHPO's regulations are discovered. Candidates are expected to fully cooperate with any investigation.

20. Certification Upon Passing All Required Examinations

A paper certificate and wallet card will be issued to all credential holders who have passed the required examinations and shall include:

- Credential holder's name
- Credential holder's IJCAHPO ID number
- Credential title
- IJCAHPO as the certificate issuer
- Signature of IJCAHPO authorizing agent(s)
- Certificate term of validity
- IJCAHPO Seal
- Initial date of IJCAHPO certification

21. Use of Credentials

Candidates who have been approved and passed IJCAHPO's certification examination(s) may use the appropriate credentials for their certification level and maintain their certification based on IJCAHPO's recertification criteria.

22. American Council on Education – College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE Credit®)

The ACE recommendation service is applicable for certifications earned between March 1, 2019, through February 28, 2022. ACE Credit evaluated IJCAHPO certifications and have currently recommended college credit as follows:

- COA – 12 semester hours in the lower-division baccalaureate/associate degree category
- COT – 18 semester hours in the lower-division baccalaureate/associate degree category
- COMT – 15 semester hours in the upper-division baccalaureate degree category

Your Questions Regarding ACE College Credit Answered

1. What were the previous dates of ACE Credit recommendation acceptance? Can someone still use those dates to claim college credit?

The ACE Credit previously approved college credit recommendation for certifications received from January 1, 1997, through January 31, 2008, and December 1, 2014, through February 28, 2019. If you received your COA, COT, or COMT during those time periods, you may submit a request for a transcript to ACE Credit.

2. If someone is currently certified, but not within the dates being accepted, can they retest, pass the examination, and claim college credit?

Yes, you may apply to retest in lieu of credits for recertification. The date you pass the examination may be used for submission to ACE Credit.

3. Would this apply to anyone who recertifies or only to NEW certificants?

This applies to new certification dates ONLY, not the dates of recertification. However, you may take the examination in lieu of credits for recertification and then the date you pass the examination may be used for submission to ACE Credit.

For more information:

https://documents.jcahpo.org/documents/Certification/IJCAHPO_CollegeCreditInfo.pdf

23. Refund Requests for Higher Credentials

Candidates who achieve a higher-level certification (e.g., a COA who obtained a COT or COT who obtained a COMT certification) may request a pro-rated refund of their current recertification fee. Candidates must submit the refund request in writing to IJCAHPO's Certification Department within 60 days of achieving the new credential.

24. Retaking Certification Examinations

Candidates who did not pass their assigned certification examination on the first attempt will be sent a retest application with their official examination results. For a limited time-period, candidates can retake the examination at a lower price. Candidates have 12 months from their initial test date to submit two multiple-choice retest applications. If the candidate does not pass the second retest application, a waiting period of 12 months from the initial test date is required, after which the candidate will need to submit a new application with all required supporting documentation and fees.

25. Appeal Procedures

Candidates may appeal determinations related to ineligibility or examination results. The appeal must be in writing and received within 30 days of being notified of examination results or ineligibility. The appeal should be addressed to the Secretary of Certification and include: a detailed written explanation of the grounds for the appeal, any evidence or documentation to support the reason a decision should be overturned, and the appeal fee. The burden of proof is the responsibility of the candidate.

26. Confidentiality and Use of Certificant Information

IJCAHPO has established policies and procedures to ensure the integrity of its examination procedures and protect candidate privacy.

- IJCAHPO reserves the right to use, for any purpose, all examination data in aggregate report, related to examination performance. Release of such data will NOT include names or personal, identifiable information.
- Performance feedback reports providing data on examination performance will be released only to the candidate.
- All examination content and materials are strictly confidential and will not be released to anyone except those involved in the development and administration of the examination.
- The name of individuals who are newly certified, who have advanced to a higher level of certification, or whose certifications may have expired, may be published by IJCAHPO, or provided to the public without authorization.
- IJCAHPO may provide verification of certification status without authorization.

27. Scope of Practice of the Allied Ophthalmic Profession

Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) are individuals qualified through academic and clinical experience to provide patient care and assistance to ophthalmologists and may hold professional credentials.

AOP responsibilities include assisting in the diagnostic evaluation, management, treatment, education, and care of patients with medical and surgical conditions affecting the visual system. Their Scope of Practice includes the application of technology and the use of protocols across all healthcare delivery sites including, but not limited to, the hospital, clinic, and physician's office. They enter acquired clinical data and dictated information from

the physician into paper or Electronic Medical Records (EMR). These activities are supported by education, research, and administration.

AOP may not diagnose, or treat eye disorders, and may not prescribe medications; they are not independent practitioners. They can provide diagnostic information and clinical data in the ophthalmic examination to the physician, who is treating patients, and may assist in surgery, patient education, and compliance with prescribed treatment. It is not within the AOP's Scope of Practice to perform any injection technique or similar invasive procedures that involve the placement of needles, trocars, cannulas, or installation devices with and beneath tissue surfaces.

Patient and family education activities are to promote knowledge and understanding of the eye disease process, medical therapy, and self-help. Public education activities focus on the promotion of visual eye health and wellness.

Assisting in the performance of clinical and diagnostic activities may include, but is not limited to:

1. Obtaining and documenting patient histories
2. Maintaining and repairing equipment and instruments
3. Determining visual acuity including pupillary and visual acuity assessments
4. Performing tests, evaluations, and studies of the visual system including visual fields, keratometry, ocular motility, PAM, and osmolarity
5. Performing automated and subjective refraction without prescribing
6. Performing ophthalmic imaging
7. Administering eye drops, ointments, and irrigating solutions to the eye, and knowledge about oral medications and non-invasive techniques
8. Assisting with corrective lenses including spectacles and contact lenses (e.g., lensometry, etc.)
9. Performing supplemental testing
10. Performing office duties and clinical tasks – entering data into the EMR
11. Providing patient services

Assisting with patient treatments, interventions, procedures, and management may include, but is not limited to, the application and monitoring of:

1. Administration of pharmacological agents related to eye care procedures as prescribed and supervised by the physician, including but not limited to topical anesthetics, fluorescein, and other topical dyes, dilating agents, miotics, and pressure lowering eye drops
2. Acquisition and processing of microbiological specimens; preparation and labeling of microscope slides and culture media for cultures obtained by the physician
3. Measurement of intraocular pressure (tonometry)
4. Performing automated and manual refraction for diagnostic purposes
5. Performing amblyopia treatment: patching, drops, prisms, etc.
6. Performing surgical procedures

Assisting in the performance of ophthalmic surgical activities may include, but is not limited to:

1. Pre-operative preparation of the patient
2. Preparation of surgical instruments and equipment
3. Proper aseptic technique
4. Induction of ophthalmic anesthesia

5. Surgical procedures
6. Surgical complications
7. Ophthalmic surgical pharmacology
8. Minor surgical and therapeutic procedures
9. Post-operative education

Performing imaging and other activities that may include but is not limited to:

1. Examination techniques: fundus photography, external photography, Optical Coherence Tomography, A-scan, and B-scan
2. Ultrasonography and ultrasound biomicroscopy
3. Proper maintenance of instruments
4. Intraocular lens power calculations

28. Standards of Ethics of the Allied Ophthalmic Profession

The Standards of Ethics of the International Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (IJCAHPO) shall apply to persons holding certificates from IJCAHPO that are either currently certified and to persons applying for certification by IJCAHPO to become certificants (Candidates). Certification is a method of assuring the medical community and the public that an individual is qualified to practice within the profession. Because the public relies on certificates issued by IJCAHPO, it is essential that certificate holders and candidates act consistently with these Standards of Ethics. IJCAHPO does not guarantee the job performance of any credential holder or applicant. The IJCAHPO Board of Directors does not express an opinion regarding the competence of any certificants or applicant. Allied ophthalmic healthcare is a multi-specialty field comprised of ophthalmic assistants, technicians, and technologists (with sub-specialties in surgical, ultrasound biometry and sonography) and other midlevel eye care team members.

The Standards of Ethics are intended to be consistent with the Mission Statement of IJCAHPO, and to promote the goals set forth in the Mission Statement.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the ethics requirements is to identify individuals who commit to a set of professional values that cause one to act in the best interest of the patients. These professional values and the resulting behavior are one element of IJCAHPO's definition to be certified. The Standards of Ethics provides guidance on what it means to be qualified and to motivate and promote a culture of ethical behavior within the profession. Behavior inconsistent with the Standards of Ethics shall have their IJCAHPO credential removed or restricted.

A. Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics shall serve as a guide by which certificate holders and candidates may evaluate their professional conduct as it relates to patients, healthcare consumers, employers, co-workers, and other members of the ophthalmic healthcare team. The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to aid certificate holders and candidates in maintaining a high level of ethical conduct and in providing for the protection, safety, and comfort of patients. Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) shall:

1. Act in a professional manner, respond to patient needs, and support co-workers and associates in providing quality patient care.
2. Deliver patient care and services unrestricted by the concerns of personal attributes or the nature of the disease or illness, and without discrimination based on sex, race, creed, religion, or socio-economic status.
3. Use theoretical knowledge and concepts, use equipment and accessories consistent with the purposes for which they were designed, employ procedures techniques appropriately, and perform services in accordance with the accepted standard of practice.
4. Assess situations; exercise care, discretion, and judgement; assume responsibility for professional decisions; and act in the best interest of the patient.

5. Act as an agent through observation and communication to obtain pertinent information for the ophthalmologist to aid in the diagnosis and treatment of the patient, and recognizes that interpretation and diagnosis are outside the scope of practice for the profession.
6. Practice ethical conduct appropriate to the profession and protect the patient's right to quality ophthalmologic care.
7. Respect the confidence entrusted in the course of professional practice, respect the patient's right to privacy, and reveal confidential information only as required by law or to protect the welfare of the individual or the community.
8. Continually strive to improve their knowledge and skills through the participation in continuing education and professional activities, sharing knowledge with colleagues, and investigating new aspects of professional practice.

B. Rules of Ethics

The Rules of Ethics form the second part of the Standards of Ethics. They are mandatory standards of minimally accepted professional conduct of all certificate holders and candidates. These Rules of Ethics are intended to promote the protection, safety, and comfort of patients. The Rules of Ethics are enforceable. IJCAHPO certificants are required to indicate any ethics violations, criminal charges, and convictions as required on initial and recertification applications.

Fraudulent or Deceptive Practices

1. Employing fraud or deceit in procuring or attempting to procure, maintain, reinstate, or renew certifications as issued by IJCAHPO. This includes the altering in any respect any document issued by IJCAHPO or indicating in writing certification and registration with IJCAHPO when that is not the case.
2. Engaging in false, fraudulent, deceptive, or misleading communications to any person regarding the individual's education, training, credentials, experience, or qualifications or the status of the individual's certification with IJCAHPO.
3. Knowingly engaging or assisting any person to engage in or otherwise participating in, abusive or fraudulent billing practices, including violations of federal laws or state/provincial medical assistance laws.
4. Subverting or attempting to subvert IJCAHPO's certification and registration processes by: making a false statement or knowingly providing false information to IJCAHPO; or failing to cooperate with any investigation by IJCAHPO.

Conduct and Scope of Practice – Failure to Conform to Minimally Acceptable Standards

1. Engaging in unprofessional conduct, including but not limited to:
 - a. Departure from or failure to conform to applicable federal, state, or local governmental rules regarding ophthalmic Scope of Practice.
 - b. Any ophthalmic practice that may create unnecessary danger to a patient's life, health, or safety.
2. Engaging in conduct with a patient that is sexual or may reasonably be interpreted by the patient as sexual, or in any verbal behavior that is seductive or sexually demeaning to a patient; or engaging in sexual exploitation of a patient or former patient. This also applies to unwanted sexual behavior, verbal or otherwise.
3. Engaging in any unethical conduct, including, but not limited to, conduct likely to deceive, defraud, or harm that public; or demonstrating a willful or careless disregard for the health, wealth, or safety of a patient. Actual injury need not be established for this clause to be effective.
4. Performing procedures which the individual is not competent to perform through appropriate training and/or education or experiences unless assisted or personally supervised by someone who is competent through training and/or education or experience.
5. Delegating or accepting the delegation of an ophthalmic function or any other prescribed healthcare function when the delegation or acceptance could reasonably be expected to create an unnecessary danger to a patient's life, health, or safety. Actual injury to a patient need not be established under this clause to be effective.

6. Actual or potential inability to practice allied ophthalmic patient care with reasonable skill and safety to patients by reason of illness; use of alcohol; drugs, chemicals, or any other material; as a result of any mental or physical condition.
7. Adjudication as mentally incompetent, mentally ill, chemically dependent, or dangerous to the public by a court of competent jurisdiction.
8. Improper management of patient records, including failure to maintain adequate patient records or to furnish a patient record or report required by law; or making, causing, or permitting anyone to make false, deceptive, misleading entry in any patient record.
9. Revealing privileged communication, providing false or misleading information from or relating to a former or current patient, except when otherwise required or permitted by law, or viewing, using, releasing, or otherwise failing to adequately protect the security or privacy of confidential patient information.

Violation of Government Laws and Regulations

1. Violating a state or federal narcotics or controlled substance law, even if not charged or convicted of a violation.
2. Violating a rule adopted by a state or federal regulatory authority or certification board resulting in the individual's certification/license being denied, revoked, suspended, placed on probation, or a consent agreement or order, voluntarily surrendered, subject to any conditions, or failing to report to IJCAHPO any of the violations or actions in this rule.
3. Convictions, criminal proceedings, or military court martial as described:
 - a. Conviction of a crime, including felony, a gross misdemeanor, or a misdemeanor. All alcohol and/or drug related violations must be reported; and/or
 - b. Criminal proceeding where a finding or verdict of guilt is made or returned, but the adjudication of guilt is either withheld, deferred, or not entered or the sentence is stayed; or a criminal proceeding where the individual does not admit to guilt to the criminal act and asserts innocence, a plea of guilty or no contest; or where the individual enters a pre-trial diversion activity; or military court martial related to any offense identified in these Rules of Ethics.
4. Failing to immediately report to the certificate holder's or candidate's supervisor information concerning an error made with the treatment or care for a patient. Errors include any departure from the standard of care that is maybe reasonably considered to be, unethical, or improper. Errors also include behavior that is negligent or should have occurred in connection with a patient's care but did not by omission. The duty to report exists whether or not the patient suffered any injury.

29. Purpose of Recertification

The purpose of certification renewal is to provide a mechanism to assure the public that IJCAHPO certified AOP have met current standards of knowledge and skills required to maintain their respective certification.

- Certification is time-limited, granted for 3-year periods, and must be renewed.
- IJCAHPO certified AOP must maintain professional competency based on current information and knowledge affecting their practice.
- Knowledge and skills required for professional and competent AOP evolve over time.
- Recertification requirements serve to measure and reassure the public of continued professional competence in AOP.
- Without a process for renewal of certification, a credential's value may diminish over time.

Recertification Application Audits

Certificants applying for recertification for the first time or recertifying late, are required to include copies of the evidence of credits earned with the recertification application. IJCAHPO also conducts random audits of recertification applications, requesting proof of attendance and credits earned for all CE courses listed on the application. It is advised to retain all documentation to verify credits in the event of an audit.

Recertification Alternative to Earning CE Credits

Individuals may retest at their most recent level of certification in lieu of earning continuing education credits. The certification must not be in a revoked status. COT and COMT certificants are only required to complete the multiple-choice examination to retest to recertify. Certificants that choose to retest in lieu of earning continuing education credits for recertification should submit the following:

- Application for Examination
- Examination Fee

Denial of Recertification

If, during the process of applying for recertification, allegations of a violation of the IJCAHPO Standards, Procedures, and Sanctions are investigated and proven true, this may result in the denial of recertification, either on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the circumstances. Certificants are expected to fully cooperate with the investigation.

Recertification Appeal Procedures

Any candidate may appeal determinations related to denial of recertification. The appeal must be in writing and received within 30 days of being notified of denial. The appeal should be addressed to the Secretary of Certification and include: a detailed written explanation of the grounds for the appeal, any evidence or documentation to support the reason a decision should be overturned, and the appeal fee. The burden of proof is the responsibility of the applicant. IJCAHPO's Secretary of Certification will submit the appeal to the members of the Appeal Committee for review, and a written notification of the Committee's decision will be mailed within 6 weeks of the initial appeal communication. If the initial appeal is denied, a second appeal may be sent to the IJCAHPO Certification Committee within 30 days of notice of the first appeal decision. The Certification Committee's decision is final and binding.

Recertification Special Consideration for Hardship

Individuals who are unable to complete the recertification requirements due to hardship have an opportunity to request a review of their case. A written request must be submitted to the Secretary of Certification. The request must be postmarked within 30 days of their recertification deadline and include detailed supporting documentation regarding the hardship. Examples of hardship include health, natural disasters, and extended active-duty military leave.

30. Non-Certified Status

Individuals who do not apply for recertification or miss the recertification deadline, will be placed on non-certified status. Individuals who are placed on non-certified status are not permitted to present themselves as IJCAHPO certificants; and they may not utilize the credential after their name on business cards, stationery, name badges, etc. From the time the individual is placed on non-certified status, they will have 6 months to apply for recertification before their credential becomes revoked. Within that 6-month period, the number of continuing education credits required to recertify does not increase, but a late fee will be assessed. Individuals will not receive a new recertification date if they recertify within the 6-month non-certified period. For example, if the individual is due to recertify in December 2022, but does not recertify until December 2023, the recertification cycle will remain December 2022 – December 2025. If the non-certified status continues for longer than 6 months, certification will be considered revoked. Individuals in revoked status are required to contact the IJCAHPO Certification Department for reinstatement options.

31. Revocation of Certification

IJCAHPO certification may be revoked for disciplinary reasons. Conduct which may initiate disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, supplying false information on the certification application, or supporting documentation, engaging in inappropriate or dishonest conduct during the examination, or otherwise failing to comply with the IJCAHPO Standards, Procedures, and Sanctions.

32. Standards, Procedures, and Sanctions

I. Basic Principles

IJCAHPO is an organization of ophthalmological societies and associations. IJCAHPO has established criteria for training, examination, certification, recertification, and utilization at various levels of expertise for AOP.

Certification by IJCAHPO means that the individual has fulfilled the educational requirements pertaining to specifically delegated technical ophthalmic services under the direction of an employing ophthalmologist, either in his or her private office, a medical clinic, a hospital, or other medical facility. IJCAHPO certification does not warrant the competence or job performance of certificants.

Certification by IJCAHPO is a non-exclusive and non-transferable right to use the applicable IJCAHPO certification designation(s) for the certification period, so long as the certificant remains in compliance with all IJCAHPO rules and requirements. IJCAHPO reserves the right to revise its rules and requirements at any time.

References herein to “individual(s)” include applicants for certification and recertification and current IJCAHPO certificants.

II. Eligibility for Certification and Recertification

- A. No individual may apply for certification or recertification, or maintain certification, unless they comply with all IJCAHPO rules and standards.

Certification or recertification may be denied, revoked, or otherwise affected for non-compliance with IJCAHPO rules and standards.

- B. The individual must truthfully complete and sign an application in the form provided by IJCAHPO and shall provide additional information as requested. The individual must notify IJCAHPO within thirty (30) days of occurrence of any change in name, address, telephone number, and any facts bearing on eligibility, certification, or recertification (including but not limited to):

1. Disciplinary action by a professional licensing board or professional organization.
2. Indictment, arrest, conviction, or plea of guilty to any felony or misdemeanor.
3. Any mental or physical condition which impairs the individual's ability to render objective and competent professional performance.

Applicants must refrain from correcting any statement concerning their certification status which is or becomes untrue or misleading.

Upon receipt of notice of any information referenced in Section II, B, or any other information bearing upon the individual's certification status, IJCAHPO may:

1. Request additional information from the individual, including, but not limited to, court records, evidence of rehabilitation, and related medical documentation.
2. Refer the matter to the Disciplinary Review Committee pursuant to Section VI of these rules.

- C. In applying for certification and recertification, and in maintaining current certification, all individuals agree that:

1. The individual will not use in any way the examinations, certificates, cards, logos, and emblems of IJCAHPO, the name “International Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology, Inc.”, the term “IJCAHPO”, and abbreviations relating thereto, and IJCAHPO's certification designations without the express prior written consent of IJCAHPO.
2. The individual shall immediately relinquish, refrain from using, and correct at the individual's expense, any outdated or other inaccurate use of any IJCAHPO certificates, cards, logos, emblems, names, and related abbreviations in case of suspension, limitation, or revocation by IJCAHPO or as otherwise requested by IJCAHPO.

- D. Unauthorized Use of IJCAHPO's Designations and Property

IJCAHPO will enforce all rights and legal remedies against any individual found to have misrepresented that they are certified by IJCAHPO when they are not or found to have engaged in unauthorized use or misappropriation of IJCAHPO property (as described in Section II, C). IJCAHPO may suspend eligibility for certification in such instances and may require the payment of damages and expenses, including attorney's fees, and a showing of rehabilitation before certification eligibility is permitted.

III. IJCAHPO Examinations

All examinations are delivered in English.

Where questions concerning a test score are raised, individuals are required to cooperate in any IJCAHPO review or investigation. IJCAHPO reserves the right to disregard or nullify any examination score if, in the sole opinion of IJCAHPO, there is adequate reason to question the validity of the score. IJCAHPO in its discretion may:

1. offer the individual an opportunity to take the examination again at no additional fee;
2. offer the individual an opportunity to take the examination again in the ordinary course, including payment of all fees; or
3. proceed as described in Section VI, below. No detail concerning the candidate's performance on specific examination items or the candidate's examination score will be provided.

All examination IJCAHPO Standards, Procedures, and Sanctions information and materials are confidential and will not be released to the candidate.

IV. Review of Application and Certification

A. Grounds for Action

The following are grounds for IJCAHPO to deny, revoke, or otherwise act upon certification or recertification eligibility:

1. Obtaining or attempting to obtain certification or recertification for oneself or another by fraud or deception of material fact in an application or any other communication to IJCAHPO, including but not limited to: (a) misstatement of a material fact, (b) failure to make statement of a material fact, or (c) failure to provide information requested by IJCAHPO.
2. Providing or attempting to provide ophthalmic services except as specifically delegated by an ophthalmologist.
3. Misrepresentation of IJCAHPO certification or certification status including, but not limited to, falsification of documents, use of credential while on non-certified status, and use of credentials without attainment.
4. Irregularity in connection with any IJCAHPO examination including, but not limited to, copying answers, or permitting another to copy answers for any examination.
5. Unauthorized distribution of, possession of, use of or access to pertinent materials or information regarding questions or answers relating to any IJCAHPO examination or other confidential IJCAHPO documents.
6. Gross or repeated negligence or malpractice in providing ophthalmic care.
7. Personal use of alcohol or any drug or substance to a degree which impairs professional performance providing ophthalmic care.
8. Any physical or mental condition which impairs competent professional ophthalmic care performance.
9. Physical or sexual abuse of a patient.
10. The conviction of plea of guilty, or plea of nolo contendere to a crime which is directly related to public health, safety, or professional performance providing ophthalmic care.
11. Failure to cooperate reasonably with any IJCAHPO investigation of a disciplinary matter.
12. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information.

- B. Sanctions may be applied for violations of any of the above grounds for action as set forth in Section VI, below.

V. Disciplinary Review Committee

The Disciplinary Review Committee is composed of three members, all of whom are members of the Certification Committee. A Committee member may not serve on any matter in which his or her impartiality or the presence of actual or apparent conflict of interest might reasonably be questioned. It is the responsibility of the Committee member to identify any potential conflict and to disclose all appropriate facts to the Secretary of Certification, who shall have final authority to determine whether the Disciplinary Review Committee member shall be replaced for that hearing.

VI. Review Procedures

A. Submission of Allegations

1. Allegations of a violation of IJCAHPO disciplinary rules are to be referred to IJCAHPO for disposition. A person concerned with possible violation of IJCAHPO's rules (the "complainant") must identify the person(s) alleged to be involved and the facts concerning the alleged conduct in as much detail and specificity as possible, with available documentation, in a written statement addressed to IJCAHPO's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The statement should identify by name, address, and telephone number the person making the information known to IJCAHPO and others who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the alleged conduct. The complainant may be required to supplement the information provided, or to provide a written complaint, notarized affidavit, release, or other documentation.
2. If a complainant is not available but the CEO has reason to believe there may have been a violation of an IJCAHPO rule, the CEO may still refer the matter to the Disciplinary Review Committee.
3. The CEO shall make an initial determination of the allegations of violation. The CEO shall determine whether (a) the allegations fail to state a violation of IJCAHPO's rules, or (b) good cause may exist to deny eligibility or question compliance with IJCAHPO's rules. If the CEO determines that the allegations fail to state a violation of IJCAHPO's rules, no further action shall be taken, and the IJCAHPO Board and complainant (if any) shall be notified of this decision. Appeals of such decisions by complainants may be made in the manner described in Section VII, B and C, except that no fees shall be paid, and no written decision shall be necessary. The CEO may not appeal a decision in a matter where there was no complainant.
4. If the CEO determines that a legitimate question of compliance with IJCAHPO's rules has been presented, the CEO shall transmit the allegations to the Disciplinary Review Committee.

B. Procedures of the Disciplinary Review Committee

1. The Disciplinary Review Committee shall review the allegations. If the Committee determines after such review that the complaint does not justify further inquiry into possible violation of IJCAHPO's disciplinary rules, no further action shall be taken. The IJCAHPO Board and the complainant (if any) shall be so informed. Appeals of such decisions may be made in the manner described in Section VII, B and C, except that no fees shall be paid, and no written decision shall be necessary. The CEO may not appeal a decision in a matter with no complainant.
2. If the Committee finds by majority vote that good cause exists to question whether a violation of an IJCAHPO rule has occurred, the Committee shall transmit a statement of allegations to the applicant or certificant by certified mail, return receipt requested, setting forth the applicable standard alleged to have been violated. This will state:
 - a. The facts constituting the alleged violation of the standard.
 - b. The applicant or certificant may request an oral hearing for the disposition of the allegations, with the applicant or certificant bearing his or her own expenses for such matter.
 - c. The applicant or certificant shall have fifteen (15) days after receipt of the statement to notify IJCAHPO if he or she disputes the allegations and/or requests an oral hearing on the record.

- d. The applicant or certificant may attend the hearing with or without the assistance of counsel, may question any witness, and produce evidence on their behalf.
 - e. The truth of allegations or failure to respond may result in sanctions. If the applicant or certificant does not dispute the allegations or request a hearing, the applicant or certificant consents that the Disciplinary Review Committee may render a decision and apply available sanctions (set out in Section VI, D).
3. IJCAHPO will not review such an application for certification until the Disciplinary Review Committee and/or the IJCAHPO Board of Directors renders a final decision on the complaint authorizing staff to proceed with reviewing the application.
 4. Where an applicant or certificant has failed to respond to a complaint in the manner provided for above or does not dispute the allegations or request a hearing, the applicant or certificant consents that the Disciplinary Review Committee may render a decision and apply available sanctions (set out in Section VI, D).

C. Hearing procedures if the applicant or certificant disputes the allegations or requests a hearing:

1. The Disciplinary Review Committee shall: (a) schedule a hearing after the request is received, allowing for an adequate period for preparation for the hearing; and (b) send by certified mail, return receipt requested, a Notice of Hearing to the applicant or certificant. The Notice of Hearing shall include a statement of the time and place of the hearing as selected by the Disciplinary Review Committee. The applicant or certificant may request modification of the date of the hearing for good cause.
2. The Disciplinary Review Committee shall maintain a verbatim oral or written transcript.
3. IJCAHPO and the applicant or certificant may consult with and be represented by counsel, make opening statements, present documents and testimony, question witnesses, make closing statements, and present written briefs as scheduled by the Disciplinary Review Committee. The extent of this activity is at the complete discretion of the Disciplinary Review Committee.
4. The Disciplinary Review Committee shall determine all matters relating to the hearing. The hearing and related matters shall be determined on the record by majority vote.
5. Formal rules of evidence shall not apply. Relevant evidence may be admitted. Disputed questions shall be determined by majority vote of the Disciplinary Review Committee.
6. Proof shall be by preponderance of the evidence.
7. Whenever mental or physical disability is alleged, the applicant or certificant may be required to undergo a physical or mental examination at the expense of the applicant or certificant. The report of such an examination shall become part of the evidence considered.
8. The Disciplinary Review Committee shall issue a written decision following the hearing and any briefing. The decision shall contain factual findings, conclusions, and any sanctions applied. It shall be mailed promptly by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the applicant or certificant.

D. Sanctions

Sanctions for violation of any IJCAHPO rule may include one or more of the following:

1. denial or suspension of eligibility;
2. re-examination or suspension from the examination process for one (1) year;
3. revocation;
4. non-renewal;
5. censure;
6. reprimand;
7. suspension;

8. training, education, treatment, or other corrective action;
9. probation for up to five (5) years; and
10. conditions relating to the above. A failure to comply with conditions of sanctions (such as corrective action) may result in a re-evaluation of sanctions by the Committee issuing the sanctions.

VII. Appeal Procedures

- A. If the decision of the Disciplinary Review Committee finds that the allegations are not established, no further action on the appeal shall occur and the individual shall be notified.
- B. If the decision rendered by the Disciplinary Review Committee is not favorable to the applicant or certificant, and the applicant or certificant alleges that the decision of the Disciplinary Review Committee was arbitrarily or capriciously rendered, the decision may be appealed to the IJCAHPO Board of Directors.

The ground for appeal is limited to only those adverse decisions alleged to have been arbitrarily or capriciously rendered. The applicant or certificant may appeal the adverse determination by submitting a written appeals statement within thirty (30) days following receipt of the decision of the Disciplinary Review Committee.

The appropriate filing fee must accompany the written appeals statement. This fee may be waived in instances of documented and severe financial hardship. IJCAHPO, through its CEO or a designee, may file a written response to the statement of the applicant or certificant.

- C. The IJCAHPO Board of Directors by majority vote shall render a decision on the record below without hearing, although written briefs or other submissions may be submitted at the request and discretion of the IJCAHPO Board of Directors.
- D. The decision of the IJCAHPO Board of Directors shall be rendered in writing following any briefing. The decision shall contain factual findings, conclusions, and any sanctions applied and shall be final (set out in Section VI, D). The decision shall be transmitted to the applicant or certificant by certified mail, return receipt requested.

VIII. Summary Procedure

Whenever IJCAHPO determines that there is cause to believe that a threat of immediate and irreparable injury to the health of the public exists, such allegations shall be forwarded to the Disciplinary Review Committee, who shall review the matter immediately by telephone or other expedited notice and hearing procedure. Following such notice and opportunity by the individual to be heard, if the Disciplinary Review Committee determines that a threat of immediate and irreparable injury to the public exists, certification may be suspended for up to sixty (60) days pending a full hearing under the procedures (Set out in Section VI, C).

IX. Release of Information

- A. All candidate applications, forms, and information are the property of IJCAHPO.
- B. IJCAHPO is not required to return, provide, or permit access to such information.
- C. By virtue of application for and/or receipt of certification, the individual applicant or certificant authorizes IJCAHPO and its officers, directors, agents, employees, committees, committee members, counsel, and others to communicate all information relating to any IJCAHPO application, certification, and review thereof including pendency or outcome of disciplinary proceedings to state and federal authorities, employers, other certificants, training programs, and others by any means.

X. Waiver

The individual applicant or certificant agrees that he or she releases, discharges, and exonerates IJCAHPO, its officers, directors, agents, employees, committees, committee members, counsel, and others for any actions taken in good faith pursuant to IJCAHPO's rules, standards, and procedures from any and all liability, including but not limited to liability arising out of: (a) the furnishing or inspection of documents, records, and other information; and (b) any investigation and review of application or certification made by IJCAHPO.

XI. Consideration of Eligibility

Eligibility and/or certification is considered on the following basis:

- A. In the event of a felony or misdemeanor conviction described in Section IV, A, a candidate may make application upon exhaustion of appeals and the completion of sentencing (including, but not limited to, probation, final release from confinement, or parole, if any, whichever is later).
- B. In any other event that has rendered a decision of ineligibility or revocation, a candidate may make application no earlier than one (1) year from the final decision of ineligibility or revocation.

In addition to other facts required by IJCAHPO, such an individual must fully set forth the circumstances of the decision denying eligibility or revoking certification, information concerning all convictions, sentences received, and conditions of probation and parole, as well as all relevant facts and circumstances since the decision relevant to the application. The individual bears the burden of demonstrating by clear and convincing evidence that they have been rehabilitated and/or poses no danger to others.