

Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination



Candidate Handbook 2020

Application Deadline*	Testing Window
January 22, 2020	March 7 – March 21, 2020
July 15, 2020	August 8 – August 22, 2020

***Applications will not be accepted after this deadline**

Administered by:



1350 Broadway, Suite 800 | New York, NY 10018
www.ptcny.com/contact

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This Handbook contains necessary information about the Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination. Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. This Handbook is subject to change.

CONTACT INFORMATION

<p style="text-align: center;">Professional Testing Corporation (PTC) www.ptcny.com (212) 356-0660</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for examination • Obtain general application policy and procedure information • Obtain information about testing policies and procedures • Transfer to a new testing period • Request Special Accommodations • Request Hand Score • Question about score reports • Recertification • Miscellaneous inquiries
<p style="text-align: center;">Prometric www.prometric.com/AHSCP (800) 741-0934</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule test appointment • Reschedule test appointment (within the same testing period) • Cancel test appointment • Find directions to test site • Questions regarding testing sites and appointments
<p style="text-align: center;">American Hypertension Specialist Certification Program (AHSCP) www.ahscp.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified Hypertension Clinician Study Guide • Certified Hypertension Clinician Directory

ATTENTION CANDIDATES

This handbook contains necessary information about the Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination. It is required reading for those applying for and taking the Examination. All individuals applying for the examination must comply with the policies, procedures, and deadlines in this Handbook and attest to this by signing the Candidate Attestation found on the application. Please retain this handbook for future reference. This handbook is subject to change. See www.ptcny.com for handbook updates.

PURPOSE OF CERTIFICATION

The Certified Hypertension Clinicians Program was formed by the American Hypertension Specialist Certification Program (AHSCP), formerly the ASH Specialist Program, in 2014 in response to the growing recognition that the hypertension problem requires the coordinated effort of front-line health care providers with documented expertise in managing hypertension. The American Hypertension Specialist Certification Program created the Certified Hypertension Clinician (CHC) designation for the specific purpose of identifying and recognizing health care providers with expert skills and knowledge in the management of clinical hypertension.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Two years of direct patient care experience in hypertension is recommended.

2. Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Currently is licensed or certified as a nurse practitioner in the United States. **Please submit a copy of your current license or certification with your application.**

CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALISTS

Currently is licensed or certified as a clinical nurse specialist in the United States. **Please submit a copy of your current license or certification with your application.**

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

Currently is licensed or certified as a physician assistant in the United States. **Please submit a copy of your current license or certification with your application.**

PHARMACISTS

Currently is licensed as a pharmacist in the United States and has completed at least one year of residency (PGY-1) or equivalent patient care training, or three years of direct patient care practice experience (requires a signed attestation from current supervisor). **Please submit a copy of your Pharmacist license as well as proof of completion of residency and/or an attestation from your current supervisor confirming three years of direct patient care practice with your application.**

PHYSICIANS

Currently is licensed as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) in the United States and has completed residency in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics or Gynecology. **Please submit a copy of your current license and proof of completion of residency (or primary board certification) with your application.**

3. Complete and file the online application for the Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination.

4. Pay the required fee.

THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS



COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

Step 1 – Complete Application

Go to www.ptcny.com/test-sponsors/AHSCP to view examination testing periods, application deadlines, and link to the online application. You must complete the examination application in full, using your name exactly as it appears on your current government issued photo ID such as a driver's license or a passport. Applications are not considered complete until all information and payment has been provided. The completed application can be submitted and paid for online. Retain the link to the application and your login information.

Please note, for new applications you will be asked to create a PIN number. This PIN will be used when going into your existing application.

Step 2 – Submit Examination Fee and Application for Review

Receive email from PTC stating that your payment and application has been received and under review.

Step 3 – Receive Approval of Application

Receive email from PTC stating that your application has been approved.

Step 4 – Receive Scheduling Authorization and Schedule Testing Appointment

Within eleven (11) weeks prior to the start of the testing period, candidates will receive a Scheduling Authorization from PTC via email from notices@ptcny.com. The Scheduling Authorization includes an eligibility number and information on how to set up your examination location, date, and time through Prometric. Retain this document.

You must present your current driver's license, passport, or U.S. Military ID at the testing center at the time of your examination appointment or you will be refused admission. The name on the ID must exactly match the name on the Scheduling Authorization.

Applicants who are not approved to sit for the examination or whose applications are incomplete 21 days prior to the first day of the testing window will receive a refund of their application fee minus the \$50 administrative fee. Refunds will be processed approximately 30 days after the end of the testing period.

EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION AND SCHEDULING

The Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination is administered during an established two-week testing window on a daily basis, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by Prometric.

Scheduling Examination Appointments



Approximately eleven (11) weeks prior to the start of the testing window, approved candidates will be emailed a Scheduling Authorization from **notices@ptcny.com**. Please ensure you enter your correct email address on the application and add the 'ptcny.com' domain to your email safe list. If you do not receive a Scheduling Authorization eight (8) weeks prior to the start of your chosen testing window, contact the Professional Testing Corporation at (212) 356-0660 or online at www.ptcny.com/contact.

The Scheduling Authorization will indicate how to schedule your examination appointment with Prometric as well as the dates during which testing is available. Appointment times are first-come, first-served, so schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization in order to maximize your chance of testing at your preferred location and on your preferred date. **Candidates who wait until the last minute run the risk of missing out on their preferred date, time, and testing center. Candidates unable to schedule an appointment will forfeit their fees.**

Candidates unable to take the examination during their chosen testing window will need to reapply for the examination and pay a new application fee.

After you make your test appointment, Prometric will send you a confirmation email with the date, time, and location of your exam. Please check this confirmation carefully for the correct date, time, and location. Contact Prometric at (800) 741-0934 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

Note: International candidates may also schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment online at <http://www.prometric.com/AHSCP>.

IMPORTANT!

You **MUST** present your current driver’s license, passport, or U.S. military ID at the test center. Expired, temporary, or paper driver’s licenses will **NOT** be accepted. The name on your Scheduling Authorization **MUST** exactly match the name on your photo ID.

Fees will not be refunded for exams missed because of invalid ID.

Rescheduling Examination Appointments within a Testing Period

Candidates are able to reschedule their examination appointments within the same testing period as long as the request is submitted within the timeframe described below. Reschedule within the permitted time frame by calling or going to the Prometric website: <http://www.prometric.com/AHSCP>.

Time Frame	Reschedule Permitted?	Stipulations
Requests submitted 30 days or more before the original appointment	Yes	None
Requests submitted 29 to 5 days before the original appointment	Yes	Candidate must pay Prometric a rescheduling fee of \$50.
Requests submitted less than 5 days before the original appointment	No	Candidates who do not arrive to test for their appointment will be considered a no-show and all their examinations fees will be forfeited. Candidates will need to reapply and pay full examination fees for a future testing period.

Transferring to a New Testing Period

Candidates unable to take the examination during their scheduled testing period may request a **ONE-TIME** transfer to a future testing period. **There is a transfer fee of \$250.00.** After you have transferred once by paying the \$250.00 fee, you will need to pay the examination fee of \$600.00 in order to transfer a second time; so, ***please plan carefully.***

Please note: requests to transfer to a new testing period must be received within 30 days of your originally scheduled testing period.

Candidates wishing to transfer to a new testing period need to follow the steps below.

1. Go to <http://secure.ptcny.com/apply>.
2. Click “Start New Application.”
3. Choose AHSCP-CHC in the first drop-down menu; then choose the new examination period in the second drop down menu and fill out the rest of the information on the page.
4. Fill out the application making sure you answer yes to the question asking if you are transferring.
5. When you have finished the application, click “Submit Transfer Request.”
6. PTC Support will send you an email letting you know your transfer application was approved and that you can log back into your application and pay the one-time \$250.00 transfer fee.

Call 212-356-0660 if you have any questions regarding the transfer process.

If candidates are unable to attend the examination on the date for which they registered and elect not to transfer to another testing period, the application will be closed and all fees will be forfeited. There will be no refund of fees.

The transfer fee is based on costs and is not punitive in nature. The transfer fee must be paid at the time the request is approved. The candidate is responsible for contacting Prometric and canceling the original examination appointment, if one was made.

Exams may only be transferred to a new testing period once; please plan carefully.

Please note: Transferring your Examination only refers to instances when a candidate is unable to take their exam during a testing period for which they have already applied. Candidates who did not pass their examination and are retaking the examination need to pay the full \$600 Examination Fee.



Failing to Report for an Examination

If you fail to report for an examination, you will forfeit all fees paid to take the examination. A completed application form and examination fee are required to reapply for the examination.

EXAMINATION FEES

Fee Type	Amount	Details
Application Fee	US \$600.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-refundable¹ • Non-transferable • Includes testing center fees • Includes non-refundable \$50 administrative fee
Transfer Fee (Moving to a new testing window; see page 7)	US \$250.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies to candidates who need to move to a new testing period • Must submit new application & fee to PTC
Rescheduling Fee (29-5 days prior to scheduled appointment; see page 6)	US \$50.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies to candidates who need to move their appointment within their current testing period • Payable directly to Prometric • Reschedule with Prometric online or over the phone



All fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

There will be no refund of fees except if applicants are ineligible for the examination. Ineligible candidates will be refunded their fees minus an administrative fee. **Please be advised: Prometric does not have the authority to grant transfers to another testing period or refunds.**

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

AHSCP and PTC support the intent of and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). PTC will take steps reasonably necessary to make certification accessible to persons with disabilities covered under the ADA. According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (such as seeing, hearing, learning, reading, concentrating, walking) or a major bodily function (such as neurological, endocrine, or digestive system). The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and special test accommodations will be held in strict confidence.

All approved testing accommodations must maintain the psychometric nature and security of the examination. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature or security of the exam will not be granted.

¹ Applicants who are ineligible to take the examination or whose applications are incomplete by the application deadline will have their examination fees returned minus an administrative fee.

Special testing arrangements may be made upon receipt of the Application, examination fee, and a completed and signed Request for Special Needs Accommodations Form, available from www.ptcnyc.com/PDF/PTC_SpecialAccommodationRequestForm.pdf or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660.

This Form must be uploaded with the online application no later than 8 weeks prior to your chosen testing period. Candidates who do not submit their Special Accommodations Form with their application may not be able to test during their chosen testing period and therefore be subject to rescheduling or transfer fees.

Only those requests made and received on the official Request for Special Needs Accommodations Form will be reviewed. Letters from doctors and other healthcare professionals must be accompanied by the official Form and will not be accepted without the Form. All requests must be made at the time of application. Accommodations cannot be added to an existing exam appointment.

PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

- Check your government issued photo ID (driver's license, passport or U.S. Military ID) when you make your examination appointment. Is it expired? Does the name on your ID match the name on your Scheduling Authorization email? Proctors at the Prometric testing center will refuse admission to candidates with expired IDs, IDs with names that do not match their records, and temporary paper IDs. Candidates will be marked as no-shows and will forfeit their exam fees.
- Check your PTC Scheduling Authorization email and Appointment Confirmation email from Prometric to make sure everything is accurate (i.e. your name, exam name, appointment date, time and location).
- Make yourself familiar with the location of your chosen testing site and any requirements they may have for parking and check the weather and traffic conditions before you leave for the testing center. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to arrive as late arrival may prevent you from testing.
- In the event of inclement weather, check the Prometric website for site closures: <https://www.prometric.com/closures>.
- Prometric's website provides information on what you can expect on your test day, including a walkthrough of check in and security procedures: <https://www.prometric.com/test-center-security>.
- This Handbook provides the Content Outline for the Examination (see appendix). Use these to help you start studying for the examination.
- Review the Rules for the Examination on the next page before your appointment.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE TESTING CENTER

PTC has partnered with Prometric Testing Centers to deliver examinations to candidates. Here is what you can expect when you arrive at your Prometric Testing Center.

- Candidate Check-In
 - Candidates will be asked to present their IDs
 - Candidates will be asked to empty and turn out their pockets
 - Candidates will be “wanded” or asked to walk through a metal detector
 - Inspection of eyeglasses, jewelry, and other accessories will be conducted. Jewelry other than wedding and engagement rings is prohibited.
 - Religious headwear may be worn into the testing room; however, it may be subject to inspection by a testing center administrator before entry into the testing room is permitted.
 - Prometric provides lockers for candidates to store their purses, mobile phones, jackets, food, drinks and medical supplies.

- During the Exam
 - No breaks are scheduled during the exam. Candidates who must leave the testing room to take a break will not be given extra time on the exam
 - Accessing mobile phones or study materials during the examination is prohibited
 - Smoking is prohibited at the testing center
 - All examinations are monitored and may be recorded in both audio and video format

Please keep in mind: other exams will be administered at the same time as your examination. Therefore, examinees may hear ambient noises such as typing, coughing, or people entering and exiting the testing room that cannot be avoided. Prometric is unable to provide a completely noise-free environment. However, headphones may be requested to minimize impact.

Please see [Prometric's website](#) for more information about what to expect on testing day.

RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

Please read the information below carefully. You are responsible for adhering to the examination rules while at the testing center.

- ⇒ You must present your current driver's license, passport, or US Military ID at the testing center. Candidates without valid ID will NOT be permitted to test. Temporary or paper copies of your ID will not be accepted.
- ⇒ Electronic devices that can be used to record, transmit, receive, or play back audio, photographic, text, or video content, including but not limited to, cell phones, laptop computers, tablets, Bluetooth devices; wearable technology (such as smart watches), MP3 players (such as iPods), pagers, cameras, and voice recorders are not permitted to be used and cannot be taken in the examination room. Prometric provides lockers for your personal items.
- ⇒ No papers, books, or reference materials may be taken into or removed from the testing room.
- ⇒ No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the examination session. The candidate should read carefully the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.
- ⇒ Candidates are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, with the sole exception of going to the restroom.
- ⇒ Bulky clothing, such as sweatshirts (hoodies), jackets, coats, and hats (except hats worn for religious reasons), and most types of jewelry may not be worn while taking the examination. Proctors will ask you to remove such items and place them in your locker. Please see [Prometric's statement on Test Center Security](#) for more information.
- ⇒ All watches and "Fitbit" type devices cannot be worn during the examination.
- ⇒ Food/beverages are not permitted inside the testing room. Leave these items in your assigned locker.



Contact PTC at (212) 356-0660 or www.ptcny.com/contact with any questions about the Examination Rules.

Violation of any of the rules listed above may lead to forfeiture of fees, dismissal from the testing room, and cancellation of your test scores.

TESTING CONDITIONS OR EXAMINATION FEEDBACK

Any candidate who feels that the examination effort was negatively impacted by the test center conditions should notify the proctor immediately. The situation should also be reported to PTC at www.ptcny.com/contact within 3 business days of the test appointment. Any comments about the test itself should also be reported to PTC at www.ptcny.com/contact within 3 business days of the test appointment.

REPORT OF RESULTS

All candidates will be notified in writing by PTC, of their official scores (scores on the major areas of the examination and on the total examination will be reported) within approximately four weeks of the close of the testing period. Please note that this time is necessary to allow for the psychometric review and administration time required to ensure accurate and reliable scores.

Please note that official scores will not be released at the testing center but will be sent via mail within four weeks following the close of the testing period.

Please notify PTC as soon as possible regarding any address changes to ensure that you will receive your official test scores.

REQUESTING A HANDSCORE

Candidates who fail the examination may request a hand scoring of their data file. Hand scoring is a manual check of the data file by the testing service to determine if there have been any errors in scoring. Although the probability of such an error is extremely remote, this service is available. Requests for hand scoring must be received by PTC no later than 90 days after the date of the examination by completing and returning the Request of Handscore form on www.ptcny.com with payment of \$25. Candidates who fail the examination will not be permitted to see the examination questions. For reasons of test security, no candidate is allowed to review the examination or any of its items.

To ensure correct reporting of results, PTC automatically performs handscores of examinations of candidates who score within 3 points of passing as a quality control measure. Thus, it is extremely doubtful that any examination results will change from “fail” to “pass” through handscoreing.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF EXAMINATION SCORES

The American Hypertension Specialist Certification Program will release the individual examination scores in writing ONLY to the individual candidate. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to the Professional Testing Corporation, at 212-356-0660.

REEXAMINATION

The Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination may be taken as often as desired, upon filing of a new Application and fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated; however, candidates may not retest during the same testing period.

ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION & RECERTIFICATION

Eligible candidates who pass the Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination are eligible to use the designation CHC after their names and will receive certificates from AHSCP. A registry of Certified Hypertension Clinicians will be maintained by AHSCP and may be reported in its publications.

Certification as a CHC is recognized for a period of ten years at which time the candidate must retake and pass the current Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination or meet such alternative requirements as are in effect at that time in order to retain certification.

CONTENT OF THE EXAMINATION

The Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination is a computer-based examination composed of a maximum of 175 multiple-choice, objective questions with a total testing time of two (2) hours. The content for the examination is described in the Content Outline on the next page.

The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in clinical hypertension and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by AHSCP.

AHSCP, with the advice and assistance of the Professional Testing Corporation, prepares the examination.

The Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

I.	Scientific Foundations	15%
II.	Assessment and Diagnosis	15%
III.	Secondary Hypertension	10%
IV.	Treatment	40%
V.	Special Populations and Conditions	20%

I. SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS

- A. Physiology (e.g. hemodynamics, renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system, sympathetic nervous system)
- B. Pathophysiology
- C. Epidemiology (e.g. risk, prevalence, importance of systolic hypertension, control rates)
- D. Clinical Trials
- E. Principles of Drug Action (e.g. Pharmacology)

II. ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSIS

- A. Blood Pressure Measurement/Monitoring
- B. History and Physical Exam Findings
- C. BP Classification
- D. Diagnostic Testing
- E. Target Organ Damage

III. SECONDARY HYPERTENSION

- A. Renal Parenchymal Disease
- B. Renovascular
- C. Endocrine
- D. Obstructive Sleep Apnea
- E. Pharmacologic (e.g. prescription, non-prescription, illicit, complementary therapies)
- F. Vascular (e.g. coarctation)

IV. TREATMENT

- A. Prevention
- B. Population Health and Screening (e.g. Million Hearts, Healthy People Initiatives)
- C. Lifestyle Modification
- D. Goals of Therapy (e.g. targets, evidence based therapy, guidelines)
- E. Drug Therapy (e.g. drugs, combination therapy, approaches)
- F. Drug Interactions
- G. Adherence

- H. Barriers to Treatment and Control (e.g. psychosocial, socioeconomic issues)
- I. Ongoing Management
 - 1. Referral, Frequency of Follow-up (visits and labs)
 - 2. Self-measurement and Out of Office Monitoring
 - 3. Team Based Care (handoffs, review with collaborating team)
- J. Cardiovascular Risk Factor Assessment and Management

V. SPECIAL POPULATIONS AND CONDITIONS

- A. Hypertensive Crisis/Emergencies/Urgencies/Malignant Hypertension
- B. Difficult to Treat/Resistant Hypertension
- C. Orthostatic Hypotension
- D. Co-existing Kidney Disease (e.g. proteinuria, diabetic nephropathy, renal failure, transplant)
- E. Co-existing Heart Disease (e.g. coronary artery disease, myocardial infarction, heart failure)
- F. Co-existing Vascular Disease (e.g. aortic aneurysm, stroke, peripheral arterial disease)
- G. Treatment of Hypertension in Hospitalized Patients (e.g. perioperative)
- H. Hypertension in Pregnancy (e.g. drug choice, when to refer)
- I. Vulnerable Populations (e.g. indigent, frail elderly)
- J. Environmental Situations (e.g. altitude, noise)
- K. Psychiatric Disorders (e.g. panic)
- L. Children and Adolescents

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

The following are samples of the types of questions that may appear on the Certified Hypertension Clinician Examination. These sample questions are intended for candidates to view how test questions are structured. Please note these are samples and these specific questions will not appear on the examination.

1. As men and women age from 20 to 80 years, the average level of systolic blood pressure generally
 1. increases.
 2. decreases.
 3. stays the same.
 4. plateaus then decreases.

2. Doxazosin in combination with other drugs is the most appropriate treatment for patients with hypertension and
 1. heart failure.
 2. mild depression.
 3. benign prostatic hypertrophy.
 4. chronic obstructive lung disease.

3. Patients adherent to the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet typically show
 1. weight gain.
 2. increased sodium excretion.
 3. reduction of systolic and diastolic blood pressure.
 4. blood pressure reduction only when combined with pharmaceutical therapy.

4. A hypertensive emergency would most likely be produced by an abrupt withdrawal of
 1. prazosin.
 2. atenolol.
 3. lisinopril.
 4. clonidine.

ANSWER KEY	
Q	A
1	1
2	3
3	3
4	4

REFERENCES

The CHC Task Force has developed a Study/Reference List for the Certified Hypertension Clinicians (CHC) Examination. The CHC Study/Reference List can be downloaded at <http://www.ahscp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CHC-Study-Guide.pdf>. Those who are preparing to take the Examination for the CHC Certification may find this a useful document. However, the CHC Study/Reference List may not include all relevant material and references; nor is it suggested that the Examination will be exclusively based on the CHC Study/Reference List.

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