



ACHCA

American College of
Health Care Administrators

Professional Certification Handbook

Certified Nursing Home Administrators (CNHA)

Certified Assisted Living Administrators (CALA)

**1101 Connecticut Avenue
NW Suite 450
Washington, DC 20036
(800) 561-3148
Info@achca.org
www.achca.org**

Welcome to the ACHCA Certification Program!

The mission of the American College of Health Care Administrators (ACHCA) is to be the “catalyst for excellence in post-acute and aging services leadership”. As part of our effort to live this mission, we have created the ACHCA Certification program. These credentials are central to our efforts to support you in your pursuit of continued professional development.

Becoming certified by ACHCA is important for Long-Term and Post-Acute Care Administrators because it demonstrates a commitment to professional excellence and a willingness to maintain high standards of care for residents. ACHCA certification is recognized as a mark of distinction in the long-term care profession, and it can help administrators stand out in a competitive job market.

Here are a few reasons why Long-Term and Post-Acute Care administrators should consider becoming certified by ACHCA:

Professional Development: The ACHCA offers a range of professional development opportunities, including continuing education, networking events, and access to industry publications. These resources can help administrators stay up to date on the latest trends and best practices in long-term care management.

Improved Credibility: ACHCA certification is recognized by industry leaders and can help administrators build credibility with colleagues, residents, and their families. Certification demonstrates a commitment to quality and a dedication to maintaining the highest standards of care.

Advancement Opportunities: ACHCA certification can open doors to new job opportunities and career advancement within the long-term care industry. Certified administrators are often preferred by employers and may be more likely to be considered for leadership positions.

Compliance with Regulations: ACHCA certification can help administrators ensure that their facilities are in compliance with state and federal regulations. Certification requires a thorough understanding of regulatory requirements and standards of care, which can help administrators ensure that their facilities are providing the highest level of care to residents.

I encourage you to review this handbook thoroughly for answers to most of your questions concerning our Certification programs. Should you have additional questions, please contact us at professionaladvancement@achca.org.

Best wishes on your journey to professional excellence as a Certified Administrator!



Robert W. Lane, CNHA, FACHCA

ACHCA President & CEO

Table of Contents

<u>ACHCA's Professional Certification Program</u>	3
<u>Definitions</u>	3
<u>CNHA: Nursing Home Administrator Certification</u>	4
<u>CALA: Assisted Living Administrator Certification</u>	4
<u>Reasons to Pursue Professional Certification</u>	5
<u>List of States for Licensure Recognition</u>	5
<u>Certification Value Statement</u>	6
<u>Requirements for Professional Certification</u>	7-8
<u>Exam Overview</u>	8
<u>Exam Content</u>	9
<u>Examination Day</u>	9
<u>Examination Processes</u>	10
<u>Disciplinary Policy</u>	11
<u>Certification Renewal</u>	12
<u>Certification Expiration</u>	12
<u>The Executive Portfolio</u>	12
<u>Recertification by Exam</u>	14
<u>References</u>	14
<u>Code of Ethics</u>	15
<u>How to apply for Professional Certification or Recertification</u>	16
<u>Certification/Recertification Fees</u>	17

ACHCA's Professional Certification Programs

- Have the goal of defining mastery and excellence in the profession.
- Includes Nursing Home Administration and Assisted Living Administration.
- Certify professionals who have demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and values consistent with the high standards of management necessary to provide quality care to residents, families, and communities.
- Provide visible and tangible evidence of public accountability for the efficient delivery of quality health care.
- Benefit professional nursing home administrators, assisted living administrators, public and private financing agencies, state licensure boards, state regulatory agencies, employees, and ultimately, residents and families who are served by health care services.

Certified Professionals

- Recognize that they are responsible for creating an organizational environment dedicated to the physical, social, and emotional needs of residents.
- Are committed to a higher standard of quality care, which includes healing, empathy, and compassion for those in need and for those who love them.
- Must pair leadership and financial skills with a thorough understanding of the aging process and long-term care industry.

Definitions

Certification:

- Certification is defined as “a voluntary process by which the ACHCA grants a time-limited recognition to an individual after verifying this person has met predetermined, standardized criteria offering evidence of mastery of the desired credential.”
- Professional Certification sets advanced professional standards.
- ACHCA’s Professional Certification Programs do not require educational or experiential qualifications for eligibility.
- Initial certification requires the successful completion of a core and specialization examination.
- Identifies and recognizes individuals who are performing at an advanced level of skill and knowledge.
- Results in an advanced professional credential.

PLEASE PROCEED TO THE NEXT PAGE

CNHA: Nursing Home Administrator Certification

ACHCA began certifying nursing home administrators in 1981 and, through the years, the program has been revised several times to reflect emerging trends in professional credentialing. The CNHA exam is based on the exam blueprint developed by the ACHCA Certification Committee, Subject Matter Experts as well as the four “Domains of Practice” as set forth by the National Long-Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB):

1. Care, Services, and Supports
2. Operations
3. Environment and Quality
4. Leadership and Strategy

The ACHCA CNHA certification examination includes many aspects of NAB’s “subdomains of practice,” including, but not limited to:

- A. Core Domains of Practice
- B. NHA Domain of Practice
- C. RCAL Domains of Practice
- D. HCBS Domains of Practice

CALA: Assisted Living Administrator Certification

Not all states mandate licensure of assisted living administrators. Those that do have varying eligibility requirements to practice in the profession. With inconsistent administrator requirements across states, experienced assisted living administrators can demonstrate their knowledge and ability through ACHCA Professional Certification. Since the assisted living sector does not have federal regulatory oversight and is regulated by the states, the ACHCA Professional Certification process provides a national quality standard for assisted living administration. The CALA exam is based on the exam blueprint developed by Subject Matter experts based on the NAB-recommended references for the Resident Care and Assisted Living Lines of Service Exam. ACHCA’s CALA program serves as a model for advanced practice in assisted living administration.

Reasons to Pursue Professional Certification:

National Recognition & Endorsement

The Professional Certification Program identifies and honors administrators, executive directors, and managers who are performing at an advanced level of skill and knowledge. Certified Nursing Home Administrators may be eligible for some form of licensure recognition in participating states/ jurisdictions (see insert at right).

Commitment to the Public

Professional Certification reflects a commitment to residents, families and staff. Certified administrators have advanced knowledge and experience to lead their facilities.

Enhancement of the Profession

Professional Certification promotes quality in the profession and improves the public image of administrators. The presence of a Certified Administrator in a long-term care organization speaks well to consumers evaluating an Assisted Living Community or Skilled Nursing Facility.

Personal Satisfaction and a Sense of Achievement

Certification is a voluntary program that allows experienced and practicing administrators to validate their knowledge, skills, and abilities. Professionally Certified individuals cite a strong feeling of personal accomplishment.

Professional Development:

Candidates who sit for the certification exam receive detailed score reports so they can assess areas of strength and areas for development. ACHCA offers a series of bootcamps, webinars, and consulting services to assist candidates with professional development needs and services.

Employer Recognition

Some employers encourage their administrators to become professionally certified, and others look for Certification as a condition of hire. Certification is considered a “mark of distinction” on a résumé.

ACHCA Recognition

Upon Certification, ACHCA will:

- Provide a certificate suitable for framing and recognizing your achievement.
- Provide a sample press release you can send to your local newspapers.
- Provide a letter to your CEO (or a potential employer) informing him or her of your achievement and its significance (upon request).
- Publish your name in ACHCA’s member publications.
- Provide a micro badge that you can copy and paste into your email signature, telling your peers, residents, and family members you hold this exceptional distinction.
- Recognize you before your peers at a special ceremony during the Annual Convocation & Exposition, where you will receive a specialized lapel pin only available to certified administrators.

State Recognition

The following states currently recognize ACHCA's CNHA program, which in many cases “fast tracks” administrator eligibility for licensure in that state:

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Minnesota
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Rhode Island

Licensing rules and requirements vary by state. Check with your state licensing board for your state’s reciprocity/endorsement requirements. A list of state licensure boards and contact information is maintained on the NAB website at www.nabweb.org.

American College of Health Care Administrators

Certification Value Statement

Evidence is growing about the importance and value of the long-term care administration profession to the delivery of quality care and quality services to elders and is being advanced by corporations and both the public and practitioners in recent years. Progressive corporate leaders and facility owners embrace the value of professional certification. By undertaking the certification process, administrators have shown a commitment to excellence, best practices, and mastery in their profession and to providing a higher quality of care to the populations they serve. When hiring administrators, those with certification also have licensure reciprocity in a number of states, which is a competitive advantage in finding and retaining the best talent in the industry.

Research about the value of certification reflected that ACHCA members, certified members, and fellows were leading facilities with better quality than non-members in 13 of the 19 quality indicators examined. These findings support the value of professional membership, as well as voluntary certification or fellow credentialing, with respect to quality improvement and better survey outcomes. Achieving national certification is an external benchmark of the organization's effectiveness in implementing culture transformation as well as accreditation requirements.

- ◇ Residents, their families, and consumers expect knowledgeable organizational leadership. Professional certification verifies to the public that administrators are highly skilled and possess the knowledge needed to strive toward excellence in providing high-quality care and services. When compared to non-certified administrators, ACHCA-certified administrators oversee facilities associated with

Higher Quality of Care and Higher Occupancy Rates.

ACHCA's commitment to promoting excellence in long-term care leadership is reflected in our strong educational and mentoring programs, which reflect ongoing industry changes. Our partnering and collaboration with other long-term care stakeholders provide coordinated efforts for industry alignment and recognition. Clearly, the investment in leadership development embedded within ACHCA and its associated advancement programs equip the new and seasoned long-term administrator with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to provide excellent quality care and services to our residents and their families.

The complete article titled The Importance and Value of Professional Membership of Nursing Home Administrators can be found in *The Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*, Vol. 37 Number 4, Spring 2015.

Requirements for Professional Certification

Application and Registration

- For each credential, candidates must complete and submit an application (see below for link to online applications).
- Acknowledge the ACHCA Code of Ethics (see page 15).
- Pass both the “core” Certification Exam (100 questions) and the specialty exam (50 questions).
- Submit exam fees upon application

Eligibility Criteria

- ACHCA membership is preferred but **not** a requirement for Professional Certification.
- Candidates must be qualified to practice in the state where they reside/work.

Application Process

- A candidate's exam eligibility must be established before exam authorization can take place. Please review the eligibility criteria above before submitting your application.

Scheduling the Professional Certification Exam

- Once the application is approved and the applicant receives an approval letter, which serves as the ATT (Admission to Test) letter from ACHCA, the computer-based professional exam(s) may be scheduled for the day of your choice.
- Exams are administered online by our service partner, Pathway Health.
- All candidates must schedule an appointment prior to testing. It is strongly recommended that appointments are scheduled once the ATT letter is received. A candidate has a three-month authorization period in which to take the exam(s).
- **To schedule an exam, please visit www.achca.org/certification**

Special Accommodations

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, special testing accommodations will be considered for individuals with disabilities recognized by the ADA. Requests for special accommodations to take the exam must be approved by ACHCA prior to scheduling your appointment. Requests can be made directly on the Professional Certification Application or by contacting ACHCA at professionaladvancement@achca.org.

Refund and Cancellation

If a scheduled exam needs to be canceled, ACHCA & Pathway Health must be notified no less than 24 hours before the exam date. If adequate notice is not provided, a \$100.00 processing fee will be charged. The exam can be rescheduled.

Candidates who have been approved for but have not yet scheduled an exam and who wish to cancel the exam authorization may notify ACHCA within 30 days. A Refund, minus a \$75 dollar processing fee, will occur within 30 days of the application. After 30 days, no refunds will be issued.

Pursuing Multiple Credentials

- Candidates may take two specialty examinations on one test date.
- The same application form may be used to register for multiple exams.
- If two specialty exams are taken on the same test date, see the fee schedule on page 17.

Confirmation Notice

ACHCA will email a confirmation notice to applicants upon receiving the application for certification.

Change in Contact Information

Changes to your name or contact information must be submitted via email at professionaladvancement@achca.org.

Certification of Foreign Administrators

Foreign administrators are waived of all U.S. licensure requirements. Foreign administrators who meet all other requirements are eligible for ACHCA Certification.

Exam Overview**Development**

ACHCA has contracted with an outside vendor to provide testing and consulting services for the Professional Certification Exams. Pathway Health is a professional management and consulting organization serving clients in the long-term care and post-acute care industry. Since their founding in 1997, Pathway Health has been keeping a pulse on clinical, regulatory, quality, and reimbursement trends to keep their clients on the path to success. They also provide expert consulting services, strategic technology implementation, and education solutions for the post-acute care continuum. Pathway's experience and expertise, combined with select ACHCA volunteers and Subject Matter Experts, ensure that the programs are superior in terms of professional testing standards and candidate expectations.

The Exam Development Process

Individual test items are written and revised year-round. New test questions are introduced in each exam administration and may be selected from the curated Exam Item Bank.

Subject matter experts, in conjunction with Pathway Health, review the individual item statistics and set the cut scores (pass/fail rates). Experts judge the relevance of each item and the importance of a qualified candidate correctly answering that question. These judgments and the actual statistical results of the exams are factored to yield a cut score for each exam.

Pathway Health and ACHCA subject matter experts create and review all test questions for content and construct validity. All test questions are reviewed by members of the ACHCA certification committee based on years of experience, knowledge, and area of expertise.

Exam Preparation

Because the ACHCA certification exams are designed to draw on your mastery of the NAB domains and your personal experience, developing traditional study materials is difficult. Candidates are encouraged to review the NAB domains (and subdomains) and may have the opportunity to attend test-preparation "bootcamps" at convocation and may also purchase online study materials designed to assist them in study preparation.

Exam Content

New items are routinely added to the exam bank of questions, and some topics may or may not be covered. Please use this information as a guide for preparation. Candidates for CNHA and CALA must complete both the General Administration portion of the exam and a Specialty section.

Part I – General Administration {Core} (100 questions)

1. Care, Services, and Supports
 - a. 1A – Quality of Care
 - b. 1B – Quality of Life
 - c. 1C – Ancillary Services
2. Operations
 - a. 2A – Financial Management
 - b. 2B – Risk Management
 - c. 2C – Human Resources
3. Environment and Quality
 - a. 3A – Care Setting
 - b. 3B – Regulatory Compliance
4. Leadership & Strategy
 - a. 4A – Leadership
 - b. 4B – Organizational Strategy

Part II – Specialty Portion for Nursing Home Administration and Assisted Living Administration (50 questions each section)

Specialty exams emphasize those aspects of the Domains of Practice that are unique to their specialty. Specialty exam questions are distributed in approximately the following percentages:

1. Care Services - 37%
2. Operations - 36%
3. Environment and Quality - 16%
4. Leadership and Strategy - 11%

Examination Day

Three hours are allotted to complete the 100-question general exam and a 50-question specialty exam (either nursing home administration or assisted living administration). Those candidates taking a second specialty exam will have an additional 90 minutes to answer the additional 50-question exam.

Candidates are immediately notified of the results of the exam. ***Please note that exam scores received online are not official.*** ACHCA receives exam scores after completion of an exam. Candidates will be notified of official exam scores by ACHCA within ten (10) days of receipt of the official score report from the testing service.

After the Exam

Upon receipt of successful passing of the exam, the ACHCA will send the certificant a press release, the CEO notification form, the ACHCA micro badge, and a certificate suitable for framing, at which time the certificant may use the certification credential. A specially designed certified administrator lapel pin will be awarded at the next convocation.

Questions or comments regarding the professional Certification exam must be submitted to ACHCA in writing via email at professionaladvancement@achca.org.

Examination Processes

Determination of Passing Scores

Passing scores are determined by the learning management software used to take the exam and are subject to official review by Pathway Health and ACHCA. Successful candidates will achieve a minimum composite score of 70% in order to pass.

Examination Results

Candidates are given a Pass/Fail score for both Parts I and II. A candidate must pass both the general and the specialty examinations to receive the credential.

Exam scores are valid for one year. A candidate who has previously passed Part I, the General Administration Section, may apply the score from that section to seek an additional credential within the one-year period. For example, a CALA may seek the Nursing Home Administrators Certification by taking only the CNHA Specialty exam within this one-year period.

Confidentiality of Exam Scores

Only designated ACHCA staff, staff of ACHCA's contracted testing company, and members of the Professional Advancement Committee (when necessary) have access to exam scores. Other than for research purposes, scores will not be released to anyone other than the examinee without written permission.

Retaking Exams

If the candidate fails either the general or the specialty examination, he/she may apply to retake only the failed examination for the appropriate fee listed in the fee schedule on page 17. A candidate may retake the general exam or either of the specialty exams up to three (3) times within the year after failing the exam. Exam scores are valid for three years. After three (3) failed attempts, the candidate must wait 12 months until retaking the exam.

Challenging Scores & Appeals

Candidates may appeal a decision of the Certification Committee or any aspect of a Certification Exam. All appeals must be submitted in writing to the Certification Committee. Appeals related to the calculation of exam scores must be received within 30 days following the exam. Candidates may request to have exams reviewed by the Certification Committee. However, actual scores very rarely change as a result of a review. Candidates must submit a written request for appeal and payment for \$75.00 to the attention of ACHCA Certification staff. The fee includes checking for omitted questions or any conditions that may have interfered with the scoring process. Information on responses to specific questions cannot be provided to ensure exam security. Appeals should be sent via email to professionaladvancement@achca.org, requesting a return receipt. The request should state the reason why the scores are contested and should include any information to be considered by the Certification Committee.

Exam Updates

ACHCA is continually developing new exam items that are added to the item bank and removing items no longer relevant. The exams are updated annually or as directed by the certification committee.

Credentialing Dishonesty Policy

In concert with the ACHCA Code of Ethics found on page 15 of this handbook, credentialing dishonesty is taken very seriously. ACHCA credentialing exams are designed to measure an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities, and mastery of long-term care administration. The use of any external resources, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), in any form or format, on these exams is strictly prohibited because it can introduce bias, inaccuracies, and other errors that could compromise the validity and reliability of the exam. By prohibiting the use of all external sources, including AI, ACHCA ensures that our exams are fair, accurate, and reliable measures of an individual's qualifications and mastery of the LTC/PAC profession. The certification testing procedure operates under the assumption that all applicants' work will be generated by the applicant and no outside sources will be utilized. ACHCA prohibits the use of content-generating AI, such as Chat GPT and all other artificial means. Any instance of an individual using any external resource and/or form of AI-generated content being used for any portion of the exam will be considered credentialing misconduct and shall be subject to the ACHCA Disciplinary Policy as set forth below:

Disciplinary Policy

The PA Committee may revoke the application or certification of an individual or otherwise take disciplinary action in accordance with the PA Committee Professional Practice (ACHCA Code of Ethics) and Disciplinary Procedures.

Such procedures currently allow revocation of application or certification and allow other disciplinary action in the case of:

- * ineligibility;
- * gross misconduct, as defined by the ACHCA certification committee. This includes but is not limited to probation, sanction(s), or loss of the applicant's license.
- * irregularity in connection with the exam;
- * use of any form of artificial intelligence when taking any ACHCA credentialing examination.
- * unauthorized possession or distribution or other use of exam materials;
- * misrepresentation in any statement to the Certification Committee or public regarding Certification;
- * loss or suspension of other health care provider licenses required for the field covered by Certification
- * conviction or plea of guilty to a felony or misdemeanor related to the practice of medical management or administration;
- * not adhering to the eligibility requirements for Certification candidacy or ensuring compliance with proficiency requirements; or
- * violating the ACHCA Code of Ethics (page 15).
- * In addition to the Code of Ethics, any ongoing conduct unbecoming of a certificant that unduly harms the reputation of the certification or ACHCA may qualify for revocation at the sole discretion of the ACHCA Certification Committee and/or the Board of Directors.

ACHCA reserves the right to amend these Disciplinary Procedures as needed.

In the event disciplinary review is required, the Certification Committee shall serve as a Hearing Panel and follow established policy for such hearings and reviews. Copies of the Disciplinary Process policy are available by contacting ACHCA.

ACHCA's Professional Certification Programs do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender, health status, lifestyle, membership status, nationality, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Certification Renewal

In order to ensure continued competency, Certified Administrators must renew their Certification **every three years.**

One of the following options may be completed to renew certification:

- Complete an Executive Portfolio
- Pass the Certification Specialty Exam (*CNHA & CALA only*)

A recertification application must accompany any of the above renewal options. A link to the recertification application can be found on page 16, or on the ACHCA website, <http://www.achca.org/recertificationapp>

Certification Expiration

Certification renewal may be completed up to one year prior to the expiration date or during a one-year grace period* after the expiration date. The renewal dates continue in three-year increments from the original Certification date, regardless of the date of renewal. If the Certificant does not renew, she/he will be decertified. If a Certificant wishes to regain Certification after being decertified, the candidate must apply for and pass the Certification Exam.

**The one-year grace period for certification renewal is for the submission of the application, documents, and fee and may not be used to earn additional CE toward the current renewal.*

The Executive Portfolio

The Executive Portfolio allows an administrator to demonstrate professional activity and development during the certification renewal period. Requirements include:

Individuals who complete either the Certified Nursing Home Administrator (CNHA) or Certified Assisted Living Administrator (CALA) program **must submit proof of continuing education (CE) credits every three (3) years to maintain their certification(s).** The number of CEs to submit vary based on an individual's membership within ACHCA:

- Recertification applicants must submit **90 CEs every three (3) years.** Members must submit a **minimum** of 18 CEs in **each** of the four (4) National Association for Long-Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB) domains during this timeframe, and the other 18 CEs submitted must be related to long-term and post-acute care administration or senior living leadership.

Acceptable CEs to submit must come from national conferences (e.g., ACHCA Convocation, AHCA/NCAL Convention and Expo, LeadingAge Annual Meeting and Expo, Argentum Senior Living Executive Conference), regional conferences (e.g., ACHCA District events), or state-level conferences, whether offered in-person or in an online or virtual format. **Any CE credits submitted must be from sessions approved by NAB or from sessions approved by a state licensure board or regulatory agency.**

For any individual who **completes a master's degree or doctoral degree in a relevant program** (e.g., Master of Healthcare/Health Services Administration, Master of Business Administration, Ph.D. in Health Professions Education, DBA, DHA) during the three-year recertification period, **all continuing education credit requirements are satisfied** upon receipt of an official transcript confirming conferral of the graduate degree.

Enhanced Credit for CEs

To incentivize attendance at the annual ACHCA Convocation and District events, CE credits obtained from those educational sessions will be worth additional value. **If individuals attend the annual ACHCA Convocation, every CE earned there is worth 15% more than those obtained at other conferences and events, and for CEs earned at ACHCA District or Chapter events, every CE obtained there is worth 10% more.** For example:

- Attending ACHCA Convocation and earning 25 CEs = $25 \times 1.15 = 28.75$ CEs.
- Attending ACHCA District or Chapter event and earning 25 CEs = $25 \times 1.10 = 27.5$ CEs

Continuing Education Alternatives

In lieu of CEs obtained at conferences, ACHCA recognizes the multitude of ways that a healthcare leader with the CNHA or CALA may demonstrate continued excellence, contributions to the profession of long-term care administration and senior living leadership, or ongoing professional development and education. As such, individuals submitting their required CEs for recertification may substitute Convocation or conference CEs with the alternatives noted below **for up to 30 CEs out of their number of required CEs every three (3) years as noted above.** Acceptable alternative CEs earned during the recertification period include:

- Serving as an instructor teaching a course related to long-term care or health care at the undergraduate university level for an **entire semester** is worth three (3) CEs for each time taught, and a course at the graduate level is worth six (6) CEs each time taught.
- Publication of an article the individual has written as the first author in a **scholarly peer-reviewed journal** (e.g., *The Gerontologist*, *JAMDA*, *Seniors Housing and Care Journal*) or authorship of a published **book chapter** constitutes six (6) CEs. If the applicant is not the first author, they will earn three (3) CEs.
- Publication of a substantive article in a **national publication that is a newspaper, magazine, or periodical** (e.g., *McKnight's*, *Provider*) is worth three (3) CEs (note that “substantive” implies more than a letter to the editor and will be reviewed for appropriateness).
- Presenting a session at a national conference focused on long-term care or senior living (e.g., ACHCA Convocation) or a similar statewide or regional conference (e.g., state affiliate of ACHCA, AHCA/NCAL, LeadingAge, or Argentum) is worth two (2) CEs.
- Serving for one (1) full year or term as a **mentor within the ACHCA Mentoring Program** constitutes four (4) CEs.
- Serving for **1,000 hours as a preceptor** in your care community for a new administrator during their Administrator-in-Training experience is worth four (4) CEs.
- Each of these activities is worth **three (3) CEs for each time** the service or activity is completed:
 - Serving as a Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award Examiner with the AHCA/NCAL [National Quality Award Program](#);
 - Completion of the [Larry Minnix Leadership Academy](#) from LeadingAge;
 - Completion of the [Certified Director of Assisted Living \(CDAL\) credential](#) or the [Senior Living Sales Counselor Certificate](#) from Argentum; or
 - Serving as a Site Visitor at a university through the NAB [Health Services Executive \(HSE\) academic accreditation program](#).
- Receiving the **Gold Award as part of the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program** constitutes six (6) CEs. **NOTE: The applicant must have been the administrator of record for at least the nine (9) month period prior to the facility receiving the award to be eligible for this credit.**

- **Individuals may submit other potential alternate CEs, in advance, to the Certification Committee for review.** Items submitted should be essentially equivalent to the items in this list, and the committee retains sole discretion whether to approve other items as alternate CEs.

Submission of Materials

All documents to verify CE credits or alternative CE credits must be submitted through an assigned OneDrive folder that ACHCA maintains. To gain access to your personal folder, please contact Elizabeth Lollis at elollis@achca.org.

Recertification by Specialty Exam

The Certification Specialty Exam is used to recertify in the event that an administrator chooses not to complete the Executive Portfolio. An applicant must contact ACHCA to be approved to recertify by exam. If approved to recertify by exam, the applicant must pass the exam before the end of their certification grace period. *It is recommended that an applicant who wishes to recertify by exam requests approval no later than six months before the end of their certification grace period.*

Credentialing Exam References & Resources

Applicants are encouraged to review and investigate available references and resources to assist in studying for the credentialing exams. These references can be found on the ACHCA certification website under “Exam Resources.” You may access these resources at www.achcacertification.com.



PREAMBLE: The preservation of the highest standards of integrity and ethical principles is vital to the successful discharge of the professional responsibilities of all long-term health care administrators. This Code of Ethics has been promulgated by the American College of Health Care Administrators (ACHCA) in an effort to stress the fundamental rules considered essential to this basic purpose. It shall be the obligation of members to seek to avoid not only conduct specifically proscribed by the code, but also conduct that is inconsistent with its spirit and purpose. Failure to specify any particular responsibility or practice in this Code of Ethics should not be construed as denial of the existence of other responsibilities or practices. Recognizing that the ultimate responsibility for applying standards and ethics falls upon the individual, the ACHCA establishes the following Code of Ethics to make clear its expectation of the membership.

Expectation I

Individuals shall hold paramount the welfare of persons for whom care is provided.

PRESCRIPTIONS: The Health Care Administrator shall:

- Strive to provide to all those entrusted to his or her care the highest quality of appropriate services possible in light of resources or other constraints.
- Operate the facility consistent with laws, regulations, and standards of practice recognized in the field of health care administration.
- Consistent with law and professional standards, protect the confidentiality of information regarding individual recipients of care.
- Perform administrative duties with the personal integrity that will earn the confidence, trust, and respect of the general public.
- Take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination on basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, citizenship status, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, past, present or future status in the U.S. uniformed services, genetics or any other characteristic protected under applicable law.

PROSCRIPTION: The Health Care Administrator shall not:

- Disclose professional or personal information regarding recipients of service to unauthorized personnel unless required by law or to protect the public welfare.

Expectation II

Individuals shall maintain high standards of professional competence and personal conduct.

PRESCRIPTIONS: The Health Care Administrator shall:

- Possess and maintain the competencies necessary to effectively perform his or her responsibilities.
- Practice administration in accordance with capabilities and proficiencies and, when appropriate, seek counsel from qualified others.
- Actively strive to enhance knowledge of and expertise in long-term care administration through continuing education and professional development.
- Demonstrate conduct that is in the best interest of the profession.

PROSCRIPTIONS: The Health Care Administrator shall not:

- Misrepresent qualifications, education, experience, or affiliations.
- Provide services other than those for which he or she is prepared and qualified to perform.
- Conduct themselves in a manner detrimental to the best interest of the profession.

Expectation III

Individuals shall strive, in all matters relating to their professional functions, to maintain a professional posture that places paramount the interests of the facility and its residents.

PRESCRIPTIONS: The Health Care Administrator shall:

- Avoid partisanship and provide a forum for the fair resolution of any disputes which may arise in service delivery or facility management.
- Disclose to the governing body or other authority as may be appropriate, any actual or potential circumstance concerning him or her that might reasonably be thought to create a conflict of interest or have a substantial adverse impact on the facility or its residents.

PROSCRIPTION: The Health Care Administrator shall not:

- Participate in activities that reasonably may be thought to create a conflict of interest or have the potential to have a substantial adverse impact on the facility or its residents.

Expectation IV

Individuals shall honor their responsibilities to the public, their profession, and their relationships with colleagues and members of related professions.

PRESCRIPTIONS: The Health Care Administrator shall:

- Foster increased knowledge within the profession of health care administration and support research efforts toward this end.
- Participate with others in the community to plan for and provide a full range of health care services.
- Share areas of expertise with colleagues, students, and the general public to increase awareness and promote understanding of health care in general and the profession in particular.
- Inform the ACHCA Standards and Ethics Committee of actual or potential violations of this Code of Ethics, and fully cooperate with ACHCA's sanctioned inquiries into matters of professional conduct related to this Code of Ethics.

PROSCRIPTION: The Health Care Administrator shall not:

- Defend, support, or ignore unethical conduct perpetrated by colleagues, peers or students.

To Apply for ACHCA Professional Certification

Please apply online at www.achca.org/certification for authorization to take the ACHCA professional certification examinations. The certification application must be completed in one sitting. If you navigate away from the application window, you may lose your work and will need to begin the application again. Your online application will not be complete until you have paid the certification application fee. The certification fees can be found on page 17.

To Apply for ACHCA Professional Recertification

Please apply online at ACHCA.org for recertification of your ACHCA professional certification. [Click here](#) to access the online recertification application.

ACHCA requires the submission of the Executive Portfolio to document the achievement of continuing education (CE) and other acceptable forms of recertification at the time of recertification application submission. To access the Executive Portfolio, please [click here](#). A signed copy of the [affidavit form](#) is also required.

If the candidate has taken the Specialty Exam in lieu of the Executive Portfolio, please upload a copy of the notification letter.

ACHCA Professional Certification Fees (Fees subject to change)		
Certification Application Fees	Member	Non-Member
Join ACHCA NOW to receive member pricing *ACHCA membership is individual, not facility based, CLICK HERE to join ACHCA!	\$400 * *Introductory price – subject to change	\$600
Single Credential Certification Exam (check only one)	Included with above	Included with above
Add Additional Credential exam (same day)	\$135	\$150
Add Additional Credential exam (different day)	\$135	\$150
Retake Certification Exam (failed section)	\$75/section	\$100/Section
Recertification Application Fees		
Single recertification fee	\$175 – Executive Portfolio \$250 – Recertification by exam	\$225 – Executive Portfolio \$300 – Recertification by exam
Additional recertification fee	\$135	\$150

Payment

All payments must be made online with credit card at ACHCA.org

-This is completed at the time of application submission. A payment page will appear at the end of your application.

**** Refund and Cancellation Policy for Scheduled Exams****

Candidates who have been approved for but have not yet scheduled an exam and who wish to cancel the exam authorization may notify ACHCA within 30 days. A Refund, minus a \$75 dollar processing fee, will occur within 30 days of the application. After 30 days, no refunds will be issued.

ACHCA's Professional Certification Programs

ACHCA Certification Promotes:

- **Professional Development**
- **Employer Recognition**
- **Customer Confidence**
- **National Recognition**
- **Quality Outcomes**

