



NATIONAL CERTIFICATION COUNCIL  
FOR ACTIVITY PROFESSIONALS

*Enriching Lives Through Person-Centered Engagement*

# Certification Standards

Effective October 1, 2020

**National Certification Council for Activity Professionals**

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Certification Standards of the National Certification Council for Activity Professionals (NCCAP).

### Activity Professional Certification

NCCAP was created in 1986 by the National Association of Activity Professionals (NAAP) as the official credential of the Activity Profession.

NAAP is explicitly referenced by CMS in Ftag 658 as competent to establish professional standards of practice for the Activity Profession. Based on this authority, NAAP created the Modular Education Program for Activity Professionals (MEPAP) as the national curriculum for certification of Activity Professionals.

NCCAP is a national credentialing body recognized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). NCCAP meets the formal requirements of the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE).

NCCAP offers an Experiential Track as well as a Professional Equivalency Track for Art Therapist Board Certified (ATR-BC), Music Therapist Board Certified (MT-BC), Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA), Certified Therapeutic Recreation Therapist (CTRS) and Occupational Therapist Registered (OTR).

Since 1986, NCCAP has been the Gold Standard for certification and ensures the highest knowledge and skills to deliver person-centered care.

### Benefits for Activity Professionals

- Enhanced professional recognition
- Career development
- Newsletters, social media and resources
- National Registry
- Highest professional competency based on independent examination

### Benefits for Employers

- NCCAP standards and certification are validated by an independent *Clinical and Curriculum Advisory Board* of practitioners, clinicians and academic experts.
- NCCAP educational and training content are updated annually with regulatory and policy changes, CMS guidelines and industry best practices.
- NCCAP certification can ensure a higher degree of regulatory compliance, lower risk, improved resident and family satisfaction and increased quality of care and services.
- NCCAP certification has been shown to increase employee retention and reduce staff turnover.

### Why Become NCCAP Certified?

- Most States accept NCCAP certification for meeting the requirement to work in the field of activities and life enrichment.
- NCCAP certification assures Employers, Administrators, Surveyors and families that you possess the competencies to enhance the quality of life of those in your care through meaningful activities and engagement.
- Many organizations only hire certified Activity Professionals.

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# NCCAP CERTIFICATIONS

## 1. ACTIVITY PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

To meet Federal and State requirements to work in the field of activities.

- A. Activity Professional Apprentice Certified (APAC)
- B. Activity Professional Certified (APC)
- C. Activity Director Certified (ADC)
- D. Activity Consultant Certified (ACC)

## 2. ENGAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

To demonstrate the skills and knowledge of age-related settings, conditions and diagnoses.

- A. Person-Centered Engagement Certified (PCEC)
- B. Memory Care Validation® Certified (MCVC)
- C. Montessori Dementia Engagement Certified (MDEC)
- D. Montessori Home Engagement Certified (MHEC)
- E. Adult Day Engagement Certified (ADEC) – *coming soon*
- F. Assisted Living Engagement Certified (ALEC) – *coming soon*

## 3. SPECIALIZATIONS

To demonstrate advanced knowledge in particular age-related settings and subject matter.

- A. Adult Day Services (ADS)
- B. Assisted Living (AL)
- C. Education (EDU)
- D. Home Care (HC)
- E. Memory Care (MC)
- F. Person-Centered (PC)

## QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS OF CERTIFICATIONS

NCCAP standards include Qualification Components that vary by type and level of certification. See following charts for specific requirements of certification.

1. **EDUCATION.** High School Diploma, GED, college credits or college degree.
2. **EXPERIENCE.** Documented work or volunteer experience with individuals across the continuum of care. Must be within the past 5 years for initial certification or within current certification period for renewal.
3. **CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) FOR RENEWALS.** CE clock hours must be earned within the current certification period for renewal. Many include workshops, seminars and college courses on topics in the NCCAP Body of Knowledge. CEs are required to ensure knowledge of regulations and best practices.
4. **REQUIRED CURRICULUM.** Curriculums vary by type of certification.
  - A. NCCAP's Professional Certifications require the *Modular Education Program for Activity Professionals* (MEPAP). The MEPAP is a two-part program with each part consisting of a total of 180 hours of related instruction and practicums verified by the National Association of Activity Professionals (NAAP) and must have been completed within 7 years of applying for certification:
    - MEPAP 1-APC (Activity Professional Certified): Prepares students for the functions and duties of an Activity Professional.
    - MEPAP 2-ADC (Activity Director Certified): Prepares students to apply principles of management in the role of Activity Director including leadership, advocacy, planning, organizing, staffing, directing and documentation.
  - B. Engagement Certifications use specialized curriculums focused on the knowledge and skills to deliver person-centered care for particular settings or age-related diagnoses.
  - C. Certified Activity Professionals working to become Activity Consultant Certified (ACC) must complete an Independent Study under the guidance of a NCCAP Instructor.
5. **NATIONAL EXAM.** Required for Activity Director, Activity Consultant, Experiential Track and Professional Equivalency Track. National Exam is offered at independent testing sites and via remote proctoring and requires a separate fee for the testing company. Exam must be taken within 90 days of applying for certification, may be retaken and requires the separate fee each time. A score of 70% is required to pass.
6. **CONSULTING EXPERIENCE.** Required for ACC only, consulting experience may include advising a group, working 1:1, teaching a class, conducting workshops and publishing professional articles.

## NCCAP CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

### 1. ACTIVITY PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

#### A. ACTIVITY PROFESSIONAL APPRENTICE CERTIFIED (APAC)

Intended for the entry-level workforce, Activity Professional Apprentice Certified (APAC) is the start of the career path to work in activities or become an Activity Director. It is not promoted as meeting the requirements for Activity Director. APAC ensures an individual is competent to work in the activities and life enrichment field. APAC requirements are the same as Activity Professional Certified (APC) *except for* hours of activity experience. When required hours of documented work experience are obtained, APAC converts to APC at no additional charge. APAC is good for up to 6 years and must be renewed every 2 years.

QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS	TRACK 1	TRACK 2
<b>1. EDUCATION</b>	High School Diploma, GED plus at least 6 college credits	High School Diploma, GED or higher
<b>2. EXPERIENCE</b>	No experience required. Obtain 2,000 hours of on the job training to earn APC	No experience required. Obtain 4,000 hours of on the job training to earn APC
<b>3. CONTINUING EDUCATION</b>	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification
<b>4. REQUIRED CURRICULUM</b>	MEPAP 1-APC	MEPAP 1-APC
<b>5. NATIONAL EXAM</b>	Not required	Not required

#### B. ACTIVITY PROFESSIONAL CERTIFIED (APC)

Activity Professionals who meet the NCCAP standards to provide services that enhance quality of life through activities and engagement.

QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS	TRACK 1	TRACK 2
<b>1. EDUCATION</b>	High School Diploma, GED plus at least 6 college credits	High School Diploma/GED
<b>2. EXPERIENCE</b>	2,000 hours in past 5 years	4,000 hours in past 5 years
<b>3. CONTINUING EDUCATION</b>	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification
<b>4. REQUIRED CURRICULUM</b>	MEPAP 1-APC	MEPAP 1-APC
<b>5. NATIONAL EXAM</b>	Not required	Not required

### C. ACTIVITY DIRECTOR CERTIFIED (ADC)

NCCAP standard to lead and direct an activities and life enrichment team and program.

QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS	Track 1	Track 2	Track 3
1. EDUCATION	Bachelor's Degree or higher	Associate's Degree or higher	12 or more college credits
2. EXPERIENCE	2,000 hours in an activities department in past 5 years	3,000 hours in an activities department in past 5 years	6,000 hours in an activities department in past 5 years
3. CONTINUING EDUCATION	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification
4. REQUIRED CURRICULUM	MEPAP 1-APC and MEPAP 2-ADC	MEPAP 1-APC and MEPAP 2-ADC	MEPAP 1-APC and MEPAP 2-ADC
5. NATIONAL EXAM	Required	Required	Required

QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS	Track 4	Track 5	
1. EDUCATION	High School Diploma/GED	<b>PROFESSIONAL EQUIVALENCY PATH</b> Individuals with related education and experience are eligible for certification. Individuals can apply for Activity Director Certified (ADC) after verification of current certification by an allied credentialing body, including <b>AT-BC, MT-BC COTA, CTRS, OTR.</b>	Bachelor's Degree
2. EXPERIENCE	12,000 hours in an activities department in the past 6 years		10,000 hours in an activities department in the past 5 years
3. CONTINUING EDUCATION	10 clock hours on activity documentation of MDS and Care Planning in past 5 years		10 clock hours on activity documentation of MDS and Care Planning in past 5 years
4. REQUIRED CURRICULUM	MEPAP 1-APC and MEPAP 2-ADC		MEPAP not required
5. NATIONAL EXAM	Required		Required

## EXPERIENTIAL TRACK FOR ADC

NCCAP standard for individuals able to demonstrate the competencies to lead and direct an activities and life enrichment team and program.

QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS	EXPERIENTIAL TRACK
<b>1. EDUCATION</b>	High School, GED or higher.
<b>2. ESSAY REQUIREMENT</b>	Write a 500-word essay for each of 8 Domains of Practice that clearly demonstrates your knowledge and ability to implement the competencies listed under each Domain.  <u>Note:</u> Advanced Education may reduce the number of required essays. Submit transcripts and supporting documents related to the competencies in the 8 Domains of Practice for consideration.
<b>3. WORK EXPERIENCE</b>	List and submit evidence of at least <b>10</b> years of work experience in an Activities Department and with at least <b>5</b> years <b>currently</b> in the role of Activity Director.
<b>4. PRACTICUM PROJECT</b>	Successfully complete an assigned practicum project to demonstrate the implementation of specific skills and knowledge.
<b>5. NATIONAL EXAM</b>	Pass the NCCAP National Exam.

Contact NCCAP if you meet these requirements and would like to apply: [info@nccap.org](mailto:info@nccap.org) .



**Note: Activity Director Certified Provisional (ADCP)** no longer offered after October 1, 2019. Individuals who received ADCP prior to this date continue to meet the standards previously in effect up to the allowable time of 6 years to earn all 5 requirements for Activity Director Certified (ADC):

1. Academic Education: High School Diploma/GED or higher.
2. Required Curriculum: MEPAP 1-APC.
3. Activity Experience: Hours for Academic Education level per ADC Tracks 1, 2, 3 or 4.
4. Continuing Education: Clock hours for Academic Education level per ADC Tracks 1, 2, 3 or 4.
5. Required Curriculum: MEPAP 2-ADC.

ADCP certification is valid for up to 6 years and must be renewed every 2 years with 30 CEs. Individuals who do not complete all requirements for ADC within 6 years are eligible for APC if they complete MEPAP 1-APC.

**D. ACTIVITY CONSULTANT CERTIFIED (ACC)**

Activity Professionals who meet NCCAP standards to provide professional consulting services to an activity program, staff or department.

<b>QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS</b>	<b>TRACK 1</b>	<b>TRACK 2</b>	<b>TRACK 3</b>
<b>1. EDUCATION</b>	Master's Degree or higher	Bachelor's Degree or higher	Associates Degree or higher
<b>2. EXPERIENCE</b>	2,000 hours in an activities department in past 5 years	4,000 hours in an activities department in past 5 years	6,000 hours in an activities department in past 5 years
<b>3. CONTINUING EDUCATION</b>	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification
<b>4. REQUIRED CURRICULUM</b>	MEPAP 1-APC and MEPAP 2-ADC if previously completed for AAC or ADC, submit certificates of completion	MEPAP 1-APC and MEPAP 2-ADC if previously completed for AAC or ADC, submit certificates of completion	MEPAP 1-APC and MEPAP 2-ADC if previously completed for AAC or ADC, submit certificates of completion
<b>5. NATIONAL EXAM</b>	Required unless fulfilled for ADC	Required unless fulfilled for ADC	Required unless fulfilled for ADC
<b>6. CONSULTING EXPERIENCE</b>	200 hours of activity consulting experience within the past 3 years OR completion of independent study with the guidance of NCCAP Instructor	200 hours of activity consulting experience within the past 3 years OR completion of independent study with the guidance of NCCAP Instructor	200 hours of activity consulting experience within the past 3 years AND completion of independent study with the guidance of NCCAP Instructor

## 2. ENGAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

NCCAP Engagement Certifications use specialized curriculums for the skills and knowledge for person-centered care in specific settings or to address age-related diagnoses.

Engagement Certifications are designed for all who work with older adults including direct support and frontline workers. Engagement Certifications may be used to meet facility education, training and in-service requirements as well as for proof of competency for Surveyors and Regulators.

Person-Centered, Home Care and Dementia Engagement curriculums and certification are recommended for family care givers as well as non-professional care givers.

Current APC, ADC and ACC meet experience requirement of all Engagement Certifications.

Engagement Certifications are valid for 1 year and must be renewed with 5 CE clock hours.

<b>QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS</b>	<b>Person-Centered Engagement Certified (PCEC)</b>	<b>Montessori Dementia Engagement Certified (MDEC)</b>	<b>Montessori Home Engagement Certified (MHEC)</b>
<b>1. EDUCATION</b>	High School Diploma/GED	High School Diploma/GED	High School Diploma/GED
<b>2. EXPERIENCE</b>	1,000 hours of experience in any care community within past 5 years	1,000 hours working with people with dementia within past 5 years	1,000 hours of experience with people aging in place within past 5 years
<b>3. CONTINUING EDUCATION</b>	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification
<b>4. REQUIRED CURRICULUM</b>	Person-Centered Engagement	Montessori Dementia Engagement	Montessori Home Engagement

<b>QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS</b>	<b>Assisted Living Engagement Certified (ALEC)</b>	<b>Adult Day Engagement Certified (ADEC)</b>	<b>Memory Care Validation® Certified (MCVC)</b>
<b>1. EDUCATION</b>	High School Diploma/GED	High School Diploma/GED	High School Diploma/GED
<b>2. EXPERIENCE</b>	1,000 hours of experience in Assisted Living within past 5 years	1,000 hours of experience in Adult Day Services within past 5 years	1,000 hours of experience in dementia care within past 5 years
<b>3. CONTINUING EDUCATION</b>	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification	No CE required for initial certification
<b>4. REQUIRED CURRICULUM</b>	Assisted Living Engagement	Adult Day Engagement	Memory Care: Validation®

### **3. SPECIALIZATIONS**

NCCAP Certified Activity Professionals are eligible to receive specialization designations.

A Specialization demonstrates advanced education and study related to engagement and person-centered care and recognizes the competency for a team approach, directing an activity team, and carrying out an activity program in the subject area of the Specialization.

NCCAP offers the following Specializations:

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| A. ADULT DAY SERVICES | D. HOME CARE       |
| B. ASSISTED LIVING    | E. MEMORY CARE     |
| C. EDUCATION          | F. PERSON-CENTERED |

#### **SPECIALIZATION QUALIFICATION COMPONENTS**

1. Applying for or renewing current APC, ADC, ACC.
2. 10 CE clock hours within the past 2 years in addition to CE requirements for certification.
3. Topics of all CEs must relate to the Body of Knowledge.
4. Documented evidence of all CEs must be submitted for review and approval.
5. Specializations must be renewed every 2 years at the same time as of Activity Professional Certification (APC, ADC, ACC).

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **EDUCATION**

1. High School Diploma or GED.
2. Academic Degrees or College Credits:
  - A. From an accredited college or university.
  - B. All subject areas of degrees and college courses are accepted.
  - C. No time limit for college degree or credits.
  - D. Course work used must be a grade of “C” or better.
  - E. Equivalency of any college or technical credits must be based on an evaluation from an accredited US college, university or independent agency.
3. Documentation Needed to Verify Academic Education:
  - A. Copy of High School Diploma or GED.
  - B. Copy of transcripts from each college or university referred to in your application.
  - C. NCCAP may require foreign transcripts and college credits to be verified by an accrediting organization.

### **EXPERIENCE**

1. Applicable Work Experience
  - A. Activity Professional Certification:
    - i. 50% of work experience must be directly working with activity programming and documentation.
    - ii. 50% can be indirectly working with activities, i.e. Restorative, CNA, Dietary Aide, Rehab, etc.
    - iii. 30% of this experience can be volunteer work with individuals across the continuum of care.
  - B. Engagement Certification:
    - i. All Engagement Certifications require 1,000 hours of experience.
    - ii. Work must be directly related to a care setting in the subject matter of the certification.
    - iii. A current APC, ADC and ACC fulfills work experience for all Engagement Certifications.
2. Experience Time Frame: APAC, APC, ADC, ACC and ADCP experience must be within the past 5 years.
3. Documentation of Activity Experience must be on official company letterhead and include:
  - A. Employee title.
  - B. Dates of beginning and end of employment within the past 5 years.
  - C. Defines type of population served.
  - D. Total hours of experience up to the date of letter. Note: must state the number of hours worked, for example: “20 hours per week.” “Full-time” or “part-time” will not be accepted.
  - E. Letter signed by Administrator, Program Director or Supervisor.
  - F. For companies no longer operating or closed, submit other proof such as pay stubs or tax records.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE)

1. Continuing Education Timeframe:
  - A. No CEs are required for initial certification.
  - B. CEs for renewal must have been completed within the timeframe of your current certification.
  - C. Do not submit actual or copies of documentation with renewal application but save them in case you are audited.
  - D. Activity Professional Certifications (APAC, APC, ADC, ACC) are valid for 2 years. Engagement Certifications are valid for 1 year.
  
2. Qualifying Continuing Education:
  - A. College and university courses can be used to satisfy CE requirements if the courses have not been used to meet Education requirements for certification and were not required as part of the college degree. One college credit is equal to 10 CE clock hours.
  - B. Subject matter of the CE must be included in the topics of the NCCAP Body of Knowledge.
  - C. Each CE clock hour must be at least 60 minutes in length unless otherwise specified in the table below as required by International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) standards.
  - D. Allowable CE delivery methods include:
    - i. A group setting with a leader and discussion.
    - ii. Independent or on-line format.
    - iii. Other methods if NCCAP-Approved (e.g., facility tours at state or national conferences).
  - E. Presentations at workshops, in-service trainings and courses can receive CE hours as follows:
    - i. Presentations must pertain to the activity profession.
    - ii. Proof of presentation must be submitted including agenda and program marketing material.
    - iii. CE clock hours equivalent to double the total presentation time to allow for preparation time. That is, a 1-hour presentation counts as 2 hours of CE.
    - iv. CE hours are allowed only for the initial presentation if presentation is given more than one time.
  - F. Authoring of educational articles receives CE hours as follows:
    - i. Article must pertain to activities and reflect topics in the NCCAP Body of Knowledge.
    - ii. Proof of publication in a National or State professional publication, website or online.
    - iii. Submit copy of publication with application.
    - iv. One CE clock hour for every 400-600 words.
    - v. CE hours allowed only for one publication of the same article.
  
3. Activities that do not qualify as CE:
  - A. Entertainment, reading, recreation or travel.
  - B. Business and committee meetings.
  - C. Self-taught courses.
  - D. Activity experience and performing duties related to work.
  
4. NCCAP periodically audits CE submissions. Documentation required to be maintained for CE audits:
  - A. Evidence of CE approval by a college, university, or other accrediting body.
  - B. Proof or Certificate of Attendance with the following information:

- i. Name of attendee
- ii. Title or topic of the educational session
- iii. Date and location of the educational session
- iv. Specific number of clock hours attended
- v. Sessions submitted for over 8 hours must include copy of official session outline
- vi. Instructor(s) name and credentials
- vii. Sponsor name
- viii. Signature of instructor or sponsor
- ix. If no Certificate of Attendance, provide course brochure with written explanation
- x. Copy of transcripts from college or university and course outline, syllabus and description
- xi. Hand-written certificates are not accepted

5. Total Annual CE Hours Required for Renewal:

- A. APAC: 20 hours, APC: 20 hours, ADC: 30 hours, ADCP: 30 hours, ACC: 40 hours.
- B. Engagement Certification: 5 hours for annual renewal.
- C. Specialization: 10 hours for initial Specialization and renewal with Professional Certification.

6. To Obtain NCCAP Approval for a CE Course:

- A. CE Instructor must submit approval forms found on [www.nccap.org](http://www.nccap.org).
- B. "Approved CE Educator" with website posting and logo available for additional fee.

**TYPE AND AMOUNT OF CE FOR RENEWAL**

Allowable Type and Amount of CE in a Certification Application (See text above for criteria and required documentation)	% LIMIT	TOTAL ANNUAL CE REQUIREMENT				
		5 Hrs	10 Hrs	20 Hrs	30 Hrs	40 Hrs
Health care skill-based related courses (CNA, CDL, CPR, etc.)	20%	1	2	4	6	8
Workplace in-services of at least 30 minutes in length. <u>Note:</u> APC requires at least 3 different topic areas. ADC requires at least 4 different topic areas. ACC requires at least 5 different topic areas. ADC and ACC must include at least one course on "management".						
- Mandatory workplace in-service (any combination of in-person or virtual)	70%	3.5	7	14	21	28
- Additional non-mandatory workplace in-service	70%	3.5	7	14	21	28
Facility-based teleconference, internet streaming video subscriptions (e.g. Primedia, Relias, Care2Learn, HealthStream, etc.)	70%	3.5	7	14	21	28
Non-traditional courses including online, correspondence and home study:						
- No NCCAP approval number (e.g. Skills Builder)	30%	1.5	3	6	9	12
- Has NCCAP approval number	100%	5	10	20	30	40
Activity-related courses other than MEPAP including adult education, workshops, seminars, facility tours as part of conferences, state-required training and educational sessions at professional venues	100%	5	10	20	30	40
College or university courses including independent study and correspondence courses	100%	5	10	20	30	40
Published educational articles written by applicant (see text above for documentation requirements)	20%	1	2	4	6	8
Speeches, presentations and lectures delivered by applicant at workshops, in-services and courses (see above text for documentation requirements)	20%	1	2	4	6	8
<b>Total CE Hours Required</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>

## **ACTIVITY CONSULTANT EXPERIENCE**

1. Consultant experience must meet the certification criteria and may be a combination of:
  - A. One-to-one activity consultation, and,
  - B. Teaching a class or workshop of at least 1-hour actual teaching time, subject to:
    - i. Count only the first-time class or workshop is delivered.
    - ii. Content must meet requirements and definitions in NCCAP Certification Standards
    - iii. Teaching Modular Education Program for Activity Professionals (MEPAP)
    - iv. Acting as a MEPAP Practicum Supervisor counts up to 20%
    - v. Articles published in National or State publications, print or online, qualify as 1 hour of consulting experience for each 400-600 words and count up to 20%
  - C. Include a copy of published materials with application
    - i. May count up to 40 hours direct on-site supervision of activities-related practicum
    - ii. At least 40 hours of consulting must occur outside place of current employment
    - iii. At least 40 hours of consultation must be direct activity consultation
    - iv. Activity Consultant Track 3 Candidates please contact NCCAP office to obtain requirements
2. Consulting Experience Timeframe: 200 hours must be from within the past 3 years.
3. Documentation of consulting experience:
  - A. On facility or program letterhead.
  - B. Verify each aspect of consulting experience used by submitting letter(s) to verifying:
    - i. Employee title
    - ii. Dates of beginning and end of employment only within the last 3 years
    - iii. Actual total hours of experience up to the date of the letter
  - C. Letter signed by administrator, program director or supervisor.
  - D. For all teaching submit copy of advertising document, copy of certificate of attendance, and verification that the session was presented include:
    - i. Title of educational offering
    - ii. Date, time and number of clock hours offered
    - iii. Location of presentation
    - iv. Presenter's name and qualification for teaching: degree, certification number or experience.

## **REQUIRED RENEWALS**

1. Professional Certification renewal is required every two years and must occur before the expiration date in order to avoid a **Late Fee**. Late renewal does not change the two-year period. CE clock hours required for renewal are required to be earned during the 2 years after initial certification and every 2 years thereafter:
  - APAC or APC: 20 CE hours
  - ADC or ADCP: 30 CE hours
  - ACC: 40 CE hours
  - Specializations: 10 CE hours additional for each specialization

2. All Engagement Certifications require 5 CE hours for renewal every year. Late renewal and payment date do not change the one-year period. Acquire CE during the one year after initial certification and thereafter.
3. Renewal email notifications are sent 120 days prior to expiration and then monthly thereafter.
4. Renewals should be submitted 6 weeks prior to expiration date to allow for review and processing. Renewal fees are due at the time of renewal submission. Renewals received without appropriate forms or correct payment are considered incomplete.
5. DO NOT SEND PROOF OF CEs such as certificates of completion. Only list the information requested in the renewal application. However, you must retain these records as proof in case you are audited. NCCAP periodically audits CEs submitted with renewals in order to verify compliance. If you are audited, you have 7 days to submit proof of your CEs or you will be charged a **Late Fee**.
6. Renewal information, including renewal fees and required application forms are on [www.nccap.org](http://www.nccap.org).
7. Renewal applications should be submitted online prior to expiration date on [www.nccap.org](http://www.nccap.org) or printed and mailed to NCCAP office postmarked before certification expiration to avoid a **Late Fee**.
8. A notification will be sent via email regarding missing items required for renewal.
9. Your certification will be held in “Pending Status” for up to 1 year until missing items are submitted and accepted. After 1 year, APC and APAC must reapply for initial certification. If you were ADC or ACC within the past 6 years you must take the National Exam, meet CE requirements for renewal and pay a Late Fee. After 6 years you must reapply meeting the current standard for initial APC, ADC or ACC.
10. Processing of renewal applications can be expedited by paying a **Fast Track Fee**.

### LEVEL CHANGE

1. Activity Professionals seeking a Level Change need to complete a Level Change application and pass the National Exam.
2. Applicants only need to add additional information supporting the Level Change and pay the level change fee (see [www.nccap.org](http://www.nccap.org) for Fee Schedule).
3. The expiration date of certification remains the same as your last current expiration date.
4. If level changing to ADC or ACC, you are required to take and pass the National Exam which requires a separate fee for the independent testing company.
5. APAC automatically level changes to APC at no additional charge when the required number of documented work experience hours or on the job training are approved.



# BODY OF KNOWLEDGE – Topic Areas for Continuing Education

## **WORKING WITH RESIDENTS/CLIENTS**

### **1. Human Development and Late Adult Years**

- Life Span Potential
- Theories of Aging

### **2. Human Development and Aging**

- Human Behavior and Aging
- Potential and Creativity
- Wellness and Self-Esteem

### **3. Spirituality of Aging**

- Reminiscing
- Tasks of Life Review
- Worship and Religion
- Death and Dying
- Palliative Care
- Journaling
- Ethics
- Tasks of Vital Aging
- Prayer and Scripture
- Personal Growth
- Wisdom in Aging
- Comparative Religions

### **4. Biology of Aging**

- Changes: Physical & Sensory
- Sexuality
- Medications
- Nutrition
- Healthy Aging
- Illness and Dysfunction
- Bariatric Issues
- Behavioral Interventions
- Pain Management

### **5. Sociology of Aging**

- Involvement and Isolation
- Dependence and Independence
- Living Alone and Social Networks
- Cultural Attitudes
- Social Histories
- Long-Term Care, Aging and Social Needs
- Living Arrangements: Retirement Housing, Elder Communities, Long-Term Care, Adult Day Services, Assisted Living, Mental Health, Sub-Acute, Independent Living, Home Health, Aging in Place, Senior Centers
- Cultural Competency
- Person-Centered, Resident-Directed and Relationship-Based Care

- Baby Boomers and Generational Diversity
- Diversity and Inclusion
- LGBTQI
- Sign Language and Foreign Languages
- Elder Abuse

### **6. Psychology of Aging**

- Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)
- Understanding Behavioral Expressions
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Memory Loss, Cognitive Decline and Dementia
- Leisure & Aging
- Psychological Choices: Depression, Anxiety, Fears
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Security
- Successful adaptations
- Hospice
- Counseling Techniques
- Stereotypes and Myths
- Institutionalization
- Aging in Place
- Memory Care

### **7. Leisure and Aging**

- Recreation: Definition, Types, Philosophy
- Lifestyles
- Retirement Living
- Attitudes: Motivation
- Analysis of Leisure Time
- Client Interests
- Client Rights: Different Categories
- Volunteerism
- Creativity in Aging
- Leisure Education
- Barriers to Leisure
- Person Centered Programming

### **8. Basic Health**

- Infection Control
- First Aid and CPR
- Health Precautions
- Personal Health Issues
- Compassion Fatigue
- Geriatric Medications and Contra-Indications in the Activities Delivery systems
- Nutritional Issues and Diabetes

## **9. Group Instruction or Leadership**

- Adult Learning Modes
- Instruction Methods: Lecture, Handouts, Videos
- Demonstrations, Samples, Slides, Discussion, Participation, Survey, Sharing Experience
- Teaching Materials - Tools, Resources
- Group Dynamics and Leadership
- In-Service
- Leader Listening
- Esteem Building
- Build Group Support and Group Leadership

## **10. Therapy for the Disabled Aging**

- Overview of PT, OT, Speech Therapy, Art Therapy, Recreation Therapy, Dance Therapy, Music Therapy, Drama Therapy, Validation, Poetry Therapy, Reality Orientation, Re-motivation, Horticulture Therapy, Montessori
- Restorative Programs: Feeding Training, ADL Skills, etc.
- Patient Physical Transfer Techniques
- Therapeutic Approach: Meaningful, Purposeful and How it Helps
- Therapeutic Feeding Techniques
- Aroma Therapy
- Massage Therapy
- Therapeutic Swimming

## **11. With Residents and Staff**

- Types of Communication
- Listening Skills
- Responding Skills
- Communication with Frail
- Communication with Confused
- Intercultural Concerns
- Morale Building
- Dealing with Difficult Situations

## **12. Public Speaking**

- Professional Image
- Leading Meetings
- Business Etiquette

## **13. Public Relations**

- The Written Message
- Media Use: Press releases, P.S.A., T.V., Radio
- Publicity and News
- Letters of Appreciation
- Volunteer Programs
- Fund Raising

- Marketing Activity Importance letters, Bulletin Boards, Posters, Graphic Techniques
- Community Marketing of Facility and Activities Delivery Systems

## **14. Interpersonal Relationships**

- Staff Team Approach: Working Together
- Coordination of Services: Staff, Families, Volunteers, etc.
- Peer Relationships: Staff, Residents
- Family Relationships: Various Age Needs and Attitudes
- Empowerment, Managing Relationships, Personality Evaluation
- Staff and Client Relationships
- Consultant Relationships
- Organizational Relationships
- Organizational Structures in Different Levels of Care
- Conflict Resolution
- Dealing with Difficult People
- Assertiveness Training

## **15. Motivation**

- Clients, Families, Staff, Volunteers
- Professional Improvement
- Motivational Techniques

## **16. Community Service, Support, Relations**

- Recreation Resources
- Service Clubs
- Religious Resources
- Mainstreaming
- Adult Health Services and Support Groups: Alzheimer's, MS, Ostomy, Parkinson's, Arthritis, Amputee, Cancer
- Business and Chambers of Commerce
- Family Open Houses
- Library Resources

## **17. Regulations**

- State and Federal Activities, Regulations and Standards, OSHA, ADA, Professional Standards
- Survey Process
- Plan of Corrections
- Legislative Updating
- JCAHO, CARF, Specialty Standards
- Assisted Living Regulations, Memory Care, Enhanced Assisted Living Regulations
- Medical Adult Day Health Regulations

- Mental Health Adult Day Health Regulations, Adult Day Habilitation (MR/DD)
- Adult Home Regulations, Personal Care and Boarding

### **PROGRAMMING**

#### **18. Individualized Care Planning**

- Assessment: MDS, CAA's, CATS
- Interdisciplinary Team
- Care Planning, Approach, Progress Notes
- Professional Standards
- Legal, Ethical Issues
- Medical Terms
- Charting, Confidentiality
- Patient-Resident Involvement
- For Participant Learning
- Quality Indicators
- Individualized Service Plans
- Person Centered Care Planning and "I" Care Plans

#### **19. Program Management**

- Philosophy of Operation
- Expressive and Creative Program Scope: Physical, Mental, Social, Emotional, Community, Spiritual, Educational
- Program Planning: Resident Centered
- Organization and Calendar
- Program Implementation and Conducting Activities
- Evaluation Techniques
- Operating Audio and Visual Equipment and Personal Electronic Devices
- Equipment & Supplies: Control, Safety Precautions, Resource Materials, Ordering
- Modes of Programming
- Operating Facility Vehicles

#### **20. Computer Skills**

- Word Processing
- Database
- Charting
- Desktop Publishing
- Games
- Participant Learning
- Internet

#### **21. Program Types: Theory and Practice**

- Supportive
- Maintenance
- Empowerment

- Exercise: General, Volleyball, Wheelchair, Reiki, Tae Kwon Do, Yoga, etc.
- Social, Parties, etc.
- Outdoor (e.g., Barbecues, Games, Walks, etc.)
- Away from the Facility (e.g., Visits to Community Places of Interest, etc.)
- Religious (e.g., Bible Study, Services, etc.)
- Creative (e.g., Crafts, Drama, Writing, Journaling, Scrapbooking, etc.)
- Educational (e.g., Current Events, Alzheimer's Group, Adult Learning, etc.)
- Residents with special needs (e.g., AIDS, DDs, MRs, MS, etc.).
- Resident Planned (e.g., Resident Council or Any Activity, etc.)
- In-Room (e.g., Adapt Out-of-Room Activities, etc.)
- Sensory (e.g., Braille Materials, Any Sensory Stimulation, Pet, Food Related, Snoozelen™, Meditation, Massage, Reflexology, etc.)
- Reality Awareness
- Entertainment (e.g., Games, Entertainer Resources, etc.)
- Self Help (e.g., Independent Activities)
- Music: Basic & Adaptive Techniques 1. Accompaniment Instrument-Chord Structure, Ear Training 2. Recreational-Rhythm Instruments, Musical Games, Movement, Literature for Aged
- Community Oriented (e.g., Intergenerational, Community Groups in the Facility, etc.)
- Computer Based and Live Teleconferencing
- Lesson Planning
- Technological Advancements
- Wii
- Outings Policies and Procedures
- Recreational, Leisure Vehicle Training
- Bar Tending, Mixology, Wine Tasting
- Proper Food Handling

### **MANAGEMENT, PERSONNEL, ETHICS AND LEGAL ISSUES**

#### **22. Personal Employment**

- Recruiting, Interviewing, Hiring, Termination, Development, Recognition, Evaluation: Staff and Volunteers
- Job Search: Resume Writing, Interview Preparation

#### **23. Management and Leadership**

- Interdisciplinary Care Plan Team
- Leadership Styles
- Program Management

- Program Evaluation
- Supervision Philosophies and Techniques
- Delegating and Enabling Staff Ability
- Self-Analysis
- Time Management
- Activity Staff In-Service
- How to Conduct Meetings: Staff, Association
- Problem Solving
- Resident Council and Family Council
- Record Keeping
- Dealing with Challenging People
- Stress Management
- Memory Improvement
- Violence in the Workplace
- Controlling
- Advocacy and Ombudsman
- Universal Worker Concepts
- Culture Change and Greenhouse Concepts
- Management and Management Techniques
- Generational Diversity/Gender Issues
- Quality Assurance, CQI, TQM, etc.
- Association Management and Conferences
- Committee Development
- Customer Service

#### 24. Management Writing Skills

- Documentation Chart Auditing
- Job Descriptions
- Policies and Procedures Manuals
- Incident Records/Reports
- Letters of Request, Direct Mail
- Grant Writing
- Public Relations

- E-mail and Internet Etiquette
- Form Development

#### 25. Financial Management

- Reimbursement
- Record Keeping
- Expense Control
- Establishing Non-Profit Status
- Fund raising
- Donation Management
- Establishing Budgets

#### 26. Professional Development

- Certification
- Professional Attitude Toward Residents
- Professional Associations
- Business Expectations
- Professional Standards, Ethics
- Professional Affiliations
- Professionalism

#### 27. Consulting

- Consultant's Role, Goals, Knowledge
- Consultant's Education

#### 28. Resources

- How to Work with Volunteers
- How to Work with Supervisors
- How to Work with Consultants
- How to Work as Middle Management
- Intra-departmental Skills
- How to work with Vendors

**Downloadable versions of Certification Standards, policies, forms, documents, fees and additional resources on: [www.nccap.org](http://www.nccap.org).**



ESTABLISHED IN 1981, NAAP IS THE FORMAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ACTIVITY PROFESSIONAL. AUTHORIZED BY CMS IN FTAG 658 TO ESTABLISH PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF PRACTICE, NAAP CREATED NCCAP IN 1986 AS THE CERTIFICATION BODY OF THE PROFESSION. NCCAP REMAINS THE ONLY CERTIFICATION RECOGNIZED AND SUPPORTED BY NAAP FOR THE ACTIVITY PROFESSION.