



# **Certification Renewal Policies and Procedures**

**The policies, procedures, and deadlines described in these instructions are subject to change. Please be sure to verify that you are using the most current document.**

## **Introduction**

The following pages contain all the information you need to renew your CRRN certification by 60 points of credit. This system is designed to encourage continual learning and allows CRRNs to select educational activities that meet their individual needs and interests. Please take a few minutes to review the instructions. If you have any questions, please call the Rehabilitation Nursing Certification Board (RNCB) at 800.229.7530 or email [cert@rehabnurse.org](mailto:cert@rehabnurse.org).

The purpose of the CRRN 60 points of credit renewal process is to encourage CRRNs to pursue continuing competence. Continuing competence is defined as “The ongoing commitment of a registered nurse to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, and judgement with the attitudes, values, and beliefs required to practice safely, effectively, and ethically in a designated role, patient population and/or setting.”

### **Who should renew**

To be eligible for renewal by points of credit, CRRNs must have:

- a current, unrestricted RN licensure
- at least 1000 hours of rehabilitation nursing experience as an RN within the previous 5 years
- 60 points of credit that meet the published criteria.

It is not necessary to track hours devoted to specific rehabilitation nursing tasks or roles. Rehabilitation nursing is a philosophy of care and is not limited to any specific setting or role. Regardless of the setting or role, if you are working with individuals with physical disability or chronic illness toward the restoration, maintenance, and promotion of optimal health—that is considered rehabilitation nursing.

### **Time frame for earning points**

CRRNs have up to 5 years to earn points of credit toward CRRN renewal. The chart on page 5 will help you identify your time frame, deadlines, and expiration date.

To be fair to all candidates, deadlines must be strictly enforced and we are unable to grant extensions. Please be sure complete and submit your application by the deadline. If you are submitting your application by mail, be sure to do so on or before the deadline. We encourage you to use a traceable delivery service such as FedEx or UPS. The shipment date

## **Potential rehabilitation nursing practice settings and roles**

### **Practice settings**

- Clinic
- Community agency/home health agency
- Dept. of Veterans Affairs medical center
- Educational institution
- General hospital with or without rehabilitation unit
- Insurance company
- Long-term care facility
- Private company/private office
- Rehabilitation facility
- Subacute unit

### **Roles**

- Academic instructor
- Case manager
- Charge nurse
- Clinical nurse specialist
- Community nurse
- Consultant
- Home health nurse
- In-service instructor
- Insurance nurse
- Nurse clinician
- Nurse liaison
- Nurse manager
- Nurse practitioner
- Nursing administrator
- Researcher
- Staff nurse

information from a delivery service will be considered equivalent to a US Postal Service postmark. Private postage meter dates are not considered official postmarks.

### **How to earn points**

You may earn points through a variety of professional development activities. These activities are continuing education, presentations, academic coursework, publication, and community service. **Each method has specific criteria and in each case, the content must be related to rehabilitation nursing.**

### **Related to rehabilitation nursing**

All of the professional development activities must be related to rehabilitation nursing. A topic is considered related to rehabilitation nursing if it falls within the examination content outline.

### **Definition of rehabilitation nursing**

Rehabilitation nursing is a specialty practice area within the scope of professional nursing. It involves the diagnosis and treatment of human responses of individuals and groups to actual or potential health problems resulting from altered functional ability and altered lifestyle.

The goal of rehabilitation nursing is to assist individuals with disabilities and chronic illnesses in the restoration, maintenance, and promotion of optimal health. The rehabilitation nurse is skilled at treating alterations in functional ability and lifestyle resulting from injury, disability, and chronic illness.

Rehabilitation nurses provide comfort, therapy, and education; promote health-conducive adjustments; support adaptive capabilities; and promote achievable independence. Rehabilitation nurses provide holistic, comprehensive, and compassionate end-of-life care, including promotion of comfort and relief of pain.

### **Application process**

If renewing by points of credit, there are two methods by which you may submit your points: an online system or paper-based application. Applications for renewal by either method will be accepted beginning 6 months prior to the certification expiration date.

#### **Online application**

1. Six months prior to the expiration date, the “submit and pay” option will become available. You may submit the application and make payment any time during this 6-month period, however, a higher fee will apply to any application submitted during the last 3 months of certification. Please refer to page 5 for a description of the deadlines.
2. To submit online, you must pay by credit card.
3. If paying by check, you must print the application and mail it with payment. Please be aware that if submitting by mail, the postmark deadline will apply. The option to print the application will not become available until 6 months prior to the expiration date.
4. If you withdraw your application or your application is denied, you will be issued a refund less a \$75 processing fee.
5. If your application is selected for audit or questions come up during the review of your application, you will be contacted via email at the address you have provide. Please be sure to check your email account, including spam folders, until your certification is renewed. Failure to respond to request for audits or clarification may result in loss of certification.

#### **Paper-based application**

1. A paper application will be available 6 months prior to the certification expiration date.
2. The review process takes approximately 8 weeks. This means that if you mail your application close to the application deadline, you might not learn whether your certification has been renewed until a few weeks before the expiration date.
3. Your payment is deposited upon receipt. If you withdraw your application or your application is denied, you will be issued a refund less a \$75 processing fee.
4. **It is not necessary to send any certificates or other documentation with your application.** If your application is selected for audit, you will be contacted via email. Unsolicited certificates are destroyed.
5. If your application is selected for audit or questions come up during the review of your application, you will be contacted via email at the address you have provide. Please be sure to check your email account, including spam folders, until your certification is renewed. Failure to respond to request for audits or clarification may result in loss of certification.
6. Due to the heavy volume of applications received close to the deadline, we might not be able to provide immediate verification of receipt.
7. Mail does get lost. We encourage you to **send your application via a traceable delivery service and keep a copy for your records.**

## Fees

There is a fee for certification renewal. Your ARN membership must be current at the time of application in order to receive the member discount. If you are not currently a member of ARN, you may join ARN prior to renewing your CRRN certification to receive the member discount. ARN membership fees are subject to change. **ARN membership is not required for CRRN certification.**

## Verification of work experience

Renewing CRRNs must have completed 1000 hours of rehabilitation nursing experience within the 5-year certification period at the time of application for renewal. You must provide **complete** contact information for 2 professional colleagues who are able to verify a minimum of 1000 hours of rehabilitation nursing experience within the 5-year certification period. One colleague must be your immediate supervisor **OR** another CRRN. Your immediate supervisor need not be an RN. The second colleague may be another other professional colleague (e.g., nurse, therapist, physician, case manager, social worker). In the event your application is selected for audit, these individuals will be contacted and asked to affirm your rehabilitation nursing experience.

An alternative verification procedure is available for CRRNs in independent practice who do not have a supervisor or CRRN colleague or have been practicing as a rehabilitation nurse by caring for physically disabled or chronically ill family members in place of paid employment. Information about the alternative verification process is available at [www.rehabnurse.org](http://www.rehabnurse.org).

## Deadlines

All policies regarding deadlines and time frames are strictly enforced and the submission date or postmark is very important; whether your application meets the deadline is determined by the online submission, postmark, or shipping date. To be fair to all candidates, we are unable to grant deadline extensions or waive the any fees.

If submitting an application via the online system, the early submission deadline is the last day of the month, three months prior to the certification expiration date. The final deadline is the expiration date.

If applying by mail, the application postmark deadlines will be the same as the online submission deadlines. Please refer to the chart below for specific dates.

You will not be able to access on the online renewal system after your certification has expired. If mailing the application, applications received with a postmark or shipping date after the expiration date will not be accepted, regardless of the circumstances.

**Important Notice Regarding Deadlines**

If renewing online, the application submission deadline is midnight, central time. This deadline applies if you are applying by the early deadline (March 31 or September 30) or the final deadline (June 30 or December 31). If you have not completed and submitted the application by midnight, central time, you may incur a higher fee or miss the opportunity to renew entirely. Customer service representatives are available Monday-Friday, 8 am to 6 pm, central time.

**Application deadlines: early and final option**

When applying for renewal, you have two choices: the standard application deadline or the final deadline. The renewal fee is discounted for CRRNs who complete the renewal requirements and submit the application on or before the standard deadline. The final deadline fee is a higher fee.

Certification expiration	Standard deadline		Final deadlines*	
	Application submission or postmark deadline	Dates for earning points	Application submission or postmark deadline	Dates for earning points
6/30/2022	3/31/2022	July 1, 2017, to March 31, 2022	6/30/2022	July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2022
12/31/2022	9/30/2022	January 1, 2018, to September 30, 2022	12/31/2022	January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2022
6/30/2023	3/31/2023	July 1, 2018, to March 31, 2023	6/30/2023	July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2023
12/31/2023	9/30/2023	January 1, 2019, to September 30, 2023	12/31/2023	January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2023
6/30/2024	3/31/2024	July 1, 2019, to March 31, 2024	6/30/2024	July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2024
12/31/2024	9/30/2024	January 1, 2020, to September 30, 2024	12/31/2024	January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2024
6/30/2025	3/31/2025	July 1, 2020, to March 31, 2025	6/30/2025	July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2025
12/31/2025	9/30/2025	January 1, 2021, to September 30, 2025	12/31/2025	January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2025
6/30/2026	3/31/2026	July 1, 2021, to March 31, 2026	6/30/2026	July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2026
12/31/2026	9/30/2026	January 1, 2022, to September 30, 2026	12/31/2026	January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2026

The final deadline fee will apply when:

1. Your application is submitted online or received with a postmark\*\* after the early deadline but on or before the certification expiration date.
2. Using points earned after the early deadline but on or before the certification expiration date.

\*\*Shipping date for UPS, FedEx, or other delivery service.

### **Postmark and mailing information**

If you wait until the expiration date to mail your application, you will have to be proactive in making sure your package has an acceptable postmark or shipping date. If you mail your application on the expiration date, verify the postmark or shipment date. Just because you put your envelope in a postal box on a given day does not always mean it will be postmarked that day. If you use a delivery service such as FedEx or UPS, call the delivery service to determine the best drop-off location.

### **Notification of renewal decision**

You can expect a decision on your application within approximately 8 weeks of receipt. If your application is approved, you will receive an email link to your digital badge and certificate. If your application is denied, you will be notified in writing.

### **Inactive status**

Inactive CRRN status is available to those who have experienced designated traumatic or life-altering events that have affected their ability to maintain certification. Inactive status gives an additional period of up to three years for the nurse to meet the requirements for renewal. While certification is on inactive status, the nurse may not use the CRRN credential.

You must meet the following criteria in order to qualify for inactive status:

1. Current, unrestricted RN licensure
2. Experience one or more qualifying event during the 5-year certification period:
  - Birth or adoption of a child
  - Leaving paid employment to care for a child or other dependent
  - Unemployment
  - Active military duty
  - Divorce
  - Serious illness of self or family member
  - Death of a family member
  - Declared state of emergency
  - Civil unrest
  - Loss of primary housing due to natural disaster (e.g. earthquake, hurricane, fire, catastrophic flood)

You may apply for inactive status up to six months after your certification expiration date (e.g., if your certification expires on December 31, you have until June 30 of the next year to apply for inactive status). Inactive status does not allow additional time to complete the renewal process; however, it does shift the time frame for completing the renewal requirements to renew by points of credit or examination. Inactive status is valid for a period of up to 3 years. There is an application fee. When you are ready to apply to reactivate your certification, you may submit a points of credit application or apply to take the CRRN examination. You must meet the criteria and pay the fee in effect at the time in order to reactivate certification.

Visit [www.rehabnurse.org](http://www.rehabnurse.org) to download the inactive status application.

## Continuing education

Continuing education is defined as learning activities intended to build upon the educational and experiential bases of the professional nurse for the enhancement of practice, education, administration, research, or theory development with the goal of improving the health of the public. Continuing education activities include conferences, workshops, seminars, and independent study activities for which you have earned contact hours (e.g., journal articles, CD-ROM programs, on-line offerings). There is no limit on the number of points that may be earned through independent study. One contact hour equals 1 point. You may submit all 60 points in the area of continuing education.

### Criteria for continuing education points

1. All must be related to rehabilitation nursing.
2. Two-thirds must be approved by a national or state nursing organization for nursing contact hours. *(If you submit more than 60 points of continuing education, a minimum of 40— $\frac{2}{3}$  of 60—must be approved by a national or state nursing organization.)*

### Related to rehabilitation nursing

Please refer to page 3.

### Nursing approval

#### Definitions

**National nursing organization:** an association or other organization focused on one or more aspects of nursing which operates on the national level in the US. Most groups that meet this definition will refer to nursing in their names. Interdisciplinary organizations do not meet this definition.

**State nursing organization:** a state board of nursing, state licensing body for nurses, or state nursing association. Local chapters of national nursing organizations do not meet this definition.

Continuing education activities are considered nursing-approved if they fall into one of the following categories:

1. The program was provided by a national or state nursing organization.
2. The program was approved for nursing contact hours by a national or state nursing organization.
3. The program was provided by an organization accredited to provide nursing continuing education contact hours by a national or state nursing organization.

In most cases, the certificate of attendance or promotional literature will provide specific information about who provided and, if applicable, approved the program.

**The following examples are organizations that are national or state nursing organizations. This list is not all-inclusive.**

- American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
- American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
- American Association of Occupational Health Nurses
- American Holistic Nurses' Association
- American Nephrology Nurses' Association
- American Nurses Credentialing Center's-Commission on Accreditation (ANCC)
- Any state board of nursing (e.g., California Board of Nursing)
- Any state nursing association (e.g., Illinois Nurses Association)
- Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
- Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
- Oncology Nursing Society
- Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society

**The following examples are organizations that are not national or state nursing organization. If contact hours earned through these organizations were not approved by a nursing organization, the contact hours cannot be considered “approved by a national or state nursing organization.” This list is not all-inclusive.**

- American Management Association
- American Medical Association
- Certification of Disability Management Specialist Commission
- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Commission
- Commission on Case Management Certification
- The Joint Commission
- National Association of Boards of Examiners for Nursing Home Administrators
- National Association of Rehabilitation Professionals in the Private Sector
- The Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission (CARF)
- Local chapters of national or state nursing organizations
- Colleges or universities

### **Restrictions**

The following are not acceptable:

- Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS)
- Programs intended to meet mandatory annual review requirements (e.g., CPR, bloodborne pathogens, fire and safety).
- Attendance at the same continuing education program more than once.
- Credit for both attending and for presenting a continuing education activity. If you are submitting points for presenting a session that was part of a larger program, you may receive credit for attending the parts of the program you did not present. To do this, subtract the hours you presented from the total number of contact hours provided by the program. Submit only those contact hours for which you were an attendee under continuing education.

### **Presentations**

Presentations are those activities in which you, as a presenter, deliver rehabilitation nursing content to nurses and other healthcare professionals. **The presentation must be delivered within a structured framework of teaching and learning for which national or state nursing organization-approved contact hours have been awarded.** Please refer to the information above to determine whether the program was approved by a national or state nursing organization. A maximum of 12 points of credit will be accepted.

Presentation participation may be as a primary instructor, guest lecturer, panel participant, or poster or paper presenter. The following are acceptable activities and their point values:

1. Presentations: Two points for each nursing-approved contact hour awarded to attendees.
2. Paper or case study presentation: Two points for each original paper or case study presentation
3. Poster presentation: two points for each original poster.

### **Restrictions**

The following are not acceptable:

- Credit for presenting the same program more than once
- Programs that have not been approved for nursing contact hours by a national or state nursing organization



## Academic coursework

Academic coursework is defined as work for which you receive postsecondary academic credit at the college level that is related to rehabilitation nursing practice. Please refer to the definition on page 3 to determine whether a course can be considered related to rehabilitation nursing. Coursework can be at the graduate or undergraduate level. Each credit hour is equal to 4 points of credit. A maximum of 48 points will be accepted.

The number of academic credit hours earned for a course will generally appear on your grade report or transcript and is based on the number of classroom hours per week. This means that if you spend 3 hours per week in class, the course is worth 3 credit hours (or 3 credit hours x 4 = 12 points).

## Professional publications

You may earn 12 points of credit for each original manuscript published or accepted for publication. To qualify, your manuscript must be a journal article or text chapter for healthcare professionals. Up to 36 points will be accepted.

### Restrictions

The following are not acceptable:

- Earning points for both acceptance and publication of a single manuscript.
- Articles or texts written primarily as patient or public education.

## Community service

Community service pertains to volunteer activities that are intended to educate the public, improve the quality of life for physically disabled or chronically ill people, or improve the practice of professional rehabilitation nursing. Acceptable activities and their corresponding point values are listed below. A maximum of 10 points will be accepted in this area.

### Acceptable activities and corresponding point values

1. Publication of an article or chapter text: Publication of an article or chapter text on a healthcare-related topic in a general interest or consumer publication. Each original manuscript will be awarded 2 points.
2. Presentation: Presentation of a healthcare-related topic to a public audience in a formal setting. Each original presentation will be awarded 1 point.
3. Volunteer leadership in a healthcare organization: Leadership in a volunteer capacity of a local, state, regional, national, or international professional healthcare organization. To qualify, you must have served as an officer or board member for at least 1 year. Each leadership activity will be awarded 1 point. If serving a multi-year term, you may not receive credit for each year served.
4. Review board participation: Serving in a formally-appointed capacity to review the original work of others as a content expert such as on an editorial board, research or program grant application review committee, continuing education approval unit review panel, or abstract review committee for a term of 1 year will be award 2 points.

### Restrictions

The following are not acceptable:

- Activities for which you receive payment for your services in excess of \$75.
- Activities that are considered part of your employment.

## Audits

This section concerns the documentation you will be asked to supply in the event your application is identified for audit. It is not necessary to submit any certificates or other documentation with your initial application. Please keep your original documentation and send photocopies if you are audited.

A percentage of applications are audited each year to monitor compliance to the criteria. This is a random process based on order of receipt. If your application is selected for audit, you will be notified by email and given 30 days to provide the necessary documentation.

### Acceptable documentation

**Continuing education:** Submit copies of proof of attendance or completion of continuing education offerings or programs. This should include the date, year, program title, your name, the provider (and sponsor if applicable), and the number of contact hours awarded. Each certificate must include a statement that verifies that the program was approved for nursing contact hours by a national or state nursing organization, if you indicated it met this requirement on your application. A certificate of attendance including the above information is sufficient. **A transcript from a learning management system or third-party vendor is not acceptable.**

**Presentation:** Submit evidence of participation in the presentation of a continuing education program, paper or case study presentation, or poster presentation. Documentation such as a brochure, announcement, or written statement by a supervisor is acceptable. The documentation must include your name as presenter; the date and year of the presentation; program or poster title; behavioral objectives; the number of contact hours awarded for the presentation; and the name of the nursing organization that approved the program for contact hours.

**Academic coursework:** Submit copies of transcripts for completed course work.

**Professional publication:** Submit publication or letter of acceptance of an original manuscript from professional journals or textbook publishers who have published your original manuscripts. You will need a copy of the letter of acceptance or the table of contents or chapter heading, including proof that your name as author is published.

#### Community service:

*Publications.* Submit the letter of acceptance or a copy of the article or chapter text that show the date of publication and your name as author.

*Presentations.* Submit a letter or promotional materials from the sponsoring organization listing you as presenter and the presentation date.

*Volunteer leadership or review board participation.* Submit a letter from the sponsoring organization stating your role and the date or term of services.

## Denial of certification renewal

Applications may be denied for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to submit a completed application by the deadline
2. Failure to earn and, if requested, provide appropriate evidence of a minimum of 60 points of credit as determined by the RNCB.
3. Limitation, suspension, or termination of RN licensure by any jurisdiction
4. Failure to supply additional requested information by the established deadline
5. Falsification of application materials
6. Misrepresentation
7. Misuse of the CRRN credential

If your renewal application is denied based on failure to accumulate 60 points of credit that meet the published criteria, alleged falsification of an application, alleged misrepresentation, or alleged misuse of the CRRN, you have the option of submitting your application for reconsideration and appeal to the RNCB in accordance with RNCB policies and procedures.

If your renewal application is denied based on limitation, suspension or revocation of RN licensure, failure to apply for renewal by the certification expiration date, or failure to respond to requests for additional information, you are not eligible for reconsideration or appeal.

If your renewal application is denied, you will be notified within 8 weeks of receipt of the application.

Applicants may submit a written request for reconsideration to the Rehabilitation Nursing Certification Board (RNCB) within 30 days following the date on which the decision for renewal was mailed to the applicant. The request for reconsideration must include the reasons why the denial is being contested.

If certification renewal is denied due to limitation, suspension or revocation of RN licensure, you may not take the certification examination until licensure is restored and all other eligibility criteria are met. In the event that certification renewal is denied (after all appeal rights are exhausted) based on falsification of an application or misuse of the CRRN credential, RNCB shall determine a reasonable time after which you may take the CRRN examination. Individuals without current certification may not represent themselves as Certified Rehabilitation Registered Nurses. RNCB shall take action against any individual who falsely represents himself or herself as a Certified Rehabilitation Registered Nurse.

### **Purpose and Rational of CRRN Renewal Requirements**

The purpose of the CRRN 60 points of credit renewal process is to encourage CRRNs to pursue continuing competence. Continuing competence is defined as “The ongoing commitment of a registered nurse to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, and judgement with the attitudes, values, and beliefs required to practice safely, effectively, and ethically in a designated role, patient population and/or setting.”

Both the eligibility criteria and professional development requirements are intended to encourage continuing competence by requiring CRRNs to maintain current, unrestricted RN licensure; engage in a minimum number of hours of experience in the specialty; and demonstrate commitment to integrating and applying knowledge and skills by participating in professional development activities such as continuing education, presentations, academic coursework, and community service activities.