

# Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM)

## Candidate Guide



## CONTACT INFORMATION

### AHIMA

Customer Relations

Phone: (800) 335-5535  
Fax: (312) 233-1500

Submit Exam Applications and Fees:

Certification examinations must be completed and purchased online through your my.ahima.org account. Please visit the direct link below.  
<https://my.ahima.org/certification/getcertified>

Submit Official Associate, Bachelor, or Master HIM Transcript:

Candidates submitting official transcripts from a CAHIIM-accredited program, please mail official transcripts (unopened/sealed in a school envelope) separately to:  
AHIMA  
Attn: Certification Transcripts  
233 N. Michigan Ave., 21st Fl.  
Chicago, IL 60601

Official transcripts must contain the degree along with the conferred/awarded graduation date. Transcripts sent in an opened official school envelope are considered unofficial and will not be processed.

Appeals and Ethics Complaints:

Commission on Certification Appeals  
AHIMA  
[Certificationappeal@ahima.org](mailto:Certificationappeal@ahima.org)

Pearson VUE Exam Scheduling:

(888) 524-4622

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### ABOUT THE CANDIDATE GUIDE

Introduction.....	2
About CCHIIM .....	2
About AHIMA .....	3

### VALUE OF CERTIFICATION

AHIMA-Certified Professionals Deliver the Results	
Your Organization Needs .....	3
Professional Certification through AHIMA .....	3
ABOUT CERTIFICATION .....	4

### ABOUT AHIMA CREDENTIALS

Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) .....	4
Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) .....	5
Certified Coding Associate (CCA) .....	5
Certified Coding Specialist (CCS) .....	6
Certified Coding Specialist—Physician-based (CCS-P) .....	6
Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA) .....	6
Certified in Healthcare Privacy and Security (CHPS) .....	7
Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner (CDIP) .....	7

### APPLYING FOR THE EXAM

Submitting an Application .....	8
Submitting Official Transcripts .....	8
Official Transcript Estimated Processing Time Frame .....	8
Incomplete Applications .....	8
Independent Testing Agency .....	8
TEST TAKERS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	9
AHIMA EXAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST .....	10

### SCHEDULING THE EXAMINATION

Authorization to Test (ATT) Letters .....	10
Scheduling an Appointment to Test .....	10
Test Centers .....	10

### APPOINTMENT CHANGES

Policy on Cancelling or Rescheduling .....	11
Refund Policy .....	11
Penalties .....	11
ELIGIBILITY EXTENSION FEE AND POLICY .....	11

### PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

Tips for Success .....	12
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### ON EXAMINATION DAY

Examination Procedures .....	12
Identification Requirements .....	12
Test Center Restrictions .....	13
Security .....	13
Misconduct .....	13
Cancellation Due to Bad Weather or Other Emergencies .....	13
Medical or Personal Emergency .....	14

### AFTER THE EXAMINATION

Notification of Examination Results .....	14
Confidentiality Procedures .....	14
Validation of Scores .....	14
Release of Information .....	14
Certificates .....	14
Examination Complaints .....	14
Re-taking the Examination and Process .....	14
Use of the Credential .....	15
Registry .....	15
Credential Verification .....	15
AHIMA Membership .....	15

### APPENDICES

Appendix A: Authorization to Test Letter .....	16–17
Appendix B: Professional and Regulatory Candidate Rules Agreement .....	18–19
Appendix C: AHIMA Examination Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure, and Conduct Agreement .....	20
Appendix D: Sample Pass/Fail Score Report .....	21–22
Appendix E: AHIMA Accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policies and Procedures .....	23

## ABOUT THE CANDIDATE GUIDE

### Introduction

Congratulations on your decision to earn an American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) credential. We commend your commitment to your career and the health informatics and information management (HIIM) profession.

This guide includes information about:

- Eligibility qualifications
- Guidelines for applying and scheduling the examination
- What to expect at the test center
- What to expect after completing the examination

### About the Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM)

#### Purpose

CCHIIM serves the public by establishing, implementing, and enforcing standards and procedures for certification and recertification of HIIM professionals.

#### CCHIIM Mission

Through certification, the CCHIIM ensures the competency of professionals practicing health informatics and information management (HIIM) worldwide.

#### CCHIIM Vision

Professional excellence in health informatics and information (HIIM) through certification.

#### CCHIIM Values

- The application of evidence-based best practices for certification;
- The validation of workforce competence through professional certification;
- The commitment to ongoing professional development, lifelong learning, and workforce excellence; and
- The recognition of CCHIIM-certified professionals' role in maintaining and enhancing quality health information for the safety of the public and the improvement of healthcare.

#### CCHIIM Exam Development Process: An Overview for Stakeholders

AHIMA/CCHIIM certification exams are valid, reliable, and legally defensible assessment instruments that measure the competency of potential certificants against a codified and relevant body of HIIM competencies. The subject matter (also referred to as a body of knowledge, or BoK for short) represented by these competencies is further

segmented across specific roles and disciplines throughout the HIIM profession as a whole by the requisite levels of depth, breadth, and experiences necessary for successful job performance, as exemplified by each respective AHIMA certification.

#### About CCHIIM Exam Development Committees (EDC)

CCHIIM EDCs are composed of experienced, credential-specific subject matter experts, representing HIIM leaders, practitioners, and other relevant stakeholders. EDCs are responsible for the specific oversight of their respective credential's certification examination. EDC responsibilities are codified in the CCHIIM operating code.

#### Job Analysis

The job analysis process ensures quality control of the relevancy, currency, and validity of the competencies assessed by each certification examination. AHIMA plans for and conducts comprehensive job analyses according to the rate and amount of changes taking place within a given certification examination. Consistent with best practices, the task of job analysis is overseen by a diverse and representative sample of stakeholders, including recently certified professionals and employers/supervisors. These stakeholders assess the criticality of current workplace practices, skills, tasks, and responsibilities, with respect to the importance and frequency of performance. The results of the job analysis influence to what extent the competencies are revised for each certification examination.

#### Exam Content Outline

The job analysis serves as the foundation for the examination blueprint. First, the individual competencies are grouped into domains that represent specific and similar areas of content. Next, the percentage weighting of each content domain is determined, in part, through the individual competency statement criticality scores, considered collectively, within each domain. This weighting of domains relative to one another allows one to determine how much, or to what extent, each domain is assessed (both by the number and difficulty of test items), relative to the other domains.

The exam content outlines are listed on the certification web page are typically established or revised at the same time as the development of the examination blueprint.

For details regarding exam eligibility requirements and the exam content outlines please visit the links below:

CCA - <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certification-exams/cca/>

CCS - <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certification-exams/ccs/>

CCS-P - <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certification-exams/ccs-p/>

RHIT - <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certification-exams/rhit/>

RHIA - <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certification-exams/rhia/>

CDIP - <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certification-exams/cdip/>

CHDA - <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certification-exams/chda/>

CHPS - <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certification-exams/chps/>

### About AHIMA

AHIMA is a global nonprofit association of health information (HI) professionals. AHIMA represents professionals who work with health data for more than one billion patient visits each year. AHIMA's mission of empowering people to impact health drives our members and credentialed HI professionals to ensure that health information is accurate, complete, and available to patients and providers. Our leaders work at the intersection of healthcare, technology, and business, and are found in data integrity and information privacy job functions worldwide.

AHIMA currently sponsors the following certification examinations:

Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)

Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT)

Certified Coding Associate (CCA)

Certified Coding Specialist (CCS)

Certified Coding Specialist—Physician-based (CCS-P)

Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA)

Certified in Healthcare Privacy and Security (CHPS)

Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner (CDIP)

## VALUE OF CERTIFICATION

### AHIMA-Certified Professionals Deliver the Results Your Organization Needs

#### Setting the standard since 1932 as the leader in HIIM certification

The AHIMA Commission on Certification is nationally recognized as the most respected HIIM credentialing agency. AHIMA certifications provide validation of professional competency to employers. Healthcare quality, financial performance, and operational efficiency are strengthened by hiring AHIMA-credentialed professionals.

### Professional Certification through AHIMA

#### Excellence in Operations and Healthcare Delivery

AHIMA establishes professional standards of excellence. Credentials are issued in HIIM, compliance and data quality, coding, privacy and security, and health data analysis, responding to the demands of the rapidly changing healthcare environment.

#### Dedication Required, Competency Ensured

Credentials are earned through a combination of education, experience, and performance on certification exams. Following initial certification, credentials must be maintained through rigorous continuing education, ensuring the highest level of competency for employers and consumers.

#### Certified for Success

Organizations that employ credentialed HIIM professionals can expect the highest levels of competency. The ability to adhere to industry standards and regulations is demonstrated through attaining credentials. Certified professionals are leaders in healthcare, displaying a commitment to the industry, their colleagues, and consumers.

#### Leverage the Benefits and Anticipate Results

Credentialed professionals offer employers a broad range of benefits that can be leveraged for immediate application to HIIM and other operations functions. Because they have pursued certification, credentialed professionals are ready to apply their skills and require less training than noncredentialed peers. Their expertise reduces exposure to fraud and abuse charges through precise, ethical management of health information. The accuracy of health data is increased, making it more meaningful and positively affecting the revenue cycle.

These key factors influence the success of healthcare organizations through improved delivery of quality healthcare and enhanced operational efficiency, producing results that impact the bottom line.

## ABOUT CERTIFICATION

Certification is a means for showing that a certified professional possesses the knowledge and skills necessary for optimal performance of his or her job. Through credentialing, the practitioner's employer, peers, and the public are reassured the certified individual is both competent and well-informed in the daily and accurate administration of his or her professional duties. Certain professions (for example, doctors, lawyers, technicians, and others) require that the individuals performing their duties be certified, owing to legal or safety reasons or high professional standards. Whatever the reason, credentialing makes a professional a likelier candidate for gainful employment and career advancement.

The NCCA's definition of continuing competence is,



“demonstrating specified levels of knowledge, skills, or ability not only at the time of initial certification but throughout an individual's professional career.”

## ABOUT AHIMA CREDENTIALS



### Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)



Working as a critical link between care providers, payers, and patients, the RHIA is an expert in managing patient health information and medical records, administering computer information systems, collecting and analyzing patient data, and using classification systems and medical terminologies. Underlying this expertise is a comprehensive knowledge of medical, administrative, ethical, and legal requirements and standards related to healthcare delivery and the privacy of protected patient information. RHIAs often manage people and operational units, participate in administrative committees, and prepare budgets. RHIAs interact with all levels of an organization—clinical, financial, administrative, and information systems—that employ patient data in decision making and everyday operations.

Job opportunities for RHIAs exist in a multitude of settings throughout the healthcare industry. These include the continuum of care delivery organizations, including hospitals, multi-specialty clinics and physician practices, long-term care, mental health, and other ambulatory care

#### Other benefits include:

- Credentialed professionals receive better compensation from their employers
- Employers know they've hired productive and knowledgeable individuals
- Certification marks a professional as an exceptional individual in his or her field
- Greater chance for advancement in one's chosen career
- Certification gives greater insight on potential employees during the hiring process
- Consumers are protected from the threat of incompetent or unfit practitioners
- A certified professional's work reflects the best practices and high professional standards of his or her field

settings. The profession has seen significant expansion in non-patient care settings, with careers in managed care and insurance companies, software vendors, consulting services, government agencies, education, and pharmaceutical companies.

#### Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

##### RHIA applicants must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

- Successfully complete the academic requirements at the baccalaureate level of an HIM program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM)<sup>1</sup>
- OR
- Successfully complete the academic requirements, at the master's level, of an HIM program accredited by CAHIIM and following a specific set of criteria
- OR
- Graduate from an HIM program approved by a foreign association with which AHIMA has a reciprocity agreement<sup>2</sup>

1. Students in CAHIIM-accredited programs for RHIA, enrolled in their final term of study, are now eligible to apply for and take their respective certification exam early. Eligible students include the following:
  - Students currently enrolled and in their last term of study
  - Students who have completed their coursework but have not yet graduated
  - Graduates currently waiting for their official transcripts
  - Early tester form can only be submitted twice per exam
  - RHIA only offered in the United States

2. AHIMA and the Canadian Health Information Management Association (CHIMA); Korean Medical Record Association (KMRA); and Health Information Management Association of Australia (HIMAA) shall permit a graduate of a program in HIM at the baccalaureate degree level to apply to write the appropriate certification examination consistent with the academic level achieved and given independently by the aforementioned associations. The graduate must meet the educational competencies for certification as a technician or administrator established by the association to which the application is made.

3. Registered Health Information Technicians (RHIT) who meet the following eligibility requirements will be eligible to sit for the RHIA examination during the timeframe of July 1, 2017 through 2021:
  - Have at least a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution or nationally recognized accreditor; and
  - Have received their RHIT credential on or before December 31, 2018; and
  - Have complied with the Standards for Maintenance of the RHIT credential.
  - RHIT only offered in the United States.

The academic qualifications of each candidate will be verified before a candidate is deemed eligible to take the examination. All first-time applicants must submit an official transcript from their college or university.<sup>1</sup>



### Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT)

Professionals holding the RHIT credential are health information technicians who ensure the quality of medical records by verifying their completeness, accuracy, and proper entry into computer systems. They may also use computer applications to assemble and analyze patient data for the purpose of improving patient care or controlling costs. RHITs often specialize in coding diagnoses and procedures in patient records for reimbursement and research. An additional role for RHITs is cancer registrars—compiling and maintaining data on cancer patients. With experience, the RHIT credential holds solid potential for advancement to management positions, especially when combined with a bachelor's degree. Although most RHITs work in hospitals, they are also found in other healthcare settings including office-based physician practices, nursing homes, home health agencies, mental health facilities, and public health agencies. In fact, employment opportunities exist for RHITs in any organization that uses patient data or health information, such as pharmaceutical companies, law and insurance firms, and health product vendors.

#### Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

RHIT applicants must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

- Successfully complete the academic requirements at an associate's degree level of an HIM program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM)<sup>1</sup>
- OR
- Graduate from an HIM program approved by a foreign association with which AHIMA has a reciprocity agreement<sup>2</sup>

The academic qualifications of each candidate will be verified before a candidate is deemed eligible to take the examination. All first-time applicants must submit an

1. Students in CAHIIM-accredited programs for RHIT, enrolled in their final term of study, are now eligible to apply for and take their respective certification exam early. Eligible students include the following:
  - Students currently enrolled and in their last term of study
  - Students who have completed their coursework but have not yet graduated
  - Graduates currently waiting for their official transcripts
  - Early tester form can only be submitted twice per exam
  - RHIT only offered in the United States.

official transcript from their college or university.

Students interested in obtaining a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate, a Certificate of Completion, or Transfer of Credits information must contact the CAHIIM-accredited program in which they wish to enroll regarding their institutional policies. Please visit the program directory website at <https://www.cahiim.org/programs/program-directory> to access the list of CAHIIM-accredited programs.

### Certified Coding Associate (CCA)

The CCA credential distinguishes coders by exhibiting commitment and demonstrating coding competencies across all settings, including both hospitals and physician practices. Becoming a CCA positions you as a leader in an exciting and growing market. CCAs also:

- Exhibit a level of commitment, competency, and professional capability that attracts employers
- Demonstrate a commitment to the coding profession
- Distinguish themselves from noncredentialed coders and those holding credentials from organizations less demanding of the higher level of expertise required to earn AHIMA certification

Based upon job analysis standards and state-of-the-art test construction, the CCA designation has been a nationally accepted standard of achievement since 2002. More than 8,000 people have attained the certification since its inception.

#### Eligibility Requirement

- High school diploma or equivalent

#### Training and Recommendations:

- Six months coding experience directly applying codes;

OR

- Completion of an AHIMA-approved coding program (PCAP Program);

OR

- Completion of other coding training program to include anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, Basic ICD diagnostic/procedural and Basic CPT coding



## Certified Coding Specialist (CCS)



CCSs are professionals skilled in classifying medical data from patient records, generally in the hospital setting. These coding practitioners review patients' records and assign numeric codes for each diagnosis and procedure. To perform this task, they must possess expertise in the ICD-10-CM and CPT coding systems. In addition, the CCS is knowledgeable in medical terminology, disease processes, and pharmacology. Hospitals and medical providers report coded data to insurance companies or to the government in the case of Medicare and Medicaid recipients for reimbursement of expenses.

Researchers and public health officials also use coded medical data to monitor patterns and explore new interventions. Coding accuracy is thus highly important to healthcare organizations because of its impact on revenues and describing health outcomes, and in fact, certification is becoming an implicit industry standard. Accordingly, the CCS credential demonstrates tested data quality and integrity skills in a coding practitioner. The CCS certification exam assesses mastery proficiency in coding rather than entry-level skills. Professionals experienced in coding inpatient and outpatient records should consider obtaining this certification.

### CCS Eligibility Recommendations

**While not required, one of the following are recommended to sit for the CCS examination:**

- By Credential: RHIA, RHIT, or CCS-P;

OR

- By Education: Complete courses in all the following topics: anatomy & physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, medical terminology, reimbursement methodology, intermediate/advanced ICD diagnostic coding, and procedural coding and medical services (CPT®/HCPCS) plus one (1) year of coding experience directly applying codes

OR

- Minimum of two (2) years of related coding experience directly applying codes;

OR

- Hold the CCA® credential plus one (1) year of coding experience directly applying codes;

OR

- Hold a coding credential from another certifying organization plus one (1) year of coding experience directly applying codes



## Certified Coding Specialist—Physician-based (CCS-P)



The CCS-P is a coding practitioner with expertise in physician-based settings such as physician offices, group practices, multi-specialty clinics, and specialty centers. He or she reviews patients' records and assigns numeric codes for each diagnosis and procedure. To perform this task, the individual must possess in-depth knowledge of the CPT coding system and familiarity with the ICD-10-CM and HCPCS Level II coding systems. The CCS-P is also an expert in health information documentation, data integrity, and quality. Because patients' coded data is submitted to insurance companies or the government for expense reimbursement, the CCS-P plays a critical role in the health provider's business operation. With the growth of managed care and the movement of health services delivery beyond the hospital, the employment outlook for this coding specialty looks highly favorable. The CCS-P certification exam assesses mastery-level proficiency in coding rather than entry-level skills. Professionals performing coding in a doctor's office, clinic, or similar setting should consider obtaining the CCS-P certification to attest to their capabilities.

### CCS-P Eligibility Recommendations

**While not required, one of the following are recommended to sit for the CCS-P examination:**

- By Credential: RHIA, RHIT, or CCS;

OR

- By Education: Complete courses in all the following topics: anatomy & physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, medical terminology, reimbursement methodology, intermediate/advanced ICD diagnostic coding, and procedural coding and medical services (CPT®/HCPCS) plus one (1) year of coding experience directly applying codes

OR

- Minimum of two (2) years of related multi-specialty coding experience directly applying codes;

OR

- Hold the CCA® credential plus one (1) year of multi-specialty coding experience directly applying codes;

OR

- Hold a coding credential from another certifying organization plus one (1) year of multi-specialty coding experience directly applying codes

## Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA)

Individuals who earn the CHDA designation will achieve recognition of their expertise in health data analysis and validation of their mastery of this domain. This prestigious certification provides practitioners with the knowledge to acquire, manage, analyze, interpret, and transform data into accurate, consistent, and timely information, while balancing the "big picture" strategic vision with day-to-day details. CHDA-certified professionals will exhibit broad organizational knowledge and the ability to communicate with individuals and groups at multiple levels, both internal and external.

**Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:**

- Hold an RHIT® or RHIA® credential; OR
- Bachelor's degree or higher degree from an accredited college or university

**While not required, the following are recommended:**

- Minimum of 3 years of healthcare data experience
- Experience in data acquisition, data analysis, data management, data interpretation and reporting, and data governance.

## Certified in Healthcare Privacy and Security (CHPS)

The CHPS credential denotes competence in designing, implementing, and administering comprehensive privacy and security protection programs in all types of healthcare organizations. Becoming certified in healthcare privacy and security demonstrates a choice to focus and advance by specializing in privacy and security dimensions of HIM.

Being distinguished with this special expertise signifies a commitment to advancing privacy and security management practices and lifelong learning and professional development.

**Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:**

- High School or General Education Degree (GED) and a minimum of six (6) years of experience in healthcare privacy or security management
- Associate's degree and four (4) years experience in healthcare privacy or security management
- CCA or CCS or CCS-P or RHIT and a minimum of four (4) years of experience in healthcare privacy or security management
- Baccalaureate degree and a minimum of two (2) years experience in healthcare privacy or security management

- Healthcare information management credential (RHIA) and minimum of two (2) years of experience in healthcare privacy or security management
- Master's or related degree (JD, MD, or PhD) and one (1) year of experience in healthcare privacy or security management

## Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner (CDIP)

The CDIP certification will confirm the commitment of AHIMA to globally improve and maintain quality information for those involved in healthcare and support the integrity of the patient's health record.

The certification will distinguish those professionals serving as clinical documentation specialists as knowledgeable and competent to provide guidance relative to clinical documentation in the patient's health record, thus promoting the HIM profession overall.

**Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:**

- Hold an associate's degree or higher, OR
- Hold a CCS®, CCS-P®, RHIT®, or RHIA® credential

**While not required, the following are recommended:**

- Minimum of two (2) years of clinical documentation integrity experience
- Associates degree or higher in a health care or allied health care discipline
- Completion of course work in the following topics:
  - medical terminology
  - human anatomy and physiology
  - pathology
  - pharmacology

## Exam Eligibility Audit

AHIMA's Commission on Certification reserves the right to verify the information supplied by, or on behalf of, a candidate. If selected for an audit, the candidate may be asked to submit additional documentation supporting eligibility.

Taking the certification examination is voluntary. AHIMA strictly adheres to the eligibility requirements for certification. It is the responsibility of the candidate to comply with all procedures and deadlines in order to establish eligibility for the examination. For questions about eligibility, please contact:

Attn: Certification Department  
AHIMA  
Telephone: (800) 335-5535  
Certification@ahima.org

## Applying for the Exam—Submitting an Application

Before submitting an application, carefully review the information contained in this guide. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure eligibility before submitting the application. Applicants who are determined to be ineligible, and submit an ineligible application or request withdrawal of their application, will receive a refund of the application fee minus a \$75 processing fee. Candidates whose exam applications are not approved will be contacted by AHIMA via email.

All applications will be submitted online via <https://my.ahima.org/certification/getcertified>

- Ensure the name on the application matches the name on the identification (ID) to be used for admission to the test center (see section on Identification Requirements, p 12)
- Include the education program code (EPC) on the application (for RHIT and RHIT applicants only)
- Submit verification of eligibility, if applicable. (Official transcript for RHIA and RHIT only)
- Application Fees are listed online. The applicant will be prompted to make the payment through the portal.

### Nondiscrimination Policy

AHIMA and Pearson VUE do not discriminate against any candidate on the basis of race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, religion, disability, marital status, parental status, ancestry, sexual orientation, military discharge status, or source of income. All examination applicants will be judged solely on the criteria established by the Commission on Certification.

## Submitting an Early Tester Form for RHIT & RHIA Exams ONLY

Students can submit an early tester form in their last quarter or semester of their CAHIIM approved program. The form will be used as a placeholder for the official transcript requirement to allow the student to sit for the RHIT or RHIA exam. The form must be completed by the student and the program director. Incomplete forms will cause a delay with processing candidates exam applications. Early tester forms can only be submitted twice per exam. Program director’s signatures are valid for a maximum of 90 days from the date the exam application is submitted. Completed early tester forms can be uploaded while completing the exam application or sent to [earlytest@ahima.org](mailto:earlytest@ahima.org).

Candidates who have passed their RHIT or RHIA exams will have one year from the date the exam is passed to submit their official transcripts. Transcripts received must follow the RHIT or RHIA eligibility requirements. Failure to meet the transcripts requirement within the one-year timeframe will result in exam results being nullified and the exam will have to be re-taken and passed if the candidate choose to hold the RHIT or RHIA credential.

## Submitting Official Transcripts

Candidates can submit their official transcripts electronically or by mail.

- **Electronically:**
  - If this option is available through your school, please contact your school for vendor information. Transcripts must be received directly from the vendor (i.e. national student clearinghouse, parchment, etc.) and sent electronically to: [certificationtranscripts@ahima.org](mailto:certificationtranscripts@ahima.org)
  - Official transcripts must contain the degree along with the conferred/awarded graduation date.
  - Official transcripts sent electronically from the candidate/ registrar are considered unofficial and will not be processed.

OR

- **Mail:**

Candidates submitting official transcripts from a CAHIIM-accredited program, please mail official transcripts (unopened/sealed in a school envelope) separately to:

AHIMA  
Attn: Certification Transcripts  
233 N. Michigan Ave., 21st Fl.  
Chicago, IL 60601

Official transcripts must contain the degree along with the conferred/awarded graduation date.

Official transcripts are **ONLY** needed for the RHIT or RHIA exam.

Transcripts sent in an opened envelope is considered unofficial and will not be processed.

## Official Transcript Estimated Processing Time Frame

Official transcripts estimated processing time frame can take up to four weeks.

Candidates will be notified via email if there is an issue with the transcripts received.

## Incomplete Applications

An application may be considered incomplete for the following reasons:

- Missing official transcript
- Missing Request for Accommodations form and documentation form (if applicable)

## Independent Testing Agency

Pearson VUE has been contracted by AHIMA to help administer AHIMA’s certification examinations in the United States and internationally. Pearson VUE delivers millions of high-stakes tests every year across the globe for clients in the licensure, certification, academic admissions, regulatory, and government testing service markets. It boasts the world’s leading test center network, with more than 5,000 test centers in 165 countries, 230 of which are fully owned and operated Pearson Professional Centers. Pearson Professional Centers utilize a patent-winning design, which was created specifically for high-stakes testing and offers a carefully controlled, consistent testing environment.

For more information about Pearson VUE, please visit [pearsonvue.com/ahima](http://pearsonvue.com/ahima).

## What is a Beta Exam?

A beta exam is a new version of a exam content outline is released. The beta exam will consisting of new exam questions written to the new exam content outline. These new exam questions have not yet undergone psychometric analysis for validity and reliability. The purpose of beta testing is to evaluate new exam questions by having them answered by actual credential candidates. A new exam goes through the beta process before the exam is launched for the first time. This is one of the last steps during an exam development process. Data gathered and analyzed during the beta period is used to select the best exam questions, and to eliminate questions that are vague, too difficult, or not useful in evaluating a candidate’s HIM knowledge. During the beta period, you will not receive immediate results upon completion of your exam. There is a waiting period (typically up to 24 weeks from the start of the beta period) after which results are provided to test takers.

## TEST TAKERS’ RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### As a test taker, you have the right to:

- Be informed of your rights and responsibilities as a test taker
- Be treated with courtesy, respect, and impartiality, regardless of your age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics
- Be tested with measures that meet professional standards and are appropriate, given the manner in which the test results will be used
- If you have a disability, you have the right to inquire and receive information about testing accommodations
- Know in advance of testing when the test will be administered, if and when test results will be available to you, and if you are expected to pay a fee for testing services
- Know the consequences of taking or not taking the test, fully completing the test, or canceling the scores. You may need to ask questions to learn these consequences
- Receive a written explanation of your test results within a reasonable amount of time after testing and in commonly understood terms
- Have your test results kept confidential to the extent allowed by law
- Present concerns about the testing process or your results, and receive information about procedures that will be used to address such concerns

### As a test taker, you have the responsibility to:

- Read or listen to your rights and responsibilities as a test taker
- Treat others with courtesy and respect during the testing process
- Ask questions prior to testing if you are uncertain about why the test is being given, how it will be given, what you will be asked to do, and what will be done with the results
- Read or listen to descriptive information in advance of testing and listen carefully to all test instructions. You should inform AHIMA before scheduling your test if you wish to receive a testing accommodation or if you have a physical condition or illness that may interfere with your performance on the test
- Know when and where the test will be given, pay for the test if required, appear on time with any required materials (for example, valid identification and codebooks, if allowed), and be ready to be tested
- Follow the test instructions you are given and represent yourself honestly during the testing
- Be familiar with and accept the consequences of not taking the test, should you choose not to take the test
- Inform appropriate person(s) (as specified to you by the organization responsible for testing) if you believe that testing conditions affected your results
- Ask about the confidentiality of your test results, if this aspect concerns you
- Present concerns, if you have any, about the testing process or results immediately after the test

*Adopted from the American Psychological Association Test Takers’ Rights and Responsibilities*

## AHIMA EXAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Candidates **MUST** ensure that all items on this checklist are completed in order for their exam to be processed:

- Read the Candidate Guide
- Make sure the first and last name provided on the application matches the name on the primary identification
- Confirm meeting eligibility criteria
- Include credit card
- Complete special accommodations form (American with Disabilities Act), if applicable

### For RHIA and RHIT candidates only:

- For Early Testing candidates: Completed early tester forms can be sent to earlytest@ahima.org
- For Certificate of Degree candidates: Send in verification letter from Program Director to certificationtranscripts@ahima.org
- For all other candidates: Send in official (sealed) transcripts separately to:

**Electronic** (if this option is available, vendor information is provided by your school): CertificationTranscripts@ahima.org OR

### Paper:

Certification Transcripts  
233 N. Michigan Ave., 21st Fl.  
Chicago, IL 60601

### Confidentiality Procedures

AHIMA and Pearson VUE have adopted policies and procedures to protect the confidentiality of examination candidates.

AHIMA and Pearson VUE staff members will not discuss pending examination applications with anyone but the candidate) and will not report scores by telephone, e-mail, or fax.

Pearson VUE will not release exam results to anyone other than the candidates.

AHIMA is not responsible. Be sure to include your AHIMA ID#/e-mail address and a copy of your driver's license, state ID, etc..

For fast and easy scheduling, testing appointments may be scheduled by logging in at pearsonvue.com/ahima. You may also call Pearson VUE's customer service number at (888) 5AHIMA2 (524-4622) (wait time may vary depending on candidate volume). When scheduling an exam, candidates should be prepared to provide the authorization number located in the ATT letter. After the exam is scheduled, candidates will receive information about the time and date of the exam, and a confirmation number via email from Pearson VUE. Candidates should keep a copy of this information for future reference.

Directions to the testing center may be obtained by logging on to pearsonvue.com. ATT letters are not required at the testing center.

## Test Centers

Test centers are available throughout the United States and internationally. A complete listing of test center locations in the US, including addresses and driving directions may be found on Pearson VUE's website: [www.pearsonvue.com/ahima](http://www.pearsonvue.com/ahima).

Before the day of the examination, please be sure the address and directions to the test center are correct. If a candidate goes to the wrong test center on the day of the examination and cannot test, their exam fee will be forfeited and candidate must re-apply and re-submit another application and fee.

If the candidate does not agree with Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) which is given before the start of the exam, their exam fee will be forfeited and candidate must re-apply and re-submit another exam application and fee. See Appendix C

There are test rules that each candidate must agree to follow prior to exam entrance. See Appendix B for the professional regulatory candidate rules agreement.

## APPOINTMENT CHANGES

### Policy on Cancelling or Rescheduling

AHIMA's policies about changing a testing appointment are as follows:

- Candidates may cancel and reschedule the examination up to 15 business days prior to the scheduled examination date at no charge
- Any candidate who reschedules or cancels his or her appointment 14 days prior to the exam date will be charged a penalty of \$30 by Pearson VUE. Rescheduling and payment must be completed using a valid credit card through [pearsonvue.com/ahima](http://pearsonvue.com/ahima) or by calling the Pearson VUE Call Center at (888) 524-4622
- Candidates may not reschedule the examination less than 24 hours prior to the examination appointment
- Candidates failing to appear for the scheduled appointment or who are over 15 minutes late will not be allowed to test and will be considered a no-show and the exam will be forfeited. A new application and the full application fee must be submitted in order to test

Deadline	Rescheduling Fee
Up to 15 business days before exam date	No charge
14 business days prior to exam date	\$30

### Refund Policy

Candidates can request a refund for their exam application up to fourteen (14) business days prior to their scheduled test date or eligibility end date.

All appointments must be canceled through Pearson VUE prior to the request for a refund.

There is a \$75 processing fee for all refund requests. Refunds will be credited back to the card that was used for payment. If payment was made with a check, a check will be issued and sent to the mailing address on file.

Please allow up to 4 weeks for the funds to be added back to your card or up to 3 months if paid with a check.

Refunds will not be granted if requested after eligibility end date or if the exam has been forfeited.

### Penalties

- Any candidate who does not bring the correct code books for CCA, CCS, & CCS-P exams to the testing site will not be allowed to test and the exam fee will be forfeited
- Any candidate who does not bring the proper identification to the testing site will not be allowed to test and the exam fee will be forfeited
- Any candidate who has requested a refund but has not canceled his or her schedule appointment before the end of their eligibility end date will not be eligible for a refund
- Any candidate who shows up to the wrong testing location will not be allowed to test and the exam fee will be forfeited
- Any candidate who forfeited his/her exam and is still seeking to test will have to submit a new exam application along with payment

## ELIGIBILITY EXTENSION FEE AND POLICY

Candidates may request an extension for their eligibility period by following the policy outlined below:

1. First Request for an Extension-\$50 (valid for an additional 30 days)
2. Second Request for an Extension-\$100 (valid for an additional 60 days)
3. Third and Final Request for Extension - \$150 (valid for an additional 90 days)

**Note:** No additional extension will be authorized  
**Extensions are nonrefundable**

Steps for Requesting an Extension:

1. If you already scheduled your exam date with Pearson VUE, you must contact Pearson VUE at (888) 524-4622 directly and cancel your exam appointment prior to requesting an extension
2. Complete and submit the Eligibility Extension Request Form (form available on [https://www.ahima.org/media/dhvdcohw/eligibility-extension-request\\_new.pdf](https://www.ahima.org/media/dhvdcohw/eligibility-extension-request_new.pdf)) and scan to [certification@ahima.org](mailto:certification@ahima.org)

**Note:** Requests for an extension must be received no later than 14 business days prior to the scheduled exam date or eligibility end date

3. A representative from the Certification department will contact you within 48 business hours to collect payment. If payment cannot be collected within 48 business hours your extension request will be closed and a new request will have to be submitted
4. You will be notified via e-mail (e-mail address required on form) once your request has been processed and approved

## SCHEDULING THE EXAMINATION

### Authorization to Test (ATT) Letters

After eligibility for the examination is approved, Pearson VUE will send the candidate an Authorization to Test (ATT) letter by e-mail for those candidates with a valid e-mail address (see Appendix B). Candidates with an approved application will receive the ATT letter within five (5) business days. The ATT letter contains an authorization number, the eligibility period for testing, and instructions for scheduling an appointment. Candidates may only schedule their appointment within their eligibility window, which is 120 days. The eligibility start date and end date are provided in the ATT letter. Once your exam is approved it is expected you are ready to take your exam. The 120 day eligibility window is put in place to allow you to schedule your exam at a testing center of your choice. We do not recommend using this time to prepare for the exam.

### Scheduling an Appointment to Test

The testing appointment should be scheduled soon after receiving the ATT letter. Scheduling an appointment early in the eligibility period increases the likelihood that the candidate can sit for the exam at his or her optimal date and time. Space at the Pearson VUE testing centers is limited and the availability of a testing "seat" is not guaranteed. Therefore, candidates who schedule their exams in the latter part of their eligibility period run the risk of not sitting for the exam and forfeiting the exam fee.

Before scheduling a testing appointment, be sure the name on the ATT letter is identical to the name on all forms of identification that will be used for identification purposes at the testing center. In the event of any errors or a name change, please submit your request in writing to [info@ahima.org](mailto:info@ahima.org). If you schedule an exam with the incorrect name, you must submit a name change request to AHIMA within 7 business days prior to your scheduled exam. If this is done outside of the 7 business days, your exam will be forfeited and

## PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

### Tips for Success

- Do not apply for your exam before you are prepared. You have XX days to take the exam once it has been scheduled or you will forfeit.....
- Read through the entire candidate guide.
- Visit AHIMA’s exam preparation page at [ahima.org/certification](http://ahima.org/certification). You will be able to:
  - Review exam specifications
  - Review content outline
  - Allow enough time to prepare for the exam. Consistent and thorough is strongly encouraged.

- Know when and where the test will be given, appear on time with any required materials (for example, valid identification and codebooks CCA, CCS, CCS-P), and be ready to be test
- Please ensure that both forms of your identification meet the requirements posted on [pearsonvue.com/ahima](http://pearsonvue.com/ahima) under “On Examination Day”

## ON EXAMINATION DAY

### Examination Procedures

The Pearson VUE staff adheres to approved procedures to ensure the test center meets AHIMA’s testing criteria. Please review the following information prior to the testing date to ensure familiarity with the procedures.

Plan to arrive at the test center 30 minutes before the scheduled appointment. Candidates arriving at the test center 15 minutes after the scheduled start time of the appointment will not be allowed to test and will forfeit the testing fee.

When arriving at the test center, candidates will:

- Receive the Professional Examination Rules Agreement
- Submit two valid, correct forms of identification (ID)
- Have their digital signature captured to verify that signatures match
- Have their palm vein pattern captured
- Have a photograph taken
- Store belongings
- Show reference materials for approval (when applicable)

A dry erase board will be provided to all candidates for use during the examination. No scratch paper is allowed.

### Identification Requirements

To be allowed to test, candidates must present a primary form of ID containing their signature and picture, and a second form of ID showing their signature. The name on the primary and secondary forms of ID must match the name appearing on the ATT letter.

Acceptable forms of **primary ID** must be valid and nonexpired, and feature the candidate’s photograph and signature. These include:

- Government-issued driver’s license, including temporary license with all required elements (refer to “Unacceptable forms of Candidate Identification” for an exception when presented with a Texas driver’s license that carries two expiration dates)
- US Dept of State driver’s license
- US learner’s permit (plastic card only with photo and signature)
- National/state/country identification card
- Passport
- Passport card

- Military ID
- Military ID for spouses and dependents
- Alien registration card (green card, permanent resident visa)
- Government-issued local language ID (plastic card with photo and signature)

Acceptable forms of **secondary ID** must be valid and nonexpired, and feature the candidate’s signature.

These include:

- Social Security card
- Debit/ATM card
- Credit card (must have a visible expiration date)
- Any form of ID on the primary list

The following are examples of **unacceptable** forms of ID:

- Expired driver’s license or expired passport
- Library card
- Marriage certificate
- Voter’s registration card
- Club membership card
- Public aid card
- Temporary driver’s license without proper paperwork and photo identification
- Temporary Social Security card without signature
- Video club membership card
- Traffic citation (arrest ticket)
- Fishing or hunting license
- AHIMA membership card

Without acceptable forms of ID, candidates will not be allowed to test and will forfeit the application fee. Pearson VUE reserves the right to deny a candidate from taking the exam if there is a question in regards to the validity of the ID(s).

To review the list of acceptable primary and secondary forms of identification, please refer to [pearsonvue.com/ahima](http://pearsonvue.com/ahima).

### Test Center Restrictions

To ensure examination results for all candidates are earned under comparable conditions, it is necessary to maintain a standardized testing environment. Candidates must adhere to the following:

- No reference or study materials may be brought into the examination room
- Code books with handwritten notations or comments are allowed but must be free of any notes containing coding rules and guidelines from other reference materials (for example, *Coding Clinic*, *CPT Assistant*, and similar materials)
- Code books with Post-It Notes and/or loose materials will not be allowed
- No handmade tabs will be allowed
- Documents or notes of any kind may not be removed from the examination room. All computer screens, paper, and written materials are the copyrighted property of Pearson VUE and may not be reproduced in any form
- Candidates will not be allowed to take anything into the examination room other than those items given to them by the administrator and their identification documents.
- Prohibited items will not be allowed in the examination room. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to, the following: calculators, pagers, cell phones, electronic digital devices (PDAs, watches, and the like), recording or photographic devices, weapons, briefcases, computers or computer bags, and handbags or purses. Candidates cannot bring in drinks or snacks of any kind
- Eating, drinking, and smoking are prohibited in the test center
- Questions regarding the content of the examination may not be asked of the test center administrator during the examination

### Security

All proprietary rights in the examinations, including copyrights and trade secrets, are held by AHIMA. In order to protect the integrity of the examinations and to ensure the validity of the scores reported, candidates must adhere to strict guidelines regarding proper conduct in handling copyrighted proprietary examinations. Any attempt to reproduce all or part of the examinations, including, but not limited to, removing materials from the examination room, aiding others by any means in reconstructing any portion of the examinations, selling, distributing, receiving or having unauthorized possession of any portion of the examinations, is strictly prohibited by law. Alleged copyright violations will be investigated and, if warranted, prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. It should be noted that all examination scores may be invalidated in the event of this type of suspected breach.

Candidates may not write on any examination materials distributed by or belonging to AHIMA.

A candidate can be disqualified from taking or continuing to sit

for an examination, or from receiving examination results, or the candidate’s scores might be cancelled, if Pearson VUE determines through proctor observation, statistical analysis, and other evidence that the candidate’s score may not be valid or that the candidate was engaged in collaborative, disruptive, or other unacceptable behavior during the administration of the examination.

Test centers are continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes.

### Misconduct

Individuals who engage in the following conduct may be dismissed from the test center and their scores will not be reported.

Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Using electronic devices such as calculators, pagers, cell phones, and tablets
- Giving or receiving help during the examination or being suspected of doing so
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else
- Using notes, books, or other aids
- Removing or attempting to remove note paper from the test center
- Creating a disturbance or behaving in an abusive or otherwise uncooperative manner

### Cancellation Due to Bad Weather or Other Emergencies

In the event of bad weather, a natural disaster, pandemic or epidemic, or another emergency (for example, a test center power outage), Pearson VUE along with AHIMA will determine whether circumstances warrant cancellation and rescheduling of examinations at a particular test center.

Examinations will not be cancelled and rescheduled if the test center administrator can open the test center. Every attempt will be made to administer all examinations as scheduled.

However, should examinations at a test center be cancelled, all affected candidates will be contacted by Pearson VUE about rescheduling their examinations.

### Medical or Personal Emergency

A medical or personal emergency is an unplanned event within three (3) days of the examination appointment that prevents you from taking the exam will be taken into consideration. A medical or personal emergency may apply to you or one of your immediate family member; spouse, child, or parent as defined by the Family Medical Leave Act. Documentation (i.e., doctor’s note, emergency room forms, obituary) showing why you could not take your exam will be required. Once all documentation is reviewed the candidate will be notified via email with a decision. Please note: Without the submission of proper documentation, refunds or extensions will not be granted and all exam fees will be forfeited. All documentation must be submitted no later than 15 business days from the date of the exam appointment.



## AFTER THE EXAMINATION

### Notification of Examination Results

After completing the examination and evaluation, candidates will be asked to report to the test center staff to receive their score report.

The score report will not include performance on pretest questions, and these questions will not be used to determine passing or failing. Candidates will receive their results immediately upon completion of their exam.

In the event a new exam format is in a Beta testing period and the passing mark has not been pre-established, exam candidates will receive a test completion notice upon completion of their exam. Once the passing mark has been determined, exam results will be uploaded to your Pearson VUE account. Newly credentialed professionals (if authorized) will appear on AHIMA's website at [secure.ahima.org/certification/newly\\_credentialed.aspx](https://secure.ahima.org/certification/newly_credentialed.aspx) within 48 business hours. However, early testers will not appear until their official transcript has been reviewed and approved.

### Confidentiality Procedures

AHIMA and Pearson VUE have adopted policies and procedures to protect the confidentiality of examination candidates. AHIMA and Pearson VUE staff members will not discuss pending examination applications with anyone but the candidate and will not report scores by telephone, e-mail, or fax.

AHIMA and Pearson VUE will not release exam results to educational institutions unless authorized by the candidate.

### Passing Standard Setting

The passing score, or cut score, is established through a process known as standard setting. A panel of stakeholders who serve as subject matter experts (SMEs) provides judgments on how a minimally qualified candidate (MQC) would perform on the exam. The SMEs utilize the Modified Angoff methodology, which is widely accepted for establishing passing scores. Through consensus, the SMEs determine which objectives on the examination blueprint will be easier or harder for the MQC. The SMEs then conduct a thorough review of each item. They provide several ratings in terms of the proportion of 100 minimally qualified candidates that will get the answer right. The results of this multiple day standard setting procedure along with the recommended cut score range are then compiled and presented to CCHIIM. CCHIIM reviews the panel's recommendations, the estimated difficulty of the exam, as well as an estimated expectation of candidate performance, and consequently votes to approve the passing score.

### Validation of Scores

AHIMA and Pearson VUE are responsible for the validity and integrity of the scores reported. Occasionally, computer malfunctions or candidate misconduct may cause a score report to be suspect. AHIMA and Pearson VUE reserve the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, violation of AHIMA's regulations is discovered. Candidates are expected to fully cooperate with any investigation.

### Release of Information

All individuals who successfully complete an examination may be recognized for this achievement on AHIMA's website (authorization by the candidate is required.) AHIMA and Pearson VUE will not release scores to any other third-party.

### Certificates

Candidates who pass the examination can view and print their certificate in their CEU center, which can be accessed at [www.my.ahima.org](https://www.my.ahima.org). If you are interested in ordering a hard copy certificate or frame, please visit <https://ahima.liftoff.shop/>. The candidate's name will appear on the certificate exactly as it appears on the candidate's AHIMA profile.

### Examination Complaints

Candidates are required to report any complaints at the test center on the day of their examination.

**Because of the secure nature of the examination, neither AHIMA nor Pearson VUE will disclose examination questions or candidate's responses to individual questions.**

### Process to Retake Examinations

To retake an examination, a candidate must resubmit a new application with the appropriate examination fee. Transcripts are kept on file and do not need to be resubmitted. There is a mandatory waiting period after candidates take their last exam before they can sit for the exam again. For the CCA CCS, RHIT and RHIA candidates must wait 30 days before retaking the exam. For the CCS-P, CDIP, CHDA, and CHPS candidates must wait 90 days before retaking the exam.

Candidates in their retest waiting period can submit an application to retake an exam but cannot schedule the test until they receive a new authorization-to-test letter.

AHIMA is not authorized to waive retest periods due to test security policies. For more information please visit <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certifications-overview/updates-announcements/>

### Use of the Credential

Candidates who pass the examination will be authorized to use RHIA, RHIT, CCA, CCS, CCS-P, CHDA, CHPS, CDIP as applicable, following their name. AHIMA suggests the following guidelines when using credentials:

- Academic degrees (for example, PhD, JD, and MBA) are listed closest to the last name
- General credentials (for example, RHIA and RHIT) follow the academic degree. If there is no academic degree listed, the certification credential follows the last name
- The RHIT credential will be superseded once a candidate passes the RHIA exam, meaning it is no longer valid and no longer to be used

- Specialty credentials and coding credentials (for example, CHDA, CHP, CHS, CHPS, CCS, CCS-P, CCA, CDIP) follow the general credential
- The CCA credential will be superseded once a candidate passes the CCS or CCS-P exam meaning it is no longer valid and no longer to be used
- Fellowship credentials (for example, FAHIMA) follow the specialty credential
- Early testing candidates are not authorized to use their credential until all requirements have been met and verified through AHIMA

### Credential Verification Portal

Certified individuals' credential(s) information will be added into AHIMA's registry portal. Authorization is obtained from the candidate before the exam application is submitted for processing. The registry portal can be used by employers, government agencies, and accrediting agencies for credential verification purposes. The credential holder last name and AHIMA ID number will be needed to use the portal. The registry portal can be accessed at the link below. If there are questions, please contact [certification@ahima.org](mailto:certification@ahima.org).

<https://my.ahima.org/certification/credentialverification.aspx>

## APPENDIX A

### Authorization to Test Letter



**\*\*PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS E-MAIL\*\***

#### Authorization to Test

You have been authorized to take a certification exam at a Pearson VUE testing center. Information on the certification exam, the testing rules, and how to schedule your certification exam follows:

**Authorized Candidate:** John Doe Jr.

**AHIMA Candidate ID:** 123456

**Client Authorization ID:** 333333 **Pearson VUE Authorization ID:** 123456

**Exam:** CCS– Certified Coding Specialist

**Number of Attempts Authorized:** 1

**Authorized Dates:** 29 March 2018 -29 July 2018

If any details of your authorization to test are incorrect, please contact AHIMA immediately at [\(800\) 335-5535](tel:8003355535) or Pearson VUE at [\(888\) 524-4622](tel:8885244622) prior to scheduling your examination. Please note that the name on both our primary and secondary forms of identification must exactly match your name as printed on this ATT letter.

#### ADA APPLICANTS

If you were approved for ADA accommodations you will receive a confirmation e-mail from AHIMA within 48 hours. The confirmation e-mail will provide the phone number **you must** use to schedule your AHIMA exam. ADA candidates who do not schedule their exam through the proper channels will not receive their approved accommodations.

#### EXAMINATION DAY

You must be prepared to show two (2) valid, non-expired forms of personal identification. The candidate first and last name on personal identification must match exactly as shown on this letter. If a candidate arrives at the test center with the incorrect personal identification they will not be allowed to test and will forfeit their exam fees. For more information on the acceptable forms of identification, please visit [www.pearsonvue.com/ahima](http://www.pearsonvue.com/ahima).

In addition, we ask that you arrive at the testing center 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment time. This will provide adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late for an examination you will be considered a no-show and forfeit your exam fee.

#### CODE BOOK INFORMATION (FOR CCA, CCS, AND CCS-P EXAMS ONLY)

Please visit AHIMA's Certification website at [www.ahima.org/certification](http://www.ahima.org/certification) prior to your testing date. Click "Exam Name" for information for the exam that you are taking, then click "Exam Preparation" for the versions of the coding books you're required to bring to the testing center for the exam.

#### RESCHEDULE AND CANCEL POLICY

If you wish to reschedule or cancel your exam appointment, you must do so at least one full business day (24 hours) before the appointment via the Pearson VUE website or call center. Appointments must be rescheduled within the authorized exam delivery period. All registrations with accommodations must be rescheduled or canceled through the call center. If you cancel your exam appointment, **you must also inform AHIMA and contact AHIMA regarding refund policies.** If you cancel or reschedule your appointment between 14 days and one full business day (24 hours) prior to your appointment time, you will be charged \$30. If your request is made less than one full business day (24 hours) before your scheduled appointment time, or you fail to arrive for your appointment, you will be considered a no-show and you will forfeit your exam fee.

#### REFUND POLICY

All refunds must be sent through AHIMA; Pearson VUE cannot process refunds for candidates. A cancellation of an exam appointment does not constitute an exam refund. Please contact AHIMA at [www.ahima.org/customersupport](http://www.ahima.org/customersupport) for refunds.

To schedule this examination, follow the instructions below. Schedule early to obtain the date, time, and location of your choice. Have your

## APPENDIX A (CONTINUED)

### Authorization to Test Letter

AHIMA candidate ID ready.

#### AFTER THE EXAM

After completing the examination and evaluation, candidates will be asked to report to the test center staff to receive their core report or test completion notice. Candidates who pass the examination can view and print their certificate in their CEU center within 48 business hours. The CEU center can be accessed at [my.ahima.org](http://my.ahima.org). If you are interested in ordering a hard copy certificate or frame, please visit [www.ahima.org/certification/contact](http://www.ahima.org/certification/contact).

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHEDULING YOUR APPOINTMENT

You may schedule the certification exam at a Pearson VUE testing center through the Pearson VUE Web site or by calling the Pearson VUE Contact Center.

To schedule your certification exam on the Pearson VUE Website, go to this address: <http://www.pearsonvue.com/ahima>. This Web site provides more information about certification exams, programs, and testing center locations.

To schedule your certification exam, first obtain a Pearson VUE Web account, username, and password. Follow instructions on the Web site to create an account and register for the certification exam.

Once you set up your account, you can use it to review your exam information and also schedule, reschedule, and cancel certification exams.

To schedule your certification exam or to get more information, you may contact the Pearson VUE Contact Center. For a full listing of contact numbers please visit: <http://www.pearsonvue.com/contact>

You will be able to select a date and time within the authorized testing dates listed above, at a testing center of your choice. Do not call the testing center directly. We encourage you to make an appointment soon, before all seats are taken.

You should use your Pearson VUE web account to schedule your exam:

Username: userName

If you have forgotten your password, you may ask to have a new password sent to your e-mail address on file. To do so, follow the instructions at [www.pearsonvue.com/forgotpassword](http://www.pearsonvue.com/forgotpassword). With your web account, you may review or modify your appointment.

After scheduling the certification exam, you will be given instructions and sent a confirmation that includes certification exam and appointment information, directions to the testing center, instructions on what to bring, and other pertinent information.



Professional and Regulatory Candidate Rules Agreement



Professional & Regulatory Candidate Rules Agreement

Please review the following test rules agreement. Contact the TA if you have any questions. The term TA will be used in this document to mean test administrator, invigilator, and proctor.

1. **No** personal items, including but not limited to, mobile phones, hand-held computers/personal digital assistants (PDAs) or other electronic devices, pagers, watches, wallets, purses, firearms or other weapons, hats (and other non-religious head coverings), bags, coats, jackets, eyeglass cases, books, and/or notes, pens or pencils are allowed in the testing room. You must store all personal items in a secure area (a locker) as indicated by the TA or return them to your vehicle. If you refuse to store your personal items, you will be unable to test, and you will lose your test fee.  
All electronic devices must be turned off before storing them in a locker. You will be asked to empty your pockets for the purpose of allowing the TA to verify that nothing is in them. If you have hair that covers your ears, you may be asked to show them for the purpose of allowing the TA to verify that no Bluetooth devices are present. The TA may also ask you to roll up your sleeves to verify that you have no writings on your arms. Before you enter the testing room, you will be asked to pat yourself down (for example: arms, legs, waistline) to show there is nothing hidden on your body. The test center is not responsible for lost, stolen, or misplaced personal items. **Studying IS NOT allowed in the test center. Visitors, children, spouses, family, or friends ARE NOT allowed in the test center.**
2. Before you enter the testing room, the TA may collect your digital photograph, digital signature, and/or your palm vein image for the purposes of verifying your identity and protecting the security and integrity of the test. You understand that if there are discrepancies during the check-in process, you may be prohibited from entering the testing room, you may not be allowed to reschedule your test appointment, and you may forfeit your test application fee.  
The identification requirements used during the check-in process are defined by the test sponsor, and the TA has no flexibility to add, delete, or alter this process. Upon entering and being seated in the testing room, the TA will provide you with those materials authorized by the test program sponsor for your use during the test to make notes or calculations on, and you will be provided any other material as specified by the test program sponsor. **You may not remove any of these materials from the testing room or begin writing on your notepad until your test has been started.** If you need new or additional materials during the test, you must raise your hand. You must return all items and materials to the TA immediately following the test.
3. The TA will log you into your assigned workstation. You will verify that you are taking the intended test that you registered to take. Unless otherwise instructed, you must remain in your assigned seat until escorted out of the testing room by a TA.
4. Once you have entered the testing room, you may not communicate with other candidates. Any disruptive, threatening, or fraudulent behaviour in the testing room may be grounds for terminating your test, invalidating your test results, or result in disqualifying you from taking the test at a future date.
5. You understand that eating, drinking, chewing gum, smoking, and/or making noise that creates a disturbance for other candidates is prohibited during the test.
6. To ensure a high level of security throughout the testing experience, you will be monitored at all times. Both audio and video may be recorded.
7. Break policies are established by the test program sponsor. Some tests may include scheduled breaks, and if so allowed, instructions will appear on the computer screen at the appropriate time; it is important to note that whether or not the test time stops depends on the test program sponsor's policy. If you take an **unscheduled break** at any other time or if you take a break during a test in which the test program sponsor has not scheduled a break, the test time will **not** stop. The TA will set your workstation to the break mode, and you must take your ID with you when you leave the room. The TA will check your ID before escorting you back to your seat and will then resume your test.
8. If you are taking **any break**, you **MUST receive permission from the TA PRIOR to accessing personal items that have been stored** (with the exception of comfort aids, medication, and food, which you may access without permission). Unless specifically permitted by the test program sponsor, personal items that cannot be accessed during **any break** include but are not limited to mobile phones, test notes, and study guides.

Professional and Regulatory Candidate Rules Agreement

9. You must leave the testing room for all breaks. **If you want to leave the test center building during any breaks, verify with the TA whether your test program sponsor permits you to leave the building.**
10. You must follow all of the appropriate check-in and check-out processes as defined by your test program sponsor. This may include the need to show identification and/or have your palm vein pattern captured when leaving and re-entering the testing room. Before re-entering, you will be asked to pat yourself down again (arms, legs, waistline) to show there is nothing hidden on your body. Unless otherwise instructed, the TA will escort you to your assigned workstation and resume the test for you so that you may continue with your test.
11. If you experience any problems or distractions or if you have other questions or concerns, you must raise your hand, and the TA will assist you. The TA cannot answer questions related to test content. If you have concerns about a test question or image, make a note of the item (question) number, if available, in order for the item to be reviewed.
12. A Non-Disclosure Agreement or other security statement may be presented to you before the test begins. If so presented, you must read, acknowledge, and agree to the terms and conditions of such document, within the specified time limit, if applicable, in order to begin your test. Should you not agree, you will not be permitted to proceed with taking the test and you may forfeit your test fee. If you select "DECLINE," your test session will immediately end.
13. After you finish the test, you may be asked to complete an optional onscreen evaluation.
14. Unless otherwise instructed, after you have completed the test you must raise your hand, and the TA will come to your workstation and verify that your test session has ended properly. Depending on the type of test taken, the test program sponsor may display your test score on the computer screen after you have completed the test; or you may be provided with a printed score report; or you may be provided with a confirmation notice indicating that you have completed the test program sponsor's test. If printed information is to be provided to you, you must present your ID again to the TA and along with returning any and all materials supplied to you prior to the beginning of your test. You must not leave any materials at your testing workstation after you have completed your test.
15. You may not remove copies of test questions or test answers from the testing center, and you may not share or discuss with anyone all or any of the test questions or test answers you saw or viewed during the taking of the test. If you do not abide by these rules, if you tamper with the computer or if you are suspected of cheating, appropriate action will be taken, including the possibility of the test program sponsor taking action against you.

**Your Privacy:** Your test results will be encrypted and transmitted to Pearson VUE and the test sponsor. The test center does not retain any information other than when and where your test was taken. The Pearson VUE Privacy and Cookies Policy provides additional information, which you can obtain by visiting the Pearson VUE website at [www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com) or by contacting the Pearson VUE call center.

**Candidate Statement:** *By providing a digital signature, I give Pearson VUE my explicit consent to retain and transmit my personal data and test responses to Pearson VUE located in the U.S. and to the test sponsor (either of which may be outside of the country in which I am testing). I understand the information provided above and agree to follow these rules in addition to any other program rules I may have agreed to during my registration for this test. If I do not follow the rules or I am suspected of cheating or tampering with the computer, this will be reported to Pearson VUE and the test sponsor, and I acknowledge and understand that my test may be invalidated, and the sponsor may take other action such as decertifying me, and I will not be refunded my test fee.*

**AHIMA Examination Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure, and Conduct Agreement**

**AHIMA® Examination Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure, and Conduct Agreement**

This American Health Information Management Association® (AHIMA®) examination is confidential and proprietary. All information contained in this AHIMA® examination is copyrighted and protected under U.S. and international trade secret law.

By checking the “Y” box below you acknowledge that you understand and agree that the content of this AHIMA® examination, and each of its items, is proprietary and strictly confidential, and that the unauthorized retention, possession, copying, distribution, disclosure, discussion, or receipt of any examination question, in whole or in part, by written, electronic, oral or other form of communication, including but not limited to e-mailing, copying or printing of electronic files, and reconstruction through memorization and/or dictation, before, during, or after an examination, or assisting any person to do any of the above, is **strictly prohibited**. You further understand and agree that, in addition to constituting irregular behavior subject to disciplinary action, such activities violate AHIMA® proprietary rights, including copyrights, and may subject me to legal action resulting in monetary damages.

This AHIMA® examination is made available to you, the examinee, solely for the purpose of becoming certified by AHIMA® as designated in the title of this AHIMA® examination. Any unauthorized use or irregular behavior in connection with the examination is expressly prohibited. Alleged violators are subject to investigation and, if warranted, prosecution to the fullest extent of the law. Unauthorized use includes knowingly assisting another person or persons in obtaining an AHIMA® credential by fraud, deception, or artifice. It also includes removing any distributed AHIMA® examination materials from the testing center or writing on any such materials.

AHIMA® and Pearson VUE, acting as AHIMA’s designated test administrator, reserve the right to immediately suspend the administration of the examination to you or invalidate your AHIMA® examination score if irregular testing behavior is suspected through proctor observation during the examination or by statistical analysis after the examination.

AHIMA®, through its Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM), reserves the right to investigate, and if warranted in its sole discretion, to pursue credential revocation of any AHIMA® Certified Professional suspected of failing to abide by the AHIMA® Code of Ethics as previously agreed to in the statement of understanding in the application process. AHIMA’s code of Ethics which can be found on the AHIMA’s Website (<http://bok.ahima.org/doc?oid=105098#.XtafDxNKg0o>).

By continuing with this AHIMA® examination, I confirm that I have read, understood, and agree to comply fully with this AHIMA® Examination Confidentiality, Non-Disclosure, and Conduct Agreement.

- Y. Yes, “I understand and agree to the terms of the above statement.”
- N. No, “I do not understand and agree to the terms of the above statement.”

**Sample Pass Score Report**



Score Report for the  
Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) Exam

Candidate Name  
Address Line 1  
Address Line 2  
City, State PostalCode

Examination Date: 01/27/2021

Results: Pass  
Your Scaled Score: 400  
Passing Scaled Score: 300



Domains:	Percent Correct
Information Governanc	100%
Compliance with Uses and Disclosures of Pf	100%
Data Analytics and Informati	100%
Revenue Managemen	100%
Management and Leadership	100%

This exam is built for a high degree of reliability at the pass/fail decision level. Domain scores can vary across forms, particularly for domains with a low number of questions. It may be helpful to consider domain scores when planning for continuing education or other personal/professional development. However, high-stakes decisions should not be based on domain scor

Note: Domain scores are given as percentage correct and cannot be averaged to arrive at scaled scores. A scaled score is not a percent or number corre

You have successfully passed theRegistered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) Exam  
Candidates who pass the examination can view and print their certificate in their CEU Center within 48 business hours. The CEU Center can be accessed at [my.ahima.org](http://my.ahima.org). If you are interested in ordering a hard copy certificate or frame, please visit [www.ahima.org/certification/cc](http://www.ahima.org/certification/cc)

Sample Fail Score Report

Score Report for the  
2020 Code Books Certified Coding Specialist—Physician-  
based (CCS-P) Exam

Candidate Name  
Address Line 1  
Address Line 2  
City, State PostalCode

Examination Date: 01/11/2021

Results: Fail  
Your Scaled Score: 107  
Passing Scaled Score: 300

Domains:	Percent Correct
Diagnosis Coding	16%
Procedure Coding	31%
Research	17%
Compliance	24%
Revenue Cycle	11%

Domain scores can vary between attempts, particularly for domains with a low number of questions. Study for the whole exam, paying special attention to areas of domain weakness. The exam blueprint is available in the candidate handbook on the AHIMA website and provides a complete listing of the content for the examination.

You should not assume that strong performance in a domain on this attempt will result in a strong performance in that domain on your next attempt.

Note: Domain scores are given as percentage correct and cannot be averaged to arrive at scaled scores. A scaled score is not a percent or number correct.

AHIMA Accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policies and Procedures

How to Request Test Accommodations for the Certification Examinations

- Applicant must complete and submit the ADA application electronically:  
[ADA@ahima.org](mailto:ADA@ahima.org)
- Requests by a third party (such as an evaluator, employer, etc.) will not be considered
- If an applicant has a documented disability covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) and requires test accommodations, he or she must notify AHIMA in writing each time he or she requests accommodations. All documentation is destroyed once the reviewing process has been completed
- The request should indicate the nature of the disability and the specific test accommodations needed
- A qualified professional must provide documentation verifying the disability and explaining the test accommodations that are needed
- Applicants will be notified via email with a decision.

What to Do:

- Read the AHIMA Disability Documentation Guidelines carefully and share them with the qualified professional who will be providing supporting documentation for your request. <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/apply/>
- Complete the AHIMA Test Accommodation Request form. <https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/apply/>

[www.ahima.org/certification-careers/apply/](https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/apply/)

- Attach documentation of the disability and your need for accommodation
- **Incomplete documentation will delay processing of your request and exam application**
- If appropriate documentation is submitted allow up to 14 business days for all documents to be reviewed.



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Source Code: 99.21

