

# 2021

## CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

FOR THE **CERTIFIED PROVIDER CREDENTIALING SPECIALIST (CPCS)** AND  
**CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL IN MEDICAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT (CPMSM)** EXAMINATIONS



CERTIFICATION COMMISSION  
OF NAMSS



## **SPRING TESTING PERIOD**

Application Deadline – Friday, January 22, 2021

Final Application Deadline (with late fee) – Friday, February 19, 2021

Testing Period – Saturday, March 27 through Saturday, April 17, 2021

## **SUMMER TESTING PERIOD**

Application Deadline – Friday, April 30, 2021

Final Application Deadline (with late fee) – Friday, May 20, 2021

Testing Period – Saturday, June 26 through Saturday, July 17, 2021

## **FALL TESTING PERIOD**

Application Deadline – Friday, August 27, 2021

Final Application Deadline (with late fee) – Friday, September 17, 2021

Testing Period – Saturday, October 23 through Saturday, November 13, 2021

## **National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS)**

Certification Commission of NAMSS (CCN)

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Washington, DC 20006

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[certification@namss.org](mailto:certification@namss.org)

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The Certification Commission of NAMSS (CCN) was established in 1980 to advance the profession of medical services management through the development of a certification program. The CCN is the independent certifying body of the National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS), a nonprofit professional membership organization. The CCN's mission is to assure a comprehensive level of knowledge through certification in the medical services profession. The CCN is responsible for establishing the policies and procedures that govern the certification and recertification programs of NAMSS. Earning the CPCS and/or CPMSM designation recognizes professional achievement through participation in this voluntary certification program.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CANDIDATE

**It is the responsibility of each candidate to read and understand the contents of this handbook before applying for the examination.** This handbook contains current information about the policies and procedures of the certification program, eligibility criteria, exam content outline, and the reference materials used to develop the examination. It is essential that each candidate keep this handbook readily available for reference until the entire certification process, including score reporting, is completed. **The 2019 Candidate Handbook supersedes all previous versions of this handbook.**

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Medical Services Professionals (MSPs) are on the frontlines of healthcare, promoting patient safety and helping to ensure public protection through access to quality healthcare services. MSPs administer the vital risk management function of credentialing and are significantly involved in the accreditation of their healthcare organizations. The certification program establishes industry standards and serves as a comprehensive measure of knowledge in the field. The CPCS and CPMSM designations identify MSPs who have met an established standard of knowledge and understanding in the field of healthcare credentialing, governance, law, accreditation, and regulatory compliance.

The CPCS and CPMSM designations provide employers and the public with the assurance that certified individuals possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience in provider credentialing or medical services management to perform their duties competently.

## GOALS OF CERTIFICATION

The NAMSS certification program aspires to the following goals for provider credentialing and medical services management:

1. To promote industry standards, and to provide a means to verify professional knowledge in the field of provider credentialing and medical services management.

2. To distinguish those professionals who demonstrate an established level of knowledge and expertise in the field, and to provide prospective healthcare employers with a means to identify qualified candidates for provider credentialing or medical services management positions.
3. To provide the opportunity for personal validation of professional competency.
4. To raise awareness of and professionalize the positions in the field of provider credentialing and medical services management, and to acknowledge a commitment to the public to foster quality healthcare delivery.
5. To enhance knowledge and skill through continuing education and recertification requirements.

## DEFINITIONS

Provider credentialing and medical services management occurs in various healthcare settings, is performed by professionals with diverse educational and work backgrounds, and involves the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the tasks outlined in the Exam Content Outlines (see pages 11-13).

### Certified Provider Credentialing Specialist (CPCS)

The Certified Provider Credentialing Specialist (CPCS) is typically employed or contracted by a healthcare organization including, but not limited to, hospitals (health systems), health plans, ambulatory care settings, group practices, and credentialing verification organizations.

A CPCS is an integral part of a credentialing team whose responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Maintaining compliance with regulatory and accrediting bodies;
2. Participating in the development and implementation of credentialing processes and procedures;
3. Credentialing of physicians, allied health and other practitioners;
4. Overseeing or participating in the development of and adherence to:
5. Governance bylaws;
6. Department rules and regulations;
7. Policies pertaining to medical staff, practitioner/provider and the organization; and
8. Collecting and maintaining an accurate practitioner database and analyzing verification information.

**The CPCS exam is designed to test knowledge on the broad scope of those professionals employed at the level to which the title “Credentialing Specialist” would appropriately apply. While those activities in the field of provider enrollment are a respected function in the healthcare industry, the CPCS exam does not include**

**content relative to provider enrollment. The CPCS exam tests specifically to the areas of credentialing, privileging, and primary source verification.**

**Hands-on experience with the application of accreditation standards and experience with conducting the credentialing activities is a requisite for the candidate for certification. Provider enrollment specialists are typically involved in facilitation of applications and information, but are not involved in hands-on credentialing. Moreover, candidates are expected to have current, direct, preferably hands-on involvement in the major processes typically associated with this aspect of the health care industry including a majority of the areas covered in the Exam Content Outline in the Candidate Handbook.**

### **Certified Professional in Medical Services Management (CPMSM)**

The CPMSM is typically employed or contracted by a hospital/health system, ambulatory surgery center, managed care organization/health plan, credentials verification organization, or group practice where the staff is performing the management functions of medical services and compliance with accrediting standards.

The CPMSM exam focuses on the management role in medical services to include functions such as staffing, budgets, medical staff information systems, continuing education, and practitioner/provider recruitment and relations. A CPMSM is an integral part of a multidisciplinary team whose responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

1. Maintaining and ensuring compliance with regulatory and accrediting bodies;
2. Developing and implementing credentialing/privileging processes and procedures and criteria;
3. Developing and implementing provider enrollment processes and procedures and criteria;
4. Directing and managing every aspect of credentialing and privileging processes;
5. Managing departmental operations and collaborating across the healthcare organization to enhance effectiveness; and
6. Overseeing development of and adherence to:
  - Governance bylaws;
  - Rules and regulations;
  - Policies pertaining to medical staff, practitioner/provider, and the organization.

**The CPMSM exam does not test to areas such as billing, physician practice management, software development, physician recruitment, or physician staffing outside the functions of primary source verification and compliance with the accreditation standards.**

## **WHO SHOULD SIT FOR THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS**

Both exams are for those with experience in the provider credentialing and medical services management field. Candidates are expected to have current, direct, and hands-on involvement in the major processes associated with the provider credentialing or medical services management aspect of the healthcare industry, including a majority of the areas covered in the Exam Content Outlines listed on pages 11-13.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Candidates must meet the following eligibility routes **at the time of application**. The CCN reserves the right to conduct random audits to verify candidate eligibility. Any candidate found ineligible at the time of application will forfeit \$100 of the application fee.

### **CPCS Examination**

At the time of application, candidate must be currently employed in the medical services profession for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 24 months **AND** have a total of three years experience in the medical services profession within the past five years.

### **CPMSM Examination:**

At the time of application, candidate must be currently employed in the medical services profession for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 24 months **AND** have a total of five years of experience in the medical services profession within the past eight years.

## **ABOUT THE EXAMINATIONS**

The CCN partners with Scantron, an independent testing company that provides assistance with exam development, administration, and scoring.

A standardized survey of the profession is conducted every five to seven years to ensure that examination content is current, valid, and representative of the responsibilities of provider credentialing and medical services management. The NAMSS certification examinations are the only standardized and accredited certification exams currently offered to test the knowledge, skills, and abilities of medical services and credentialing professionals.

The CPCS exam is an objective examination consisting of 150 multiple-choice questions. Candidates will have a total of three hours to complete this exam.

The CPMSM exam is an objective examination consisting of 175 multiple-choice questions. Candidates will have a total of four hours to complete this exam.

A computer-based examination is administered during three, three-week testing periods per year, through a network of testing sites operated by our testing vendor, Scantron. Further information regarding testing centers and scheduling appointments can be found on pages 6-7 of this handbook and will be sent to applicants upon being deemed eligible to sit for the examination.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

NAMSS complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in order to accommodate candidates with special needs. Candidates with documented visual, physical, hearing, or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking an examination under standard conditions may request special testing accommodations and arrangements.

For the exam administrations, special needs must be documented in writing by the candidate's doctor or other qualified professional on official letterhead. This written documentation must accompany the CPCS/CPMSM application. Please note that requests for accommodations must be received at least eight (8) weeks prior to the start of a testing period.

## STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The CCN, NAMSS, and Scantron do not discriminate against any individual or entity on the basis of religion, age, gender, race, disability, nationality, creed, socioeconomic status, or any other protected classification. All individuals submitting an application for the examination will be judged solely on published criteria. Candidates are not required to be a member of any organization to apply for NAMSS certification.

## COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

All proprietary rights to the CPCS and CPMSM exams, including copyright, are held by the Certification Commission of NAMSS. In order to protect the validity of the scores reported, candidates must adhere to strict guidelines regarding proper conduct in handling these copyrighted proprietary materials. The law strictly prohibits any attempt to reproduce all or part of the CPCS or CPMSM exams or practice exams. Such attempts may include, but are not limited to: removing materials from the testing room; aiding others by any means in reconstructing any portion of the exam; posting content on any discussion forum; and selling, distributing, receiving, or having unauthorized possession of any portion of the exam or practice exams. Alleged copyright violations will be investigated and, if warranted, prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. It should be noted that examination scores might become invalid in the event of this type of suspected breach. Permanent revocation of certification may occur if allegations are substantiated.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please review the following directions to access the NAMSS online application system. Questions should be directed to the NAMSS Executive Office at [certification@namss.org](mailto:certification@namss.org).

- The online applications for the CPCS and CPMSM examination are available at <https://www.namss.org/Certification/CPCS> or <https://www.namss.org/Certification/CPMSM>.
- It is recommended that you submit your completed application by the application deadlines listed on page 2 to avoid any late fees.

You will need the following to complete the online application:

- A Personal NAMSS Account
  - Your Government Issued ID
  - Your Supervisor's Work Email Address
  - Supporting Documentation (if applicable)
  - Method(s) of Payment
1. Create or sign into your NAMSS account.
    - If you do not already have a NAMSS account, you may create one. The online application requires that you create an account on our NAMSS website. The application fields will be pre-populated based on the information from your account profile.
  2. Complete the application.
    - The online application consists of several sections. You must complete all sections prior to submitting your application.
    - If you skip any questions, you will receive an alert that will prompt you to complete the missing fields.
    - The application must be completed in one sitting. You may not access an incomplete application at a later date or time.

### 3. Submit required documents.

- If you require special testing accommodations, please attach supporting documentation to the online application. You may also submit any additional documentation via email to [certification@namss.org](mailto:certification@namss.org).
- Please note that all supporting documentation must be received at least eight (8) weeks prior to the start of a testing period.

### 4. Pay the application fee.

- You may pay for the application online with a credit or debit card. If you prefer to pay by check, please make all checks payable to NAMSS.
- A confirmation page will appear upon remittance. It will include a reference number for your records. For check payments, you must mail in your payment along with the confirmation page.

### 5. Submit the application.

- Once your application is completed and submitted, it is recommended that you print a copy of the confirmation page for your records.
- Submitted applications are final and can no longer be edited.
- The NAMSS Executive Office will email you to confirm receipt of your application. A follow-up email will be sent upon your supervisor's verification of your application.

## EXAMINATION FEES

NAMSS members	\$375
Non-members	\$500

### *Other Fees* (see conditions below)

Rescheduling, Transfer and Cancellation Fee	\$100
Late Fee	\$100

Make check or money order payable to NAMSS.

Note: There will be an additional administrative fee of \$30 for returned checks.

VISA, MasterCard, and American Express are accepted.

Checks should be mailed to:

NAMSS  
8658 Solution Center  
Chicago, IL 60677-8006

Faxed or emailed application submissions will not be accepted.

## LATE REGISTRATION

Applications submitted after the deadline may be processed if such registration can be accommodated. There is a \$100 late fee for all applications submitted after the deadline, if accommodations can be made for that testing cycle.

## RESCHEDULING AND TRANSFER OF EXAM APPOINTMENTS

Requests for rescheduling an examination appointment to a different date *within the three week testing period* must be submitted directly to Scantron through the scheduling web link listed on your Notice to Schedule (NTS). All rescheduled appointments will be subject to a \$100 rescheduling fee.

## TRANSFERRING YOUR EXAM

Requests for transferring an examination appointment to a *different testing cycle* must be submitted through the NAMSS Executive Office by emailing [certification@namss.org](mailto:certification@namss.org). All transfers of examinations to a different testing window are subject to the \$100 transfer fee.

Failure to keep an appointment or canceling an appointment without the appropriate notice (**less than five business days prior to the scheduled appointment**) will result in forfeiture of all applicable exam fees. You may transfer your exam to the next testing window up to two times. If you wish to transfer your examination further than two testing windows from the original application, you must submit for a cancellation and refund and resubmit a new application. Upon transferring your exam, you are no longer eligible for a refund and will forfeit all applicable exam fees should you decide to cancel your exam.

## CANCELLATIONS/REFUNDS

**The CCN must receive all requests for a cancellation/refund in writing, no later than two weeks prior to the start of your original testing window. If you have previously transferred your exam to a new testing window, you are not eligible for a refund.**

You may email a request for a refund to the NAMSS Executive Office to [certification@namss.org](mailto:certification@namss.org). Requests for cancellations/refunds may be made only by the exam candidate. Refunds will be issued less a \$100 processing fee.

Written requests for a refund/cancellation must be **submitted** by the following dates:

- Spring Testing Window – March 5, 2021
- Summer Testing Window – June 4, 2021
- Fall Testing Window – October 2, 2021

## SCHEDULING YOUR EXAM APPOINTMENT

The certification exams are administered during an established three-week period at computerized testing facilities managed by Scantron. Available testing dates and times vary by location.

After an application for a computer-based exam is approved, a Notice to Schedule (NTS) will be sent via email **approximately thirty days prior to the opening of the testing window**. The NTS will include the scheduling web link, your username, and your password. When you access the online scheduling

system with your username and password, you will be able to choose an exam site, date and time from the list of available sites. Please note that appointment times and site locations are on a first-come, first-served basis, and may vary in availability with each exam window.

We recommend that you access the scheduling web link as soon as you receive your NTS to schedule your appointment. Waiting to schedule your test appointment may significantly limit the date/time availability at the test center of your choice. All available testing locations and dates will be presented to you on the scheduling web link.

The scheduling website will prompt you to submit a second test date preference in the event that the first site and date you requested is no longer available.

Within twenty four (24) hours of submitting your scheduling request, you will receive a scheduling confirmation e-mail. The scheduling confirmation, plus government-issued photo identification with signature, must be presented to the proctor in order to gain admission to the testing center.

If you have any questions regarding your scheduled exam appointment, please contact Scantron at (919) 572-6880.

## DAY OF THE EXAM

It is strongly recommended that you familiarize yourself with the testing center location and parking facilities prior to the day of your exam so that you arrive at the testing center stress-free and on time.

On the day of the exam, report to the testing center at the time indicated on your confirmation notice e-mail. Late arrivals may not be admitted. If you have any problems regarding your scheduled exam location or proctor, please contact Scantron at (919) 572-6880.

Upon arriving at the testing center, you will be required to present your confirmation e-mail and provide one form of current government-issued photo identification, which must bear your name and your signature. Examples of appropriate identification include a passport or driver's license. If you do not bring the appropriate identification to the testing center, you will not be able to test within that testing period. The name on your photo identification must exactly match the name that appears on your eligibility notice.

The testing center administrator will provide a brief orientation and then escort you to a workstation. You must remain in your seat during the examination. You may only leave your workstation when authorized by a testing center staff member. If you leave your workstation during the exam, extra time will not be provided.

In the event that Internet connectivity is lost, your submitted answers will not be lost and the computer will stop the clock on your exam at the time connectivity is lost. The clock will resume when connectivity is re-established and you will be able to complete the exam in the fully allotted time period. You must notify the testing proctor if Internet connectivity is lost. The testing proctor will be able to contact Scantron should the need arise.

Contact the testing center administrator if you:

- Believe there is a problem with your computer;
- Need more scratch paper;
- Need to take a break (extra time will not be provided); or
- Require assistance from the testing center administrator.

## AT THE TESTING CENTER

To ensure all results are earned under comparable conditions and represent fair and accurate measurement, it is necessary to maintain a standardized testing environment. The following recommendations, policies, and procedures pertain to every exam candidate:

- Instructions by testing center personnel are to be followed.
- An on-screen clock will be provided and will calculate the allotted time for the exam. You will not be permitted to continue beyond the allotted time limit.
- Do not bring books or other reference materials into the testing room. The testing center administrator will not permit anyone found possessing such materials to continue the test, and you will forfeit all applicable examination fees.
- Electronic devices (cell phones, pagers, tablets, etc.) are not permitted to be used at the testing center.
- Visitors are not permitted at the testing center.
- Bring a jacket or sweater without a hood or pockets for air-conditioned rooms.

**Note:** On rare occasions, major technical problems with computer equipment at the testing center may require rescheduling of an examination at the testing center administrator's discretion. In these cases, no additional fee will be assessed.

## COMPUTER-BASED TESTING

You do not need extensive computer experience to take a computer-based examination. Benefits of computer-based testing include:

- Online tutorials for computer operation;
- The ability to mark questions as a reminder to review later;
- The ability to track and display time remaining during the exam.

### Exam Tutorial for Computer-Based Testing

An exam tutorial link is provided with the exam confirmation notice e-mail. You are encouraged to view and familiarize yourself with the testing website prior to your appointment. The tutorial is also available prior to beginning your exam at the test site, and is also available to reference during the exam if needed. Extra time is not provided once the exam is in progress. **You are strongly encouraged not to bypass the tutorial.**

## During the Exam

During the exam, you have the opportunity, time permitting, to return to answered questions, review and change previously answered questions, re-evaluate questions marked for review, and review responses for the entire exam. When your exam time expires, all questions will be included in the final calculation of your score, even if they are blank or marked for review. Once your allotted time has expired, or you exit the exam, you cannot see or review the questions again. Remember that your answers will not be lost and the clock will be stopped should Internet connectivity be lost during the exam.

## Exit Survey

At the end of the exam, you will be asked to complete a brief survey with an evaluation of your testing experience. Your survey answers are anonymous and confidential. All comments are reviewed and, if possible or necessary, changes are implemented.

## EXAM SECURITY/GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL

The CCN and Scantron maintain established test administration and security standards to ensure that all candidates are provided with a fair and consistent opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Any candidate who does not have positive identification, uses unauthorized aids, engages in misconduct, or does not follow testing procedures may be dismissed from the testing center. The CCN may choose to have the test scores of such candidates cancelled, in which case all applicable exam fees will be forfeited.

The following are examples of behaviors considered to be misconduct and will not be tolerated during the administration of the CPCS OR CPMSM exams:

- Giving or receiving assistance of any kind;
- Using references or aids;
- Attempting to take the exam for someone else;
- Failing to follow testing regulations and/or test center instructions;
- Creating disturbances;
- Copying, removing or attempting to remove exam questions and/or scratch paper from the exam room;
- Tampering with testing center computers;
- Leaving the exam room without permission;
- Using electronic communication devices (cell phones, pagers, tablets, etc.).

In the event of misconduct, gathered evidence is submitted to the CCN and Scantron for review. Both the CCN and Scantron have the right to question the validity of test scores. If there is sufficient cause to question the score, Scantron will refer the matter to the CCN, which will make the final decision on whether or not the score is to be cancelled. In the event the CCN determines a test score is invalid and should be cancelled, the CCN will notify the candidate (all applicable examination fees will be forfeited). The CCN, at its sole discretion, may decide to:

- Allow the candidate to retest at an additional cost;
- Prohibit the candidate from ever sitting for the exam and earning the certification; or
- Take other action as deemed appropriate.

## SCORING INFORMATION

The pass/fail cut-off score is determined using a criterion-referenced method, which allows the performance of each candidate taking the exam to be judged against a predetermined standard rather than against other candidates. The predetermined standard is set through a process of statistical equating, taking into account actual candidate performance across test cycles, to ensure the validity, reliability and legal defensibility of the exam.

Scaled scoring is used on all exam forms. Scaled scoring involves a mathematical conversion of the number of items that a candidate correctly answers transformed so that there is a consistent scale used across all forms of the test. The passing scaled score is 400 for the CPCS exam and 450 for CPMSM exam.

## Exam Reliability

The statistical analyses performed on the CPCS and CPMSM exams have shown that the exam is highly reliable. This reliability is a direct result of the efforts of the CCN, working with subject matter experts, to ensure that ambiguity is eliminated from individual exam questions, and that the questions address concepts appropriate for candidates sitting for the exam.

## EXAM RESULTS

Official test results will be emailed to the address reflected on your CPCS or CPMSM application within six to eight weeks after the testing window has closed. Please note that this is a change from previous years due to the move to a statistical equating method to set the passing standard and the exams will no longer be auto scored. NAMSS will retain exam results for a period of seven years.

To ensure the confidentiality of exam results, actual scores will not be released via telephone, fax, or any other electronic transmission by either the CCN or Scantron personnel. Scores will NOT be sent to employers, schools, other individuals, or organizations under any circumstances. Names of candidates who do not pass the examination are confidential and are not revealed under any circumstances, except by legal compulsory process. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to the NAMSS Executive Office at [certification@namss.org](mailto:certification@namss.org).

## APPLICANT/CANDIDATE APPEALS

Decisions by the CCN regarding initial determination of eligibility to take an examination, continued certification, disruptive examination conditions and verification of an examination score may be appealed to the CCN. The grounds for appeal to the CCN are only those stated in the previous sentence.

An appeal to the CCN must be made in writing by letter or email, with the subject line "appeal" to the following address:

2001 K Street NW, 3rd Floor North  
Washington, DC 20006  
ATTN: CCN - Appeal  
E-mail: [certification@namss.org](mailto:certification@namss.org)

All such appeals must be received by the CCN **within 30 days of the date** (1) that the CCN mailed the notice denying eligibility to take the examination or (2) the date the CCN mailed the notice denying continued certification (3) the date on which a disruptive examination condition or examination occurred, or (4) that the candidate received official notice of the examination score.

The written appeal must identify the precise factual basis, applicable rules or examination conditions that are the basis for the appeal.

## RE-EXAMINATION

Certification exams may be taken only once during a testing period. However, exams may be taken in subsequent testing periods, upon submission of a new application and payment of examination fees. Candidates may take the exam **up to two times within a 12 month period**. If a candidate does not pass the exam upon his or her second attempt, there will be a waiting period of one full year to reapply to take the exam. With each new application submission, candidates will be required to meet the eligibility requirements in effect at the time of submission.

## ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION

Certification is valid for three years. Candidates who pass the certification examination(s) may use the appropriate designation "CPCS" or "CPMSM" upon receipt of official examination results indicating a passing score. Newly certified individuals will receive a CPCS and/or CPMSM certificate. All certificants with a CPCS or CPMSM in good standing will be reflected on the "Good Standing Report" available on the NAMSS website. This is the single source of truth to verify a current certificant.

## RECERTIFICATION

Recertification is designed to assure a level of continued competence through the ongoing enhancement of knowledge and skills in the field of provider credentialing and medical services management. Certificants holding dual certification will be required to recertify only once every three years, at the time of the expiration of the first certification. Certificants, whether holding single or dual certification, must meet one of the following continuing education requirements every three years in order to maintain their certification.

- Single certification: Submit 30 hours of continuing education credits, at least 15 hours of which must be NAMSS-approved coursework; or
- Dual certification: Submit 45 hours of continuing education credits, at least 25 hours of which must be NAMSS-approved coursework; or
- Sit for and pass the certification examination(s) under the eligibility requirements in effect at the time application for recertification is made.
- All certified candidates are responsible for keeping track of their recertification dates and tracking their recertification activities. The NAMSS Executive Office does not keep track of recertification activities for candidates.

Please visit [www.namss.org/recertification](http://www.namss.org/recertification) for complete recertification information.

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT ETHICS FOR NAMSS CERTIFICANTS

NAMSS Certificants shall abide by the ethical principles developed to safeguard the public and to promote quality patient care through support of the healthcare organization and its functions.

NAMSS Certificants shall share knowledge, foster educational opportunities, and encourage personal and professional growth through continued self-improvement and application of current advancements in the profession and agree to follow the NAMSS Ethics and Code of Conduct.

NAMSS Certificants shall refrain from conduct deemed harmful to the public or inappropriate to the profession.

Any such violation of the Ethics and Code of Conduct Policy by a NAMSS Certificant may result in suspension or revocation of certification. For a copy of the Ethics and Code of Conduct Policy, please visit [www.namss.org/ethics](http://www.namss.org/ethics).

## EXAM PREPARATION

Exam questions relate to the standards at the time the exam is assembled. If you take the exam at the end of the year, remember the standards being addressed are those in effect at the time the exam was assembled (typically April of each year).

For further clarification, the exam offered in Spring and Summer 2021 was assembled in April 2020 and the exam offered in Fall 2021 will be assembled in April 2021.

With the exception of the practice exams, the CCN does not develop, administer, sponsor, endorse, or financially benefit from any type of exam review, preparatory course or published materials related to the content of the certification examinations.

## PRACTICE EXAMINATIONS

The Certification Commission of NAMSS offers online practice exams for the CPCS and CPMSM exams, which include sample questions similar to those that will be found on the actual examination. The practice exams were designed using the same specifications as the full exam.

### CPCS Practice Exam

The CPCS practice exam is composed of 40 multiple-choice questions and is intended to provide individuals with a sample of the type of questions that will be asked. These practice questions do not appear on the certification examination. Success on the practice exam does not guarantee positive results on the certification exam.

### CPMSM Practice Exam

The CPMSM practice exam is composed of 50 multiple-choice questions and is intended to provide individuals with a sample of the type of questions that will be asked. These practice questions do not appear on the certification examination. Success on the practice exam does not guarantee positive results on the certification exam.

## CERTIFICATION PREPARATION MATERIALS

NAMSS offers a variety of certification preparation materials. For a full listing of what NAMSS offers, please visit [www.namss.org/certprep](http://www.namss.org/certprep). The purchase and use of exam preparation materials does not guarantee a passing score on the exam. The CCN does not develop, administer, sponsor, endorse, or financially benefit from any type of exam review, preparatory course, or published materials related to the content of the certification examinations.

## REFERENCE MATERIALS

Exam questions are based on a wide variety of publications, regulations, and resources in the medical services field. Suggested preparation for the examination may include, but is not limited to, the following resources:

- AAAHC
- CMS Hospital Conditions of Participation  
<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/CFR-2011-title42-vol5/CFR-2011-title42-vol5-part482>

- CMS Regulations and Interpretive Guidelines for Hospitals  
[https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap\\_a\\_hospitals.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap_a_hospitals.pdf)
- DNV National Integrated Accreditation for Healthcare Organizations (NIAHO)
- EMTALA  
[www.cms.hhs.gov/GuidanceforLawsAndRegulations/downloads/emtala.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/GuidanceforLawsAndRegulations/downloads/emtala.pdf)
- Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986 (HCQIA)  
<http://www.npdb.hrsa.gov/resources/titlelv.jsp>
- HFAP
- The Joint Commission Accreditation Standards
- NCQA Health Plan Standards and Guidelines
- NCQA CVO Standards
- NPDB/HIPDB Guidebook  
<http://www.npdb.hrsa.gov/resources/aboutGuidebooks.jsp>
- Robert's Rules of Order
- URAC

## 2021 CPCS EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

### Credentialing and Privileging (60%)

- Analyze an initial application and supporting documentation for completeness and eligibility according to accreditation standards and federal regulations, and then notify the practitioner of the application status.
- Analyze a reappointment/recredentialing application and supporting documentation for completeness and eligibility according to accreditation standards and federal regulations, and then notify the practitioner of the application status.
- Process an initial or reappointment/recredentialing application by using primary, secondary, or recognized equivalent sources to maintain compliance with accreditation standards and federal regulations.
- Collect, verify, analyze, and deliver practitioner-specific data obtained during the credentialing process for the reviewing and approval bodies to have the information necessary to make decisions in compliance with accreditation standards and federal regulations.
- Process practitioner requests for privileges by obtaining documentation of competency in compliance with accreditation standards and federal regulations.

### Ongoing Monitoring (22%)

- Monitor and evaluate practitioner sanctions, complaints, and adverse information between credentialing cycles to maintain compliance with accreditation standards and federal regulations.

- Verify and document expirables by using primary, secondary, and recognized equivalent sources to maintain compliance with accreditation standards and federal regulations.

### **Supporting Departmental Operations (18%)**

- Participate in internal and external audits of practitioner files and operational documents (e.g., policies, procedures, monitoring logs) to maintain compliance with accreditation standards and federal regulations.
- Support credentialing functions and meeting documentation to maintain compliance with accreditation standards and federal regulations.

## **2021 SPRING AND SUMMER CPMSM EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE**

### **Credentialing and Privileging: Develop, Manage, Conduct, and Maintain Credentialing and Privileging Processes (38%)**

- Direct the credentialing and privileging processes of practitioners/providers in accordance with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures to mitigate organizational risk (e.g., negligent credentialing, discrimination) and promote the delivery of safe, quality patient care.
- Oversee the evaluation of credentialing/privileging requests and evidence of education, training, competence, and experience against established criteria for practitioners/providers to determine eligibility for requested privileges, membership, and/or plan participation.
- Collaborate with the organization's medical staff to develop and maintain a facility-specific, criteria-based clinical privileging system for privileged practitioners/providers in accordance with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures.

### **Ongoing Monitoring And Compliance: Ensure Continuous Adherence to Regulatory Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Organizational Policies and Procedures (27%)**

- Develop and/or maintain applicable governance documents (e.g., bylaws, credentialing policies and procedures, rules and regulations) that support and direct organizational practices and that comply with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, managed care requirements, and organizational policies and procedures.
- Using a variety of tools, develop, review and prepare practitioner/ provider performance improvement and peer review data in reports and presentations in order to facilitate analysis by the appropriate organizational leadership to enable evaluation of current/ongoing practitioner/provider competency.
- Facilitate efficient and timely due process that complies with an organization's corrective action, fair hearing, and appeals policies as well as applicable legal and regulatory requirements

by serving as an advisor to organizational leadership (e.g., medical staff, administration) in order to ensure consistency

- Identify adverse actions (e.g., summary suspensions, privileging actions) taken against a practitioner/provider and appropriately report/notify the necessary authorized agencies, organizational staff, and external organizations in accordance with applicable law and contractual requirements.
- Monitor and report sanctions and complaints (e.g., OIG, state license) for practitioners/providers in order to recommend action by medical staff and/or organizational leadership to comply with internal and external requirements (e.g., state and federal agencies and health plans).
- Comply with internal and external requirements related to verifying the status of practitioner/provider expirables (e.g., licenses, certifications, insurance, vaccinations/immunizations) by querying approved sources and recommending action(s) to medical staff and/or organizational leadership based upon bylaws and policies/procedures (e.g., automatic suspension).

### **Department Operations Management: Ensure Effective Functioning of Departmental Operations (20%)**

- Prepare, review, and manage operational budget and staffing plans, and perform human resources-related functions by evaluating financial and other internal and external resources to support departmental operations.
- Assess, implement, effectively utilize, and maintain products and information systems (e.g., files, reports, minutes, databases) by analyzing the needs and resources of the department in order to manage data with efficiency and integrity in a manner that complies with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures
- Oversee the preparation of materials for committees, boards, and other organizational groups in order to maintain an official record of proceedings and decisions and to identify and ensure follow-up on action items (e.g., scheduling, agendas, meeting materials, action plans).

### **System Management: Integrate and Collaborate with Others in the Facility on Interdisciplinary Responsibilities to Enhance Organizational Functions (15%)**

- Work independently and/or with others to monitor educational activities offered by the organization to assist practitioners/providers in meeting their education requirements.
- Collaborate with others to create and implement orientation about programs, policies, and practices that support practitioner/provider compliance with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures.
- Develop policies and applicable tools (e.g., confidentiality statements, audit tools, verifications, practitioner access) that govern the efficient management, sharing, and distribution of

information to internal and external sources (e.g., managed care, hospitals, marketing, recruiting) in accordance with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures.

## 2021 FALL CPMSM EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

### Credentialing and Privileging: Develop, Manage, Conduct, and Maintain Credentialing and Privileging Processes (35%)

- Prepare, review, and manage operational budget and staffing plans by evaluating financial and performance data to support organizational initiatives.
- Assess, implement, and effectively utilize technology and resources by analyzing the needs of the department in order to manage data with efficiency and integrity to comply with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures.
- Oversee the preparation of materials for committees, boards, and other organizational groups in order to maintain an official record of proceedings and decisions, and facilitate follow-up on action items.

### Ongoing Monitoring And Compliance: Ensure Continuous Adherence to Regulatory Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Organizational Policies and Procedures (26%)

- Develop and/or maintain applicable governance documents that support and direct organizational practices and that comply with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, managed care requirements, and organizational policies and procedures.
- Identify, review and report practitioner performance data, complaints, sanctions, adverse actions, and quality of care issues in order to facilitate analysis by the appropriate organizational leadership to enable evaluation of current/ongoing practitioner competency or network participation.
- Facilitate consistent, efficient, and timely investigation, appeals, and due process to comply with an organization's corrective action, fair hearing, and appeals policies as well as applicable legal and regulatory requirements.
- Identify adverse actions taken against a practitioner/provider and appropriately report/notify the necessary authorized agencies, organizational staff, and external organizations in accordance with applicable law and contractual requirements.
- Comply with internal and external requirements related to verifying and reporting the status of practitioner/provider expirables by querying approved sources and recommending action(s) to medical staff and/or organizational leadership based upon bylaws and policies/procedures.

### Department Operations Management: Ensure Effective Functioning of Departmental Operations (20%)

- Direct the credentialing, privileging, and enrollment processes of practitioners/providers in accordance with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures to mitigate organizational risk and promote the delivery of safe, quality care.
- Oversee the evaluation of credentialing/privileging requests and evidence of education, training, competence, ability to perform, and experience against established criteria for practitioners/providers to determine eligibility for requested privileges, membership, and/or plan participation.
- Oversee the submission of complete and accurate applications and/or practitioner data/roster to ensure timely approval and maintenance of network participation.
- Collaborate with the organization's medical staff to develop and maintain a facility-specific, criteria-based clinical privileging system for privileged practitioners/providers in accordance with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures.

### System Management: Integrate and Collaborate with Others in the Facility on Interdisciplinary Responsibilities to Enhance Organizational Functions (19%)

- Collaborate with others to implement programs, policies, and practices that support practitioner/provider status (e.g., onboarding, changes, off boarding) and compliance with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures.
- Develop policies and procedures that govern the efficient management and distribution of practitioner/provider information to internal and external sources in accordance with regulatory requirements, accreditation standards, and organizational policies and procedures.