



2015 CERTIFICATION RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook provides important information on renewal eligibility, how to renew (including options for expired or lapsed certifications), each of the six professional development categories, practice hour requirements, and special requirements for specific certifications.

Purpose of Certification Renewal

Nursing technology, strategies, and research can change nursing practice and health care; this can become an issue for public safety. Due to these changes, the Commission on Certification established a 5-year period for certification. Renewing certification every 5 years provides evidence to the public that the nurse is meeting requirements for continued competence by updating his or her knowledge and showing commitment to lifelong learning. Certification can be renewed through various professional development activities—continuing education, academic credits, presentations, publication or research, precepting, or professional service.

Certification renewal may also permit you to seek continued licensure, reimbursement, and potential employer recognition.

Certification renewal is required for continued use of your ANCC certification credentials. If you choose not to renew your ANCC certification, then you must cease using your ANCC credentials after your certification expiration date.

Overview of Certification Renewal Process

You can submit your application during the 12 months prior to your certification expiration date. If the certification exam is retiring, you may apply to test anytime before your certification is due to lapse. See page 13 for a list of exams scheduled for retirement.

If you have questions, contact the Customer Care Center at 1.800.284.2378 or visit www.nursecredentialing.org.

Requirements effective January 1, 2015, are:

1. All renewal applicants will be required to fulfill Category 1 (75 contact hours) as half of their professional development requirement. The other half may be fulfilled with any professional development category (2 through 6).
2. All advanced practice nurses (nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists) must include at least 25 contact hours of pharmacotherapeutics to fulfill their Category 1 requirement. If Category 1 is doubled, then at least 25 of the 150 continuing education hours are required in pharmacotherapeutics.

Important note: If you double Category 1, there is no requirement to double the number of pharmacotherapeutic hours.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

ANCC is conducting an extensive review of its certification renewal requirements in 2014 and 2015. This will result in changes in future requirements to renew a certification. You are encouraged to continually check the ANCC website for updates.

CERTIFICATION RENEWAL ELIGIBILITY

Certification Renewal Eligibility Options When Your Certification Credential Is Current

*Renewal Eligibility Option A: Professional Development **Plus** Practice Hours*

- > Hold a current, active RN license in a state or territory of the United States or the professional, legally recognized equivalent in another country.
- > Hold a current ANCC certification.
- > Complete the professional development requirements for your certification credential within the 5 years preceding your renewal application submission.
- > Complete a minimum of 1,000 practice hours in your certification role and population/specialty (must be completed within the 5 years preceding your renewal application submission).
- > If you hold a nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist certification credential, your practice must be in the role and population that correspond to your certification.
- > Pay the renewal fee.

*Renewal Eligibility Option B: Professional Development **Plus** Testing (if you do not have practice hours in your certification specialty). This option applies only to those certifications in which an exam is available.*

- > Hold a current, active RN license in a state or territory of the United States or the professional, legally recognized equivalent in another country.
- > Hold a current ANCC certification.
- > Complete the professional development requirements for your specific certification credential within the 5 years preceding your renewal application submission.
- > Pay the renewal fee.
- > Pass the exam. (If you do not pass the exam before it lapses, your certification is no longer valid.)

Tip for Option B: You can apply to test up to 12 months prior to your certification expiration date. If the certification test is retiring, you may apply to test anytime before your certification is due to lapse. See page 13 for the tests scheduled for retirement. This will allow time for you to schedule your test at your convenience.

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Certification Renewal Eligibility Options When Your Certification Credential Has Expired (also called reactivation)

*Renewal Eligibility Option C: Professional Development **Plus** Practice Hours (if your certification has been expired for less than 2 years)*

- ▶ Hold a current, active RN license in a state or territory of the United States or the professional, legally recognized equivalent in another country.
- ▶ Hold an expired ANCC certification.
- ▶ Complete the professional development requirements for your specific certification credential within the 5 years preceding your renewal application submission.
- ▶ Complete a minimum of 1,000 practice hours in the same certification role and population/specialty (must be completed within the 5 years preceding your renewal application submission).
- ▶ If you hold a nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist certification credential, your practice must be in the role and population that correspond to your certification.
- ▶ Pay the renewal fee **plus** the reactivation fee of \$125.

*Renewal Eligibility Option D: Professional Development **Plus** Testing (if your certification has been expired for more than 2 years or you do not have practice hours in your certification specialty). This option applies only to those certifications in which an exam is available.*

- ▶ Hold a current, active RN license in a state or territory of the United States or the professional, legally recognized equivalent in another country.
- ▶ Hold an expired ANCC certification.
- ▶ Complete the professional development requirements for your specific certification credential within the 5 years preceding your renewal application submission.
- ▶ Pay the renewal fee **plus** the reactivation fee of \$125.
- ▶ Pass the exam.

Important Notice: There is no certification grace period or backdating for an expired certification credential. Certification renewal applications received after the certification expiration date will have a renewal period beginning with the date of approval and will therefore incur a gap in the certification dates. When there is a gap in certification dates, ANCC cannot backdate a certification renewal to meet regulatory, reimbursement, or other requirements for practice or employment. You will need to check with your state licensing board, employer, and/or the agency that is reimbursing your services in order to determine whether you can continue to practice and/or receive reimbursement for services while you are in the process of reactivating your certification. Please submit the complete application when you renew—submitting a partial or incomplete renewal package will only delay approval of your certification renewal, resulting in a longer gap in the certification dates.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development requirements must be completed within the 5 years preceding your renewal application submission.

ANCC uses these six unique professional development categories:

- Category 1: Continuing Education Hours
- Category 2: Academic Credits
- Category 3: Presentations
- Category 4: Publication or Research
- Category 5: Preceptor Hours
- Category 6: Professional Service

Effective January 1, 2015, for candidates submitting a renewal application, **all candidates must complete:**

Category 1 (75 continuing education hours) plus one additional category. (Candidates are allowed to double Category 1, submitting a total of 150 continuing education hours, in order to fulfill the entire professional development requirement.) **All advanced practice nurses (nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists) must include at least 25 of the 75 continuing education hours in pharmacotherapeutics in order to fulfill their Category 1 requirement. If Professional Development Category 1 is doubled, then at least 25 of the 150 continuing education hours are required in pharmacotherapeutics.**

Important note: If you double Category 1, there is no requirement to double the number of pharmacotherapeutic hours.

Accepted Practice Hours

Practice hours must be completed within the 5 years preceding the date on your renewal application submission.

A minimum of 1,000 practice hours in your certification specialty is required and can be completed either through employment or as a volunteer.

Clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) must complete practice hours in their certification roles and populations at the advanced level.

Faculty can use hours of direct clinical supervision of students for clinical practice. The direct clinical supervision must be in the certification role and population. Advanced practice (CNS and NP) faculty must have direct supervision of advanced practice registered nursing (APRN) students.

Certification Renewal Audit: ANCC conducts random audits of renewal applications. If your application is selected for audit, you will be required to submit all supporting documents. Please maintain a copy of your renewal application and the supporting certificates and other documents for the entire 5-year certification period in order to satisfy any audit requests.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CATEGORIES

CATEGORY 1: Continuing Education Hours

1. **Beginning January 1, 2015**, all certification renewal candidates are required to complete 75 continuing education hours **plus** one of the six ANCC professional development categories. Candidates are allowed to double Category 1 in order to satisfy their entire professional development requirement.
2. Beginning January 1, 2015, all advanced practice nursing certificants (CNSs and NPs) are required to complete 25 continuing education hours of pharmacotherapeutics as a portion of the required 75 continuing education hours. There is no requirement to double the number of pharmacological hours.
3. A minimum of 51% (38.25 hours) of the 75 continuing education hours **must** be directly related to the full scope of your certification role and specialty.
4. At least 50% (37.5 hours) of your 75 continuing education hours must be formally approved continuing education hours. Formally approved continuing education hours meet one or more of the criteria listed below:
 - a. Continuing nursing education (CNE) approved for nursing contact hours by an accredited provider or approver of nursing continuing education
 - b. Continuing medical education (CME) approved for CME hours
 - c. Sponsored by organizations, agencies, or educational institutions accredited or approved by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), or the Commission on Dietetic Registration
 - d. Provided by one of these accepted agencies:
 - American Nurses Association
 - American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
 - American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
 - American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
 - American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM)
 - American Psychiatric Association (APA)
 - American Psychological Association (APA)
 - American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA)
 - Emergency Nurses Association (ENA)
 - National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)
 - National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners (NAPNAP)
5. Independent study and/or e-learning approved for continuing education hours by one of the accepted continuing education providers may be used for 100% of the required continuing education hours (e.g. independent study programs, online courses, articles from professional journals).

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6. Other healthcare disciplines' continuing education hours applicable to your certification specialty (e.g., dietitian, medicine, social work, counselor, or physical therapist) are acceptable.
7. Repeat courses are not accepted for certification renewal. You may claim credit for a specific course only once, even if you took that course multiple times during the past 5 years.
8. The hours achieved from academic coursework that are applicable to your certification specialty can be converted to contact hours. See Professional Development Category 2 for accepted academic coursework.
9. As needed, you can use these formulas to convert continuing education credit/academic hours:

1 contact hour = 1 CME or 0.1 CEU or 60 minutes	1 academic semester credit = 15 contact hours
1 CEU = 10 contact hours	1 academic quarter credit = 12.5 contact hours

Documentation: Complete the continuing education hours section of the Professional Development Record in order to document the courses attended and the hours obtained. If the course title(s) does not reflect the content, you must provide a brief description of the content. **Do not submit certificates in lieu of completing the form, because these are not acceptable and will delay the evaluation of your application for certification renewal.**

Audit: If your record is audited, you will be required to submit supporting documents, such as a copy of the completion certificate(s) showing the dates, title, number of contact hours, sponsoring organization, etc. In addition, you may be required to provide evidence of the applicability of the course to your certification.

CATEGORY 2: Academic Credits

1. Complete five semester credits or six quarter credits of academic courses in your certification specialty.
2. If you do not have enough credits to complete this category, you may convert those credits to contact hours and report them under Category 1.

1 semester credit = 15 contact hours	1 quarter credit = 12.5 contact hours
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3. Repeat courses are not accepted for certification renewal. You may claim credit for a specific course only once, even if you took that course multiple times during the past 5 years.
4. Courses taken toward degree completion or academic independent study courses are accepted if they are applicable to your area of certification. These include:
 - Adult education principles,
 - Anatomy,
 - Health/physical assessment,
 - Nursing management/administration,
 - Nursing research,
 - Pathophysiology,
 - Physiology,
 - Pharmacotherapeutics,
 - Physiology, and
 - Sign language and/or medical terminology for healthcare providers and foreign language and/or medical terminology for healthcare providers.
5. Academic credit received for a thesis or dissertation related to your certification specialty is acceptable. (If you use your thesis or dissertation credits to meet Professional Development Category 2, then you cannot use the same thesis or dissertation credits to meet Professional Development Category 4.)

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6. Examples of courses that are generally not accepted for Professional Development Category 2 include audited courses, art, chemistry, physics, history, math, music, and public speaking.

Documentation: Complete the academic course section of the Professional Development Record in order to document the courses attended and the academic credits received. If the course title(s) does not reflect the content, you must provide a brief description of the content. **Do not submit transcripts in lieu of completing the form, because these are not acceptable and will delay the evaluation of your application for certification renewal.**

Audit: If your record is audited, you will be required to submit supporting documents, such as a transcript(s) showing the number of academic credits, sponsoring organization, etc. In addition, you may be required to provide evidence of the applicability of the course content to your certification. Please maintain supporting documentation for the entire 5-year certification cycle.

CATEGORY 3: Presentations

Five different educational presentations in your certification specialty fulfill these criteria:

1. You were the primary presenter of a first-time presentation.
2. The five different presentations must total at least 5 hours.
3. The presentations were delivered in a structured teaching/learning framework to nurses, other healthcare providers, or the public as part of conferences, grand rounds, in-services, seminars, CD-ROM content, Internet-based or other e-learning formats, teleconferences, patient/family teaching, or public education.

Do not submit the following types of presentations, because they are not accepted toward your certification renewal: repeat presentations of the same material or modifications of the same material, presentations or lectures that were a required part of your job, or presentations for which you served as a panel moderator.

Documentation: Complete the presentation section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit supporting documents, such as a copy of the presentation outline, abstract, letter accepting your abstract, or letter inviting you to speak as well as evidence that you actually presented the topic (e.g., a thank-you letter on official letterhead). Please maintain supporting documentation for the entire 5-year certification cycle.

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CATEGORY 4: Publication or Research

PUBLICATION

1. One article published in a peer-reviewed journal or a book chapter related to your certification specialty. You must be the author, co-author, editor, co-editor, or reviewer.

Documentation: Complete the publication section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit supporting documents including:

- A copy of the table of contents and a copy of the entire article or chapter, journal name with the date, and your name;
- If you were the editor, then a copy of the page from the journal identifying you as the editor or a letter from the publisher stating you were the editor; and
- If you were the peer reviewer, then a letter from the publisher stating you reviewed the article and the date this occurred.

OR

2. Five (5) different articles related to your certification specialty published in a non-peer-reviewed journal and/or newsletter.

Documentation: Complete the publication section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit the following information:

- Detailed outline of the content;
- Copies of the e-learning journal or newsletter articles that clearly state you were the primary author; and
- Letters from the publishers stating that you were the primary author.

OR

3. Primary author of content related to your certification specialty utilized in e-learning and/or other media presentations.

Documentation: Complete the publication section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your record is audited, you will be required to submit the following information:

- Detailed outline of the content;
- Copy of the e-learning document that clearly states you were the primary author; and
- Letter from the publisher stating you were the primary author.

OR

4. Primary grant writer for a federal, state, or national organization project, although grant writing is not a primary component of your employment responsibilities. The purpose of the grant must be related to your certification specialty.

Documentation: Complete the publication section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit a copy of the grant summary abstract and the letter from the grant sponsor acknowledging receipt of your grant application.

These publications are generally not accepted: publication(s) that is a component of your job (e.g., patient education materials, course syllabi), letter(s) to the editor, or publication(s) "in press."

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RESEARCH

1. An institutional review board (IRB) research project related to your certification specialty, completed during your 5-year certification period, for which you are clearly identified as one of the primary researchers although research is not a primary component of your employment responsibilities.

Documentation: Complete the research section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit supporting documents such as a copy of the IRB approval letter or IRB letter of exemption and a one-page abstract of no more than 250 words describing the research study and findings and the period when the research was conducted.

OR

2. A completed dissertation, thesis, or graduate-level scholarly project related to your certification specialty.

Documentation: Complete the research section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit supporting documents such as the dissertation, thesis, or scholarly project approval letter and a one-page abstract of no more than 250 words that describes your dissertation, thesis, or scholarly project findings and the time period during which the dissertation, thesis, or scholarly project was conducted. Note: The academic hours awarded for your dissertation, thesis, or scholarly project that are used to meet Category 4 requirements cannot be used to meet the requirements of Professional Development Categories 1 or 2.

OR

3. Serve as a content reviewer on an IRB, dissertation, thesis, or scholarly project that is not a component of your employment duties.

Documentation: Complete the research section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit supporting documents from the organization describing this work and the dates you served as the reviewer (e.g., a letter on official letterhead).

OR

4. Serve as a content expert reviewer of other activities related to your certification specialty and not as a part of your employment duties (such as software and e-learning). Serving as a product reviewer for your organization is not acceptable.

Documentation: Complete the research section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit documentation from the publisher and/or organization describing the work and the dates you served as the reviewer (e.g., a letter on official letterhead).

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CATEGORY 5: Preceptor Hours

Complete a minimum of 120 hours as a preceptor in which you provided direct clinical supervision/teaching to students in an academic program that is related to your certification specialty,

OR

provide a minimum of 120 hours of clinical supervision related to your certification specialty to registered nurses in a formal registered nurse refresher or internship program that relates to your certification specialty.

For either option above, the following rules apply:

- Clinical nurse specialists and nurse practitioners must precept CNS and/or NP students in an academic program related to their certification specialties.
- Orientation preceptor hours are not accepted.
- Preceptor hours cannot be counted toward your certification practice hour requirement.
- Faculty may not utilize this category for clinical supervision of students in their educational program.

Documentation: Complete the preceptor section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you will be required to submit a completed Preceptorship Documentation Form showing the hours, objectives, outcomes, and location of the preceptorship, signed by the institution responsible for the person being precepted.

CATEGORY 6: Professional Service

Complete 2 or more years of volunteer service during your certification period with an international, national, state, or local healthcare-related organization in which your certification specialty expertise is required. Accepted volunteer activities include serving on boards of directors, committees, editorial boards, review boards, and task forces.

Documentation: Complete the professional service section of the Professional Development Record.

Audit: If your certification record is audited, you must submit an official description of your volunteer duties and a detailed typewritten document of 500 words or less describing the impact of this service on your ability to obtain new knowledge in your certification specialty. In addition, you will be required to provide supporting documentation of your volunteer service (e.g., a copy of an official letter or other documents from the organization attesting to your service and the dates of service).

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APPLICATION FEES 2015

CERTIFICATION RENEWAL APPLICATION FEES 2015

Prices below include a \$140 nonrefundable administrative fee.

ANA Member	All Certifications	\$200	Required attachment: A copy of your American Nurses Association membership card. (Full and Direct ANA members only. Individual Affiliate members excluded from this offer.)
Collaborating Organizations	Varies—See Chart Below		Required attachment: A copy of your membership card.
Nonmember	All Certifications	\$350	
Reactivation Fee	All Certifications	\$125	Add this fee if your certification has expired.

Discount rates for members of specific collaborating organizations: To claim this discounted rate, you must have membership in an organization listed next to your certification.

Required attachment: A copy of your membership card.

Certification Name	Organization	Discount Rate for 2015
Acute Care NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
Adult-Gerontology Acute Care NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
	Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association	\$280
	National Gerontological Nursing Association	\$280
Adult-Gerontology Primary Care NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
	Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association	\$280
	National Gerontological Nursing Association	\$280
Adult-Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist (available April 2014)	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
	Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association	\$280
	National Gerontological Nursing Association	\$280
Adult Health CNS	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
Adult Psychiatric–Mental Health CNS	American Psychiatric Nurses Association	\$240
	International Society of Psychiatric–Mental Health Nurses	\$280
	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
Adult NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
Adult Psychiatric–Mental Health NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
	American Psychiatric Nurses Association	\$240
	International Society of Psychiatric–Mental Health Nurses	\$280
Ambulatory Care Nursing	American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing	\$280

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APPLICATION FEES 2015, CONTINUED

Certification Name	Organization	Discount Rate for 2015
Cardiac-Vascular Nursing	American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation	\$280
	Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association	\$280
	Society for Vascular Nursing	\$280
Child/Adol Psychiatric-Mental Health CNS	American Psychiatric Nurses Association	\$240
	International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses	\$280
	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
Emergency Nurse Practitioner	Emergency Nurses Association	\$280
	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
Family NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
Forensic Nursing, Advanced	International Association of Forensic Nurses	\$280
Gerontological NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
	Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association	\$280
	National Gerontological Nursing Association	\$280
Gerontological Nursing	National Gerontological Nursing Association	\$280
Informatics Nursing	None available	
Medical-Surgical Nursing	None available	
Nurse Executive	None available	
Nurse Executive, Advanced	None available	
Nursing Case Management	None available	
Nursing Professional Development	Association for Nursing Professional Development	\$280
Pain Management	American Society for Pain Management Nursing	\$280
Pediatric NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
Pediatric Nursing	None available	
Pediatrics CNS	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
Psychiatric-Mental Health NP (across the life span) {formerly named Family Psychiatric-Mental Health NP}	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
	American Psychiatric Nurses Association	\$240
	International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses	\$280
Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing	American Psychiatric Nurses Association	\$240
	International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses	\$280

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APPLICATION FEES 2015, CONTINUED

These certification exams are retired but can be renewed if professional development and practice hour requirements have been met. Testing is not an option for these certification renewals. Collaborator organization discounts are listed below.


Certification Name	Organization	Discount Rate for 2015
Advanced Public Health Nursing	American Public Health Association–Public Health Nursing Section	\$280
Cardiac Rehabilitation Nursing	None available	
Certified Vascular Nursing	None available	
CNS Core	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
College Health Nursing	American College Health Association	\$280
Community Health Nursing	American Public Health Association–Public Health Nursing Section	\$280
General Nursing Practice	None available	
Gerontological CNS	Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association	\$280
	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
	National Gerontological Nursing Association	\$280
High-Risk Perinatal Nursing	None available	
Home Health Nursing	None available	
Home Health Nursing CNS	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
Maternal-Child Nursing	None available	
Perinatal Nursing	None available	
Public/Community Health Nursing CNS	American Public Health Association–Public Health Nursing Section	\$280
	National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	\$280
School NP	American Association of Nurse Practitioners	\$280
School Nursing	None available	

Future Exam Retirements

Certification Name	Retirement Date
Acute Care NP	December 31, 2015
Adult Health CNS	December 31, 2016
Adult NP	December 31, 2015
Adult Psychiatric–Mental Health CNS	December 31, 2016
Adult Psychiatric–Mental Health NP	December 31, 2015
Child/Adolescent Psychiatric–Mental Health CNS	December 31, 2016
Gerontological NP	December 31, 2015

The Advanced Public Health Nursing exam method of certification was replaced with a portfolio method of certification. Please check the ANCC website for current information.

NOTES:



The mission of the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA), is to promote excellence in nursing and health care globally through credentialing programs. ANCC's internationally renowned credentialing programs certify and recognize individual nurses in specialty practice areas. ANCC recognizes healthcare organizations that promote nursing excellence and quality patient outcomes while providing safe, positive work environments. In addition, ANCC accredits healthcare organizations that provide and approve continuing nursing education. It also offers educational materials to support nurses and organizations as they work toward their credentials.

ANCC's Certification Program enables nurses to demonstrate their specialty expertise and validate their knowledge to employers and patients. Through targeted assessments that incorporate the latest nursing practice standards, ANCC certification empowers nurses with pride and professional satisfaction.



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