

Recertification Process – Guidelines

Maintaining Certification

JCAHPO conducts a job task analysis every 3-5 years to validate the changes in technical knowledge and skill required to perform job functions at each level of certification. Technology and practices in medicine and healthcare continually change. In order to assure that certificants continue to evolve with the industry's changing needs, the Certification Committee and Board of Directors established the recertification process; a process that requires you to keep current with new developments in the field of ophthalmology through continuing education credits or re-examination. Recertification enables you to demonstrate your continued knowledge to employers, peers and the general public.

An initial certification is valid for 36 months (three-years). After that period, recertification is required every three years to maintain the use of the credential. The recertification period begins exactly 36 months (three-years) from the month and year that you successfully completed all requirements for initial certification. A reminder letter to recertify will be sent approximately six-months prior to your recertification date.

To recertify, certificants may use one of two pathways:

1. Submit continuing education (CE) requirements - Information regarding this method is noted below.
2. Retest at their current certification level – To use this method of recertification, please refer to Retesting in Lieu of CE Credits for Recertification on page 32.

When recertifying with CE credits, all acceptable credits are classified as either Group A or Group B. Group A credits are pre-approved by JCAHPO based on ophthalmology (eye-care) content. Group B credits may be earned in the ways listed below. Certificants who are applying for recertification may choose earning either all Group A credits, or a combination of Group A & B.

As of August 1, 2011 all ophthalmology (eye-care) related topics, regardless of the relation to an examination content area, will now be awarded Group A credit for classroom (lecture), workshops & e-learning courses. COURSES/SEMINARS MUST STILL BE SUBMITTED TO, & PRE-APPROVED BY, JCAHPO'S EDUCATION DEPARTMENT to qualify for CE Credit!

All continuing education courses must be recorded on the application for recertification and duplicate courses are not allowed. The credits also need to be earned within your current 36-month certification cycle.

You can earn Group A credits by:

- Attending lectures, workshops, or distance-learning courses, such as online courses, that have been awarded JCAHPO Group A credit.
- Completing an independent study course and quiz that has been awarded JCAHPO Group A credit.
- Completing topics on medical ethics, professionalism, coding and regulations that have been awarded JCAHPO Group A credit.
- Completing certification exam review preparation courses that have been awarded JCAHPO Group A credit.
- Teaching or authoring courses awarded JCAHPO Group A credit. (1:1 basis). Only one credit per course topic will be awarded per recertification cycle.

You can earn Group B credits by:

- Attending lectures, workshops, or distance-learning courses that have been awarded JCAHPO Group B credit.
- Completing an independent study course and quiz that has been awarded JCAHPO Group B credit.
- Attending Grand Rounds or Physicians' Continuing Medical Education (CME) in Ophthalmology, Category 1 courses approved by the AMA or CMA that meet JCAHPO's Group A content areas (2 hours attended – 1 credit for COAs, CCOAs and COTs; 1 hour attended = 1 credit for COMTs.)
- Teaching a course awarded JCAHPO B credit. (1 hour taught = 1 credit) Only one credit per course topic will be awarded per recertification cycle.
- Authoring or co-authoring a scientific publication and/or poster. JCAHPO reviews submissions for consideration of credit. Maximum of 5 credits for first author and 3 credits for co-author. Contact the JCAHPO Education Department for more details.
- CPR certification. You can count one Group B credit per course for CPR certification for a maximum of 3 Group B credits per CE cycle.

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Sources of CE Credit

JCAHPO publishes a listing of all programs awarded CE credit under “Education - Earn Credits at Home” or “Education - Earn Credits at Meetings” at www.jcahpo.org including independent study courses with quizzes. Information on CE opportunities, including distance learning options (audio tapes, videotapes, magazine articles, on-line courses) and independent study courses with quizzes are also posted on the Web site.



ACTIONED was designed to increase your value as a highly skilled member of the medical eye care team. Leading ophthalmic organizations representing more than 20,000 ophthalmic medical personnel have collaborated to create the ACTIONED website.

ACTIONED serves as the premier e-learning network delivering affordable, accessible education and training. The web site offers courses at basic, intermediate and advanced levels, with new courses added regularly. You can access interactive simulations, downloadable audio, audio/video, downloadable text and web-based seminars.

Most courses include a quiz or assessment as the final component of an activity. Upon completion of the quiz, you will receive feedback on your results and have the opportunity to print a continuing education credit certificate for your records.

Offering assessment tests of up to 100 questions, you can complete the assessments to qualify for certificates of completion and continuing education credits or to prepare for certification examinations.

To access the continuing education opportunities offered by ACTIONED, visit www.actioned.org.

Recertification Application Process

JCAHPO will mail you a recertification reminder approximately six months prior to your recertification date; however, it is your responsibility to be aware of and comply with recertification requirements. The expiration date of the certification cycle is published on your certificate and wallet card.

At the end of your certification cycle, you are required to submit the recertification application, printable at www.jcahpo.org, accompanied by supporting documentation and pay the recertification fee listed in the JCAHPO fee schedule. The recertification application must be postmarked no later than the last day of the last month in your certification cycle. ***Please allow 4 – 6 weeks to process your application for recertification.***

Your recertification application must be completed in full and include:

- 1) **Section 1** – Applicant Information
- 2) **Section 2** – Employer (It is not required that you be currently employed, but you must have a sponsoring ophthalmologist, noted in section 7).
- 3) **Section 3** – Certification Category
- 4) **Section 4** – Payment
- 5) **Section 5** – Responsibility Statement, Item 8 MUST be completed and item 10 MUST include your signature
- 6) **Section 6** – Applying for Recertification

First Time Recertification and Late Recertification Candidates

- If you are applying for recertification for the first time or are late recertifying, please submit the following:
- Completed application, including signatures on pages 2 and 3.
- List of CE credits earned on page 4, including **COPIES** of the evidence of attendance for credits earned.
- Recertification fee. Please refer to the fee schedule.
- A late fee will be assessed for recertification applications submitted past the recertification deadline. The late fee is noted in the fee schedule.

Previously granted recertifications:

- If you applied for and were granted recertification previously at your current certification level or at a less advanced level and are not late recertifying, please submit the following:
- Completed application, including signatures on pages 2 and 3 of the application.
- List of CE credits earned. (Do not submit copies of credits unless audited. See “Random Audits”).
- Recertification fee. Please refer to the fee schedule.

- 7) **Section 7** – Sponsor/Employer Endorsement

You will need the signature/endorsement of your sponsoring ophthalmologist to verify that he/she knows you, confirm your continued knowledge and skill in the field, and that you are working within established JCAHPO guidelines.

Note: CCOAs are not required to have a sponsoring ophthalmologist. CCOAs must include their supervisor’s signature on their application. ROUBs and CDOs may have a supervising physician as their sponsor.

Verify that all areas are signed and that your sponsor’s name is printed under the signature.

- 8) **CE Credit Listing** (Page 4 of the application)

A list of all CE credits earned to verify that you have completed the required continuing education. ***All CEs must be earned within your 36 month (three-year) recertification cycle and duplicate courses are not allowed.***

Before mailing your application for recertification, please be sure of the following:

- The entire application is completed and includes the required signatures, sponsor information and credits.
- OSA applicants only - the required surgical log is enclosed.
- The recertification fee is enclosed and if recertifying late, the late fee is enclosed.

COA, COT, COMT, CCOA, OSA Recertification Requirements

Continuing Education Requirements

Number of Credits Required per each 36 month (three-year) Cycle:			
Credential	Total Number of Credits Required	Minimum number of Group A Credits Required	Maximum Number of Group B Credits Permitted
COA/CCOA	18	12	6
COT	27	18	9
COMT	36	18	18

Retesting in Lieu of CE Credits for Recertification

You may apply to take a multiple-choice examination at your current core certification level in lieu of earning CE credits during your recertification period. To be recertified using the examination option, you must successfully complete the multiple-choice examination at your current level. In order to avoid a lapse in your certification, the exam must be completed before the expiration of your certification. The Skill Evaluation or Performance Test does not need to be repeated. Please submit the Application for Examination and the appropriate examination fee if you plan to pursue this method of recertification.

OSA RECERTIFICATION

The OSA sub-specialty requires a current certification as a COA, COT or COMT. Because the two are linked, your first certification period in this sub-specialty may be shorter than the standard 36 months (three-years). Once the two cycles are synchronized, you will be due to apply for recertification in both areas every 36 months (three-years).

For Example - David is currently a COT who passed the ophthalmic surgical assisting examination on June 15, 2010. His current technician certificate is valid from January 2009 through January 2012. His new certificate with the ophthalmic surgical assisting sub-specialty will be dated January 2009 through January 2012. After recertifying, his certification cycle for both areas will be January 2012 through January 2015.

At the end of your certification cycle, you will need to recertify the OSA sub-specialty. You may achieve recertification in one of the following ways:

1) Submit the following information to JCAHPO, postmarked no later than the last day of the month in your certification cycle:

- **A completed application for recertification:**

JCAHPO will mail a reminder, approximately six months in advance of the time you are due to apply for recertification at your core level. A separate application and fee are not required for the sub-specialty if submitted with your core level recertification application. The application requires the signature/endorsement of your sponsoring ophthalmologist. If you are unable to submit an application for recertification in ophthalmic surgical assisting, please indicate this on your application.

- **A log of surgical cases in which you have participated during your certification cycle:**

A log of cases in which you have actively participated (not merely observed), functioning as one of the following: Sterile First Assistant, Sterile Scrub Assistant, or Non-sterile Circulator must be submitted with the signature of your sponsoring ophthalmologist attesting to your continued satisfactory performance in the operating room. The log may be printed at www.jcahpo.org.

- The case requirement is divided into two groups: Categories A and B. You may choose to earn 100 percent of your case requirement from Category A, or you may choose to earn at least 90 percent of the case log from Category A and the remaining cases from Category B. (Refer to Appendix C for OSA Case Requirements A & B)

- You have the option of attending CE courses to fulfill a portion of the case log requirement. You may earn up to 10 CE credits by attending courses in ophthalmic surgical assisting to substitute for up to 10 surgical cases. Courses that have been awarded JCAHPO or AMA CME Category 1 credit are acceptable.

2) You also have the option of retesting in lieu of submitting the case log. Please contact the Certification Department for the prerequisites and more details.

Recertification Requirements

Random Audits

JCAHPO conducts random audits of recertification applications, requesting proof of attendance and credits earned at all CE courses listed on the application. Please retain all documentation to verify credits in case you are audited. Once you have received your certificate and wallet card, there is no need to retain documentation except for your own records.

Non-Certified Status

If you do not apply for recertification or miss the recertification application deadline, you will be placed on non-certified status. Individuals who are placed on non-certified status are not permitted to represent themselves as JCAHPO-certified personnel; and they may not utilize the credential after their name on business cards, stationery, name badges, etc.

From the time you are placed on non-certified status, you will have 12 months (one-year) to apply for recertification before your credential becomes revoked. Within that 12-month (one-year) period, the number of continuing education credits required to recertify your credential does not increase, but a late fee will be assessed.

You may choose to take the multiple-choice exam at your previous core certification level in lieu of earning CE credits. The exam must be successfully completed within 12 months (one-year) from the time you are placed on non-certified status. The Skill Evaluation or Performance Test does not need to be repeated if your certification is not in a revoked status. Please submit the Application for Examination if you plan to pursue this method of recertification.

Please note: Certificants will not receive new recertification dates when they recertify within the 12-month (one-year) inactive status.

Example: Jennifer's COMT certificate is dated September 30, 2009 through September 30, 2012. She is not ready to complete her recertification application by her deadline.

- If her recertification application is processed and accepted after September 30, 2012, and before September 30, 2013 (one year late), no additional credits are needed, but a late fee is assessed.
- Even if Jennifer recertified September 1, 2013, her next recertification cycle is still September 30, 2012 through September 30, 2015 and all credits will need to be earned during that time period. Any credits that Jennifer earned between September 30, 2012 and September 30, 2013, that were not used to satisfy her original recertification, may be carried over.

If your non-certified status continues for longer than 12 months (one-year), your certification will be considered revoked. Please contact the JCAHPO Certification Department to discuss your reinstatement options.

Denial of Recertification

If, during the process of applying for recertification, allegations of a violation of the JCAHPO Standards, Procedures, and Sanctions Pertaining to Certification and Recertification are investigated and proven true, this may result in the denial of recertification, either on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the circumstances. Certificants are expected to fully cooperate with the investigation.