

CALIFORNIA CERTIFYING BOARD FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANTS



RECERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

BASIC * ADMINISTRATIVE * CLINICAL

December 2014

RECERTIFICATION POLICY

All CCMA credentials must be recertified every five (5) years. Failure to do so within one year of expiration date will result in your being placed on a Non-Active Status list. This information is not confidential and may be released if requested.

It is important to note that final acceptance of credits and categories will be determined by the CCBMA Review Committee.

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GUIDELINES FOR RECERTIFICATION

- ❖ Recertification is required every five years to maintain active CCMA status.
- ❖ There are two ways to become recertified; recertification by examination or recertification by the Continuing Medical Education (CME) method.
- ❖ Application for recertification by examination or by CME method may be acquired by visiting our website at www.ccbma.org or calling 866-622-2262.
- ❖ Recertification by the CME method is available for only one year after expiration of a current credential. Thereafter, recertification is available only by retaking the examination providing the candidate meets the eligibility requirements as set forth by the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants.
- ❖ At least 60 credits are required. Credits must be relevant to the medical assisting profession and fall within the scope of practice as defined for the Medical Assistant by the Medical Board of California. Please refer to website www.mbc.ca.gov for scope of practice regulations.
- ❖ Credits must be earned within the five (5) years preceding application for recertification. Credits earned prior to original certification date may not be used.
- ❖ Documentation for credits must include:
 - Name of program sponsor
 - Date attended
 - Subject of program
 - Amount of credit received (hours/credit)
 - Category (Basic, Administrative, Clinical)
- ❖ **All medical assistants will be required to show proof of current Adult CPR certification. You must provide proof of your current CPR certification with the application.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT RECERTIFICATION

Q. After I am certified, how will I keep my certification?

A. Recertification is required every five years to maintain a current certification status. This may be accomplished by either retesting or by the Continuing Medical Education (CME) method.

Q. What do I need if I am recertifying by the Continuing Medical Education method?

A. If you choose to recertify by the CME method, you will need 60 credits within the five-year period. The credits must be in specific categories and must be within the scope of practice for a California Medical Assistant as set forth by the Medical Board of California.

- If you are certified CCMA-AC, you will need 30 credits in the Basic category and 15 credits in each of your specialties – Administrative and Clinical.
- If you are certified CCMA-A or CCMA-C, you will need 30 credits in Basic, 15 credits in your specialty, and the remaining 15 credits can be in the Basic, Administrative and/or Clinical categories.

Q. What is a point, unit or credit?

A. One contact hour (50 minutes of classroom instruction) equals one point or credit.

Q. Is it true you get more credits for a college course?

A. Yes, for college courses that deal with medical assisting or appropriate medical topics. One college semester unit is equivalent to 18 CEU credits. One college quarter unit is equivalent to 12 CEU credits.

Q. How do I get the credits that I will need to recertify?

A. There are many ways to obtain credits. When you certified, you were sent information that explains the many ways to get CME credit, and also how to determine the correct category. You may also refer to pages 15-17 of this booklet.

Q. What about membership in the California Medical Assistants Association, Inc.?

A. CMAA membership is not required for certification. However, it is a very reasonable way to accumulate continuing education credits. CMAA offers CME credits at their meetings held regionally across the state. There are also State Meetings held each year that offer credits on some great educational topics.

Q. What about the CMAA publication? I see them on the website and read the CME article. Does that earn credit?

A. The publication is the "*The California Medical Assistant*" and is a great source of information for medical assistants. There is always a continuing education article in each issue and, while anyone can read it, you must be a member to access the self-assessment tests. Each member is given a password. You can then download the self-assessment test, complete it and mail it to the CCBMA office for credit. The self-assessment tests must be sent in within two months of the publication issue date and must be passed with a grade of 70% or better to receive credit.

Q. Does CCBMA offer any credits for sale?

A. CCBMA does offer continuing education articles for sale. To obtain a current list, visit the Store tab on our website at www.ccbma.org or contact the CCBMA office. We can mail you a brochure with all of the articles that are available. The articles sell for \$5 each. The articles are already placed into the correct category for you. This is also helpful if you are short a few credits in a specific category.

Q. Where else can I get credits?

A. There are Internet sources and local programs such as CPR, first aid, computer courses, etc. that will also count, provided the subject matter is within the scope of practice for a California Medical Assistant. Remember to keep the proof of completion in a safe place. You may be asked to provide proof of these credits when applying for recertification. If your credits are from college courses or from an Internet source, you will be required to provide proof with the application. The proof must document the name of the course, the date of completion, and the number of contact hours or credits issued. In the case of college courses, an unofficial transcript showing the above and a passing score will need to be provided upon application for recertification.

Q. Do on-line computer courses count?

A. Yes, but you **MUST** provide proof that you completed the education and send a copy with your application. Some of the educational courses may be a partial hour and those can be combined to equal one hour. The proof must show the contact hours.

Q. Is proof of current CPR status required for my recertification?

A. Yes. It is important to note that all medical assistants are required to show proof of current Adult CPR Certification. CPR can be counted twice in a five (5) year period. CPR will be counted as clinical credit. CPR certification must be for hands-on instruction. On-line CPR courses **WILL NOT** be accepted. The Review Committee will not accept any application that does not include proof of current CPR certification.

Q. Do you track my credits for me?

A. The only CME credits CCBMA will track are self-assessment tests from articles purchased through our office and self-assessment tests from "*The California Medical Assistant*" publication. In order to receive credit, you must receive a score of 70% or greater. You will need to send in the self-assessment test from "*The California Medical Assistant*" within two months of publication in order to receive credit.

Q. What is the best way to track my CME?

A. Photocopy the documentation form on our application for recertification. Make a few copies and document each continuing education course as you complete them. Keep the proof with the documentation form and your work will be done for you.

Q. How do I get a list of what I have done through the CMAA publication and any articles I have purchased through CCBMA?

A. When you complete and return the self-assessment test purchased from the Board, a letter is sent to you with a list of the articles for which you have received credit. If you would like an accounting of the articles you have completed from the CMAA publication, please request this with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

- Q. I know there is a documentation form on the Recertification Application, but can't I just send in copies of my CME?*
- A. Each application must have an accompanying documentation sheet completed by you. The completed documentation sheet(s) stay with your application permanently upon final determination of your recertification. It is the responsibility of the certified medical assistant to record their credits onto the sheet(s).
- Q. How do I determine into which category my education credits fit?*
- A. This can be intimidating at first, but there are tools to help you. There is a free Study Outline available on our website at www.ccbma.org. You may have received it with your initial application for the exam. You may also download "Requirements for Continuing Medical Education Credits (CME)" from our website. In addition, our article brochure will give you an idea of how subjects break down into categories. Recertification information was also sent to you with your certificate packet. If you are still concerned after looking at these resources, you may call our office. **It is important to note, however, that final acceptance of credits and categories will be determined by the CCBMA Review Committee.**
- Q. Do I get credit for on-the-job experience?*
- A. Not for regular duties or volunteer work. However, credit can be received for office training such as for HIPAA and OSHA. Another example would be conversion of medical record systems. These trainings must be documented on office letterhead by your physician employer or practice administrator. Documentation must include the date of training and time involved.
- Q. Will I have to send proof of my credits?*
- A. You will need to provide proof of any credits earned on the computer or in college. Otherwise, do not send the proof unless it is requested by CCBMA. The proof must show your name, the program title, the date of completion, and the contact hours or credits received.
- Q. How long does it take to process my recertification application?*
- A. Review of a properly completed application will take approximately 60-90 days. **Please be advised that a one year grace period is extended as a courtesy to our medical assistants by our Board, but may not be recognized by your employer.** We advise you to apply early to allow sufficient time for the review process.

Q. What if my application is deferred?

A. You will be contacted by CCBMA informing you of any missing credits or application issues. You will then be given a limited time to comply with the Review Committee's request for further information/credits.

Q. What is a "grace period"?

A. We offer a one year "grace period" to allow those who are missing some of the credits needed to comply with the requirements. It is important to note that the one year grace period is a courtesy extended to our medical assistants by our Board and may not be recognized by your employer. It is far better to meet the requirements within the five year period. Applications can be accepted within one year prior to your recertification date.

Q. Does applying to recertify early affect my recertification date?

A. No. You will still receive five years from the date you are due to recertify.

Q. Can I fax my application to CCBMA Headquarters?

A. No. All applications must show an original signature. No faxed applications will be accepted.

Q. What is the cost of recertification?

A. The cost of recertification is noted on the recertification application. For those who choose to recertify by the CME method, the cost is dependent upon your current certification status and whether or not you are a current member of the California Medical Assistants Association. We encourage California Medical Assistants to join CMAA as they promote the professional and educational growth of medical assistants. Please visit their website at www.cmaa-ca.org to find out more information about membership. Further information on applicable fees can be found on page 13 of this booklet.

If you have additional questions, please contact our office toll free at 866-622-2262

APPLICATION REVIEW TIMELINE

- **Recertification by examination:** Authorization for testing is released 21-30 business days after receipt of a **properly completed** application, provided the applicant meets the current eligibility criteria set forth by the Board. Once authorization is released, the applicant can schedule with the testing company a test date, time and location convenient for them.
- **Recertification by continuing education method:** The review process can take approximately 60 days from receipt of a **properly completed** application. If recertification is deferred, the medical assistant will be contacted regarding missing credits/information. This can delay approval of recertification. Therefore, California Certified Medical Assistants are encouraged to start the recertification process three to six months prior to the end of the current active date.

When recertification is granted, you will receive a seal which can be attached to your original certificate, and a wallet card. If you have need for a replacement wallet card or certificate, please call our office for current pricing. Replacement pins are also available for a fee.

APPLICATION FEES**

Recertification by Examination:

Basic and Clinical Specialty (CCMA-C)	\$145
Basic and Administrative Specialty (CCMA-A)	\$145
Basic, Administrative & Clinical (CCMA-AC)	\$185

Recertification by Continuing Education Method:

<u>Credential</u>	<u>CMAA Member*</u>	<u>Non-CMAA Member</u>
CCMA (Reciprocity)	\$75	\$150
CCMA-A	\$60	\$120
CCMA-C	\$60	\$120
CCMA-AC	\$75	\$150

*California Medical Assistants Association 888-464-2622

***Fees are subject to change*

Application fees must accompany the application and can be in the form of Cashier's Check, Money Order, MasterCard or Visa.

No personal checks will be accepted for application fees.

RECERTIFICATION BY EXAMINATION

Recertification by examination is available to any California Certified Medical Assistant provided application for examination is received within one year of expiration of current credential or eligibility requirements are met for the inactive California Certified Medical Assistant.

CCBMA offers year-round Computer Based Testing (CBT). Many locations are available. You can locate a site nearest you by visiting our exam vendor's website at www.pearsonvue.com/ccbma and looking under "Locate a Test Center." All sites are open Monday through Friday, with many sites offering Saturday testing.

Upon approval of your application, you will be notified of scheduling instructions for the exam. You will be required to select a specific site when you register.

If application for recertification by examination is received after the "grace period" has expired, the applicant must meet the current eligibility requirements as set forth by the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants. The requirements are as follows:

- Currently employed as a medical assistant by a licensed physician (MD/DO) or podiatrist (DPM) in the United States.
- At least two years employment with in the last five years as a medical assistant for a licensed physician in the United States.
- Graduate of an accredited medical assisting program in the United States within one year preceding application.
 - Current employment as a Medical Assisting Instructor in an accredited institution in the United States.
- United States Military training or United States Military schooling equivalent to that provided by accredited medical assistant programs in the United States.

Faxed applications for Recertification by Examination WILL NOT be accepted.

RECERTIFICATION BY CME METHOD

Educational Points Required

- Recertification by the Continuing Education Method (CME) requires points in each credential as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Basic (B)</u>	<u>Administrative (A)</u>	<u>Clinical (C)</u>	<u>Any (B/A/C)</u>
CCMA-AC	30	15	15	
CCMA-A	30	15		15
CCMA-C	30		15	15

HOW TO OBTAIN CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION (CME) RECERTIFICATION POINTS

One contact hour (50 minutes of classroom instruction) One Point

One college semester unit 18 points

One college quarter unit 12 points

Recertification points may be accumulated from various sources. Some examples are:

- Seminars on medical topics within the scope of practice for California Medical Assistants.
- College courses that deal with medical assisting or appropriate medical topics.
- CMAA Membership – Membership in the California Medical Assistants Association (CMAA) provides a very reasonable way to accumulate CME credits toward recertification. CMAA educational programs, as well as self-assessment tests from Continuing Education articles printed in each issue of *“The California Medical Assistant,”* the bimonthly publication of the California Medical Assistants Association, provide credits. Call toll free (888) 464-2622 for further information or visit the CMAA website www.ccma-ca.org.

- Articles purchased from the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants. Call toll free (866) 622-2262 for the current list of articles or go to our website at www.ccbma.org.
- Authorship of different types of published materials. Please contact our office for requirements for credit.
- Continuing Education Credits may also be obtained from sources listed below and will apply toward recertification if the topic relates to the practice of medical assisting. No credit will be accepted if it does not fall within the scope of practice for a California Medical Assistant.
 - Internet Sources - There are multiple internet sites offering CME credits. It is important to stay within the scope of practice for a California Medical Assistant. It is strongly recommended that you always print a hard copy of the credits earned as the Review Committee will require proof of any credits earned online.
 - Local Programs – CPR recertification and First Aid courses qualify as clinical credit, while computer classes can be used for administrative credit. OSHA updates, use of safety equipment, information on new vaccines and drugs, and third-party billing programs all qualify for credit. Be sure to keep your “Proof of Participation” certificates in a safe place in the event you are asked to provide proof of your continuing education credits.

DOCUMENTATION OF CREDITS

All applications for recertification by the CME method must have an accompanying Credit Documentation Sheet, completed by the applicant. You may photocopy the sheet as necessary. Applications without Credit Documentation Sheet(s) will be considered incomplete and will result in a delay in processing the application for recertification.

- Indicate your name on each sheet, as well as your Certificate Number and Date of Birth.
- Use a separate line for each activity.
- Complete the Program Date, Program Provider, Program Title, amount and type of credit earned for each activity.
- Distribute your points in the areas earned (Basic, Administrative or Clinical).
- Points can be used only once. (Example: If you use 10 points for a college course in the Basic column, you cannot use these same points in the Administrative or Clinical columns.)
- Be sure to total **ALL** points on your last sheet.

YOU MUST HAVE DOCUMENTATION TO SHOW THE CONTENT AREA, THE DATE COMPLETED, THE AMOUNT AND TYPE OF CREDIT EARNED.

- Each Documentation Sheet is reviewed for appropriate categories as defined in the CCBMA Study Outline.
- Do not send certificate of participation with the application form unless it is from a college course or a computer on-line course, or your current CPR card. You must provide proof of completion of these items.
- Random audits will be performed. Retain all documents until you have received notification of recertification.
- If you are required to send credit documentation, be sure to send clear, unaltered copies of original transcripts or CME certificates of participation.
- **DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS** – Documents submitted will not be returned.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CME CREDITS BY CATEGORY

Certificates of participation or other proof of attendance at an educational presentation must be maintained by each individual. This documentation should clearly indicate the topic category as shown in the following examples.

The Basic credits are usually the easiest to obtain. They pertain to topics that affect all medical assistants, whether they are considered Clinical or Administrative.

BASIC CATEGORY *Credits in this category would apply to **all** medical assistants.*

- **Medical Terminology, Anatomy and Physiology**
Examples would include: Basics of Disease (i.e. shingles, asthma, migraines, diabetes, congestive heart failure, etc.) Smoking Cessation, Women's Health, Structure and Function of the Body
- **Technical References**
Examples would include: Who is a required reporter, Generational Studies, General information about medications and their reactions
- **Psychological Aspects of Medical Assisting**
Examples would include: Stress Management, The Medical Office Professional, Making the Most of Your Skills
- **Professional Development**
Examples would include: Team Building, Leadership, Career Success, Spanish or other foreign language
- **Law and Ethics**
Examples would include: Programs on Ethical and Legal Implications of Scheduling, Medical Assistants Scope of Practice, HIPAA, Identity Theft
- **Patient Education**
Examples would include: Drugs and the Elderly, Diet and Nutrition, Helping the Patient Prepare for Surgery, Chaperoning, Cultural Awareness

ADMINISTRATIVE CATEGORY *Credits in this category would apply to the Front-Office Medical Assistant*

- **Secretarial Skills, Scheduling and Office Equipment**
Examples would include: The Business Professional's Grammar and Writing Workshop, Professional Telephone Techniques, Use and Care of Office Machines, Scheduling Systems, Front Desk Safety and Security, Collection of Patient Demographics Under HIPAA Regulations, Insurance Authorizations and Referrals, Bad E-Mail Habits: What Message Are You Sending?
- **Records Management**
Examples would include: Converting from Paper to Electronic Medical Records, Document Scanning and Indexing in the EHR, HIPAA and Records Security, Retention and Destruction of Medical Records
- **Computer Concepts**
Examples would include: Basic and/or Advanced Software Techniques (i.e. Excel, Word, Access, PowerPoint), Computer Troubleshooting and IT Skills for Beginners, Health Information Technology
- **Managing Practice Finances**
Examples would include: Accounts Receivable Management, Electronic Banking and Cash Management, Essentials of Collections Law, Finance and Accounting for Nonfinancial People, Statistics – How to Evaluate Your Medical Practice's Numbers
- **Coding/Insurance Billing**
Examples would include: Terminology for Coders, Basic Introduction to ICD-10-CM, Mastering Modifiers, EOB Analysis, Successful Claims Appeals, The Art of Medical Compliance
- **Facilities/Time Management**
Examples would include: Inventory Procedures and Supply Purchase Tips, Don't Procrastinate – Effective Administrative Organizational Skills

CLINICAL CATEGORY *Credits in this category would apply to the Back-Office Medical Assistant.*

- **Infection Control**

Examples would include: Bloodborne Pathogens, Preparing Instruments, OSHA Regulations, Standard Precautions, Surgical Techniques, PPE, CLIA

- **Assisting the Physician/Patient Preparation**

Examples would include: Back Office Safety in the Exam Room, MSDS, Inventory Procedures for Drugs and Supplies

- **The Patient History**

Examples would include: Documentation Guidelines, Essential Clinical Parts of a Medical Record

- **Collecting/Processing Specimens/Testing**

Examples would include: CDC Guidelines for Specimen Collection, Instructing the Patient, EKG, Spirometry, CLIA Waived Testing, Lab Values

- **Administering Medications**

Examples would include: Immunizations Update, Injection Technique, Drug Classification, Drug Calculation

Please note that general information about drugs is NOT considered clinical education.

- **Office Emergencies**

Examples would include: Emergencies, CPR/First Aid, Abdominal Thrusts, Crash Carts

Please be aware that credits which are not within the scope of practice for a California Medical Assistant (i.e., EMT, CNA, X-ray tech, Dental, Massage Therapy, Spiritual Healing) will be denied. It is possible that partial credit may be given if the complete course outline is included with the application and the training is within the scope of practice for a California Medical Assistant. The final decision is that of the Review Committee.