Examination and Program Handbook
March 2022

Table of Contents

CENP
>> AONL

ABOUT THE AONL-CC

The American Organization for Nursing Leadership Credentialing Center (AONL-CC) an activity of the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL) administers the Certified in Executive Nursing Practice (CENP) program. The CENP program is governed by the AONL-CC CENP Steering Committee.

The CENP credentialing program in development or in operation with the AONL-CC has a Certification Program Committee that serves as content expert, program resource, and consultant to the AONL-CC Steering Committee regarding program development, examination content, test development, test administration and evaluation. Members are appointed by the AONL-CC.

Members of the Steering Committee and the Certification Program Committee for the CENP program are listed on the AONL website. www.AONL.org/certification

CONSULTING AGENCIES

The AONL-CC contracts with the American Hospital Association Certification Center (AHA-CC) for project management and quality assurance services in support of the CENP Program. In turn, the AHA-CC engages PSI Services to assist with the development, administration, scoring, score reporting and analysis of the CENP Examination.

ADHERING TO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The AONL-CC is responsible to its candidates, certificants, employers, the profession and the public for ensuring the integrity of all processes and products of its Certification Programs. As such, the AONL-CC adheres to the American Hospital Association Certification Center requirements for Professional Standards of Conduct by all who have achieved certification through successful completion of its programs.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

A certificant who is awarded certification by the AONL-CC agrees to conduct himself / herself in an ethical and professional manner. This includes demonstrating practice-related behavior that is indicative of professional integrity. By accepting certification, the certificant agrees to:
- Maintain professional competence;
- Demonstrate work behavior that exemplifies ability to perform safely, competently and with good judgment;
- Conduct professional activities with honesty and integrity;
- Avoid discriminating against any individual based on age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disability or marital status or any other protected characteristic;
- Avoid conflicts of interest;
- Abide by the laws, rules and regulations of duly authorized agencies regulating the profession; and
- Abide by rules and regulations governing programs conducted by the AONE Credentialing Center.

Infraction of these Professional Standards of Conduct is misconduct for which granting of a certification or renewal of a certification may be delayed or denied, or for which a certification may be revoked by the AONL-CC.

REPORTING VIOLATIONS

To protect the national credentials and to ensure responsible practice by its certificants, the AONL-CC depends upon its candidates and certificants, professionals, employers, regulatory agencies and the public to report incidents that may be in violation of these Professional Standards of Conduct. A certificant who has violated these Standards should voluntarily surrender his / her certification.

Complaints may be submitted by any individual or entity.

Complaints should be reported in writing and should include the name of the person submitting the complaint, the name of the person the complaint is regarding along with other relevant identifying information, a detailed description of factual allegations supporting the charges, and any relevant supporting documentation. Written complaints regarding violations of certification policies and/or the Professional Standards of Conduct should be mailed to:

CEO
American Organization for Nursing Leadership
155 North Wacker Dr., Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60606

Only signed, written communication will be considered.

The AONL-CC will become involved only in matters that can be factually determined, and commits to handling any situation as fairly and expeditiously as possible. During its investigation and decision, the AONL-CC will protect the confidentiality of those who provide information to every possible extent. The named individual will be afforded every opportunity to respond in a professional and legally defensible manner, in accordance with policies established by the AONL-CC.

The CENP Steering Committee will review, investigate and make determinations regarding CENP certificants. In the event a certificant violates the Professional Standards of Conduct and/or the CENP Steering Committee certification rules, requirements, and/or policies the CENP Steering Committee may reprimand or suspend the individual or may revoke certification.

A complete copy of the Disciplinary & Complaints policy and procedures is available from the AONL-CC upon request.

A candidate's signature on an application for examination attests to adherence to Professional Standards of Conduct.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The AONL-CC does not discriminate among candidates on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, marital status or any other protected characteristic.

TARGET PRACTITIONER DEFINITION

The nurse executive sets the vision for nursing practice in the delivery of safe, effective and efficient patient care. With an interdisciplinary approach, the nurse executive demonstrates leadership in business skills and principles, knowledge of the healthcare environment, communication and relationship management and professionalism. This includes elements of evidence-based practice, ethics, influencing behavior, accountability, clinical leadership quality improvement, strategic management, teamwork, and mentoring. The nurse executive advocates as the voice of the patient, family and the nursing profession.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Each eligibility requirement has been established to ensure that individuals certified by AONL-CC have an acceptable level of knowledge and skill. In establishing these requirements the Steering Committee acknowledges that a combination of both work experience and demonstrated knowledge are essential for individuals earning the CENP credential.

An individual who meets eligibility requirements and passes the CENP examination attains the Certified in Executive Nursing Practice (CENP) designation.

To be eligible for the Certified in Executive Nursing Practice (CENP) examination, a candidate must meet the target practitioner definition and fulfill one of the following requirements for education / work experience.

- A valid and unrestricted license as a Registered Nurse; and
- Master's degree or higher plus two years of experience in an executive nursing role. One of the degrees must be in Nursing.

OR

- A valid and unrestricted license as a Registered Nurse; and
- A baccalaureate in nursing plus four years of experience in an executive nursing role.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES
The AONL-CC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and strives to ensure that no individual with a disability is deprived of the opportunity to take the examination solely by reason of that disability. Through its agents, the AONL-CC will provide reasonable accommodation for a candidate with a disability who requests accommodation.

Wheelchair access is available at all Test Centers.

EXAMINATION CONTENT AND TIMING

HOW THE EXAMINATION IS DEVELOPED
The CENP Steering Committee participates in and provides oversight for the development and ongoing maintenance of the examinations via the CENP Certification Program Committee. The

Steering Committee, Certification Program Committee, and certification director work in partnership with PSI to ensure the examinations are developed and maintained in a manner consistent with generally accepted psychometric principles, educational testing practices, and national accreditation standards for certification programs.

The CENP Steering Committee and certification director select diverse groups of qualified subject matter experts (SMEs) to participate in exam development activities throughout the examination development process. SMEs are selected based on their demonstrated expertise, experience level, geographic representation, and specialty area and serve on the Certification Program Committees for each credential. SMEs participate in writing and reviewing examination questions, reviewing examinations, and establishing the passing point for the examinations.

Job Analysis /Role Delineation Studies are conducted periodically to identify and validate the knowledge and skills which are measured by the examinations. Each job analysis study includes a survey developed by SMEs and testing consultants and distributed to a broad group of professionals. The results of the Job Analysis /Role Delineation Studies serve as the basis for the examination and are used to develop the content outline included in this handbook.

The methodology used to set the minimum passing score is the Angoff method, in which expert judges estimate the passing probability of each question on the examination. These ratings are averaged to determine the preliminary minimum passing score (i.e., the number of correctly answered questions required to pass the examination). This method takes into account the difficulty of the examination. The preliminary minimum passing score is validated by the performance of candidates. The passing standard is applied consistently across all candidates who take the same form of the examination.

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of the AONL-CC. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may result in severe civil and criminal penalties.

EXAMINATION FORMAT AND TIMING
The examination is composed of 175 multiple-choice questions. A candidate's score is based on 150 of these questions; 25 are "trial" or "pretest" questions that are interspersed throughout the examination. A candidate is allowed three and a half (3.5) hours in which to complete the examination.

The examination is based on five major content areas. Each content area is described by the list of tasks that follows the content heading in the Examination Content Outline. In addition, the number of examination questions devoted to each major content area is indicated.

Each question on the examination is also categorized by a cognitive level that a candidate would likely use to respond. These categories are:

CENP
AONL

- **Recall:** The ability to recall or recognize specific information;
- **Application:** The ability to comprehend, relate or apply knowledge to new or changing situations; and
- **Analysis:** The ability to analyze and synthesize information, determine solutions and/or evaluate the usefulness of a solution.

PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

CONTENT
Study should begin by reviewing the Examination Content Outline (see page 18). Review the content categories and related tasks, identifying those tasks that are not performed regularly and are not familiar. Then, focus study on those unfamiliar tasks. Remember that all questions in the CENP Examination are job-related and test application and analysis of information, not just recall of isolated facts.

OTHER STUDY RESOURCES
The AONL-CC recommend that review for the CENP Examination focus on references and programs that cover the information summarized in the CENP Examination Content Outline. It should not be inferred that questions in the examination are selected from any single reference or set of references or that study from specific references guarantees a passing score on the examination. For information about references, study guides and study sessions that address content contained in the CENP Examination Content Outline visit www.AONL.org.

THE APPLICATION AND SCHEDULING PROCESS

FEE SCHEDULE
AONE Member $325
Nonmember $450

APPLICATION
After eligibility requirements are satisfied, complete the application and scheduling process in one online session by visiting www.AONL.org. Click on "Certification," then click on "Apply" and follow the online instructions. An application will be considered incomplete if any of the requested information is missing, illegible, or the appropriate fee is not included. Applications must be complete before they are processed and approved.

To be eligible for the reduced CENP Examination fee, click on "Member," then enter your membership number, name and address exactly as they appear in the AONL membership database. Your preferred mailing and email addresses designated in the membership database will be used for all records and communications. For information on your membership record, please contact the AONL Membership Services Department at 312.422.2800.

After the application information and payment using a credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover) have been submitted, you will receive an Authorization to Test (ATT) email, confirming eligibility and prompting you to schedule a preferred examination appointment (preferred appointments are not guaranteed to be available at the time of scheduling the examination) or supply additional eligibility information.

Be prepared to confirm a location and a preferred date and time for testing and to provide the unique identification number included in the Authorization to Test notice. For a special administration, the confirmation notice reports the date, location and check-in time for the examination.

If special accommodations are being requested, please contact AONL before scheduling an examination appointment.

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

A candidate with a visual, sensory or physical disability that prevents taking the examination under standard conditions may request special accommodations and arrangements. For either a computer administration or a special administration, complete the *Request for Special Examination Accommodations* form at least 45 days prior to the desired testing date.

PAYMENT

A candidate must submit the appropriate fee according to the fee schedule when the application is made. Payment may be made by credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express or Discover). Cash and personal checks are not accepted. Fees are nonrefundable. The application may be transferred to a future examination date by requesting a rescheduling of testing.

EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT

For a computer administration at a PSI Test Center, a candidate's application is valid for 90 days from the date of eligibility, during which the candidate must schedule an appointment to test on computer and take the examination. A candidate who fails to schedule an appointment within the assigned 90-day eligibility window forfeits the application and all fees paid to take the examination. A complete application and examination fee are required to reapply for examination.

A candidate is allowed to take only the examination for which application is made and confirmation is received. Unscheduled candidates (walk-ins) are not tested.

RESCHEDULING OR CANCELING AN EXAMINATION

Fees are nonrefundable. A candidate who is unable to test as scheduled may opt to reschedule. A candidate may reschedule the examination online **at least 2 business days prior** to a scheduled administration.

A candidate who wants to reschedule an examination after the 90-day period or who cancels his/her examination after confirmation of eligibility is received forfeits the application and all fees paid to take the examination. A new, complete application and examination fee are required to reapply for examination.

THE EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

The CENP examination is administered on computer at PSI Test Centers and during special administrations. During a special administration, the examination may be offered on laptop or in paper-and-pencil format.

COMPUTER ADMINISTRATION AT PSI TEST CENTERS

The primary mode of delivery of the CENP Examination is via computer at approximately 300 PSI Test Centers geographically distributed throughout the United States. Test Center locations, detailed maps and directions are available from www.AONL.org, by clicking on *Certification* and then on *Testing Centers.*

For computer administrations, there are no application deadlines. A candidate who meets eligibility requirements for the examination may submit an application and fee at any time. Ninety (90) days are allowed from confirmation of eligibility within which a candidate must make an appointment for testing and take the examination. The examination is administered by appointment only Monday through Saturday. Appointment starting times may vary by location. Candidates are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

If PSI is contacted by 3:00 PM Central Time on	Depending upon availability the examination may be scheduled as early as
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday/Saturday
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Tuesday

SPECIAL ADMINISTRATION – LAPTOP OR PAPER-AND-PENCIL

On occasion, the CENP Examination may be offered on laptop or in paper-and-pencil format during membership meetings. A candidate who meets eligibility requirements and submits an application and fee for receipt by the posted deadline is allowed to test. Dates of special administrations and deadlines for receipt of applications are posted on www.AONL.org.

INCLEMENT WEATHER OR EMERGENCY

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of examination, the AONL-CC, in concert with PSI, will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling, of an examination. The examination usually proceeds as scheduled if testing personnel are able to conduct business.

Every attempt is made to administer an examination as scheduled; however, should an examination be canceled, the scheduled candidate will receive notification following the examination regarding a rescheduled examination date or reapplication procedures. In the case of cancellation, no additional fee is required to test.

For computer administrations at PSI Test Centers, candidates may visit PSI's website at www.psionline.com/openings prior to the examination to determine if any Test Centers have been closed.

In the event of a personal emergency on the day of examination, a candidate may request consideration of rescheduling the examination without additional fee by contacting the AONL-CC in writing within 30 days of the scheduled testing session. A description of the emergency and supporting documentation are required. Rescheduling without additional fee   will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

SECURITY

The AONL-CC and PSI maintain examination administration and security standards that are designed to assure that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. The testing environment is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment or examination personnel.

ON THE DAY OF THE EXAMINATION

REPORTING FOR THE EXAMINATION

For a computer administration, report to the Test Center 30 minutes before the scheduled testing time. Look for the signs indicating PSI Test Center Check In. A candidate who arrives more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time is not admitted.

For a special administration, report to the testing room at the time indicated on the confirmation notice. The examination will begin after all scheduled candidates are checked-in and seated or at the scheduled testing time whichever comes first. Follow the signs provided in the hotel/convention center to locate the testing room.

FAILING TO REPORT FOR THE EXAMINATION

 A candidate who arrives more than fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled testing time is not admitted.

- A candidate who is not admitted due to late arrival forfeits the application and all fees paid to take the CHFM Examination. A complete application and full examination fee are required to reapply for CHFM Examination.
- A candidate who does not reschedule an examination session for a date that falls within the 90-day period forfeits the application and all fees paid to take the examination. A complete application and examination fee are required to reapply for examination.

VERIFYING IDENTITY

To gain admission to the Test Center or testing room, the candidate is required to present:

1. Two forms of identification, one with a current photograph. Both forms of *identification must be current and include the candidate's current name and signature.* Acceptable forms of photo identification include: a current driver's license with photograph, a current state identification card with photograph, a current passport, or a current military identification card with photograph. Employment ID cards, student ID cards and temporary identification cards are NOT acceptable as primary identification, but may be used as secondary identification. Secondary identification must be current and must verify the candidate's name and signature.

   If the candidate's name on the registration list is different than it appears on the forms of identification, the candidate must bring proof of the name change (e.g., marriage license, divorce decree, or court order).

2. The Authorization to Test notice provided by AONL. The confirmation notice contains a unique identification number required to sit for the examination**.** The candidate is required to sign a roster for verification of identity.

   A candidate without proper identification is not permitted to test.

CENP
AONL

RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

1. No personal items (other than keys, wallets and items required for medical or personal needs), books, papers, calculators, computers, dictionaries or other reference materials may be taken into the testing room. No valuables or weapons should be brought to the testing room. PSI is not responsible for items left in the reception room.
2. No personal pens, pencils, or other writing instruments are allowed in the testing room. Pencils will be provided during check-in.
3. Examinations are proprietary. No cameras, notes, tape recorders, pagers or cellular/smart phones are allowed in the testing room.
4. No eating, drinking or smoking is permitted in the testing room.
5. No documents or memoranda of any kind are to be taken from the testing room. Each candidate will be provided one sheet of scratch paper that must be returned to the supervisor at the completion of testing.
6. No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
7. Permission from the examination proctor is required to leave the testing room during the examination. No additional time is granted to compensate for time lost.
8. No guests, visitors or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.
9. A candidate may be dismissed from the examination for misconduct. Specific examples of misconduct follow.
   - The candidate's admission to the examination is unauthorized.
   - The candidate creates a disturbance, is abusive or otherwise uncooperative.
   - The candidate uses outside notes, references or unauthorized aids.
   - The candidate gives or receives help or is suspected of doing so.
   - The candidate attempts to remove examination materials or notes from the testing room.
   - The candidate attempts to take the examination for someone else.

Violation of any of the above provisions results in dismissal from the examination session. The candidate's score on the examination is voided and examination fees are not refunded. Evidence of misconduct is reviewed by the Appeal Board of the AONL-CC to determine whether the candidate will be allowed to reapply for examination. If re-examination is granted, a complete application and examination fee are required to reapply.

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of the AONL-CC. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may result in severe civil and criminal penalties.

TAKING THE EXAMINATION

After the identity of the candidate has been verified, the candidate is directed to a testing carrel for a computer administration or an assigned seat for a special administration. Each candidate is provided one sheet of scratch paper and a pencil for calculations that must be returned to the examination proctor at the completion of testing.

- For a paper-and-pencil administration, the candidate is provided oral and written instructions to guide the testing process.
- For a computer administration at a PSI Test Center or a laptop administration, the candidate is provided instructions on-screen. First, the candidate is instructed to enter his/her unique identification number. The candidate's photograph, taken before beginning the examination, remains on-screen throughout the examination session. Prior to attempting the examination, the candidate is provided a short tutorial on using the software to take the examination. Tutorial time is NOT counted as part of the 3.5 hours allowed for the examination. Only after a candidate is comfortable with the software, does the examination begin.

The following is a sample of what the computer screen looks like when a candidate is attempting the examination.
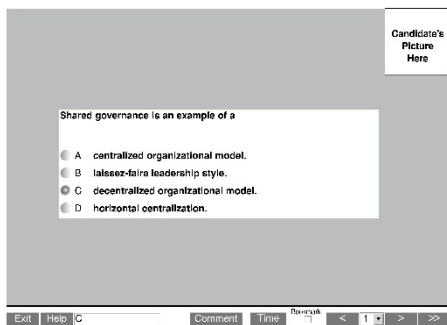
The computer monitors the time spent on the examination. The examination terminates at the 3.5 hour mark. Clicking on the "Time" button in the lower right portion of the screen reveals a digital clock that indicates the time remaining. The time feature may also be turned off during the examination.

Only one examination question is presented at a time. The question number appears in the lower right portion of the screen. The entire examination question appears on-screen (stem and four options labeled A, B, C and D). Select an answer by either entering the letter of the option (A, B, C or D) or clicking on the option using the mouse. The letter of the selected option appears in the window in the lower left portion of the screen. To change an answer, enter a different option by typing A, B, C or D or by clicking on the option using the mouse. An answer may be changed multiple times.

To move to the next question, click on the forward arrow (>) in the lower right corner of the screen. This action allows the candidate to move forward through the examination question by question. To review a question or questions, click the backward arrow (<) or use the left arrow key to move backward through the examination.

An examination question may be left unanswered for return later in the examination session. Questions may also be bookmarked for later review by clicking in the blank square to the right of the Time button. Click on the double arrows (>>) to advance to the next unanswered or

bookmarked question on the examination. To identify all unanswered or bookmarked questions, repeatedly click on the double arrows (>>).

When the examination is completed, the number of examination questions answered is reported. If fewer than 175 questions were answered and time remains, return to the examination and answer the remaining questions. Be sure to answer each examination question before ending the examination. There is no penalty for guessing.

CANDIDATE COMMENTS
For a computer administration, a candidate may make comments for any question by clicking on the Comment button to the left of the Time button. This opens a dialogue box where comments may be entered.

For a paper-and-pencil administration, comments may be provided on the answer sheet on the day of the examination. Comments will be reviewed, but individual responses will not be provided.

SCORE REPORTING
- A candidate who takes the examination in paper-and-pencil format receives his/her score report by mail approximately five weeks after the examination.
- A candidate who takes the examination on computer at a PSI Test Center or on laptop receives his/her score report on-screen and via email.

Score reports are issued by PSI, on behalf of the AONL-CC. Recognition of certification and additional information related to renewing the certification are issued from the AONL-CC within 6 weeks after a final score report is issued.

Scores are reported in written form only, in person or by U.S. mail. Scores are not reported over the telephone, by electronic mail or by facsimile. Applicant / certificant files are retained by AONL-CC for 7 years after the file becomes inactive.

The score report indicates a "Pass" or "Fail." Raw score on the total examination determines Pass/Fail status. Additional detail is provided in the form of raw scores by major categories of the Examination Content Outline. A raw score is the number of questions answered correctly. Even though the examination consists of 175 questions, the score is based on 150 questions. Twenty-five (25) questions are "pretest" questions and do not affect the candidate's score.

PASSING THE EXAMINATION
A minimum score of 108 is required to pass the CENP examination. A candidate who passes the CENP Examination is awarded the Certified in Executive Nursing Practice (CENP) credential.

The AONL-CC reserves the right to recognize publicly any candidate who has successfully completed the CENP Examination. Recognition is awarded so as not to embarrass any candidate who is unsuccessful in an attempt to achieve certification.

FAILING THE EXAMINATION

Candidates can retake the exam no sooner than 90 days after their most recent exam date. An application will be available after the 90 days have passed. Candidates may apply for and take the same certification exam up to 3 times in a 12-month period.

SCORES CANCELED BY THE AONL-CC

The AONL-CC and PSI are responsible for the integrity of the scores reported. On occasion, occurrences, such as computer malfunction or misconduct by a candidate, may cause a score to be suspect. The AONL-CC is committed to rectifying such discrepancies as expeditiously as possible. The AONL-CC may void examination results if, upon investigation, violation of AONL-CC regulations is discovered.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information about an individual's application status, personal applicant/certificant information, and examination results are considered confidential. Scores are never reported to anyone other than the candidate, unless the candidate directs such a request in writing. All application information is confidential and will not be shared with any party other than PSI for exam administration and certification processing purposes. Information about a candidate/certificant will only be released to that applicant/certificant unless release of the information is authorized in writing by the individual or is required by law.

INFORMATION FOR THE NEW CERTIFICANT

CERTIFICATION VERIFICATION

An individuals' certification status is not considered confidential. The names of certified individuals are not considered confidential and may be published by the AONL-CC. The AONL-CC will provide confirmation of certification status to anyone who requests the information. Verification of certification status will include the individuals name, current certification status, credential(s), and current expiration date.

RESEARCH & AGGREGATE DATA

The AONL-CC reserves the right to use information supplied by or on behalf of a candidate. Studies and reports concerning candidates contain no information identifiable with any candidate, unless authorized by the candidate. Demographic information about a candidate is shared only in cases where the candidate may benefit. Scores are never reported to anyone other than the candidate, unless the candidate directs such a request in writing. Aggregate exam statistics (including the number of exam candidates, pass/fail rates, and total number of certificants) will be publicly available.

NAME AND ADDRESS CHANGE

If you move or change your name after obtaining certification, please notify the AONL Credentialing Center (AONL-CC), 155 North Wacker Dr. Suite 400, Chicago, IL 60606, Phone: 312.422.2807, Fax: 312.312.248.0861, Email: aonl@aonl.org. Please provide a valid email address. Communication from the AONL-CC is primarily by email.

USE OF THE CERTIFICATION MARK

After receiving notification of CENP designation, the credential may be used as long as certification remains valid and in good standing. Individuals may not use the CENP credential until they have received specific written notification that they have successfully completed all requirements, including passing the exam. Certificants must comply with all recertification requirements to maintain use of the credential.

Certification is a non-transferable, revocable, limited, non-exclusive license to use the certification designation "CENP," subject to compliance with the policies and procedures, as may be revised from time to time.

After meeting all eligibility requirements and passing the examination, individuals may use their credential in all correspondence and professional relations. The credential is typically used after the certificant's name following any academic degrees and licensure (e.g. Jane Smith, DNP, RN, CENP).

The certification mark(s) may be used only as long as certification is valid.

THE RENEWAL PROCESS

Attaining certification is an indication of mastery of a well-defined body of knowledge at a point in time. Periodic renewal of the certification is required to maintain certified status. Initial certification or renewal of certification is valid for three (3) years.

PURPOSE & RATIONALE

AONL-CC supports the ongoing professional development of its certificants.

- The mandatory renewal process provides certificants with the opportunity to demonstrate the retention, reinforcement and expansion of their knowledge and skills.
- Renewal also provides encouragement to, and acknowledgement for, participation in ongoing professional development activities and continued learning.

To support this purpose, the recertification requirements require continuing education and professional activities that enhance ongoing professional development, recognize learning opportunities, and provide a process for both attaining and recording professional development achievements.

AONL-CC requires periodic renewal to promote professional development for certified nurse leaders and to ensure that individuals who hold the credentials maintain an ongoing commitment to learning in their area(s) of practice to strengthen their knowledge and skills.

Professional development is accomplished by either obtaining the required number of continuing education credits or by passing the certification examination for which the content is periodically updated. Renewal by continuing education credits ensures that the individual has participated in professional development activities that are directly related to the body of knowledge for Certified in Executive Nursing Practice (CENP) as defined by the respective exam content outlines. Since the examination is updated periodically, recertification by examination also ensures that the certificant has continued to build his/her knowledge and skills during the time since initial certification.

The 3-year time period established for recertification is based on both the scope of issues that face certified nurse leaders and the AONL-CC's belief that new practices, research, and information are introduced in the field with enough frequency that professional development activities should be conducted routinely so that certificants remain up to date with both current best practices and emerging knowledge.

EXPIRATION DATE

Certification expires on the last day of the month in which the credential expires. Renewal applications will not be accepted from individual's whose certification is in a state of suspension or has been revoked.

RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

A certificant may renew the CENP credential through one of two routes:

1. Successful re-examination; or

2. Documentation of 45 contact hours of continuing professional education over the 3-year period and payment of the renewal fee.

> AONL Member $200
>
> Non-member $275

Details for certification renewal are provided to candidates who pass the examination in a certification package sent by the AONL-CC. The CENP Renewal Application is also available from www.AONL.org/certification.

A certificant receives multiple notices of pending expiration from the AONL-CC, provided that a current e-mail address is on file with the AONL-CC.

VERIFICATION & AUDIT PROCESS

In order to maintain the credibility and integrity of the certification process AONL-CC reserves the right to verify any information provided on renewal applications. Requests for verification may be made prior to recertification or at a future time. Certificants are advised to retain all renewal documentation for at least 180 days after their renewal deadline.

FAILING TO RENEW

A certificant who fails to renew his/her certification is no longer considered certified and may not use the CENP credential in professional communications, such as on letterhead, stationery and business cards, in directory listings and in signature. To regain certification, the individual must retake and pass the CENP Examination.

A percent of certification renewal applications will be audited to ensure that all requirements are met. When applications are selected for audit, certificants will be notified and asked to submit documentation of all continuing education activities.

If any areas of non-compliance are identified during the any review of a recertification application the individual will have 30 days to submit any required information. If the required information is not provided, the individual's certification will expire at the end of the 30 days or on the normal expiration date (whichever comes last). If an application is selected for audit and the certificant does not respond or does not submit the requested documentation, certification will not be renewed.

APPEALS

ELIGIBILITY, EXAMINATION & RENEWAL APPEALS

A candidate who believes he/she was unjustly denied eligibility for examination, who challenges results of an examination or who believes he/she was unjustly denied renewal of certification may request reconsideration of the decision by submitting a written appeal.

The candidate for certification or renewal of certification must provide convincing evidence that a severe disadvantage was afforded the candidate during processing of an application for examination or renewal of certification or prior to or during administration of an examination. The appeal must be made within 45 days of receipt of the adverse decision (for example, a score report or any other official correspondence related to certification or renewal of certification from the AONL-CC or its agents). The written appeal must also indicate the specific relief requested.

The appealing candidate is required to submit a $100 fee with the written appeal. The fee will be refunded to the candidate if deemed justified through action of the Appeal Board.

Complete copies of the appeals policies are available upon request from AONL-CC. Please email anol@aha.org or call 312-422-2807 to request the full policy.

DISCIPLINARY APPEALS

Within thirty (30) days from receipt of notice of a determination by the Steering Committee that a certificant violated the certification program Professional Standards of Conduct and/or certification program policies and/or rules, the affected certificant may submit to the Steering Committee in writing a request for an appeal.

A complete copy of the Disciplinary & Complaints Policy, which includes the Appeals policies and procedures, is available upon request from AONL-CC. Please email aonl@aha.org to request the full policy.

CENP
>> AONL

CERTIFIED IN EXECUTIVE NURSING PRACTICE (CENP) EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

		Questions		
(RE = Recall, AP = Application, AN = Analysis)	RE	AP	AN	Total
1. Communication and Relationship Building:	**9**	**15**	**12**	**36**
A. Effective Communication				5
B. Relationship Management				6
C. Influencing Behaviors				7
D. Diversity				3
E. Community Involvement				4

1. Communication and Relationship Building:

A. Effective Communication

1. *Make oral presentations to diverse audiences on:*
   a. *Nursing*
   b. *Healthcare*
   c. *Organizational issues*
2. *Produce written materials for diverse audiences on:*
   a. *Nursing*
   b. *Healthcare topics*
   c. *Organizational issues*
3. *Facilitate group discussions*
4. *Demonstrate skill in interpersonal communication.*

B. Relationship Management

1. *Build collaborative relationships*
2. *Exhibit effective conflict resolution skills*
3. *Create a trusting environment by:*
   a. *Following through on promises and concerns*
   b. *Establishing mechanisms to follow-up on commitments*
   c. *Balancing the concerns of individuals with organizational goals and objectives*
   d. *Engaging staff and others in decision-making*
   e. *Communicating in a way as to maintain credibility and relationships*

C. Influencing Behaviors

1. *Assert views in non-threatening, non-judgmental ways*
2. *Create a shared vision*
3. *Facilitate consensus building*
4. *Inspire desired behaviors and manage undesired behaviors*
5. *Achieve outcomes through engagement of stakeholders*
6. *Promote decisions that are patient-centered*
7. *Apply situational leadership skills*

D. Diversity

1. *Establish an environment that values diversity (e.g., age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture)*
2. *Establish cultural competency in the workforce*
3. *Incorporate cultural beliefs into care delivery*
4. *Provide an environment conductive to opinion sharing, exploration of ideas and achievement of outcomes*

E. Community Involvement

1. *Represent the organization to non-healthcare constituents within the community*
2. *Serve as a resource to community and business leaders regarding nursing and health care*
3. *Represent the organization to non-healthcare constituents within the community*
4. *Serve as a resource to community and business leaders regarding nursing and health care*
5. *Represent the community perspective in the decision-making processes within the organization/system*
6. *Engage key community constituents in facility initiatives as appropriate*
7. *Represent nursing to the media as appropriate*
8. *Serve on community-based boards, advisory groups, and task forces*

Questions

	RE	AP	AN	Total

F. Interdisciplinary/Medical Staff Relationships: — **6**

1. Build credibility with physicians as a champion for patient care, quality, and the professional practice of nursing
2. Confront and address inappropriate behavior toward patients and staff
3. Represent nursing at medical executive committee and other department/medical staff committees
4. Collaborate with medical staff leaders and other disciplines in determining needed patient care services
5. Collaborate with physicians and other disciplines to develop patient care protocols, policies and procedures
6. Collaborate with physicians to determine patient care equipment and facility needs
7. Utilize medical staff mechanism to address physician clinical performance issues
8. Address disputes involving nurses and physicians or other disciplines
9. Create opportunities for physicians and nurses to engage in professional dialogue

G. Academic Relationships: — **5**

1. Determine current and future supply and demand for nurses to meet the care delivery needs
2. Identify educational needs of existing and potential nursing staff
3. Collaborate with nursing programs to provide required resources
4. Collaborate with nursing programs in evaluating quality of graduating clinicians and develop mechanisms to enhance this quality
5. Serve on Academic Advisory Councils
6. Collaborate with nursing research and translate evidence into practice
7. Collaborate to investigate care delivery models across the continuum
8. Create academic partnerships to ensure a qualified workforce for the future

2. Knowledge of the Health Care Environment: — **8 16 6 30**

A. Clinical Practice Knowledge: — **3**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of current nursing practice and the roles and the roles and functions of patient care team members
2. Communicate patient care standards as established by accreditation, regulatory, and quality agencies
3. Ensure compliance with the State Nurse Practice Act, State Board of Nursing regulations, state and federal regulatory agency standards, federal labor standards, and policies of the organization
4. Adhere to professional association standards of nursing practice
5. Ensure that written organization clinical policies and procedures are reviewed and updated in accordance with evidence-based practice
6. Integrate bioethical and legal dimensions into clinical and management decision-making
7. Ensure protection of human subject rights and safety in clinical research

B. Delivery Models/Work Design: — **4**

1. Demonstrate current knowledge of patient care delivery systems across the continuum
2. Describe various delivery systems and age-appropriate patient care models and the advantages/disadvantages of each.
3. Assess the effectiveness of delivery models
4. Develop new delivery models
5. Participate in the design of facilities

C. Healthcare Economics and Policy: **3**

1. *Understand regulation and payment issues that affect an organization's finances*
2. *Describe individual organization's payer mix, CMI and benchmark database*
3. *Align care delivery models and staff performance with key safety and economic drivers (e.g., value based purchasing, bundled payment)*
4. *Take action when opportunities exist to adjust operations to respond effectively to environmental changes in economic elements*
5. *Use knowledge of federal and state laws and regulations that affect the provision of patient care (e.g., tort reform, malpractice/negligence, reimbursement)*
6. *Participate in legislative process on healthcare issues through such mechanisms as membership in professional organization and personal contact with officials*
7. *Educate patient care team members on the legislative process, the regulatory process and methods for influencing both*
8. *Interpret impact of legislation at the state or federal level on nursing and healthcare organizations*

D. Governance: **3**

1. *Use knowledge of the role of the governing body of the organization in the following areas:*
   a. *fiduciary responsibilities*
   b. *credentialing*
   c. *performance management*
2. *Represent patient care issues to the governing body*
3. *Participate in strategic planning and quality initiatives with the governing body*
4. *Interact with and educate the organization's board members regarding health care and the value of nursing care*
5. *Represent nursing at the organization's board meetings*
6. *Represent other disciplines at the organization's board meetings*

E. Evidence-Based Practice/Outcome Measurement and Care Management: **3**

1. *Use data and other sources of evidence to inform decision making*
2. *Use evidence for establishment of standards, practices, and patient care models in the organization*
3. *Design feedback mechanisms by which to adapt practice based upon outcomes from current processes*
4. *Design and interpret outcome measures*
5. *Disseminate research findings to patient care team members*
6. *Allocate nursing resources based on measurement of patient acuity/care needed*
7. *Monitor and address nurse sensitive outcomes and satisfaction indicators*

F. Patient Safety: **5**

1. *Support the development of an organization-wide patient safety program*
2. *Use knowledge of patient safety science (e.g., human factors, complex adaptive systems, LEAN, and Six Sigma)*
3. *Monitor clinical activities to identify both expected and unexpected risks*
4. *Support a Just Culture (non-punitive) reporting environment, supporting a reward system for identifying unsafe practices*
5. *Support safety surveys, responding and acting on safety recommendations*
6. *Lead/facilitate performance improvement teams to improve systems/processes that enhance patient safety*

Questions

	RE	AP	AN	Total

G. PerformanceImprovement/Metrics — **5**

1. *Articulate the organization's performance improvement program and goals*
2. *Use evidence-based metrics to align patient outcomes with the organization's goals and objectives*
3. *Apply high reliability concepts for the organization*
4. *Establish quality metrics by:*
    a. *identifying the problem/process*
    b. *measuring success at improving specific areas of patient care*
    c. *analyzing the root causes or variation from quality standards*
    d. *improving the process with the evidence*
    e. *controlling solutions and sustaining success*

H. RiskManagement: — **4**

1. *Identify areas of risk/liability*
2. *Facilitate staff education on risk management and compliance issues*
3. *Develop systems that result in prompt reporting of potential liability by staff at all levels*
4. *Identify early warning predictability indications for errors*
5. *Correct areas of potential liability*
6. *Ensure compliance by staff with all required standards*

3. Leadership — RE **6** AP **10** AN **17** Total **33**

A. Systems Thinking: — **14**

1. *Use knowledge of classic and contemporary systems thinking in problem solving and decision making*
2. *Provide visionary thinking on issues that impact the healthcare organization*
3. *Recognize the contribution of mental models on behavior*
4. *Promote systems thinking as an expectation of leaders and staff*
5. *Consider the impact of nursing decisions on the healthcare organization as a whole*
6. *Use resources from other paradigms*

B. SuccessionPlanning: — **8**

1. *Develop a leadership succession plan*
2. *Promote nursing leadership as a desirable specialty*
3. *Mentor current and future nurse leaders*
4. *Establish mechanisms that provide for early identification and mentoring of staff with leadership potential*
5. *Develop a workforce analysis plan and implement strategies to ensure an adequate and qualified workforce*

C. ChangeManagement: — **11**

1. *Adapt leadership style to situational needs*
2. *Use change theory to implement change*
3. *Serve as a change leader*

(RE = Recall, AP = Application, AN = Analysis)

Questions

	RE	AP	AN	Total
4. Professionalism	**6**	**11**	**4**	**21**

A. Personal and Professional Accountability — 4

1. *Hold self and others accountable for mutual professional expectations and outcomes*
2. *Contribute to the advancement of the profession*
3. *Participate in and contribute to professional organizations*
4. *Promote leader and staff participation in professional organizations*
5. *Promote leader and staff participation in lifelong learning and educational achievement*
6. *Achieve and maintain professional certification for self*
7. *Promote professional certification for staff*
8. *Role model standards of professional practice (clinical, educational and leadership) for colleagues and constituents*

B. Career Planning: — 5

1. *Coach others in developing their own career plans*
2. *Seek input and mentorship from others in career planning and development*
3. *Develop a personal and professional career plan and measure progress*
4. *Solicit feedback about personal strengths and weaknesses*
5. *Act on feedback about personal strengths and weaknesses*

C. Ethics: — 7

1. *Uphold ethical principles and corporate compliance standards*
2. *Hold self and staff accountable to comply with ethical standards of practice*
3. *Discuss, resolve, and learn from ethical dilemmas*

D. Advocacy: — 5

1. *Promote clinical perspective in organizational decisions*
2. *Involve nurses and other staff in decisions that affect their practice*
3. *Represent the perspective of patients and families*
4. *Advocate for optimal healthcare in the community*

	RE	AP	AN	Total
5. Business Skills	**8**	**18**	**4**	**30**

A. Financial Management — 8

1. *Develop and manage an annual operating budget and long-term capital expenditure plan*
2. *Use business models for healthcare organizations and apply fundamental concepts of economics*
3. *Interpret financial statements*
4. *Manage financial resources*
5. *Ensure the use of accurate charging mechanisms*
6. *Educate patient care team members on financial implications of patient care decisions*
7. *Participate in the negotiation and monitoring of contract compliance (e.g., physicians, service providers)*

		Questions		
(RE = Recall, AP = Application, AN = Analysis)	RE	AP	AN	Total

B. Human Resource Management: **7**

1. *Ensure development of educational programs to foster workforce competencies and development goals*
2. *Participate in workforce planning and employment decisions*
3. *Use corrective discipline to mitigate workplace behavior problems*
4. *Evaluate the results of employee satisfaction/quality of work environment surveys*
5. *Support reward and recognize programs to enhance performance*
6. *Formulate programs to enhance work-life balance*
7. *Interpret and ensure compliance with legal and regulatory guidelines*
8. *Provide education regarding components of collective bargaining*
9. *Promote healthful work environments*
10. *Address sexual harassment, workplace violence, verbal and physical abuse*
11. *Implement ergonomically sound work environments to prevent worker injury and fatigue*
12. *Develop and implement emergency preparedness plans*
13. *Analyze market data in relation to supply and demand*
14. *Contribute to the development of compensation programs*
15. *Develop and evaluate recruitment, onboarding, and retention strategies*
16. *Develop and implement an outcome-based performance management program*
17. *Develop and implement programs to re-educate the workforce for new roles*

C. Strategic Management: **8**

1. *Create the operational objectives, goals and specific strategies required to achieve the strategic outcome*
2. *Conduct SWOT and Gap analyses*
3. *Defend the business case for nursing*
4. *Utilize the balanced scorecard analysis to manage change*
5. *Evaluate achievement of operational objectives and goals*
6. *Identify marketing opportunities*
7. *Develop marketing strategies in collaboration with marketing experts*
8. *Promote the image of nursing and the organization through effective media relations*

D. Information Management and Technology: **7**

1. *Use technology to support improvement of clinical and financial performance*
2. *Collaborate to prioritize for the establishment of information technology resources*
3. *Participate in evaluation of enabling technology in practice settings*
4. *Use data management systems for decision making*
5. *Identify technological trends, issues and new developments as they apply to patient care*
6. *Demonstrate skills in assessing data integrity and quality*
7. *Provide leadership for the adoption and implementation of information systems*

		RE	AP	AN	Total
	Total	*37*	*70*	*43*	*150*

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following is the best example of a leader effectively controlling group discussions?
   - **A. focusing on the person monopolizing the discussion**
   - B. calling attention to a person who won't talk
   - C. emphasizing the idea of different rather than conflict
   - D. confronting angry or painful feelings whenever they surface

2. Which of the following is required before a nurse executive gives permission for a researcher to access staff nurses?
   - A. verbal approval from the medical director
   - B. written approval from the governing board
   - C. verbal approval from the impacted nurse manager
   - D. written approval from the Institutional Review Board

3. The newly-hired nurse executive desires to instill trustworthiness as an ethical principle in all patient care operations. Which of the following is the best way of inspiring trust in a staff?
   - A. React differently to similar situations.
   - B. Set a maximum time to listen to staff concerns.
   - C. Respond in a timely manner to requests.
   - D. Send requests to committees for consideration.

4. A nurse executive decided to use a Pareto analysis to design feedback mechanisms for adopting practice based upon outcomes. The use of such a tool is effective because it
   - A. develops the thinking process.
   - B. identifies the few causes responsible for the most problems.
   - C. selects one solution from among several available options.
   - D. generates several solutions.

5. Which of the following is essential planning information for any piece of capital equipment?
   - A. return on investment analysis
   - B. staff training
   - C. location of nearest field service office
   - D. cost of replacement parts

Answer Key

1. C
2. D
3. C
4. B
5. A

DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY-RELATED NEEDS

Please have this section completed by an appropriate professional (education professional, physician, psychologist psychiatrist) to ensure that AONL and PSI are able to provide the required examination accommodations. This information will be treated with strict confidentiality. Return this form with the Request for Special Accommodations form as well as your examination application and fee within 45 days of the desired testing date.

PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTATION

I have known _____ since ___/___/___ in my capacity as a

 Candidate name Date

_____.

 Professional title

The candidate discussed with me the nature of the examination to be administered. It is my opinion that, because of this candidate's disability described below, he/she should be accommodated by providing the special arrangements described on the Request for Special Accommodations form.

Description of Disability: _____

_____

_____

Signed: _____ Title _____

Printed Name: _____ Date _____

License# (if applicable): _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

 _____ FAX: _____

 _____

Email: _____

Return this form to:
AONL-CC
155 N. Wacker Dr, Suite 400, Chicago, IL 60606

If you have questions, call AONL-CC at (312) 422-2807
or email at aonl@aha.org