



NATIONAL BOARD FOR
CERTIFIED COUNSELORS®

Student NEWSLETTER



Applying for Board Certification

Did you know that you could start the process of earning board certification before you graduate?

It's true! Students enrolled in a degree-granting counseling track in a master's, specialist, or doctoral program that has been preapproved to participate can get a head start on earning professional credentials while they work on completing their degree. [Visit our website](#) for a list of participating schools.

As a Student, When Am I Eligible to Apply?

Once you meet the following requirements, you can submit your application.

- Enrollment in a degree-granting counseling track in a master's, specialist, or doctoral program that has been preapproved to participate. [View a list of participating schools](#). *Certificate programs or taking additional courses for licensure do not meet eligibility requirements.*
- At a minimum, completion of coursework in six of the eight required subject areas and enrollment in the final two during the semester of the examination. Your university will determine when you are far enough along in your program to meet this requirement.
- Completion of an ethics attestation. All disclosures must be resolved before your application can be processed, including the examination registration.



National Certified Counselor (NCC) Requirements

More information about these requirements can be found on [our website](#).

- Obtain a passing score on the National Counselor Examination (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE).
- Hold a master's degree with a major study in counseling from a CACREP- or regionally accredited program, including specific coursework requirements.
- Obtain professional endorsement. For students, this must be completed by your campus coordinator. For non-students, this can be completed by a professional colleague who holds a master's degree or higher in a mental health field.
- Adhere to NBCC's ethical policies.

For individuals who did not graduate from a CACREP-accredited program; who do not have a degree from a regionally accredited doctoral program; or who are not fully licensed, additional requirements must be met:

- You must document at least 100 hours of post-master's counseling supervision over a minimum 24-month period.
- You must document completion of at least 3,000 hours of post-master's counseling work experience over a minimum 24-month period.



Student Examination Administration



After an initial review of your NCC application, you will receive specific instructions about your examination arrangements. Please read all communications regarding the examination carefully. If you do not receive communication from Pearson VUE, please email us at certification@nbcc.org. It is your choice as to which examination you would like to take; however, once you have made a choice it cannot be changed. If you are planning on using the examination to fulfill a state licensure requirement, be sure to check with the specific state before choosing the examination, as each state has its own examination requirements for licensure.

You will have a testing window during which you can schedule your examination. You will receive an email from Pearson VUE approximately two weeks before the first available examination date with instructions for scheduling your examination. When you register for your examination date, time, and location, you will receive an email confirmation from Pearson VUE. Please watch the video on “[What to Expect When Testing With Pearson VUE](#)” for a detailed review of procedures at Pearson VUE testing centers.



Accommodation Information

If you require an examination accommodation, you can [submit your request](#) along with appropriate documentation with your application. You will receive an email from NBCC with a decision after a formal review. For questions regarding accommodations, please contact accommodations@nbcc.org.

Important note:

If the name on your legal identification does not match the name that we have on file, contact us immediately. You will not be permitted to test if this information does not match. Changes to your information must be made at least 30 days prior to the start of the test window. You can view the Identification Policy on the [Pearson VUE website](#).

Preparing for the Examination

The following resources may be helpful in preparing for either examination:

- [Study guides](#)
- Current professional books, journals, and newsletters that are published by professional counseling organizations
- NBCC certification examination handbooks ([NCE](#) and [NCMHCE](#))
- Course notes
- The [NBCC Code of Ethics](#)



Postponing or Retaking the Examination

If you do not pass the examination or if circumstances prevent you from taking the examination when scheduled, you will receive information via email about rescheduling procedures, examination reregistration fees, and testing dates. You can defer your testing date at no extra charge by informing NBCC in writing at least 30 days prior to the start of the test window. A reregistration fee will be charged if notification is not received beforehand.



Examination Facts

The examination requirement for the NCC can be fulfilled by taking either the **NCE** or the **NCMHCE**. These examinations are administered through NBCC's testing partner, Pearson VUE.

- ✓ The **NCE** is made up of 200 multiple-choice questions and is scheduled for 3 hours and 45 minutes.
- ✓ The **NCMHCE** consists of 10 clinical simulations. The simulations assess clinical problem-solving ability, including identifying, analyzing, diagnosing, and treating clinical issues. The NCMHCE is scheduled for 3 hours.

The National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. and Affiliates (NBCC)

is a not-for-profit, independent certification organization established in 1982. NBCC's mission is to advance counseling as the premier certification body of the profession, with the vision of enhancing society worldwide through quality counseling.

Requesting an Examination Score Verification

Delivery of your score report can take up to 6–8 weeks after your examination administration. You will receive an email from NBCC when this information is available in your ProCounselor account. If you would like to have an official verification of your examination scores sent to a third party (such as a state licensure board), you can order this in your ProCounselor online store.

Benefits of Board Certification

- Use of the NCC designation or certification mark in personal marketing materials.
- Increased professional credibility among your peers.
- Recognition for having met high standards.
- Priority enrollment in [NBCC institutes](#).
- The professional advocacy that NBCC conducts on behalf of the counseling profession.
- NBCC's engagement with [legislative efforts](#).
- Increased professional accountability.
- Access to NBCC [scholarships and grants](#).
- Stay informed by reading NBCC's newsletter, [NBCC Visions](#).
- Opportunity to serve on the editorial review board for NBCC's electronic journal, [The Professional Counselor](#).
- Receive reduced rates on professional [liability insurance](#).
- Track your continuing education on the [ProCounselor](#) online continuing education portfolio.
- Opportunity to earn continuing education clock hours through [NBCC Foundation webinars](#).
- Inclusion in NBCC's [Counselor Find](#).
- Ability to [verify your certification online](#).
- Receive a free six-month listing in Psychology Today's Therapy Directory.



We want to stay in touch with you!

Any time your contact information changes, be sure to keep NBCC informed. Visit [ProCounselor](#) at your convenience to update your information. Add nbcc@nbcc.org to your address book so you don't miss important communications.



Scholarship, Grant, and Fellowship Opportunities

Every year, the NBCC Foundation provides scholarship, grant, and fellowship opportunities.

[Explore your options today.](#)

Next Steps

You've graduated and passed the examination—now what?

To complete your application for board certification, you will need to send NBCC an official, sealed transcript documenting your degree conferral date. If you graduated from a non-CACREP-accredited program, you will need to submit verification of 3,000 hours of counseling work experience and 100 hours of counseling supervision (both over a 24-month post-master's time period) or verification of state licensure. Electronic forms to submit these requirements are located within your ProCounselor account.

