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CONTENTS

NBCRNA Overview ........................................................................................................................................... 3
Recertification Overview................................................................................................................................. 5
Categories of Recertification......................................................................................................................... 6
Criteria for Full Recertification.................................................................................................................. 6
  Initial Certification....................................................................................................................................... 7
  Licensure...................................................................................................................................................... 7
  Continuing Education............................................................................................................................... 7
  Practice...................................................................................................................................................... 7
  Certifications by the Applicant................................................................................................................ 8
  Waiver of Liability and Agreement of Authorization, Confidentiality and Nondisclosure
  Statements.................................................................................................................................................. 8
Application for Recertification.................................................................................................................... 8
Recertification-Specific Policies and Procedures...................................................................................... 9
  Recertification Period............................................................................................................................... 9
  Late Application......................................................................................................................................... 10
  New Graduates.......................................................................................................................................... 10
Transition to the Continued Professional Certification (CPC) Program..................................................... 10

This publication contains information about NBCRNA’s Recertification Program. Participants are responsible for
knowing the contents of this handbook, as well as any additional applicable NBCRNA policies (e.g. please see NBCRNA’s

All correspondence and requests for information concerning the Recertification Program should be sent to the NBCRNA
at recertification@nbcrna.com.

The NBCRNA does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, marital
status, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

NBCRNA primary certification and recertification/CPC Programs are accredited by the following organizations:
The National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA) is a not-for-profit corporation organized under the laws of the state of Illinois. NBCRNA credentialing provides assurances to the public that certified individuals have met objective, predetermined qualifications for providing nurse anesthesia services. A nurse anesthetist who is certified by the NBCRNA is expected to: respect basic human rights and the dignity of all patients; protect the patient from harm; advocate for the patient’s welfare and collaborate with other members of the health professions; be responsible and accountable for his or her actions; maintain confidentiality of patient information, except when disclosure is required by law; and maintain the knowledge and skill necessary for competent nurse anesthesia practice.

While state licensure provides the legal credential for the practice of professional nursing, private voluntary certification indicates compliance with the professional standards for practice in this clinical nursing specialty. The certification credential for nurse anesthetists has been institutionalized in many position descriptions as a practice requirement or as the standard for demonstrating equivalency. It has been recognized in state nurse practice acts and state rules and regulations.

The primary purpose of the NBCRNA is to seek to ensure that nurse anesthetists have the necessary knowledge and skills to practice safely and effectively. In so doing, it also protects the value of the CRNA credential. The NBCRNA has designed objective criteria intended to determine whether an individual holding the NBCRNA-issued CRNA credential is properly licensed, has attested to engagement in the practice of nurse anesthesia; has participated in continuing education and other activities sufficient to indicate an effort to keep current with advances, and is free of any mental, physical, or other problems that may interfere with the practice of nurse anesthesia. Whenever program eligibility criteria are developed and/or revised, the NBCRNA engages multiple stakeholders to ensure appropriate consideration has been given as to the impact of NBCRNA decisions.

NCCA defines competence as "the ability to perform a task, function, or role up to a set of prescribed standards" (NCCA, 2014) and continuing competence as demonstrating "specified levels of knowledge, skills, or abilities not only at the time of initial certification but also throughout an individual’s professional career" (NCCA, 2014). These concepts serve as the foundation underpinning the NBCRNA certification and continued certification programs.

Vision
The vision of the NBCRNA is to be recognized as the leader in advanced practice nurse credentialing.

Mission
The mission of the NBCRNA is to promote patient safety through credentialing programs that support lifelong learning.

History
The primary certification program for nurse anesthetists was introduced by the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) in 1945. It was initially administered by the Credentials Committee of the AANA. In 1975, the AANA approved the establishment of councils for the accreditation and certification processes, and the Council on Certification of Nurse Anesthetists (CCNA) assumed the responsibility for the National Certification Examination (NCE). By this action, the profession
recognized that credentialing mechanisms, which include examination and certification, function to protect and benefit the public.

Realizing that evidence of continued professional excellence was becoming increasingly important in our society, the AANA Board of Directors in 1968 directed the AANA Education Committee to study the issue of recertification. At the AANA Annual Meeting in 1969, a bylaw was adopted to establish an optional program to provide certificates to members who had demonstrated they had completed clinical and didactic experiences reflective of the changes in nurse anesthesia practice within a five-year period. Recognizing that continuing education provides one means to assess current educational and knowledge levels of practitioners, a mandatory continuing education program was adopted by the AANA membership at the 1976 Annual Meeting, with full implementation effective August 1, 1978.

In September 1978, the AANA membership adopted the bylaw revisions providing for an organizational restructuring of the Association and establishing a Council on Recertification of Nurse Anesthetists (COR). Bylaw provisions granting the COR autonomy were adopted in 1983. In 2007, the CCNA and the COR became independent of the AANA, and together they incorporated as the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA).

With its continued mission to promote patient safety, the NBCRNA implemented the Nonsurgical Pain Management subspecialty certification in 2015 and the Continued Professional Certification (CPC) Program in 2016.

**Purpose**
The purpose of the NBCRNA includes, but is not limited to, seeking to ensure that nurse anesthetists have the necessary knowledge and skills to practice safely and effectively. In so doing, it also protects the value of the CRNA credential. The NBCRNA is responsible for:

1. Formulating, adopting and confirming compliance of initial and subspecialty certification eligibility requirements for nurse anesthetists;
2. Formulating, adopting and confirming compliance of recertification and continued professional certification (CPC) eligibility requirements for nurse anesthetists;
3. Formulating, adopting and confirming compliance of the requirements for eligibility for admission to NBCRNA-administered examinations including, but not limited to, the SEE, NCE, NSPM exam, and the CPC exam;
4. Formulating, adopting and administering NBCRNA-created examinations to candidates who have met all requirements for examination and have been found eligible.

No national organization can expect to determine the specific procedures that any individual nurse anesthetist is qualified to perform. Neither can any national organization determine whether an individual nurse anesthetist may have developed an impairment that could interfere with the proper administration of anesthesia. Ultimately, these judgments must be entrusted to the individual nurse anesthetist and to those with whom he or she works.

**Structure**
The NBCRNA Board of Directors is composed of nurse anesthetists who hold the NBCRNA-issued CRNA credential and who are actively engaged in clinical practice or in teaching or administration of a nurse anesthesia educational program; a board-certified surgeon and a board-certified anesthesiologist,
both of whom have a current working relationship with nurse anesthetists; and a representative of
the public at large.

**NCCA Accreditation**
The primary certification and recertification programs of the NBCRNA are accredited through April
2022 by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), a private not-for-profit
organization. The NCCA is the accrediting branch of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE),
which is the national standard setting organization for credentialing groups, including certification
boards, licensing boards, and associations. The NBCRNA (and before it, the CCNA and COR) has been
continuously accredited by the NCCA since 1980.

NCCA accreditation means that the NBCRNA credentialing programs meet the highest national
voluntary standards for private certification. It means that the programs have been reviewed by an
impartial commission and deemed to have met the nationally accepted criteria and guidelines of the
NCCA.

**ABSNC Accreditation**
The primary certification and recertification programs of the NBCRNA are accredited through July
2022 by the Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC) of the American Board of
Nursing Specialties (ABNS). The NBCRNA (and before it, the CCNA and COR) was one of the first
national credentialing organizations to be recognized and accredited by the ABSNC.

The ABNS, established in 1991, is the national peer review program for specialty nursing credentialing
organizations. ABNS serves as the national umbrella organization for nursing specialty certification
boards authorized and recognized to certify nurse specialists in the United States. It promotes the
highest quality of specialty nursing practice through the establishment of standards of professional
specialty nursing certification.

**Recertification Overview**
Through the recertification process, the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse
Anesthetists (NBCRNA) seeks to advance the quality of nurse anesthesia care provided to patients.
Specifically, the NBCRNA endeavors to ensure that nurse anesthetists are maintaining their skills and
keeping current with scientific and technological developments. The NBCRNA also strives to assure
that appropriate limitations are placed on those who are known to have developed conditions that
might adversely affect their ability to practice nurse anesthesia.

A nurse anesthetist who has satisfied the NBCRNA’s objective criteria receives recertification for a
period of 2 years. Note: Effective March 1, 2016, upon review and acceptance of his or her
recertification application, a nurse anesthetist who has satisfied the NBCRNA’s published criteria will
be granted recertification for a period of 4 years. Recertification is not and cannot be a guarantee of
competence to perform all nurse anesthesia procedures. Full recertification is, however, an indication
that the nurse anesthetist has maintained a current license to practice, has exercised his or her skills,
has participated in approved continuing education activities and is not known to have developed any
impairment that could interfere with the practice of nurse anesthesia.
The NBCRNA also recognizes that some individuals who have not met the criteria for Full Recertification may nonetheless be qualified to practice, although sometimes subject to certain limitations. For this reason, the NBCRNA has created two categories of interim recertification (provisional and conditional). These categories are designed to reflect the particular situations of individual nurse anesthetists and to make potential employers or colleagues aware of these situations.

Note: Effective March 1, 2016, the provisional category is being eliminated as an option for new considerations.

Finally, the NBCRNA seeks to conduct the recertification process in a fair manner. Accordingly, it gives nurse anesthetists an opportunity to seek review and appeal of an adverse decision. Throughout the recertification process, the NBCRNA attempts to keep an individual’s file confidential unless disclosure is authorized by the individual or required by law.

## Categories of Recertification

The NBCRNA recognizes two categories of recertification: Full and Interim.

### Full Recertification

Applicants who fulfill all recertification criteria are granted Full Recertification.

### Interim Recertification

The two categories of Interim Recertification are: **Provisional Recertification** and **Conditional Recertification**. The purpose of these two categories is to provide for those individuals who, for a specific reason and for a limited period of time, may not be in full compliance with all recertification criteria.

Note: Effective March 1, 2016, the NBCRNA will no longer grant an interim status of provisional recertification. Individuals who have been granted a provisional interim recertification prior to March 1, 2016 will remain in that status until his/her next recertification cycle, unless he or she documents compliance with the criteria for Full Recertification, in which case Full Recertification may be granted. Effective March 1, 2016, the NBCRNA will, at its sole discretion, grant an interim recertification status of Conditional Recertification.

A more complete description of these categories may be found in the NBCRNA *General Information and Policies Handbook* on the NBCRNA website.

## Criteria for Full Recertification

In order to receive Full Recertification, an applicant must comply with all of the following requirements:
**Initial Certification**
Receipt of initial certification by the NBCRNA or its predecessor.

**Licensure**
Documentation of compliance with all state requirements for licensure as a registered nurse performing nurse anesthesia, including a current unrestricted license to practice as a registered professional nurse, with authority to practice nurse anesthesia if such authority is granted, in at least one state and in all states in which the applicant currently holds an active license. For those individuals employed by the United States government, “state requirements” refer to the requirements of any state or territory of the United States.

**Continuing Education**
Documentation of completion of 40 hours of approved continuing education, as set forth in the Continuing Education Program of the AANA, within the two-year period prior to the applicant’s upcoming August 1 recertification date or, if the applicant’s recertification period is shorter than two years, within such shortened period prior to the applicant’s upcoming August 1 recertification date.

Nurse anesthetists may earn continuing education (CE) credits beginning the day after an individual’s recertification application is approved.

Graduates of a program of anesthesia accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs who achieve a passing score on the National Certification Examination and are granted initial certification by the NBCRNA must earn 40 hours of approved continuing education from the date of initial certification through the applicant’s upcoming August 1 recertification date.

**Practice**
Certification by the applicant that he or she has been or will have been substantially engaged in the practice of nurse anesthesia during the 2-year period prior to the applicant’s upcoming August 1 recertification date and that the record of practice is accurate.

Note: Effective March 1, 2016, applicants who cannot attest to substantial practice within two years are required to certify that he or she has been or will have been substantially engaged in the practice of nurse anesthesia during the 4-year period prior to the applicant’s upcoming August 1 recertification date and that the record of practice is accurate. In circumstances where the applicant has not practiced substantially within 2 years, but has practiced substantially within 4 years, the decision as to whether the individual has met the practice requirement for Full Recertification is at the sole discretion of the NBCRNA.

Substantial engagement in the practice of nurse anesthesia generally should consist of a minimum of 850 hours of practice over the 2-year recertification period. Because individual practice experiences vary, it is the responsibility of the applicant to assess whether his or her practice experience constitutes substantial engagement and to so certify.

The practice of nurse anesthesia may include clinical practice, nurse anesthesia-related administrative, educational or research activities, or a combination of two or more of such areas of practice. To be nurse anesthesia-related, activities must have as their primary objective and be directly related to the delivery of anesthesia care to patients or the improvement of delivery of anesthesia care to patients.
The decision as to whether an applicant has satisfied the practice requirement is at the sole discretion of the NBCRNA. If the NBCRNA determines that an applicant has not satisfied the practice requirement for recertification, he or she will be referred to the NBCRNA Refresher Program. (The NBCRNA Refresher Program will transition to the NBCRNA Reentry Program effective August 1, 2016.)

Certifications by the Applicant
Each applicant must make the following certifications:

1. That his or her license has never been revoked, restricted, suspended or limited by any state, has never been surrendered, and is not the subject of a pending action or investigation.
2. That he or she does not currently suffer from a mental or physical condition that might interfere with the practice of nurse anesthesia.
3. That he or she does not currently suffer from drug or alcohol addiction or abuse.
4. That he or she is not currently participating in a drug-related, alcohol-related, or other type of treatment, monitoring or rehabilitation program, including any voluntary programs even if disclosure is not required by the state.
5. That he or she has not been convicted of, and is not currently under indictment for, any felony.
6. That he or she has not been the subject of any documented allegations of gross incompetence, unprofessional behavior or unethical conduct.
7. That he or she has been or will have been substantially engaged in the practice of nurse anesthesia during the 2-year period prior to the applicant’s upcoming August 1 recertification date, and that the record of practice submitted with the application is accurate.

If the applicant does not so certify, he or she must provide full documentation of the reasons therefore with sufficient specificity to allow the NBCRNA to evaluate the possible impact of the problem or action on the applicant’s current ability to practice nurse anesthesia, and to resolve the issue to the NBCRNA’s satisfaction.

Waiver of Liability and Agreement of Authorization, Confidentiality and Disclosure Statements
Each applicant for recertification must, by his or her signature, agree that he or she has read, understands, and intends to be legally bound by these statements.

Application for Recertification

1. Application and Fee(s)
In order to be recertified, each applicant must submit the following materials to the NBCRNA: A completed, signed, electronic Recertification Application, including, but not limited to, acceptable documentation of continuing education credit and payment of all recertification fees, must be received by the NBCRNA no later than the July 31 expiration date of the applicant’s current recertification or the first date on which a nurse anesthetist is eligible to recertify. However, to allow adequate time for processing and verification of information, application materials should be submitted to the NBCRNA at least 4 weeks prior to the July 31 expiration date.
2. Documentation of Licensure
   a. Every applicant must submit documentation of compliance with all state requirements for
   b. licensure as a registered nurse performing nurse anesthesia, including a current and
      unrestricted license to practice as a registered professional nurse, with authority to
      practice nurse anesthesia if such authority is granted, in at least one state and in all states
      in which the applicant currently holds an active license. For those individuals employed by
      the United States government, the license may be issued by any state or territory of the
      United States.
   c. If the applicant has practiced in more than one state during the during the prior 2-year
      period, the applicant must provide appropriate documentation of licensure for the
      relevant time of practice in each state shown on the applicant’s record of practice.

3. Documentation of Continuing Education
   Acceptable documentation of completion of 40 hours of approved continuing education, as
   set forth in the AANA Continuing Education Program, must be received by the NBCRNA no
   later than the applicant’s July 31 expiration date, but preferably at least 4 weeks prior to the
   July 31 deadline.

4. Documentation of Practice
   Every applicant must submit a record of practice setting forth:
   a. a list of the facilities at which the applicant has practiced clinical nurse anesthesia or
      performed nurse anesthesia-related administrative, educational or research services
      within the preceding two-year period;
   b. the applicant’s title or role at each facility, such as “practitioner” or “educator;”
   c. the address of the facility;
   d. the name and phone number of a contact person who can verify employment at each
      facility; and the inclusive dates of practice at each facility;
   e. the inclusive dates of practice at each facility.

5. Effective Date of Recertification
   a. If an applicant has complied with all recertification criteria and the NBCRNA has received
      and approved a complete application by the July 31 deadline, the effective date of
      recertification will be August 1.
   b. If an applicant has not complied with the recertification criteria by the July 31 deadline, or
      the NBCRNA has not received and approved a complete application by July 31, the
      effective date of recertification will be the date on which the recertification criteria have
      been satisfied and a complete application has been received and approved by the
      NBCRNA. In such cases an applicant’s recertification period will be shortened accordingly.
      The NBCRNA will not, under any circumstances, extend the July 31 expiration date for
      compliance with recertification criteria.

Recertification-Specific Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures are Recertification-specific. Please note that there are
additional NBCRNA policies and procedures posted to the NBCRNA website that may apply. Nurse
anesthetists are responsible for being aware of any and all applicable procedures.

Recertification Period
Recertification historically has been effective for up to two years. As of March 1, 2016, Full
Recertification is effective for a period of up to four years depending on the individual’s date of recertification. Recertification expires four years later on July 31 for individuals who recertified between 3/1/2016 and 7/31/2017. Recertification expires automatically at the end of the recertification period unless renewed.

Interim or time-limited Recertification may be granted for a period of less than four years at the discretion of the NBCRNA.

Late Applications
Applications that are either incomplete or received after July 31 will be subject to a reinstatement fee for lapsed recertification. This fee will be required in addition to all other applicable recertification application fees.

New Graduates
New graduates of nurse anesthesia educational programs accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA) who achieve a passing score on the National Certification Examination (NCE) and are granted initial certification by the NBCRNA on or before December 31, 2015 must comply with all of the requirements of the Criteria for Full or Interim Recertification and must submit all of the materials required in the Application for Recertification section. New graduates who are granted initial certification on or after January 1, 2016 must comply with all criteria for maintenance of certification and submit all required application materials in accordance with CPC program requirements.

Transition to the Continued Professional Certification (CPC) Program
Effective August 1, 2016, the Continued Professional Certification (CPC) program will replace the current 2-year recertification program, and maintenance of certification and achievement of CPC-compliance will be determined in accordance with the criteria for Continued Professional Recertification.

Current nurse anesthetists and graduates initially certified on or before December 31, 2015 will enter into the CPC Program on August 1 in either 2016 or 2017, depending on their last recertification date. Transition into the CPC Program will occur after completion of the last 2-year recertification cycle. Individuals who are initially certified on or after January 1, 2016 will immediately enter into the CPC program. For any questions regarding the Recertification Program, please email recertification@nbcrna.com or call 855-285-4658.