

# Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM) Recertification Guide

Maintenance of Certification



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COMMISSION ON CERTIFICATION

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AHIMA

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## CCHIIM Mission

Through certification, CCHIIM ensures the competency of professionals practicing health informatics and information management worldwide.

## CCHIIM Values

- The application of evidence-based best practices for certification;
- The validation of workforce competence through professional certification;
- The commitment to ongoing professional development, lifelong learning, and workforce excellence; and
- The recognition of CCHIIM-certified professionals' role in maintaining and enhancing quality healthinformation for the safety of the public and the improvement of healthcare.

## CCHIIM Recertification Program

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### Purpose

The CCHIIM recertification (maintenance of an American Health Information Management Association certification (AHIMA) program ensures that CCHIIM-certified professionals demonstrate ongoing competence in the domain areas in which they are certified, through either maintenance or enhancement activities. For the purposes of recertification (maintenance of an AHIMA certification), CCHIIM further defines maintenance and enhancement activities as follows:

**Maintenance:** Completion of educational programs that provide updated training and skills to allow continued competence in Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM) by earning the required number of continuing education units (CEUs) in any of the HIIM Domains.

**Enhancement:** Completion of educational programs that result in expanded knowledge and skills to enhance professional growth in HIIM by earning additional CEUs in a specific HIIM domain. This is beyond the requirement to maintain certification.

The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) definition of continuing competence is, "demonstrating specified levels of knowledge, skills, or ability not only at the time of initial certification but throughout an individual's professional career."

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***Congratulations on earning your AHIMA professional credential! You've marked yourself as a leader and HIIM expert, and shown your support for the healthcare profession. But there's more to certification than that. Through it you've increased your chances for success in your chosen career.***

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## **AHIMA Certification—Your Best Professional Value**

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### **Receiving an AHIMA Credential Means:**

- Demonstrating commitment to your professional area of expertise, a dedication to quality healthcare, and a need to establish high standards in managing confidential health information.
- Offering ongoing value to your profession and employer through continuation of your personal education, allowing you to maintain your expertise and contribute at the highest levels.
- Having an edge over noncertified professionals. AHIMA certification signifies experience and knowledge, and validates professional competence for employers, consumers, and yourself.

### **What Are the Biggest Benefits of Recertification (Maintenance of an AHIMA Certification)?**

- Return on investment from the high value of being AHIMA certified.
- Professional prestige helps you remain competitive in a tough job market.
- Demonstration of your ongoing commitment and competence in HIIM.
- Networking opportunities with similarly credentialed peers who share your level of expertise.

### **To Recertify You Must:**

1. Obtain the required number of CEUs during your recertification cycle
2. Participate in accepted and qualified CEU activities
3. Report your CEUs in the CEU center by the due date
4. Pay your recertification fee in your CEU center by the due date
5. Document, retain and file your CEU activity for auditing and more in the CEU Center of your MyAHIMA account

## **Recertification Terminology**

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**Recertification Cycle:** The two (2) year cycle during which time an individual must obtain and earn their designated number of CEUs and pay the recertification fee(s) in order to maintain their credential(s) in order to maintain their credential(s).

**Anniversary Date:** The date an individual successfully passed their initial certification exam, which is also the start date for their recertification cycle.

**Inactive Period:** If an individual has not successfully met the recertification requirements during their recertification cycle, a six (6) month Inactive Period will begin following the recertification cycle end date. During the Inactive period, CEUs earned during the recertification cycle can be reported in the CEU center. A

recertification extension fee (per credential) will also be added to the credential holder’s account if the credential falls into the Inactive Period.

**Reinstatement Period:** If an individual has not successfully met the recertification requirements during their Inactive Period, a six (6) month Reinstatement Period follows the Inactive Period end date.

During the Reinstatement Period:

- The credential(s) is considered revoked.
- A reinstatement fee will be added to the credential holder’s account once the CEU requirement has been met
- CEUs earned during the first twelve (12) months of the recertification cycle will become non-applicable to reinstate the credential
- CEUs earned during the second twelve (12) months of the two-year recertification cycle until the reinstatement end date can be reported.
- If recertification requirements are not met by the Reinstatement period end date, the credential will be permanently revoked

## Recertification Process

### CEU Requirements for Single Credential

If You Have a(n)...	You Must Earn...
Certified Coding Associate (CCA)	20 CEUs
Certified Coding Specialist (CCS)	20 CEUs
Certified Coding Specialist—Physician-based (CCS-P)	20 CEUs
Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)	30 CEUs
Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT)	20 CEUs
Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA)	30 CEUs
Certified in Healthcare Privacy and Security (CHPS)	30 CEUs
Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner (CDIP)	30 CEUs

### CEU Requirements for Multiple Credentials

If you have more than one AHIMA credential, you must earn ten (10) additional CEUs per credential during your two-year recertification cycle, up to a total of fifty (50) CEUs. These CEUs may not be duplicated or used for more than one credential. Below are examples.

Credential	Required Number of CEUs
CCS and CCS-P	(20 + 10) 30
CHPS with RHIT	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CHDA	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CDIP	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CCS and CCS-P	(30 + 10 + 10) 50
CHDA with CCS, CHPS, and CDIP	(30 + 10 + 10) 50
RHIA with CCS, CCS-P, CHDA, and CDIP	(30 + 10 + 10) 50

### Credential Hierarchy:

- Upon completion of the requirements, a baccalaureate or higher level HIM credential (RHIA) supersedes an associate based HIM credential (RHIT). Once granted, recertification requirements for the RHIT are no longer required.
- The CCS credential supersedes the CCA credential. Upon passing the CCS examination, the CCA is replaced with the CCS. Recertification requirements are no longer required for the CCA credential.

### Recertification Cycle

Health informatics and information management (HIIM) is a constantly evolving field, and professionals in this field require the most current knowledge to move the profession forward. Best practices, technology, privacy and security, coding updates, healthcare laws and regulations change frequently. For these reasons a recertification cycle of two years has been established, during which time certificants will be required to attain a specific number of CEUs in order to update existing knowledge and skills as well as acquire new knowledge and skills relating to advances in the HIIM field and changing job responsibilities.

**Initial Recertification Cycle:** The initial recertification cycle for newly credentialed certificants (first credential obtained) begins the day the exam is passed and ends two years later. A credential is awarded when a candidate:

- Passes the certification examination, OR
- Passes the certification examination AND has successfully completed the academic requirements of an HIIM program accredited by CAHIIM (for RHIA and RHIT testing candidates). The academic prerequisite is confirmed when an official transcript is submitted and approved.
- **Initial for RHIT or RHIA Early Testing Candidates:** The initial recertification cycle for RHIT or RHIA early testers will begin once official transcripts have been approved. Early test takers will have up to one (1) year after the exam is passed to submit their official transcript. If transcripts are not submitted within that timeframe, the exam will have to be re-taken and passed.

### Example

Exam taken:	Exam pass date:	Transcript approval date:	Recertification cycle is:
RHIA	11/18/2021	10/5/2021	11/18/2021-11/17/2023

**Ongoing:** The recertification cycle for subsequently obtained credential(s) begins with the start of the next cycle date for the first or initial credential. For the remainder of the current cycle the second credential will be placed into a sync cycle.

**Sync Cycle:** Waives the recertification requirements for that credential for the first recertification cycle.

### Example

If existing credential is:	Current recertification cycle is:	After obtaining:	The recertification cycle for both credentials is:
RHIA	11/18/2021 – 11/17/2023	*CCS on 12/8/2022	11/18/2021-11/17/2023

*\*In this example, CEUs are only required for the RHIA credential. CCS is in a sync cycle. Recertification requirements for the CCS are waived for this recertification cycle.*

## Qualifying Continuing Education Activities and Calculation of CEUs

### Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

CEUs must be earned within your recertification cycle and must be relevant to the HIIM field as presented in the HIIM domains to be eligible for CEU credit. Eighty (80) percent of required recertification CEUs must be earned within the HIIM domains (see Appendix A). The remaining twenty (20) percent can include participation in CEU activities on topics not included in the domains but relevant to the credential holder's professional position.

### Calculation of CEUs

Calculation of CEUs is based upon clock hours. 0.5 CEUs are given for every thirty (30) minutes of attendance or participation that is fixed in length.

A session lasting 30 to 44 minutes will be accepted for 0.5 CEU credits; a session lasting less than 30 minutes will not be accepted for CEU credit. CEU credit should be calculated according to the following method:

Session Length	CEU Credits
0–29 minutes (0–0.49 hrs.)	0 CEUs
30–44 minutes (0.50–0.74 hrs.)	0.5 CEUs
45–89 minutes (0.75–1.49 hrs.)	1 CEU
90–104 minutes (1.50–1.74 hrs.)	1.5 CEUs
105–149 minutes (1.75–2.49 hrs.)	2 CEUs
150–164 minutes (2.50–2.74 hrs.)	2.5 CEUs
165–209 minutes (2.75–3.49 hrs.)	3 CEUs

### CEU Activities

1. Participation in educational programs on topics relevant to HIIM.
  - a. Educational portions of AHIMA meetings (national convention, state, local, or regional meetings)-*one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*
  - b. Educational portions of programs of allied health and other relevant professional associations - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*
  - c. Educational portions of programs sponsored by organizations or vendors on topics that maintain, update, or enlarge knowledge and skills relevant to the HIIM profession - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*
  - d. Telecommunications and teleseminars relevant to the HIIM profession - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*
2. Participation in educational programs of study that address HIIM-relevant subject areas.
  - a. Accredited post-secondary courses attended for credit, including traditional on-campus, online, or distance education administered through a college or university. This includes courses taken in pursuit of HIIM profession-relevant associate, baccalaureate, master, or doctorate degrees. All coursework and final exams must be completed by the recertification cycle end date - *fifteen (15) CEUs for each semester/ trimester credit; ten (10) CEUs for each quarter credit. CEUs earned in this manner cannot be reported for a future credential.*

#### Example

***If the credential holder has an active RHIT credential and is seeking to take the RHIA exam, CEUs earned from completed courses can only be applied to the RHIT credential.***

- b. Audit of academic course or relevant non-credit adult education course, including attendance at a college or university course with permission and following regulations, without completing necessary requirements for full credit. Course must be completed by the recertification cycle end date - *six (6) CEUs for each semester/trimester credit; four (4) CEUs for each quarter credit. **CEUs earned in this manner cannot be reported for a future credential.***  
**Example: If the credential holder has an active RHIT credential and is seeking to take the RHIA exam, CEUs earned from completed courses can only be applied to the RHIT credential.**
- c. In-person, online or distance education programs relevant to HIIM core content, that are not a college or university credit course, or a prior-approved AHIMA program, will be subject to review through a validation process. All program coursework and exams must be completed by the recertification cycle end date (*CEUs must be determined on an individual basis by CCHIIM*).
3. Publication and presentation of material relevant to HIIM.
- a. Publication is the development of an original work, relevant to the HIIM profession, reproduced by written or electronic means for general dissemination to the public (unless required as part of work responsibilities - see section VI.6.a. and VI.6.b).
- Author of a textbook, workbook, or manual - *thirty (30) CEUs*
  - Editor of a textbook, workbook, or manual - *twenty (20) CEUs*
  - Author of an article in a research journal - *fifteen (15) CEUs*
  - Author of a chapter in a textbook, workbook, or manual - *ten (10) CEUs*
  - Author of an educational article in a professional or trade journal - *five (5) CEUs*
  - Editor of a professional or trade journal - *five (5) CEUs*
  - AHIMA course writing (for example, Virtual Lab, CourseShare, EHR Hybrid Environment six-lesson course) - *five (5) CEUs*
  - Author of an educational article in a local or state newsletter - *two (2) CEUs*
  - Reviewer of book manuscripts prior to publications - *one (1) CEU per chapter*
- b. Presentation is the development of an original work delivered to an audience.
- Speaker at an educational program - *one (1) CEU for each 15 minutes of podium time*
  - Panel participant at an educational program - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of podium time*
4. Independent study activities relevant to the HIIM profession.
- a. Study groups devoted to topics relevant to HIIM. CEUs will not be granted if the study groups are used to prepare for the exam or certification held - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*
- b. Enrollment in one or more AHIMA independent study program modules (*CEUs pre-determined by CCHIIM*)
- c. Enrollment in independent study programs relevant to AHIMA core education content areas from organizations other than AHIMA (*AHIMA prior approval required*).
- d. AHIMA post-test offerings accompanying a *Journal of AHIMA* article or book published by AHIMA (*CEUs pre-determined by CCHIIM*)
- e. Advanced research (for example, reading and analyzing material above and beyond one's knowledge of the subject matter) in a HIIM topic area to support activities associated with an expert panel, workgroup, or task force of AHIMA or its affiliate - *one (1) CEU per each year*



5 . Exam Development activities – such as item writing and job analysis

- Subject Matter Experts that volunteer to participate in AHIMA’s certification exam development activities - *one (1) CEU for every hour of participation*
- Subject Matter Experts that volunteer to participate in AHIMA’s job analysis activities - *one (1) CEU for every hour of participation*

To volunteer in AHIMA’s exam development activities please send an email to [SME@AHIMA.org](mailto:SME@AHIMA.org)

6. Other activities

- Substantive oversight and involvement of directed clinical practice on behalf of a Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) accredited program - *five (5) CEUs per student supervised with a maximum of ten (10) CEUs for student supervision allowed in each recertification cycle*

Substantive oversight and involvement include, but is not limited to:

- Creating a training plan and schedule of activities
- Developing and assigning project(s)
- Providing direction and guidance
- Conducting review of progress and providing feedback
- Conducting student evaluation at the conclusion of the project(s)
- Other considerations: CEUs for other individuals assigned as mentors - *one (1) CEU for every 60 minutes of direct contact with a maximum of five (5) CEUs (five hours of contact) per student, and a maximum of ten (10) CEUs allowed in each recertification cycle.*
- Participation in an AHIMA volunteer leader conference, breakout session or work group where learning and skill development occurs (*CEUs pre-determined by AHIMA*)
- Visiting AHIMA exhibits at a national or state meeting – up to two (2) per meeting
- Internet educational offerings relevant to AHIMA core education content areas (*AHIMA prior-approval required*)
- Facilitator for an AHIMA Community of Practice (CoP or other online HIIM community) - *five (5) CEUs for one year service, per community, each year of the two-year cycle*
- Activities defined by the guidelines for approval of CE programs for state, local, and regional HIM associations
- Exceptional events recognized by the CCHIIM

### Non-Qualifying Continuing Education Activities

Examples of activities that do not qualify for CEUs are as follows. The list is illustrative and not intended to be all-inclusive.

- Responsibilities that fall within the normal parameters of an individual’s job description, including, but not limited to, the following: (1) staff meetings; (2) grand rounds; (3) preparation for and/or participation in accreditation and licensure surveys; (4) preparation of procedure, policy, or administrative manuals; (5) conducting tours; (6) participation in career day activities; (7) development of employee and staff training materials
- Published materials and/or presentations developed as a direct part of an individual’s employment
- Serving in a volunteer leadership role for AHIMA or any other professional organization
- Instructing or teaching a class
- Summarizing articles, audiotapes, or video

## Entering your CEUs

To recertify, you must enter the required numbers of CEUs and pay the recertification fee online in your MyAHIMA account. On the last day of your recertification cycle, your account will automatically be reviewed by the system to determine if you have met all applicable recertification requirements. If you have met the recertification requirements, your cycle will roll over to the subsequent two-year recertification cycle.

If you do not meet your recertification requirements by the due date, your cycle will roll into the Inactive Period. To avoid penalty (including extension fees and a permanently revoked credential), recertification requirements must be met no later than the last day of your recertification cycle end date.

Please log into your MyAHIMA account - CEU Center to track your recertification progress.

**Previously submitted learning experiences for accumulating additional CEUs beyond the first experience is not allowed under any circumstances.** All AHIMA certified professionals are subject to recertification audit – individuals who submit previous learning experiences for accumulating additional CEUs will have these experiences removed from their CEU center.”

## Recertification Fees (plus any applicable extension and reinstatement fees):

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### Single Credential (Non-Members)

\$218.00

### Each Additional Credential (Non-Members)

\$50.00

### Extension Fee (Per Credential Non-Members)

\$50.00

### Single Credential (All Members excluding Emeritus Members)

\$100.00

### Each Additional Credential

\$20.00

### Extension Fee (Per Credential)

\$50.00

### Single Credential (Emeritus Members ONLY)

\$10.00

### Each Additional Credential

\$10.00

### Extension Fee (Per Credential)

\$50.00

### Reinstatement Fee (Per Credential) (Members & Non-Members)

\$368.00

### **\*All fees are non-refundable\***

\*If you paid fee(s) that are owed to AHIMA (e.g., recertification, exam registration, recertification extension) and the funds are revoked, disputed, or insufficient funds occurs, your credential will be placed in a Revoked status until the fee(s) and any additional fees are paid in full. \*

*Note: Credential holders who are not AHIMA members pay the above fees on a biennial basis. Credential holders who are AHIMA members pay reduced recertification fees on a biennial basis. **The cost of your recertification fees will be based on your membership status.***

*Recertification due will be invoiced in the AHIMA CEU Center and payments must be made by or before your recertification cycle end date. All CEUs must be entered into your CEU center before paying the recertification fee.*

## Certification Status

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### Status Types

a. **Active:** Active status is based on meeting the recertification requirements within the two (2) year recertification cycle.

b. **Inactive:** Inactive status is based on failure to complete the recertification requirements within the two (2) year recertification cycle. Inactive status lasts for a six (6) month. Inactive Period, after which the status moves to temporarily revoked if recertification requirements are not met (see details of temporarily revoked status below).

The credential(s) may not be used during the period of inactive status. To re-activate a credential to Active status, credential holders must meet the original recertification requirements and pay the recertification extension fee for each credential

c. **Temporarily Revoked** (Reinstatement period): Temporarily revoked status is based on failure to complete the recertification requirements within the six (6) inactive period. Temporarily revoked status lasts for six (6) months following the last day of the inactive period.

The credential(s) may not be used during the period. Temporarily revoked status, after which the status moves to permanently revoked if recertification requirements are not met (see details of reinstating credential)

d. **Permanently Revoked**

i. Based on failure to complete recertification requirements within the two (2) year recertification cycle, the six (6) month inactive period, and the six (6) month reinstatement period. Please see the status timeline below. There are six months between each status period. Individuals may not use the applicable credential(s) once they have been permanently revoked.

Active (2-year recertification period) →

Inactive (1 -6 months after recertification period ends) →

Temporarily Revoked (reinstatement period; 6 – 12 months after recertification period) →

Permanently Revoked (12+ months after recertification period)

ii. Based on CCHIIM appeals committee or AHIMA Professional Ethics Committee decision regarding misconduct.

e. **Retired:** Based on the voluntary request of a fully retired individual who is no longer working in the field of HIIM. The individual may retire and begin work in the field unrelated to HIIM so long as he or she no longer holds any HIIM responsibilities. The individual's credential(s) must be active and in good standing at the time of the request. Retired requests must be done in writing. Requests can be submitted to [Certification@ahima.org](mailto:Certification@ahima.org). To re-activate a retired credential, the credential must be retired for a period of at

least 24 months and must take the current exam for each credential being un-retired. Re-activation requests can be submitted to [Certification@ahima.org](mailto:Certification@ahima.org). An individual falling under the retired status must use the term “retired” following his or her credential to differentiate from the Active Status credential, e.g., John Smith, RHIA (Retired). Note: Credential holders who are retired may continue to maintain the CEU recertification requirement and uphold an active credential if they choose so.

- f. **Voluntarily Relinquished:** Based on a voluntary request of an individual who no longer wishes to maintain his or her credential and voluntarily withdraws from the recertification process. The individual’s credential(s) must be active and in good standing at the time of the request. Voluntarily relinquished requests must be done in writing. Requests can be submitted to [Certification@ahima.org](mailto:Certification@ahima.org). Once a credential has been voluntarily relinquished it cannot be placed back into an active status. The certification examination must be re-taken and pass to re-activate the credential.

\*Individuals may not use the applicable credential(s) once they have been voluntarily relinquished.\*

## Reinstating A Credential

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### Reinstatement of Credentials

Individuals whose credential(s) has been temporarily revoked can complete the reinstatement process by following the instructions below.

#### Option A: Reactivate by CEU and Reinstatement Fee

- a. Obtain and submit the required number of CEUs into your CEU center. During the reinstatement period the credential(s) is considered temporarily revoked. CEUs earned from the half-way point of the two-year recertification cycle until the reinstatement end date can be reported. CEUs earned and reported during the first twelve (12) of the recertification cycle will become non-applicable to reinstate the credential. If recertification requirements are not met by the reinstatement period end date, the credential will be permanently revoked.
- b. Pay the reinstatement fee of \$368.00 by logging into your CEU center

#### Option B: Reactivate by Exam

- a. Retake the applicable certification exam and pass

Note: CEUs accumulated after the end of the previous recertification cycle can be reported for reactivated. However, these CEUs cannot be used or reported for the next recertification cycle. Certificants who report or use CEUs accumulated after the recertification cycle end date to reactivate their credential(s) will automatically be placed on the audit list for next cycle.

The individual will be placed in the subsequent two-year recertification cycle following reinstatement within 72 business hours.

***\*Based on your credential hierarchy order, your primary credential must be reinstated first or in an active status before any other credential(s) will be reinstated.\****

## Recertification Appeal Process

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Individuals may appeal the permanent revocation of their credential due to failure to meet CCHIIM recertification requirements. Appeals to CCHIIM by a credentialed professional are strictly limited to disputes regarding permanent revocation.

- Appeal applications can only be submitted once every ten (10) years per credential
- Appeal applications can only be submitted within ninety (90) days once your credential is permanently placed in a revoked status
- The appeal application is \$100.00 and is non-refundable

- The fee must be paid in full before your appeal application will be filed and reviewed by the CCHIIM Review Panel (CRP)

The appeal application and additional information can be found on the AHIMA website

<https://ahima.org/certification-careers/apply/policies-appeals/>

## Additional Recertification Processes

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### Audits

Each year a percentage of individuals are randomly selected for audit. Individuals selected for audits will be notified in writing and will be required to submit verifiable documentation (for example, certificates of attendance or similar materials) for each activity listed in the CEU Center by the due date specified on the audit notification material.

Verifiable documentation can include certificates of attendance, program materials, or other information provided by the program sponsor that verify program date, length, and subject matter (that is, agenda, program outline, handout, meeting summary, or meeting transcript).

It is therefore strongly recommended that CEU participants retain a hard or electronic copy of all records in their files for at least two (2) years following the recertification cycle end date. Individuals who fail to respond to the audit request by the specified due date or are found to have submitted false information on their recertification form may be denied recertification.

### Waiver of Recertification Requirements

The Commission may for a good cause waive or reduce the CEU requirement. Certificants may request a temporary waiver by submitting a written request to the Commission for consideration.

- a. Temporary Waiver – CCHIIM may temporarily waive recertification requirements due to extenuating circumstances or hardships (e.g., financial hardship, illness, unforeseen circumstances, and natural catastrophes). Temporary waiver requests must be done in writing. Requests must include documentation (e.g., unemployment letter, obituary or death certificates, medical records) showing why the recertification requirements could not be met. Requests and documentation must be submitted in writing to [Recert@ahima.org](mailto:Recert@ahima.org). Please be advised, preemptive waivers will not be considered if received during the last 6 months of your recertification cycle as described below:

- i. For those on a two-year CALENDAR cycle, requests for temporary waivers must be received after July 1<sup>st</sup> and on or before December 1<sup>st</sup> of your recertification end date.

#### Example

If your recertification cycle is January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2022, then your temporary waiver request must be received on or after July 1, 2022, and on or before December 1, 2022.

- ii. For those on a two-year ANNIVERSARY cycle, requests for temporary waivers must be received during the last 6 months of your recertification cycle end date.

#### Example

If your recertification cycle is April 1, 2021 – March 30, 2023, then your temporary waiver request must be received on or after October 1, 2022, and on or before March 1, 2023.

**All requests can take up to 30 days to be reviewed. You will be notified via email with a decision.**

## Sunset Credentials

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### Sunset Credentials

AHIMA no longer offers examination of these sunset credentials; therefore the recertification maintenance is no longer required.

<b>Credential</b>	<b>Year Sunset</b>
Physician Coding Specialist (PCS)	2001
Certified in Healthcare Security (CHS)	2007
Certified in Healthcare Privacy (CHP)	2008
Certified in Healthcare Technology Specialist (CHTS)	2018
Certified Professional in Health Informatics (CPHI)	2018

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### What is recertification?

Recertification (maintenance of an AHIMA certification) is a process that ensures CCHIIM-certified professionals demonstrate ongoing competence in the domain areas in which they are certified, through either maintenance or enhancement activities.

### What is certification maintenance?

Certification maintenance is the completion of educational programs that provide updated training and skills to allow continued competence in HIIM by earning the required number of CEUs in any of the HIIM domains.

### What is certification enhancement?

Certification enhancement is the completion of educational programs that result in expanded knowledge and skills to enhance professional growth in HIIM by earning additional CEUs in a specific HIIM domain. This is beyond the requirement to maintain certification.

### What is the initial recertification cycle?

For individuals certified on December 12, 2021, and after, the initial recertification cycle for newly credentialed certificants (first credential obtained) is two years beginning on the day the credential is awarded, which is also the date the certification exam was passed.

**Example:** If you passed the CCS examination on January 8, 2022, your recertification cycle begins on January 8, 2022, and ends on January 7, 2024, for a period of (2) years. CEUs earned during this period can be reported when you recertify.

### What if I am a RHIA or RHIT early tester—when does my initial recertification cycle begin?

Once your transcript is reviewed and eligibility is confirmed, your recertification cycle begins the day your transcript is approved. You will have up to a year from the time the exam is passed to submit your official transcript.

### What do I need to do in order to recertify or maintain my certification status?

To recertify or maintain your certification, you will need to earn and report the required amount of CEUs and pay your recertification fee(s) within your recertification cycle. This can be done by logging into your CEU center at <https://my.ahima.org/account>.

### I currently have only one (1) AHIMA credential. How many CEUs must I accumulate during the reporting period?

#### CEU Requirements for Single Credential

If You Have a(n)...	You Must Earn...
Certified Coding Associate (CCA)	20 CEUs
Certified Coding Specialist (CCS)	20 CEUs
Certified Coding Specialist—Physician-based (CCS-P)	20 CEUs
Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)	30 CEUs
Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT)	20 CEUs
Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA)	30 CEUs
Certified in Healthcare Privacy and Security (CHPS)	30 CEUs
Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner (CDIP)	30 CEUs

I currently have multiple (two or more) AHIMA credentials. How many CEUs must I accumulate during the reporting period?

### CEU Requirements for Multiple Credentials

If you have more than one AHIMA credential, you must earn ten (10) additional CEUs per credential during your two-year recertification cycle, up to a maximum of fifty (50) CEUs. These CEUs may not be duplicated or used for more than one credential. Below are examples.

Credential	Required Number of CEUs
CCS and CCS-P	(20 + 10) 30
CHPS with RHIT	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CHDA	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CDIP	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CCS and CCS-P	(30 + 10 + 10) 50
CHDA with CCS, CHPS, and CDIP	(30 + 10 + 10 + 10) 50
RHIA with CCS, CCS-P, CHDA, and CDIP	(30 + 10 + 10 + 10 + 10) 50

### How can I earn AHIMA CEUs?

AHIMA offers many opportunities to earn CEUs through meetings, audio and webinars, distance learning courses, and other activities that qualify for CEUs. For additional information on these products, please visit <https://my.ahima.org/store/>

### Can I use CEUs earned through organizations other than AHIMA?

Yes. CCHIIM accepts CEUs earned through other organizations, provided they qualify as valid CEU activities and are relevant to HIIM. See the CEU Activities section for additional details on accepted CEUs and calculation methods.

### Can I get CEUs for college courses?

Yes. CCHIIM accepts CEUs earned through participation in formal educational programs of study that address subject areas related to HIIM. Please note you cannot use courses taken prior to your certification. See the CEU Activities section for additional details on accepted CEUs and calculation methods.

### Can I earn AHIMA CEUs by earning another AHIMA certification?

No. At this time CCHIIM has not designated this as a valid CEU activity.

### How can I find out how many AHIMA CEUs I have earned so far?

CEUs earned directly through an AHIMA activity where badges are used such as at the AHIMA annual convention and the Assembly on Education Symposium will be automatically recorded in your AHIMA CEU Center.

Other AHIMA activities and non-AHIMA earned CEUs must be manually recorded in your AHIMA CEU Center. The CEU Center tracks how many CEUs you have earned within your current recertification cycle.



## What fees are required for renewing my certification?

### For AHIMA-Certified Nonmembers:

#### Single Credential

- Primary credential fee of \$218 per cycle

#### Multiple Credentials

Primary credential (based on credential hierarchy) fee, plus \$50 for each additional credential per cycle.

#### Examples:

##### 1. RHIA supersedes RHIT

- Year 1 = no fee
- Year 2 = \$218 recertification fee for RHIA

Based on credential hierarchy, the RHIA credential replaces the RHIT.

##### 2. CCS supersedes CCA

- Year 1 = no fee
- Year 2 = \$218 recertification fee for

CCS Two-year total fees = \$218

Based on credential hierarchy, the CCS credential replaces the CCA.

##### 3. RHIA and CHDA

- Year 1 = no fee
- Year 2 = \$218 recertification fee for RHIA, plus \$50 recertification fee
- Total fees = \$268

##### 4. RHIT, CCS, and CCSP

- Year 1 = no fee
- Year 2 = \$218 recertification fee for RHIT plus \$50 recertification fee per credential

Two-year total fees = \$318

### For AHIMA Members:

The cost of your recertification will be based on your membership status.

## What should I do with my CEU documentation?

For your own convenience, in case you are selected for a random audit of your reported CEUs, you should upload all CEU documentation into your CEU Center at the time you report your CEUs. In addition, you should retain all documentation for two (2) full years past your certification renewal date, in the event you are audited.

## Do CEUs carry over from one reporting period to another?

No. You can only report CEUs earned during the current recertification cycle.

## What if I don't have enough CEUs to recertify or maintain my certification?

If you do not report the required number of CEUs and pay the appropriate recertification fee(s) by the end of your recertification cycle, your credential(s) will be placed in an inactive status. Your account will be charged a recertification extension fee for each credential. CCHIIM provides a six (6) month window (the inactive period) for credential holders to meet the recertification requirements before the revocation process begins.

### What is the yearly audit?

In order to ensure high standards of competency and continuing education, AHIMA/CCHIIM will conduct an annual audit. A randomly selected percentage sample of recertification forms submitted from the prior reporting period will be sampled to participate in the audit. The audit will be conducted at each credential level. If audited, you will be required to provide documented proof of all CEU activity reported during the reporting period to AHIMA within 30 days.

If you are unable to provide documented proof within 30 days, your certification will be considered permanently. All audit paperwork is reviewed for completeness and accuracy by AHIMA certification staff. If all CEU activity documentation is successfully submitted by the due date, you will be notified via email that you have successfully met the audit requirements.

## Appendix A—HIIM Domains

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**HIIM Professional Domain Definition:** HIIM improves the quality of healthcare by ensuring the most timely and accurate information is available to make any healthcare decision. HIIM professionals manage healthcare data and information resources. The profession encompasses services in planning, collecting, aggregating, analyzing, and disseminating individual patient and aggregate clinical data. It serves the following healthcare stakeholders: patients, providers, patient care organizations, research and policy agencies, payers, and other healthcare-related entities.

Eighty (80) percent of all CEUs must be earned within the HIIM Domain, which is divided into the domain areas below.

The CCHIIM provides the following list of examples of educational experiences. These educational experiences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

### Domain I. Data Structure, Content, and Information Governance:

Data content, structure and standards helps create the framework for an optimal health record and effective information exchange between healthcare providers. This is achieved by establishing clear guidelines for the acceptable values, data sources, and how information is technically captured, processed, accessed, archived/ stored, and retrieved for specified data fields. It focuses on information systems, informatics principles, and information technology as it is applied to the continuum of healthcare delivery.

#### Examples

- a. Principles and applications of classification, taxonomies, nomenclatures, terminologies, clinical vocabularies, content related to diagnostic and procedural classification and terminologies, such as: ICD-10-CM/PCS, ICD-10-O, ICD-11, CPT, HCPCS, SNOMED, DMS-V, ICF
- b. HIIM Software applications: Encoders, Groupers, Computer Assisted Coding tools, speech recognition, CDI, and ROI applications, EHRs
- c. Technology design, architecture, and infrastructure: Cloud technologies, interfaces, encryption, firewalls, operating systems, patient, and physician portals
- d. Standards: HL-7, UHDDS, HIPAA

### Domain II. Information Protection: Access, Disclosure, Archival, Privacy and Security

Establish, evaluate, and maintain policies and protocols for protecting healthcare information to govern systems and processes that generate, collect, store, transmit, use, archive, and disposition of data and information.

#### Examples

- a. Healthcare law and regulations and terminology related to access, disclosure, archival, privacy and security
- b. Policy and procedure development, evaluation and maintenance for the following:
  - Privacy, security, and confidentiality
  - Record and data access and disclosure management
  - Data security
  - Data archiving
  - Patient portals
  - Release of information
- c. Security and privacy risk assessment, analysis, mitigation, and management
- d. E-Discovery
- e. Business continuity planning such as off-site storage, servers, and backup systems

f. Personal health information

### Domain III. Informatics, Analytics, and Data Use:

Defines how health information is manipulated and utilized by the organization and shared to external entities, including but not limited to budgeting projections, long-term service line planning, forecasting healthcare needs of an organization's patient population, resources used, etc. Data analysis is the process of transforming data into information for decision making.

#### Examples:

- a. Manipulation of available data
- b. Record tracking
- c. Data quality assessment (validity, reliability, completeness, timeliness, and accuracy)
- d. Data (internal and external) importing and exporting
- e. Data exploration and mining
- f. Statistical analysis of healthcare data
- g. Data display and reports
- h. Data extraction and transmission to internal and external entities (billing, registry reporting, quality measure reporting, vital statistics, statewide administrative databases, etc.)

### Domain IV. Revenue Cycle Management

Management and oversight of all business, administrative and clinical functions that contribute to patient revenue from point of entry through payment and adjudication. This may include insurance processing, registration, eligibility, claims management, billing, collections, and denials.

#### Examples:

- a. Payment methodologies and systems
- b. Billing processes and procedures
- c. Bill scrubbers, MCE and NCCI
- d. Local and national coverage determinations
- e. Insurance models and trends
- f. Interaction with payers (insurance plans)
- g. Appeals and denials management
- h. Revenue collection from patients
- i. Cost reporting, budget variances, budget speculation
- j. Cost benefit analysis
- k. Payer contracting
- l. Case mix management
- m. Value based purchasing programs
- n. Hospital-acquired conditions and POA
- o. Clinical documentation improvement—reimbursement focus

### Domain V. Health Law and Compliance

The process of establishing an organizational structure that promotes the prevention, detection, and resolution of instances of conduct that do not conform to federal, state, or private payer healthcare program requirements or the healthcare organization's ethical and business policies.

#### Examples:

- a. Healthcare law and regulations related to coding, clinical documentation, billing, and data reporting

- b. Industry endorsed ethics, guidelines and directives related to coding, clinical documentation, billing and data reporting
- c. Policy and procedure development, evaluation and maintenance related to billing, coding, clinical documentation, and data reporting
- d. Accreditation standards, policies, and procedures
- e. Patient safety
- f. Risk management

#### Domain VI. Organizational Management and Leadership:

Utilizing skills and tools to manage, guide, improve operations, provide innovative solutions based on health data, proactively offer knowledge and decision support expertise, and support patient safety and quality initiatives which ultimately lead to greater trust and transparency within organizations and healthcare in general.

##### Examples:

- a. Professional and practice-related ethical issues
- b. Managed care operations
- c. Negotiation techniques
- d. Workflow reengineering, workflow design techniques
- e. Leadership development
- f. Performance improvement models
- g. Training and development
- h. Work design
- i. Employee hiring and retention
- j. Effective communication
- k. Managing remote staff and functions
- l. Lean management systems
- m. Project management

#### Domain VII. Clinical Foundations:

Understand human anatomy and physiology; the nature of disease processes; and the protocols of diagnosis and treatment of major diseases, to include common drugs and laboratory and other tests used for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. Practice the ability to apply this knowledge to the reading, coding, and abstracting of medical information to support quality patient care and associated databases.

##### Examples:

- a. Medical terminology
- b. Anatomy and physiology
- c. Pathophysiology
- d. Pharmacology
- e. Diagnostic and laboratory testing
- f. Ancillary services
- g. Telemedicine
- h. Medical and surgical procedures

## Domain VIII: Evolving Topics/Other HIIM Relevant Topics

Emerging topics that arise as part of the healthcare ecosystem as it transitions to keep pace with new regulations, technologies, and other changes in the industry.

### Examples:

- a. Coding and Revenue Cycle
- b. Risk Adjustment Factor (RAF)
- c. Hierarchical Condition Category (HCC)
- d. Pay for Performance
- e. Informatics (Computer Assisted Technology (CAT)
- f. Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR)
- g. Unified Medical Language System (UMLS)
- h. Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- i. Regulations with new technology