



# Certification Policies and Procedures Handbook

Foundational



Professional



Strategic



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❗ Denotes possible and important scenarios a candidate might encounter that fall out of the “normal” candidate application process.



HRCI was established in 1976 as an internationally recognized certifying organization for the HR profession. More than 500,000 professionals from over 125 countries have earned certifications from HRCI. Our certifications represent a high level of professional achievement and are valued by employers and organizations across the globe.

## Accreditation

The aPHR®, PHR®, PHRca®, PHRi™, SPHR®, SPHRi™ and GPHR® are all accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). NCCA is an independent, third-party organization that accredits more than 300 programs from 120 organizations in a variety of professions and industries. The recently introduced aPHRi™ is designed to meet the high-quality standards established by NCCA. Certification programs must demonstrate compliance with rigorous standards that represent the best practices in the professional certification industry to earn and maintain accreditation status.

For more information on NCCA accreditation, visit [www.credentialingexcellence.org](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org).

## Certification Exams

We offer certification exams for every stage of the HR profession:



For detailed information about our certification programs and exams, please visit [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org).

# CERTIFICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

The Certification Policies and Procedures Handbook (the “Handbook”) sets forth all of the policies and procedures that apply to HRCI’s certification programs, including the aPHR®, aPHRi™ PHR®, PHRca®, PHRi™, SPHR®, SPHRi™ and GPHR® (the “HRCI Certification Programs”). The Handbook includes policies and procedures for certification eligibility requirements, application, examination registration and scheduling, examination administration, scoring, retesting, violations, investigations, and appeals. The policies and procedures in the Handbook help protect HRCI examination content, maintain the integrity of the certification application process, and ensure test fairness and validity for all HRCI certification candidates.

All candidates must read and familiarize themselves with the Handbook and must agree to all of the policies and procedures contained herein. The policies and procedures contained in the Handbook are part of:

1. the Certification Terms of Service that all candidates must accept at the time they register for an exam on [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org), and
2. the HRCI Candidate Agreement, the text of which is also included in the Handbook (collectively, the “Agreement”).

HRCI certification Examinations are made available to candidates exclusively under the terms of the Agreement, which constitutes a legally binding agreement between HRCI and candidates. “You” as used herein refers to the candidate who will take or has taken the HRCI certification exam.

## EXAM DELIVERY

HRCI partners with Pearson VUE for exam delivery at either authorized physical test centers or-if offered- the option to take the exam virtually through [online-proctored](#) testing. Pearson VUE continues to be one of the largest and most secure test delivery systems in the world. Exam dates for all HRCI certifications are available on a first-come, first-served basis at approved testing centers and online. HRCI monitors testing administration closely and periodically evaluates both online and test center locations based on customer volume.

## Impartiality Statement

HRCI executive leadership and its management adhere to all principles of impartiality to ensure that its certification and other activities are undertaken fairly and objectively. HRCI is intentionally structured to segregate responsibilities within the organization in order to facilitate this commitment and to continually monitor processes to that end. We understand the importance of impartiality when carrying out our certification activities, managing conflict of interest and ensuring the objectivity of our certification activities. Any complaint or indication of concern over impartiality is taken seriously and acted on for immediate resolution.

## Nondiscrimination Statement

We do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, age, religion, marital status, sexual orientation or any other status that is protected by applicable U.S. laws.

## Terms and Conditions

As part of the certification program application process, you must acknowledge that you have read, understood and accepted the following terms and conditions:

1. Certification Terms of Service
2. Candidate Agreement
3. Code of Ethical and Professional Responsibility
4. Certification Policies and Procedures Handbook



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# EXAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS



HRCI exams are rigorous and primarily experience based. In order to take an exam, candidates must meet certain [eligibility criteria and requirements](#).

## “Professional-Level” Experience

HRCI defines “professional-level” HR experience as:

- The ability to use independent judgment and discretion in performing work duties
- Some authority for decision-making
- In-depth work requirements, such as data gathering, analysis and interpretation
- Interaction with people at multiple levels including decision-makers
- Individual accountability for results

Eligible candidates have acquired the minimum years of HR experience based on their education level for the specific certification they select. **An HR-themed college degree is not a requirement.**

Professional-level HR experience is required for PHR, PHRca, SPHR, GPHR, PHRi and SPHRi as these exams measure HR experience and knowledge gained on the job and through formal education.

Individuals who fall into one of the below categories may want to consider the aPHR or aPHRi exams:

- Managers whose main job is in a function other than HR
- Entry-level HR practitioners (i.e., HR clerks or HR assistants)
- Those interested in transitioning into the HR profession

## Documenting Work Experience

You must complete the Work Experience section of the application to document that the amount of professional-level work experience you have meets the eligibility requirement. The most recent experience will be helpful towards your eligibility. *However, the HR work experience does not need to be current or sequential.*



## For SPHRi Candidates Only: Documenting Knowledge of Local Employment Laws

You are required to select from one of these four (4) options during the application process and may be asked for documentation confirming that you:

- Hold a local or national HR certification (such as aPHR, PHR, SPHR, GPHR or other certifications such as: CHRP, CIPM, CAHRI-CP, etc.) that includes knowledge of local employment laws in your country of residence.
- Hold a bachelor's degree (or global equivalent) or higher in Human Resources.
- Have successfully completed a college or university-level course in Employment Law.
- Have successfully completed an education or training program in Employment Law.
- Likely sources for Employment Law courses and training are associations (local HR associations and American Chambers of Commerce, for example) law firms, colleges and universities, or training firms that specialize in HR topics.

### Criteria for a course that meets the Employment Law requirement:

- May be delivered in a classroom setting or virtually.
- Must provide a comprehensive review of employment laws that includes the major functional areas of Human Resources (hiring, pay/ benefits, employee/labor relations, termination, health and safety).
- Must cover foundational knowledge ("legal updates" do not qualify).
- Must be conducted by a qualified expert in the field of employment law (such as an attorney or professor with appropriate credentials).
- Must contain a minimum of five (5) hours of instructional time (not including breaks, registration or evaluation periods).
- Must provide a certificate of successful completion.

HRCI performs random audits of all applications. If your application is selected for a random audit, you must provide [official documentation](#) to indicate that you have gained knowledge of local employment law in one or more of the four ways mentioned above.



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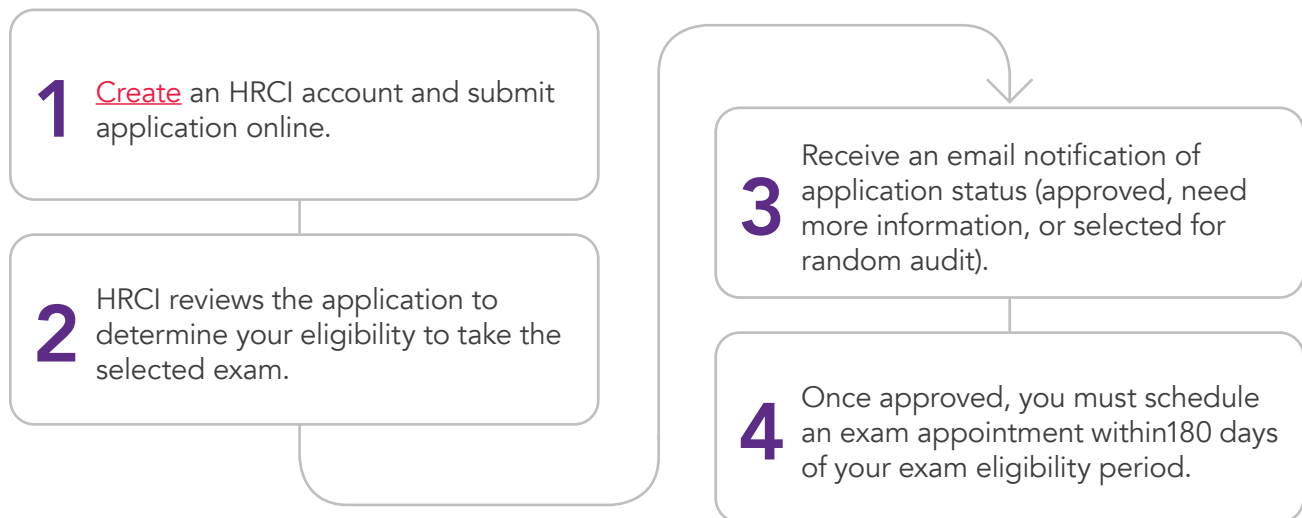


# APPLY FOR AN HRCI EXAM



## Application Process

The application process is as follows:



*Note: Certain countries where candidates reside might be under a “USA Trade Sanction” (embargo). Please visit [www.hrci.org/embargo](http://www.hrci.org/embargo) for the most current list of impacted countries. If you live in one of these countries, please contact HRCI immediately at [info@HRCI.org](mailto:info@HRCI.org) for additional assistance.*

## HRCI Candidate Agreement

The HRCI Candidate Agreement (the “Agreement”) is a critical component of the Handbook. You must accept and agree to all terms of the Agreement each time you register for and schedule an HRCI certification examination, and you must personally reaffirm your understanding and acceptance of its terms before commencing the exam on test day, each time you take the exam. The entire text of the Agreement is provided in Appendix A to the Handbook.

## Additional Forms

To find any application-related forms you might need, please visit: <https://www.hrci.org/resources/forms>.

## Legal Name

When creating your HRCI profile and submitting your application, you must use your full legal name including middle name (written in Latin characters) as it appears on your official, unexpired, valid, government issued ID. This is the official name that will allow you to be eligible to take the exam and that will appear in the [HRCI Directory](#) of Certified Professionals as well as on your digital badge once you successfully pass the exam(s).

## Email Address

HRCI will use your email address as the primary identifier in your online profile and for communications. Because your email address will be attached to all online records, it is best to choose a permanent email address for this purpose. If you use a work email address, please remember to update it if you change jobs. HRCI also accepts your mobile number as a means of verification and communication with you. Please complete and update the mobile telephone section accordingly.

## Methods of Payment



Fees are subject to change at any time and without prior notice. Please refer to [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org) for the most current information about fees. All payments and fees must be in U.S. Dollars (USD). HRCI accepts VISA, MasterCard, American Express, money order, certified check, cashier's check and company/organization checks. Certified and cashier's checks must be made payable to HRCI, in U.S. Dollars (USD) and drawn on a U.S. bank. Cash or personal checks are not accepted. Note: HRCI cannot begin reviewing an application until all payments have been received and processed.

For payments by certified check or money order, candidates must complete the online application, send payment via mail, and include a photocopy

of the application summary page and the email address for each candidate with payment. If you are paying for a group or multiple candidates, a single check in U.S. Dollars (USD) with the exact and total amount may be used to pay for the purchase. **CAUTION: You will be responsible to include/pay for any banking/wire transaction fees when using ACH or a wire transfer payment method.**

## Incomplete Payment

HRCI will return certified checks, cashier's checks and money orders to the sender if sent without proper candidate identification. Please mail payments to: HRCI, Accounting Department, 1725 Duke Street, Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314 USA.

## Vouchers

HRCI offers a pre-paid voucher option which provides a unique code to be used in exchange for exam types and products. Vouchers do not have a monetary value and must be used for the exact purpose and designated exam product(s).

A voucher is valid for 365 calendar days from the date of purchase. During the 365 days, vouchers are nonrefundable in whole or in part and must be redeemed in a single transaction (no remaining credit if not used in whole). Vouchers cannot be combined with any other discount offer or promotions.

Exam candidates who redeem vouchers for payment must follow all applicable eligibility and exam rules for that specific exam-type. If a candidate does not take the exam within the application eligibility period (180 days), the candidate must reapply to take an exam and pay all applicable fees using a new voucher or another payment method.

The voucher's expiration date ends its validity and cannot be redeemed or be of any value to a candidate or organization that purchased the voucher(s).



## Application Confirmation

HRCI and most of its partners and vendors communicate using email. Therefore, you must provide an active email address in your application to ensure you receive all communications including notifications, confirmations and reminders.

Within one (1) business day of processing payment, HRCI will send you an auto-generated email to confirm receipt of your application. You will receive a separate email notification with the status of the application (approved, need more information, or selected for random audit). Once eligibility is approved, you must schedule an exam appointment within the application approval's eligibility period.

## After Applying for the Exam

Processing time for application-related items and forms:

Type of Application	Processing Time
Application that does not require additional documents or is not selected for random auditing	One (1) business day
Application with a Special Testing Accommodation Request Form	Ten (10) business days (excluding weekends and holidays)
Application that is selected for Random audit	Ten (10) business days (excluding weekends and holidays)
Exam Type Change Form	Ten (10) business days (excluding weekends and holidays)

## ! Name Changes

Once you create your HRCI profile and submit your application, you must contact HRCI if there is a mistake or your name legally changes. To change a legal name, follow this process:

- Complete the [Name Change Request Form](#).
- Provide a scanned copy of a certified or notarized document, marriage certificate, or government issued ID. **All documents must be officially issued, valid and unexpired.**
- All the above items must be attached and submitted via email to [info@hrci.org](mailto:info@hrci.org). Once the change is made, HRCI will notify you via email.

If you have an exam already scheduled, you must submit the change request **at least five (5) business days before your scheduled exam appointment**. HRCI does not return documents. Please do not send original, certified or notarized documents.

HRCI does not return documents. Please do not send original, certified or notarized documents.



## Address, Phone or Email Changes

If your mailing address, email and/or telephone number changes, please [log into](#) your HRCI account and update your profile accordingly.

If you need assistance with making such updates, please send a request to [info@hrci.org](mailto:info@hrci.org) with the subject line "Need Assistance With Changes".

## Application Review

HRCI, at its sole discretion, can deny an application and set its status to "ineligible," if it has information that supports the denial and has determined the following:

- Documented experience fails to meet the eligibility requirements.
- Information on the exam application has been falsified or misrepresented.
- Documentation necessary to determine eligibility is not submitted.

## Exam Application Audit

HRCI performs random audits of all applications to verify the accuracy of the information submitted. A candidate's application may be selected for audit at any point in the initial or subsequent application process. A candidate is notified by e-mail no later than one (1) business day if selected for random audit.

If selected, the candidate must submit one e-mail that includes all of the following items in order to verify that the application meets the eligibility requirements for the selected exam type. The e-mail with attachments must be sent to [certdirector@hrci.org](mailto:certdirector@hrci.org).

- [The Exam Application Audit Form](#)
- Official job description(s)
- Educational transcript/diploma
- Local Employment Law document (SPHRi™ only)

Once all required items are e-mailed to HRCI, we will review them within ten (10) business days. If you are unable to provide the required information, your application will be set to "ineligible" status. Your exam fee will be refunded less the application fee and any special fee(s), as applicable.

Refunds are determined at HRCI's sole discretion and may be considered if an application is made ineligible. If a refund is made, a processing fee will be applied. Fees are subject to change at any time and without prior notice.



## Request for Reconsideration (Appeal)

A request for reconsideration allows an individual to appeal certain adverse non-disciplinary decisions made by HRCI as part of the exam eligibility, exam testing and recertification processes.

Non-disciplinary adverse decisions for which candidates may use this appeal process are limited to:

- Denial of eligibility to take an exam;
- Concerns about an unsuccessful exam result;
- Test administration interruptions or errors caused by a testing vendor and resulting in an incomplete or failed exam;
- Rescheduling of exam by testing vendor;
- Extension of a deadline to accommodate a medical or personal emergency;
- Denial of recertification application;

A request must be made using the [Request for Reconsideration \(Appeal\) Form](#) and submitted to HRCI within ten (10) business days of receiving the adverse determination. The written request must include date of determination, details of the circumstances, the reason for the appeal (including relevant supporting materials not previously submitted), and individual's email address, postal address, and a phone number at which the individual can be reached.

The request will be reviewed with any additional information relevant to the appeal within ten (10) business days of receipt of request. If there is any reason for which impartiality might be reasonably be questioned, the CX manager will recuse themselves.

The request will be reviewed by the Customer Experience Manager who will obtain and review any additional relevant information from the testing vendor within 10-15 business days of receipt of request. The Customer Experience Manager will notify the individual of the decision within five (5) business days of the determination. The determination will be **final** and made without prejudice or adverse implications against the appellant, the vendor or HRCI.

**NOTE:** Requests for Reconsideration do not apply to canceled, invalidated or withheld exam scores, or to investigation outcomes.



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## Exam Appointment Rescheduling

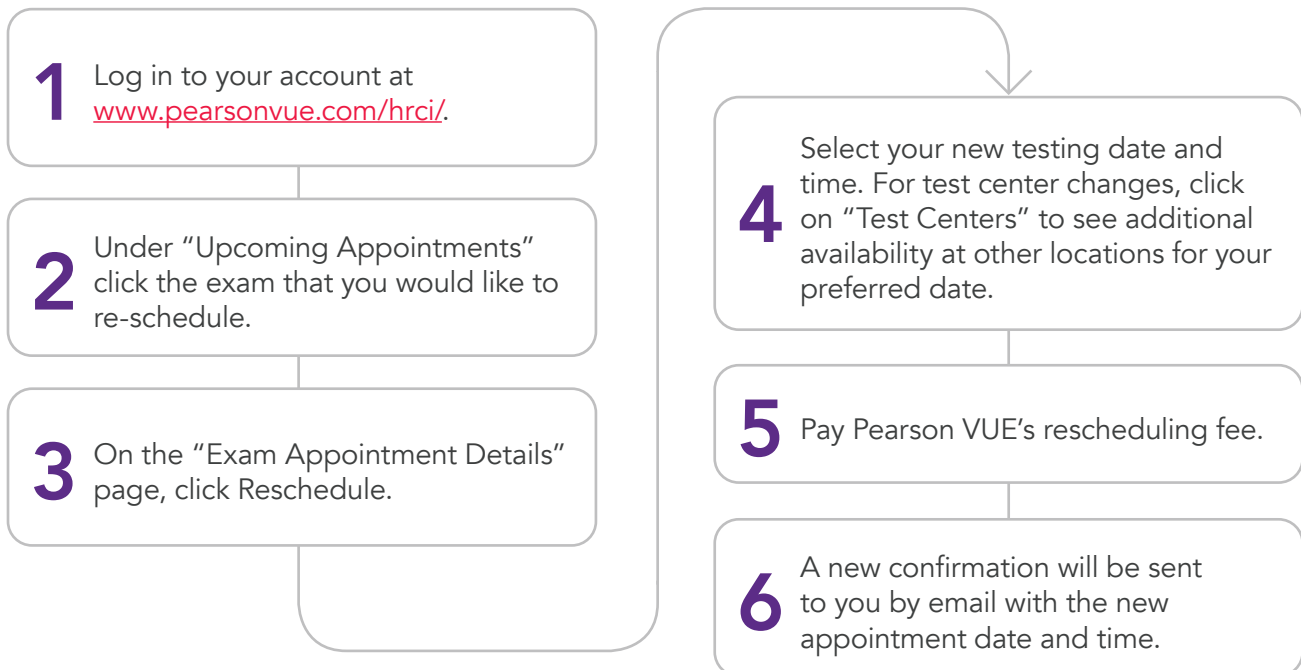
### Rescheduling Process

If you reschedule your exam appointment, you must pay Pearson VUE's nonrefundable fee each time you change/cancel your appointment. You are not guaranteed a new appointment if you try to reschedule.

You must reschedule your exam appointment at least:

- two (2) business days before your original test center appointment or all fees will be forfeited.
- One-hour before the beginning of your virtual online proctored exam session or all fees will be forfeited.

### Reschedule Your Exam Appointment Online



Pearson VUE will send a confirmation email with your new appointment information. If you do not receive the confirmation email, contact Pearson VUE immediately.

If you have an approved special testing accommodation and want to reschedule your appointment, it is your responsibility to verify with Pearson VUE that the rescheduled exam appointment with this accommodation has been processed.

**Pearson Vue Exam Duration:** The appointment length noted in your Pearson VUE confirmation email is longer than the actual exam time. The Appointment Length includes time for all components of the testing appointment, including time to check in, assess testing preparedness, read and agree to the exam confidentiality statement, take the tutorial, and complete the optional end-of-exam survey.





## ! Refunds

Once an exam application is approved, no refunds will be made if you simply change your mind or no longer wish to take the exam.

At its sole discretion, HRCI may consider issuing a refund in certain situations, especially if an application is made ineligible. A processing fee will be applied. Fees are subject to change at any time and without prior notice.

Note: If a refund is authorized, the credit will be issued to the original method of payment. It may take up to two (2) billing cycles for a refund to be reflected on a credit card statement.

## ! No Show Status

You are considered a “No Show” if you:

- Are an inactive candidate (no response, no scheduling, expired eligibility).
- Arrive more than 15 minutes late for the exam appointment.
- Do not appear for the exam appointment.
- Do not have proper and valid identification (ID).
- Do not cancel the physical test center exam appointment at least two (2) business days before the scheduled exam.
- You do not cancel one-hour before the beginning of your virtual online proctored exam session.

## ! Medical or Personal Emergency

A medical or personal emergency is an unplanned event within two (2) days (48 hours) of the exam appointment that prevents you from taking the exam. A medical or personal emergency may apply on a case-by-case basis to you or to one of your immediate family members (spouse, child or parent as defined by the Family Medical Leave Act). Minor medical events or personal obligations that may happen on or near the exam date are not considered medical or personal emergencies.

If you were to encounter a medical or personal emergency, please contact HRCI by email at [info@hrci.org](mailto:info@hrci.org) or by phone +1.571.551.6700 or +1.866.898.4724. You must do so within 30 calendar days of the missed event. HRCI will work with each candidate on a case-by-case basis to decide best course of action. No refunds will be provided.

**Disqualifiers:** If you miss your exam appointment because you are too busy or are unprepared, you will not receive a refund or any other exception. Work emergencies or projects are not considered personal emergencies.

## Exam Eligibility and Scheduling Requirements

Fees are subject to change at any time and without prior notice. Please refer to [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org), for the most current information available about fees.



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WEB [hrci.org](http://hrci.org)



## Eligibility and Scheduling Requirements

### Continuous Testing

Candidates must meet all eligibility requirements to take HRCI exams. An exam appointment may be scheduled as soon as the application is approved.

An application is approved when the status in the online application is "Eligible-Pending Appointment."

**The exam eligibility is valid for 180 calendar days from the application approval date. This means that the exam must be scheduled and taken within those 180 calendar days.**

If a candidate does not schedule a date to take the exam within the 180 calendar days, the exam application eligibility expires, and the candidate will need to reapply and pay all applicable fees.

Once an exam is scheduled, neither changing the exam-type nor loss of interest in taking the exam are allowed. No refunds will be made if a candidate changes their mind or no longer wishes to take the exam.

### Special Testing Accommodation Requests\*

HRCI attempts to accommodate candidates with certain disabilities who need special and reasonable arrangements to take their exam. Depending on the venue and request type, HRCI will coordinate with Pearson Vue to provide reasonable auxiliary aids and services. **NOTE:** *The online-proctored exam venue offers very limited accommodation options. Therefore, consider making a test center appointment when applying for special accommodations.*

Request for special accommodations is available at the same time when completing the application. Mark the appropriate box on the application form and submit the required **Special Testing Accommodation Request Form**.

Once you complete the applicant's portion of the form, request that a professionally licensed or credentialed individual complete the Documentation of Disability Related Needs section of the Special Testing Accommodation Request Form. The description provided must include the type of disability, an explanation of past accommodations made for the disability and the specific testing accommodations requested.

**\*REMINDER:** *HRCI's partner, Pearson VUE, may not be able to fulfill all special accommodation requests. Additionally, Pearson VUE will not be able to comply with the request if the operating conditions, local laws or customs make the request unlawful, impossible or economically.*

### Post-Application Requests

If a candidate needs to submit a Special Testing Accommodation Request Form after having applied or has scheduled an appointment, the candidate must complete and apply for a special accommodation within the exam eligibility period. The candidate must also cancel that appointment at least two (2) business days before they are scheduled to test. **NOTE:** *Late accommodation requests are considered and handled on a case-by-case basis.*

Once HRCI receives the completed Special Accommodation Form, HRCI will review and coordinate with Pearson Vue to set up the reasonable and available accommodations. You will be sent an email notification from HRCI advising you to proceed and schedule a new appointment.



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# EXAM OVERVIEW



## About the Exams

HRCI exams contain a variety of questions or item types that require you to use your HR experience to select the best answer. Each exam includes scored questions and pre-test questions randomly distributed throughout the exam. Pre-test questions are not counted in the final results. The length of time given to complete an exam depends on the exam type selected. Here is an overview:

<b>Traditional multiple choice</b>	These items contain a stem (or premise) and four (4) answer choices including only one (1) correct answer.
<b>Multiple choice, multiple response</b>	These are like multiple choice items except there are two (2) or more correct answers. The item will tell you how many correct options there are.
<b>Fill in the blank</b>	You will be asked to provide a numeral, word, or phrase to complete the sentence.
<b>Drag and drop</b>	You will be asked to click on certain pieces of information and drag them with your cursor to place them in the correct position.
<b>Scenarios</b>	Scenario questions present typical HR situations, followed by a series of exam items based on the scenario. These scenarios require you to integrate facts from different subject areas.

All questions are classified based on one of the following cognitive levels:

- **knowledge/comprehension:** recalling factual material, such as definitions
- **application/problem-solving:** applying familiar principles or generalizations to solve real-life problems
- **synthesis/evaluation:** combining different elements and using critical thinking skills to solve a complex problem

Learn more about all HRCI exams including a breakdown of exam topics and [eligibility requirements](#).

## Employment Law Changes

Employment laws change constantly. Candidates are responsible for knowing HR laws and regulations in effect at the time of their exam.

## How the Exams Are Developed

HRCI follows certification industry best practices to create and update all exams. HR subject matter experts (SMEs) are involved in every step of the exam development process which is overseen by a professional testing organization.

## Pre-Test Questions

HRCI is committed to offering exams that contain current and relevant content. We achieve this goal by reviewing current questions and developing new ones to reflect changes in the profession. All exams include new questions that have not been used on previous versions of the exam type. These items are known as “pre-test” questions.

HRCI includes pre-test questions in its exams to gather valuable data about the new questions before they are included in future tests. These pre-test questions are:

- Not distinguished from others.
- Scattered throughout the exam so you will answer them with the same care in which you would when answering scored questions.
- Not counted or included in determining the final exam score.

## How the Passing Score Is Set

HRCI uses the modified Angoff method to set the cut score on every exam, which is a common, industry standard method of setting cut scores on credentialing exams. The Angoff method essentially uses field experts to determine the difficulty of each question. It defines the cutoff score as the lowest score a minimally acceptable candidate is likely to achieve. At the beginning of the standard setting meeting, SMEs discuss requirements to take the exam type, attributes of candidates who take the exam, and the characteristics of minimally qualified or minimally competent candidates (MCC) with respect to the credential type. After discussing the MCC, SMEs individually rate each item with respect to the MCC, where each rating is the expected percent of MCCs who correctly answered an item. After the SMEs individually rate items, they discuss their ratings as a group with the goal of reflecting on the reasons for their ratings and being able to adjust their ratings based on the rationale from other SMEs with different career/life experiences. After 1-2 rounds of discussion and rating adjustment, the final recommended cut score is presented to HRCI as the average final-round sum of the ratings for an individual SME across all SMEs in the panel.



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## Why Are “Scaled Scores” Used?

The purpose of scaled scores is to ensure both fairness and consistency in reporting scores to all candidates. By using the Modified Angoff model, scores are converted to a common scale to account for the difference in difficulty on multiple forms (or versions) of an exam. HRCI also creates and maintains multiple forms of the exams for security reasons. As we develop newer versions, some questions in each content area are replaced. These changes may cause one version to be slightly more difficult than another. To account for any such differences, HRCI uses a process known as equating where we ensure all exams are scored fairly. The passing score for each exam type is set at 500, regardless of the version of an exam a candidate takes. For more information about scoring, please see “Exam Scoring and Official Results Reports” and “How the Passing Score Is Set” in this handbook.

## Preparing for the Exam

No two candidates have the same knowledge base because HR experience and educational backgrounds vary.

Many candidates spend time studying and preparing for the exams to determine how well a candidate might apply their HR knowledge and experiences. Therefore, it is not possible to train for or teach to the exam by reading certain books or memorizing specific information. The best way to decide how to prepare is to review the HR content in each functional area of the Exam Content Outline for the selected exam type. If additional learning resources are needed, you can select from a variety of [HRCI preparation resources](#).

## Build Your Own Bundle

For candidates who seek additional studying materials, HRCI has created a convenient Build Your Own Bundle Program (BYOB). BYOB offers options for discounted exam preparation tools available for purchase when applying for an exam. HRCI offers a variety of the most recent [preparation resources](#).

We encourage prospective candidates to use a [variety of resources](#) that reflect their learning styles and needs. Purchasing an optional certification preparation product is NOT required. Likewise, HRCI does not guarantee an individual will pass based on the purchase of any optional certification preparation product that might correspond with the exam-type selected.

If you purchase a preparation resource as part of a BYOB or Prepackaged Bundle, and are then deemed ineligible to test, you will receive a 100% refund for the resource in addition to the exam fee. The application fee is nonrefundable.

Refunds for a preparation resource that are part of a BYOB will only be available within ten (10) business days of the application approval date, provided the packaging and material have not been accessed or damaged and pending approval from the vendor who provided such materials. Refunds of exam fees follow the refund policies in this Handbook. **Fees are subject to change at any time and without prior notice.**



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## Optional Services: Second Chance Insurance (SCI)

Second Chance Insurance (SCI) is an OPTIONAL program that allows a candidate to pre-purchase the opportunity to retake a **different version of the same exam type** a second time if the candidate is unsuccessful on the first attempt. The retake exam may not be changed to a different exam type. SCI must be purchased when the exam application is submitted online and cannot be added as a separate purchase once the exam application has been submitted. As an optional pre-paid program, the fee is nonrefundable, meaning that if a candidate purchases SCI and does not take the actual exam (no show) or does not utilize it in the allotted time to reschedule and take that same exam type, the candidate forfeits all fees and eligibility of the SCI. **Fees are subject to change at any time and without prior notice.** Please refer to our website, [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org), for the most current information about fees.

A candidate with SCI does not have to pay any additional fees or resubmit the exam application if unsuccessful. It is automatically done by HRCI. An email notification will be sent once the application is set up. Candidates have a 90-days cooling off period from the unsuccessful exam date before they may schedule their retake exam appointment. The candidate must then contact Pearson VUE and schedule an exam appointment within the allotted 180 days exam eligibility period.

If a candidate purchases SCI with their exam application and does not take the exam, the SCI is void since the insurance is only applied if the candidate takes the exam and is unsuccessful.

If an application is deemed ineligible, the SCI fee will be automatically refunded to the original method of payment or applied to a different exam-type for which the candidate applies and is deemed eligible.

## Exam Type Change

Candidates may request an exam type change if an exam appointment has not been scheduled.

## Exam Eligibility Extension

If a candidate is unable to take an exam within the original 180-calendar day eligibility period, the candidate may request an exam eligibility extension. The candidate must complete and submit an [Exam Eligibility Extension Form](#). Here are the requirements\* to apply and submit this form:

- Complete the request at least 10-calendar days (day 169 of 180) **PRIOR** to the end of the original eligibility period.
- Any scheduled exam appointment must be canceled **PRIOR** to the form being submitted. --A candidate **CANNOT** apply for this extension if the current exam eligibility is the result of a Second Chance Insurance purchase.
- Submit the request to [info@hrci.org](mailto:info@hrci.org) for review within 2-3 business days.

Once qualified and approved, HRCI processes the application and non-refundable payment, and will add 60 calendar days to the end of the original 180 calendar day eligibility.

**\*DISCLAIMER:** *This exam eligibility **DOES NOT EXTEND** access to any other associated learning bundles originally purchased. Likewise, you can only apply **ONCE** to extend your original exam-type eligibility.*

## Summary of Exam Application Options:



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Item	Credit Card Payment OR Voucher Redemption
<p><b>Application approved by HRCI</b></p>	<p>Schedule and take the exam within 180 calendar days from the application approval date.</p>
<p><b>Application is made ineligible by HRCI</b></p>	<p>The candidate must apply for the new exam-type for which the candidate is eligible. <b>No refunds.</b>  <b>NOTE:</b> If payment was with credit card, HRCI will issue a full refund minus a processing fee.</p>
<p><b>Rescheduling an Exam Appointment:</b> If you want to change the exam date within the original 180 calendar days, go to Pearson VUE</p>	<p>An individual may reschedule their physical test center exam appointment provided it is done at least two (2) business days prior to the appointment OR at least one-hour before the beginning of your virtual online proctored exam session</p>
<p><b>Exam Eligibility Extension (60 calendar days):</b> If you are unable to test within the original 180 calendar days of eligibility, you may request an extension by completing the Exam Eligibility Extension Form</p>	<p>The request must be submitted before the last ten (10) days within the 180 calendar days of eligibility. A candidate must cancel any exam appointment prior to the request. There is an extension fee and such extension is limited to one request per exam application. No refunds will be issued if unable to test during the extension.</p>
<p><b>Never scheduled an exam appointment or missed the exam appointment (during the 180 calendar days eligibility period)</b></p>	<p>No refund, exception or extension will be provided. You will need to reapply and pay all applicable fees.</p>



# ON EXAM DAY



HRCI exams are administered in highly secured online proctoring and testing centers worldwide. Only approved candidates are admitted to the test centers or allowed to take the virtual online exams. Upon arrival to the physical test center, or logging on for an online proctored exam, a candidate must present proof of identity. Without a valid, unexpired, government-issued photo ID, showing the exact eligibility full name (written in Latin characters), the candidate cannot take the exam. The candidate must cancel the appointment with Pearson VUE at least two (2) business days before the actual exam date to avoid forfeiting exam eligibility and all associated fees. Likewise, if a candidate arrives late or without the required identification matching the name under which the eligibility was approved, they will not be permitted to take the exam and will forfeit all associated fees. [Review additional Exam Day Tips.](#)

## Identification (ID) Requirements

- The first and last name on the ID must exactly match the first and last name on the exam application for which the candidate was deemed eligible.
- All IDs required must be issued by the country in which the candidate is testing. If the candidate does not have the qualifying ID issued from the country they are testing in, an international travel passport in Latin characters from their country of citizenship is required.
- Candidate is required to present one (1) form of original (no photocopies), valid (unexpired) government issued ID that includes their name, recent recognizable photograph, and signature.
- Signature and Photo - The Test Center Administrator (TCA) will capture your digital signature upon checking in. Your digital signature must match the signature on your valid, unexpired, photo identification (ID). The picture on the ID must match you, the person presenting it. If you are taking an online proctored exam, the Greeter will ask you to follow the [virtual check-in protocols](#).



### The following are acceptable forms of primary identification:

- ✓ International Travel Passport
- ✓ Driver's license
- ✓ Military ID (including spouse & dependents)
- ✓ Identification card (national/state/province identity card)
- ✓ Alien registration card (green card, permanent resident, visa)
- ✓ Local language ID (not in Latin characters) – *accepted only if issued from the country in which the candidate is testing.*

### Additional Allowances

- Expired forms of ID are not acceptable; unless accompanied by valid renewal papers.
- European Union candidates testing within the EU zone may also provide a valid, unexpired EU card as their primary ID.
- For candidates testing in Japan, an employee or student ID (with at least a name and recent recognizable photo) is acceptable if accompanied with a valid Blue Japanese Health Card.

A government issued ID missing a visible signature or that has an embedded signature must be supplemented with an original (no photo-copies), valid (unexpired) ID that has at least a matching name and recent recognizable photo, or a matching name and signature (or a valid Blue Japanese Health Card, if testing in Japan). If you have any questions about the ID you are required to bring with you to the testing center for admittance for your exam, please [contact Pearson VUE customer service](#).



## Hyphenated Names

If your last name is hyphenated, your ID must match at least one of the last names. Additionally, your signature must match the signature on the ID, and the picture on the ID must match the person presenting it.

Name on Application	Name on ID	Acceptable
Chi Xing-Lu	Sandy X. Lu	No
Chi Xing-Lu	Chi X Lu	Yes
Cynthia Chi Xing-Lu	Chi Xing Lu	Yes
Cynthia Lu	Cynthia X Lu	Yes
Jeffery Johnson	Jeffery Charles Johnson	Yes
Jeffery C. Johnson	Jeffery Charles Johnson	Yes
J.P. Smith	John P. Smith	Yes
Jennifer Lincoln Murphy	Jennifer Lincoln	Yes
Jennifer Lincoln	Jennifer Murphy	No



## Test Center Rules

The following rules are enforced at all test centers to ensure a secure, fair and consistent test experience for all test-takers.

*Note: Pearson VUE cannot guarantee a completely noise-free and distraction-free test center environment. Other exams are administered at the same time as HRCI exams. You may hear noise, including typing, coughing and people walking. You can request a noise reducing headset or disposable ear plugs from Pearson VUE where available.*

## Registration Processes

- Arrive at the Pearson VUE Test Center, or log in for your online proctored exam, at least 15 minutes before your scheduled exam time. If you miss your appointment or do not have a valid, unexpired photo ID, you cannot take the exam and will lose all your fees. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late to your appointment, you may be refused admission or access to an exam and exam fees may be forfeited. You will be asked to present your ID. The Test Center Administrator (TCA) will take your photograph, and capture your digital signature. The digital signature must match the signature on your photo ID.
- You will be directed to store any personal belongings in a testing center locker. This includes items such as a mobile device, food or drink, hat, purse/bag, coat, jacket, or additional outwear accessories, or a watch.
- HRCI exams do not include any scheduled breaks. You may take an unscheduled break if needed, such as to use the bathroom, but you will be expected to comply with security screening upon your return to the testing room. Any unscheduled breaks will count against your allotted exam time. **NOTE:** *If taking an online proctored exam, you **cannot** leave the web-camera view, take breaks, mumble or have wandering/unfocused eye movements. Otherwise, the proctor will immediately cancel the session and you forfeit the exam. Learn more about the [virtual online proctored exam protocols](#).*
- You cannot leave the test center or use a mobile device during the test or during a break. Your exam will be terminated if you leave the test center or use a mobile device. Study materials may not be reviewed or referenced during the examination or during any break and will result in your examination being terminated and your score invalidated.
- You cannot look at study materials after you arrive at the test site facility or during a break.
- You cannot smoke or take a break to smoke during the examination.
- Religious headwear may be worn into the testing room. It will be inspected by a TCA before entry into the testing room is permitted.



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## Comfort Aids

Certain items defined as “minor comfort aids” are allowed in the testing room as long as they are inspected by the TCA before they are brought into the testing room. These include:

- Tissues, such as Kleenex
- Cough drops (must be unwrapped)
- Pillow for supporting neck, back or injured limb
- Sweater, sweatshirt or blazer (If the item has pockets and the candidate does not want to remove the item for inspection, the candidate will be asked to show that the pockets are empty.)
- Eyeglasses and hearing aids
- Neck braces or collars (worn by people with neck injuries)
- Insulin pump attached to a person’s body

## Exam Processes for All Test Centers

Exams are monitored and may be recorded as audio or video. Candidates will have access to a tutorial on the computer testing technology for ten (10) minutes prior to the start of the exam. It is important that candidates use this time to understand the special features of the technology.

You can submit comments about specific exam items during the exam by following the on-screen instructions. HRCI will review all comments but will not respond to comments. Please note, you cannot ask questions about exam content of anyone.

## Exam Processes for Online Proctored Testing

You must conduct a virtual, web cam-based check-in to launch an online proctoring exam session.

It is important to be on time. You can start testing within the exam window, precisely 30 minutes before and up to 15 minutes after your scheduled appointment time. This process does not count against the time allotted to take your exam.

Here are several steps that must be followed:

- Turn off browser pop-up blockers.
- Download the testing software.

To begin your testing session and connect with a greeter:

- Sign in to your HRCI® account
- HRCI® will single sign-on to the Pearson VUE system

In the Pearson VUE system, you will be able to:

- Complete system test
- Schedule exam
- Take exam

Have your driver’s license, passport or other acceptable identification available so that your identity can be verified.

You will be asked to shut down any non-essential applications (such as email or chat).

**[For additional information, review the online proctored exam FAQ.](#)**



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## Exam Security and Cheating

In order to protect and secure the integrity of its exams and the value they bring to the HR practitioners who have earned a certification, HRCI retains the right to cancel any test score obtained in a questionable manner. Before you can begin an HRCI certification exam you must agree to an Exam Confidentiality Statement. Failure to agree to the statement will prevent you from being able to take the exam. This statement says, among other things, that you understand that the exam and the questions it contains are the exclusive property of HRCI. You must also confirm your understanding that you cannot disclose, publish, reproduce or transmit any part of the exam, in any form, by any means, in oral, written, electronic or mechanical formats, for any purpose, without the express, written permission of HRCI. This includes, but is not limited to, memorizing exam questions, sharing exam questions or topics with anyone, or comparing information taught in a certification preparation course with actual exam content, whether in whole or in part. Theft or attempted theft of any exam content is punishable as a felony. Violation of exam confidentiality is a serious ethical breach that could result in disciplinary action by HRCI, including possible suspension or revocation of any HRCI certifications earned.

## Online Proctored Testing Requirements

The exam content and delivery system are the same. If you have ever taken one of our exams at a Pearson VUE test center, you will see that the online exam is the same – the same platform, the same feel and functionality and the same navigation tools. However, there are some key differences, such as taking an online proctored exam, you **cannot** leave the web-camera view, take breaks, mumble or have wandering/unfocused eye movements.

Here is a comparison table:

Item	Pearson VUE Test Center	Online Proctored Exam
Requires use of candidate’s device (e.g., laptop)		✓
Controlled testing environment	✓	
Take candidate photo	✓	✓
Check candidate ID	✓	✓
Agree to exam testing rules	✓	✓
Photos or room scan of candidate testing area		✓
Monitored by live proctor for duration of exam	✓	✓
Unscheduled breaks allowed	✓	
Proctor can intervene/stop exam if policy violations or cheating	✓	✓
Same-day exam result	✓	✓
Printed exam results report	✓	



## HRCI's Right to Cancel, Invalidate and Withhold Scores

HRCI is committed to reporting valid scores that accurately reflect candidate performance on HRCI certification examinations. For this reason, HRCI maintains test administration, security and scoring standards designed to assure that all candidates are given the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and to prevent some candidates from gaining an unfair advantage over others. HRCI reserves the right to conduct psychometric and statistical analyses of HRCI examination response data to identify potential irregularities and to ensure score validity. HRCI may cancel, invalidate or withhold test scores if any psychometric or statistical analysis provides a reasonable basis to question the test score's validity.

HRCI reserves the right to cancel, invalidate or withhold the examination score if, in its sole judgment, HRCI has reason to conclude that:

1. there is a reasonable basis to question the exam score's validity; or
2. a testing irregularity occurred before, during or after the administration of the exam; or
3. a candidate violated the terms of the Candidate Agreement; or
4. a violation of the policies and procedures for HRCI exam administration has occurred.

If HRCI cancels or invalidates an exam score because there is a reasonable basis to question the exam score's validity, HRCI is not obligated to further investigate the matter or to determine whether an irregularity or violation has occurred. HRCI may simply cancel or invalidate the score and provide the impacted candidate with another opportunity to take the HRCI examination at issue. Neither

candidates nor certificants are entitled to appeal HRCI's decision to cancel or invalidate a score when there is a reasonable basis to question the score's validity.

If there is a reasonable basis to question the exam score's validity and HRCI cancels or invalidates an exam score for a person that has previously passed an exam and obtained HRCI certification, the person's certification will be reflected as "pending" until the person retakes and passes the examination for which the score was canceled or invalidated.

HRCI also has the right in its sole discretion to withhold exam scores pending the outcome of an investigation related to those scores, to determine whether an irregularity or violation has taken place. Neither candidates nor certificants are entitled to appeal HRCI's decision to withhold an exam score pending its investigation of a related matter. If HRCI is withholding a score pending investigation, HRCI shall inform the person in writing that the score is being withheld and then inform the person when the investigation is complete and provide the decision made by HRCI related to the exam score.

If HRCI cancels or invalidates an exam score following an investigation and makes a finding that a person that has previously passed an exam and obtained HRCI certification violated the terms of the Candidate Agreement or participated in a testing irregularity, HRCI may take any actions against the person provided in the Violations and Investigations Policy provided below, and the person may pursue an appeal of any such decision by HRCI exclusively as provided therein.

For the benefit of clarity, the HRCI Complaints and Disciplinary Policy does not apply to HRCI's decision to cancel, invalidate or withhold an examination score of any candidate or certificant for any reason.



## VIOLATIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS

### Investigations

If HRCI receives information that a testing irregularity has occurred, that any individual has violated the terms of the Certification Terms of Service, Candidate Agreement, the Handbook, or that any conduct of one or more persons, or events or conditions of testing may have compromised, or may in the near future compromise, the integrity or validity of any HRCI certification examination, HRCI reserves the right in its sole discretion, but is not obligated, to investigate the matter to gather all relevant facts and determine what actions, if any, must be taken in response to the facts. HRCI's policies on Violations and Investigations shall govern all investigations related to HRCI certification examinations.

Upon receiving notice from HRCI that it is conducting an investigation under this provision, a candidate shall:

1. Fully cooperate with the investigation;
2. Disclose to HRCI or its designee all knowledge that could potentially relate to the investigation;
3. Produce all documents and materials requested by HRCI or its designee;
4. Upon request, submit to an in-person or remote, virtual interview conducted by or on behalf of HRCI; and
5. Truthfully and completely answer all questions asked by HRCI or its designee.

A person's refusal to cooperate with any investigation or presentation of false or misleading information in relation thereto shall constitute a serious and material breach of the Candidate Agreement and shall serve as a separate and independent basis for HRCI to take action against the person as described below. HRCI may, in its sole discretion, take any of the following actions upon finding that a candidate or certificant violated any term of the Candidate Agreement or the Handbook:

1. Prohibit the person from taking any HRCI certification examination for a fixed period of time or permanently;
2. Terminate the candidate's HRCI exam administration prior to completion of the exam and, if the test is being administered in-person, require the candidate to leave the test center;
3. Invalidate or cancel the person's score, before or after scores are reported, without a refund;
4. If the person previously passed an exam and obtained any HRCI certification, suspend or revoke all of their HRCI certifications for a fixed period of time or indefinitely;
5. Pursue civil legal action against the person; and
6. Refer the matter for criminal prosecution if the person engaged in criminal conduct.



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## Appeals for Investigation Disputes

After a candidate or certificant has received a written notice of violation and applicable sanctions to be imposed by HRCI, the candidate will have thirty (30) calendar days to submit a written request for appeal to HRCI as provided in this paragraph. The sole consideration on appeal is whether HRCI acted reasonably and in good faith in accordance with its own policies and procedures when making its decision. The person requesting an appeal (the "Appellant") is required to file a written request for appeal, along with a statement describing the grounds for the appeal, why the appeal should be granted and all supporting evidence, with HRCI, within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the notice of violation and applicable sanctions from HRCI. An appeal will not be considered after such thirty (30) calendar day period has expired. The initial appeal will be decided by HRCI staff, who will render a written decision on the appeal within thirty (30) days of receiving all of the Appellant's submissions. If HRCI has made a decision to pursue a civil legal action against the Appellant or refer the matter for criminal prosecution, those decisions are not subject to appeal under this policy.

If HRCI staff determine that a written request for appeal is filed in a timely manner and uphold HRCI's original decision, the appellant may then submit a second and final level appeal for to the Appeals Committee, which will consist of three (3) HRCI-certified professionals appointed by HRCI who are not HRCI employees, but may serve as HRCI board members or HRCI volunteers. The Appellant must request a final level appeal in writing within five (5) calendar days of receiving written notice that HRCI staff upheld HRCI's original decision. All three (3) members of the Candidate Appeals Committee will then decide the final level appeal based upon the written submissions of HRCI and the Appellant. This appeals process shall not address any failure to pass any HRCI examination, nor include any challenges to individual examination questions, answers or scores. The sole consideration on the final level of appeal is whether HRCI acted reasonably and in good faith in accordance with its own policies and procedures when making its decision. The Appeals Committee will deliberate and decide the appeal within thirty (30) days of receiving the Appellant's request for same unless, in the sole discretion of the Appeals Committee, more time is required to consider or decide the appeal. The decision of the majority of the members of the Appeals Committee will be the decision of the Committee. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and binding as to all matters related to the appeal. The Appellant expressly waives the right to file a lawsuit or make any legal claims against HRCI arising out of any investigation dispute.

For the benefit of clarity, the HRCI Complaints and Disciplinary Policy does not apply to appeals for investigation disputes.



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# AFTER THE EXAM



## Exam Scoring and Official Results Reports

If testing at a physical test center, candidates will receive a copy of the exam results report at the testing center and will be notified within 1-2 business days by Pearson VUE when the official results are available online.

If a notification for exam results is not provided within a week of taking the exam, please contact HRCI by sending an email to [info@hrci.org](mailto:info@hrci.org).

When taking an online proctored exam, you will not receive an immediate result with a printed score report. You will get an email within 24- 48 hours from Pearson VUE when your web-based results report is available. However, you may login to your HRCI® account within one hour after your testing session has ended to see your exam result.

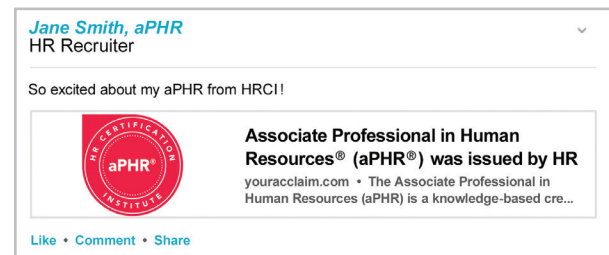
For any remaining post-exam questions, you can also [contact Pearson Vue](#) directly.

## Digital Badge

HRCI uses the digital badge as its official certificate. When a candidate passes the exam and receives the official results report, HRCI will send information on how to claim the exam type’s digital badge. This badge can be used to display the earned credential on social media sites, in the candidate’s email signature and other digital spaces and social media venues.

A digital badge is the undisputed and newest technology for displaying achievements and capabilities on social media, emails, personal websites and resumes. It protects the integrity of a professional’s credentials by providing a link to verified data from HRCI that cannot be falsified. HRCI digital badges allow the credentialed professional to provide employers with easy, valid verification of earned credentials, while positioning the professional at the forefront of this new technology for communicating professional skills. For additional information about digital badge technology, go to “Recertification Resources” at: [www.hrci.org/digitalbadges](http://www.hrci.org/digitalbadges).

### LinkedIn Example



## Optional Paper Certificate

In addition to the free digital badge, if a certified professional still wishes to have a paper certificate, HRCI works with a fulfillment vendor to provide this option. To purchase an optional paper certificate, please visit the online store at [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org). Once ordered, the certificate will be sent using a traceable delivery service.

Fees are subject to change at any time and without prior notice. Please refer to [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org) for the most current information about fees.

## Testing Experience

To report any problems that occurred during the testing experience please file a report with the Pearson Vue representative immediately. Once you have a case number, also inform HRCI at [info@hrci.org](mailto:info@hrci.org) including the situation and the case number assigned to you.

## Certification Program Feedback

Individuals have two (2) options to submit feedback:

- Optional end-of-exam survey at the test center while waiting for the results report
- [Certification Program Feedback Form](#)

## Understanding the Exam Results Report

Pearson VUE follows careful procedures to ensure that exam results reports are correct.

The results report informs the candidate of having passed or failed the exam. A scaled score of at least 500 is needed to pass. If a candidate is unsuccessful or did not pass, the candidate will receive a scaled score indicating how far from the passing score s/he was. An explanation of candidate performance levels on each of the exam topic areas is also provided. This performance level information is not an official domain score and should not be interpreted as such. The information is provided only as a guide for future study should an unsuccessful candidate wish to test again. If a candidate is successful and passes the exam, the letter with explanations can be used to guide future professional development activities.

Candidates have a 90-days cooling off period from the unsuccessful exam date before they may *schedule* their retake exam appointment. The candidate must then contact Pearson VUE and schedule an exam appointment within the allotted 180 days exam eligibility period.

## Retaking the Exam

The following chart shows what must be done to re-take an exam:

Exam Status	Next Steps	Outcome*
Unsuccessful (Fail) with Second Chance Insurance	There is a 90-days cooling off period from the unsuccessful exam date before you may schedule a retake exam appointment	HRCI will send an email notification. Candidate has 180 days from that eligibility date to schedule and take the exam.
Unsuccessful (Fail) without Second Chance Insurance	There is a 90-days cooling off period from the unsuccessful exam date before you may schedule a retake exam appointment	Candidate must re-apply, qualify, and pay all the related exam fees. Candidate has 180 days from the application approval date to schedule and take the exam.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancelled,</li> <li>• NDA Refused,</li> <li>• Withdrawn,</li> <li>• No show,</li> <li>• Not scheduled/Inactivity</li> </ul>	Candidate can re-apply immediately, qualify, and pay all the related exam fees.	Candidate has 180 days from the application approval date to schedule and take the exam.
Unsuccessful (Fail) and wants to change the exam type ( ex. From SPHR to PHR)	Candidate can apply immediately, qualify, and pay all the related exam fees.	Candidate has 180 days from the application approval date to schedule and take the exam.



## After Certification: Use of the Designation

To use HRCI letters in one's title, individuals must:

1. Successfully pass the exam-type and continue to meet our certification and recertification standards;
2. Demonstrate the requisite experience requirements; and
3. Agree to abide by the Code of Ethical and Professional Responsibility.


Successful individuals are authorized to use the following certification marks or designations in communications and marketing materials, as appropriate:

- aPHR
- aPHRi
- PHR
- PHRca
- PHRi
- SPHR
- SPHRi
- GPHR


Any complaint of logo or credential misuse should be filed through the HRCI Complaints and Disciplinary Policy. HRCI will follow all policies and procedures to determine the validity of the complaint and notify the person misusing the logo or credential that they must cease and desist use. If they fail to cease and desist, HRCI will take further steps, possible including legal action, to prevent logo or credential misuse. HRCI actively monitors for incorrect use of the logo or credential.

For more information on Recertification, visit <https://www.hrci.org/recertification/what-isrecertification/recertification-resources>.

### Correct\*



**John Smith, SPHRi**  
234-567-8910  
johnsmith@company.com



**Jane Jones, PHRca, GPHR**  
234-567-8910  
johnsmith@company.com

### Incorrect\*



**John Smith, Senior Professional in Human Resources - International (SPHRi)**  
234-567-8910  
johnsmith@company.com



**John Smith, S.P.H.R.i.**  
234-567-8910  
johnsmith@company.com

**\*Always display the first earned designation followed by others recently earned.**



## Verification Policy

The names of currently certified individuals are not considered confidential and may be published/verified by HRCI. Published information will include name, city, state, country, certification(s) held, certification status and certification number. This information can also be searched in our [Directory of Certified Professionals](#).

Your certification status may be verified in one of three ways:

1. Individuals may be listed in our Directory of Certified HR Professionals.
2. Employers can request in writing specific information with the individual's permission/release.
3. Certification status may be verified from an active digital badge

## Confidentiality

HRCI is committed to protecting confidential or proprietary information related to applicants and certification holders, as well as the examination development, maintenance and administration process. HRCI will not disclose any confidential applicant/certification holder information unless authorized in writing by the individual or as required by law. A certification status is not considered confidential information.

Personal information retained within the applicant/certification holder database and or applicant/certification holder files will be kept confidential. This includes information and any documentation regarding a disability and the need for accommodation in testing.

With the applicant's/certification holder's permission, HRCI shares non-personal information with third parties. This information is not considered confidential and may include name, city, state, country, certification(s) held and certification status.

HRCI will notify an individual seven (7) business days prior to releasing his/her information to a body having legal jurisdiction upon receipt of a court order requesting the individual's information, unless the court order prohibits such notification.

## Exam Results

Individual examination results are considered confidential. Exam scores are released only to the individual candidate unless a signed release is provided in advance. Results are not released by phone, fax or email. All personal information submitted by applicants and certification holders with their application, is considered confidential.

## Application Status

An individual's application status is considered confidential. We do not disclose information regarding whether or not an individual has applied for certification or has taken the examination. Current certification status is published and verifiable as noted in the Credential Verification section.

## Aggregate Data

Aggregate exam statistics, studies and reports concerning applicants/certification holders will contain no information that can allow others to identify an individual.



HRCI Contact Information:



PHONE +1.571.551.6700  
U.S. TOLL-FREE +1.866.898.4724



EMAIL [info@hrci.org](mailto:info@hrci.org)  
WEB [hrci.org](http://hrci.org)



# APPENDIX

## A. HRCI Candidate Agreement

### Overview

The HRCI Candidate Agreement (the “Agreement”) is a critical component of the Handbook. You must accept and agree to all terms of the Agreement each time you register for and schedule an HRCI certification examination, and you must personally reaffirm your understanding and acceptance of its terms before commencing the exam on test day, each time you take the exam. The entire text of the Agreement is reprinted below.

The HRCI Candidate Agreement (“Candidate Agreement”) is a legally binding contract between you and Human Resource Certification Institute (“HRCI”) that sets forth the terms and conditions under which HRCI will permit you to take HRCI certification examinations. You must read, acknowledge and accept the terms of this Candidate Agreement before you are permitted to register for, schedule and take a HRCI examination. If you do not agree to the terms of this Candidate Agreement, you will not be permitted to register for or take any HRCI examination. Adherence to the Candidate Agreement is necessary to enable HRCI to maintain fair examinations, ensure the validity of examination results and maintain the integrity and value of HRCI professional certifications.

By clicking on the ‘I AGREE’ button at the end of the Candidate Agreement, you are affirming to HRCI that all of the below representations and statements to HRCI are true and correct, and you are acknowledging that you have read and understand all of these requirements, rules and policies, and that you agree to abide by all of them.

I affirm that I am the person whose name and address appear on my HRCI certification application, my registration for this HRCI examination, and the government-issued photo identification that I will present or have presented for admission to the examination. At the time I created an account on [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org), I read and accepted the Certification Terms of Service, and I understand that my participation in HRCI Certification Programs, including the certification application process, is governed by the Certification Terms of Service, as well as the terms contained in this Candidate Agreement and the Certification Policies and Procedures Handbook, and I agree to abide by all of the policies, procedures, terms and conditions contained therein. I am taking the HRCI examination solely for the purpose of pursuing the HRCI certification for which I have applied, and for no other purpose. I affirm that I am not taking the HRCI examination on behalf of any other person. I affirm that all information that I provided to HRCI at the time of my certification application and my registration for this examination and at any time thereafter was complete, accurate and true in every respect and that, if any of the information that I previously provided to HRCI has changed since the time I provided it, I have submitted updated information that is complete, accurate and true, and reflects all such changes. I understand that providing

false, misleading or incomplete information to HRCI shall be considered a violation of the Candidate Agreement and will subject me to one or more of the consequences provided herein for violations of the Candidate Agreement.

I understand and agree that, as a condition of taking the HRCI examination in-person at a test center, I am subject to security screening prior to admission and re-admission to the building and/or room where the HRCI examination is administered. I further understand and agree that the security screening process for in-person testing at a test center may include requiring me to: (1) demonstrate that my pockets are empty, (2) remove any backpack, bag, jacket, non-corrective eyewear, sunglasses, coat, hooded sweatshirt, scarf, or hat (“Prohibited Personal Items”) that I may be wearing or holding (except for a genuine religious purpose), (3) lift my pants up to my knees and push my sleeves up to my elbows, and (4) submit personal items for inspection by a test administrator. I understand and agree that I will not be permitted to take or resume taking the examination if I refuse to submit to security screening as described above or to remove and secure Prohibited Personal Items (except for a genuine religious purpose) prior to entering the room where the HRCI examination is administered, at the sole discretion of test administrators.

I understand and agree that if I am taking a remote online proctored HRCI exam from my home or office through HRCI’s test administration vendor Pearson VUE OnVUE, I have the sole and exclusive responsibility to ensure that I have the required computer devices, computer operating system, software, browser, uninterrupted Internet connection and electric power required to take the HRCI exam remotely. I understand that these requirements are explained at <https://www.hrci.org/how-to-get-certified/taking-the-exam/online-testing>. I am also responsible to create a suitable testing environment, and successfully complete the Pearson VUE OnVUE systems check prior to taking a remote online proctored HRCI exam, which are also detailed at <https://www.hrci.org/how-to-get-certified/taking-the-exam/online-testing>. I understand that HRCI is not responsible for any technical problems with my computer devices, operating system, software, browser, Internet connection or electric power that may interrupt, delay, or interfere with my ability to start, take or complete a remote online proctored HRCI exam. If I experience a technical problem in any of these areas during the administration of a remote online proctored HRCI exam, I understand that I must notify the remote proctor immediately and follow the proctor’s instructions.

I understand and agree that HRCI, its authorized and trusted test centers and test administration vendors and partners acting on behalf of HRCI will take and use still digital photographs of me, video and audio recordings of me, and collect and use other personally identifiable information from me and about me for the purpose of monitoring, administering, proctoring and/or providing technical support of HRCI examination administrations, all of which will be retained and processed as part of my HRCI examination administration records. For remote online proctored HRCI examinations, HRCI’s authorized and trusted test administration vendors (including Pearson VUE OnVUE), partners, test administrators and proctors acting on behalf of HRCI will monitor live video and audio feeds of me and the physical location where I am testing (for example, the room in my home or office where I will test) all of which will be recorded, processed and retained as part of my HRCI examination administration records. I understand and agree that if I am taking a remote online proctored HRCI exam from my home or office, I am obligated to

take and submit digital photographs of my testing environment, my government-issued valid photo identification and my face. I have carefully reviewed additional details and requirements about HRCI's remote online exam administration process and procedures at <https://www.hrci.org/how-to-get-certified/taking-the-exam/online-testing>. I understand that I can obtain additional information concerning the collection, transmission, processing and retention of my personal data (including, without limitation, photographs and video and audio recordings) by reading HRCI's Privacy Policy.

I understand and agree that the following conduct, whether attempted or completed, is strictly prohibited:

- Copying, capturing, recording, collecting, reconstructing, memorizing, discussing, soliciting, transmitting, broadcasting, streaming or distributing HRCI examination content;
- Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on a HRCI examination;
- Viewing the content of another examinee's computer display or examination papers during a HRCI examination administration;
- Possessing or accessing Prohibited Personal Items while inside a room where a HRCI examination is being administered;
- Taking a HRCI examination on behalf of another person;
- Possessing, accessing or using a cellular phone or any device that connects to a cellular network or the Internet while inside a room where a HRCI examination is being administered or in any location during unscheduled examination breaks, other than the computer on which I am taking the examination;
- Possessing, accessing or using any electronic device, camera, recording device, or photographic equipment of any kind while inside a room where a HRCI examination is being administered;
- Possessing, accessing or using any books, notes, papers, note-taking materials, study materials or test-taking aids of any kind while inside a room where a HRCI examination is being administered or in any location during unscheduled examination breaks;
- Speaking out loud to myself or any other person during a remote online proctored exam administration at my home or office;
- Intentionally positioning myself so that I am not visible or only partially visible to the webcam on my computer during a remote online proctored exam administration at my home or office;
- Failing or refusing to submit to security screening or the inspection of personal items upon request by a test administrator at any time prior to or during a HRCI examination administration;
- Failing or refusing to strictly comply with the instructions and requests of a test administrator at any time prior to or during a HRCI examination administration;

- Engaging in disruptive, threatening, abusive or disrespectful behavior in or near any building where a HRCI examination is being administered;
- For remote online proctored HRCI exams, obstructing the visibility of yourself or your surroundings from the webcam or moving out of the view of the webcam; and
- Talking or communicating with anyone other than a test administrator, proctor, or an approved test reader (if your request for a test reader accommodation has been approved in writing in advance) while inside a room where a HRCI examination is being administered.

I understand and agree that engaging in any of the above described prohibited conduct shall be considered a violation of the Candidate Agreement. I agree to follow the instructions and requests of all test administrators and proctors, and understand that my failure or refusal to follow instructions or comply with requests from a test administrator or proctor shall be considered a violation of the Candidate Agreement.

I affirm that I am not taking this HRCI examination in my capacity as a test preparation agent or tutor, or for the purpose of obtaining such employment.

I am aware that HRCI examinations are confidential exams, and that their contents are disclosed to me at the time of test administration in a limited context to permit me to test in pursuit of the HRCI certification for which I have applied, and for no other purpose. I understand that HRCI examinations, questions, reading passages, answer choices, graphic images and all related examination content contained within HRCI examinations (“HRCI Examination Content”) are protected by United States and international copyright laws and that HRCI Examination Content is a trade secret under United States and international law. I agree that I will not discuss or disclose HRCI Examination Content orally, in writing, on the Internet, or through any other medium existing today or invented in the future. I agree that I will not copy, reproduce, adapt, disclose, or transmit HRCI Examination Content, in whole or in part, or assist or solicit anyone else in doing the same. I further agree that I will not reconstruct HRCI Examination Content from memory, by dictation, or by any other means, for any purpose. I understand that prohibited acts under these terms include, but are not limited to: describing questions, answer choices, hypothetical scenarios, reading passages, images or graphics from any HRCI examination; identifying terms or concepts contained in exam questions or responses; sharing answers to questions; referring others to information I saw on the exam; reconstructing a list of topics on the test; and soliciting or discussing exam questions, answer choices, reading passages, images, graphics, or topics in person, through telephonic or electronic communication, or on Internet “chat” rooms, social media, private or public groups, message boards, forums, or through any other means of communication.

I understand and agree that I also am not permitted to possess, solicit, read, study from, study or otherwise use confidential information about HRCI examinations during my own exam preparation. I affirm that I have not engaged in such conduct prior to taking this HRCI exam and that I will not engage in such conduct during or after the exam. I also agree not to ask any other individual to disclose exam content to me or to seek out actual live, confidential exam content from any other source. I agree that if I receive or have access



to information or material in any form and from any source, including but not limited to email, instant messages, text messages, website content, social media posts, electronic bulletin boards, Internet-based groups, digital or electronic files and/or paper documents, that I reasonably believe contains confidential HRCI Examination Content, or has been represented to contain HRCI Examination Content, I will immediately report its existence to HRCI. I agree that I will fully cooperate with any investigation by HRCI related to my receipt or access to information believed or represented to contain HRCI Examination Content.

I understand and agree that HRCI reserves the right to use statistical and psychometric analyses to evaluate the validity of examination response data and scores. I understand and agree that HRCI utilizes these reliable scientific methods to determine whether scores should be withheld, invalidated, canceled or investigated further to determine whether a candidate violated the terms of the Candidate Agreement. I further understand and agree that, if HRCI has a reasonable basis to question the validity of any HRCI examination response data or examination result, whether identified through the use of statistical analysis, psychometric analysis or any other reliable method or source of information, HRCI reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to withhold, cancel and invalidate examination scores, without any requirement to demonstrate that I or any other candidate violated the terms of the Candidate Agreement. I agree that if HRCI invalidates my examination score, I will not be entitled to a refund for the examination, and I will be required to pay the established fee to take the examination again, if I am permitted by HRCI to take the examination again.

I understand and agree that HRCI reserves the right to, but is not obligated to, investigate any alleged violation of this Candidate Agreement or any alleged activity or circumstance that may compromise the validity, integrity, or security of any portion of a HRCI examination, or the results thereof. Upon receiving notice from HRCI that it is conducting an investigation related to the examination, I understand and agree that I am required to:

- fully cooperate with the investigation;
- disclose to HRCI all knowledge that could potentially relate to the investigation;
- produce all documents, data and materials requested by HRCI;
- upon request, submit to an in-person or remote interview, in HRCI’s sole discretion, conducted by or on behalf of HRCI; and
- truthfully and completely answer all questions asked by HRCI.

I also understand and agree that if I provide false or misleading information to HRCI at any time, violate the terms of this Candidate Agreement, refuse to comply with any directions given to me by a test administrator, engage in any activity that may compromise the validity, integrity, or security of any HRCI examination, or fail to fully cooperate in any investigation related to HRCI examinations, that HRCI may, in its sole discretion, directly or through its authorized representatives:

- Interrupt, suspend and/or terminate the administration of my HRCI examination;
- Confiscate any item from me during a HRCI examination administration that a test administrator reasonably believes is relevant to a potential violation of this Candidate

Agreement, including, but not limited to, notes, electronic devices and Prohibited Personal Items;

- Withhold, cancel or invalidate my examination scores, before or after the scores are reported, without a refund;
- Prohibit or disqualify me from taking HRCI examinations for a fixed period of time or permanently;
- Impose special conditions of taking future HRCI examinations.
- If I previously passed any HRCI certification exam and obtained any HRCI certification, suspend or revoke all of my HRCI certifications for a fixed period of time or indefinitely; and
- Pursue a civil lawsuit against me based upon my conduct in violation of the Candidate Agreement and/or refer the matter for criminal prosecution by state and/or federal authorities or any government agency with jurisdiction.

I will not represent myself as certified by HRCI unless and until I receive an official written communication from HRCI advising me that HRCI has determined that I have met all requirements of certification and that HRCI has granted me a certification for which I have applied.

By clicking the button on the screen that reads “I AGREE” below, I am representing to HRCI that all of the prior information, statements and affirmations that I have provided to HRCI are true and correct, including but not limited to all of the affirmations contained in this Candidate Agreement. I am further confirming my agreement to all of the terms and conditions set forth in this Candidate Agreement, including, without limitation, the consequences for making false or misleading statements to HRCI, and for violating any term of this Candidate Agreement.

If there is any part of this Candidate Agreement that you do not understand or agree with, you are not permitted to register for or take any HRCI examination.

## B. Pearson VUE Regional Contact Centers

Pearson VUE maintains regional contact centers around the world. Please visit the link below for contact information for your region:

<http://www.pearsonvue.com/hrci/contact/>

## C. HRCI Code of Ethics

The HRCI Code of Ethics has been adopted to advance and uphold the highest standards of service and conduct recognized by all certificants using any of the following credentials: aPHR™, aPHRI™, PHR®, PHRI™, PHRca®, SPHR®, SPHRI™ and GPHR®.

An HRCI certification implicitly obligates the user to comply with the mandates and requirements of all applicable laws and regulations. Certificants are required to act in an ethical and professional manner by adhering to these standards and ensuring public confidence in the integrity of their professionalism.

Those holding an HRCI credential commit to the following:

### Professional Responsibility

As an HRCI certificant, you accept professional responsibility for both your individual decisions and actions. As an advocate for the HR profession, you engage in activities that enhance the credibility and value of the organizations, while contributing to their ethical success.

You will:

- Adhere to the highest standards of ethical and professional behavior.
- Effectively achieve the organization's HR goals.
- Work consistently within regulatory requirement of the HR profession.
- Strive to achieve the highest levels of service, performance and social responsibility.
- Appreciate and value the contributions of employees and associates.
- Advocate within established forums to influence innovative decision-making and results.

### Professional Development

As an HRCI certificant, you must meet the highest standards of competence and commit to strengthen your competencies.

You will:

- Commit to continuous learning, skills development and application of new knowledge related to both human resource management and the success of the organizations you serve.
- Contribute to the body of HR knowledge, the evolution of the profession and the growth of individuals through teaching, research and global dissemination of sound practices.

## Ethical Leadership

As an HRCI certificant, you are expected to exhibit individual leadership and serve as a role model while maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct.

You will:

- Act ethically in every professional interaction.
- Advocate for the ethical application of all transactions, regardless of the source.
- Ensure decisions are of the highest ethical standards.
- Acquire expert guidance, as needed, about ethical proprieties.
- Champion and mentor the development of other ethical leaders.

## Fairness and Justice

As an HRCI certificant, you are ethically responsible for promoting and fostering fairness and justice for all employees and their organizations.

You will:

- Respect the uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every individual.
- Treat people with dignity, respect and compassion to foster a trusting work environment free of harassment, intimidation and unlawful discrimination.
- Assure an environment of diversity and inclusivity.
- Confirm everyone can develop their skills and new competencies.
- Develop, administer and advocate policies and procedures that foster fair, consistent and equitable treatment for all, regardless of geographical location.
- Regardless of personal interests, support decisions made by your organizations that are both ethical and legal.

## Conflicts of Interest

As an HRCI certificant, you must maintain a high level of trust and protect the interest of your stakeholders, as well as your professional integrity. You should refrain from engaging in any activities that create actual, apparent or potential conflicts of interest.

You will:

- Adhere to and advocate the use of published policies on conflicts of interest within your organization.
- Refrain from using your position for personal, material or financial gain or the appearance of such.

- Abstain from giving or seeking preferential treatment in the human resources processes.
- Prioritize your obligations to identify conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof. When conflicts arise; you will disclose them to relevant stakeholders.

## Use of Information

As an HRCI certificant, you must consider and protect the rights of individuals, especially in the acquisition and dissemination of information, while ensuring truthful communications and facilitating informed decision-making.

You will:

- Acquire and disseminate information through ethical and responsible means.
- Ensure only appropriate information is used in decisions affecting the employment relationship.
- Investigate the accuracy and source of information before allowing it to be used in employment-related decisions.
- Maintain current and accurate HR information.
- Safeguard restricted or confidential information.
- Take appropriate steps to ensure the accuracy and completeness of all communicated information about HR policies, training and practices.

## D. HRCI Complaints and Disciplinary Policy

### A. Introduction

1. HR Certification Institute (HRCI) is an independent certifying organization for the human resources profession. As a certifying organization, HRCI evaluates individuals who wish to enter, continue and/or advance in the profession through the certification process. HRCI is governed by the Board of Directors (Board). HR Certification Institute Certification Council (Council) was established in 2016 as a Special Purpose Council within HR Certification Institute. The Council is established in HR Certification Institute Bylaws, which authorize the Council to have autonomy in decision making regarding the development and administration of HR Certification Institute’s certification programs.
2. Those certified by HRCI (referred to as “certificants”) have successfully completed the required certification process, which includes meeting certain eligibility requirements and passing a certification examination. HRCI certificants subscribe to a Code of Ethical and Professional Responsibility. By applying for certification or recertification, HR professionals agree that they have read and will comply with the Code of Ethical and Personal Responsibility, the Complaints and Disciplinary Policy and other certification program policies. These disciplinary procedures are not formal legal proceedings, thus many formal rules and practices of a court proceeding are not observed. The rules are intended to afford due process and fairness.

3. Successful candidates are granted certification by HRCI and may hold themselves to the public as such. In order to maintain and enhance the credibility of HRCI certification programs, HRCI has adopted these Administrative Procedures (the "Procedures") to allow consumers and others to bring complaints concerning a certificant's conduct to HRCI. If a violation constitutes grounds for sanctions as set forth below, the Certification Council established by the HRCI Board may reprimand or revoke the individual's certification.

The grounds for sanctions under these Procedures are as follows:

- a. Violation of established HRCI certification program policies, rules, and requirements;
  - b. Fraud or misrepresentation in the application for, or maintenance of, certification;
  - c. An irregular event in connection with HRCI examination, including (but not limited to) copying examination materials, causing a disruption in the testing area, and failure to abide by reasonable test administration rules;
  - d. Taking the exam for any purpose other than that of becoming credentialed in the area referenced in the title of the exam;
  - e. Disclosing, publishing, reproducing, summarizing, paraphrasing, or transmitting any portion of the exam in any form or by any means, verbal, written, electronic or mechanical, without the prior express written permission of HRCI;
  - f. Unauthorized possession or misuse of HRCI credentials, examinations, and other intellectual property, including but not limited to: aPHR, aPHRi, PHR, PHRca, PHRi, SPHR, SPHRi, and GPHR;
  - g. Misrepresentation of credential status;
  - h. Failure to provide requested information in a timely manner;
  - i. Conviction of a felony under federal or state law in a matter related to the practice of, or qualifications for, professional activity.
4. HRCI will ensure that information concerning the complaint process, as developed by the Certification Council, will be available to applicants, certificants, consumers and the public at appropriate locations. These Procedures apply to all complaints or inquiries received about HRCI certificants that were not initiated by HRCI. For the benefit of clarity, these Procedures do not apply to canceled, invalidated or withheld exam scores, investigations conducted by HRCI pursuant to the Violations and Investigations Policy or appeals related to investigation disputes.
  5. It should be emphasized that actions taken under these Procedures do not constitute enforcement of the law, although referral to appropriate federal, state, or local government agencies may be made by HRCI regarding the conduct of the certificant in appropriate situations.

Individuals who submit complaints are not entitled to any relief or damages by virtue of these Procedures, although they will receive notice of the actions taken if the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain any such information in confidence.

## B. HRCI Certification Council

1. The Certification Council is responsible for development and administration of the HRCI certification programs and for the implementation of these Procedures.
2. The Certification Council Chair is specifically responsible for ensuring that these Procedures are implemented and followed.
3. All Certification Council members, HRCI staff, and other individuals engaged in investigations or decisions with respect to any complaint under these Procedures may be indemnified and defended by HRCI from and against liability arising from HRCI-related activities to the extent provided by law.

## C. Complaints

1. Complaints must be submitted in writing by an individual or entity. Inquiries or submissions other than complaints may be reviewed and handled by HRCI at its discretion. For any matter not addressed by HRCI pursuant to the Violations and Investigations Policy, HRCI staff may also submit a complaint pursuant to these Procedures.
2. The submitter may be asked to complete the HRCI Complaint Submission Form and include the specific grounds for sanctions as reference above in Section A.
3. HRCI will not review or further pursue any complaints which:
  - a. Contain unreliable or insufficient information;
  - b. Are patently frivolous or inconsequential;
  - c. Allege general unethical or unprofessional behavior by a certificant;
  - d. Do not expressly reference specific grounds for sanctions;
  - e. In HRCI's sole reasonable discretion may choose not to review or further pursue a complaint based on the date of the violation; or
  - f. In HRCI's sole reasonable discretion, are more appropriately addressed by an administrative, regulatory, or law-making entity.

Upon receipt and preliminary review of a submission involving an HRCI certification program or the grounds for sanction, the Manager, Customer Experience

("Manager") may conclude, in his/her sole discretion that the submission does not constitute an actionable complaint as described above. If not an actionable complaint, the submission is disposed of by notice from the Manager to its submitter, if the submitter is identified. All such preliminary dispositions by the Manager are reported to the Certification Council in writing in an annual summary. If the Manager determines that the submission is a valid and actionable complaint, the Manager may contact the submitter or the accused for any additional information that may be necessary. The individual will have 30 days to submit any and all applicable documentation. This documentation may be presented to the Certification Council. If no applicable documentation is submitted within the 30 days, the Manager may proceed with making a determination. The Manager may consult with the additional HRCI staff and/ or legal counsel as needed to make either determination.

4. If a submission is deemed by the Manager to be a valid and actionable complaint, the Manager shall see that written notice is provided to the certificant whose conduct has been called into question. The certificant whose conduct is at issue shall also be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint. The Manager also shall ensure that the individual submitting the complaint receives notice that the complaint is being reviewed by HRCI. The Manager will determine if the submission is worthy of an investigation and gather information as necessary. Upon completion of the investigation, the Manager will provide the findings to the Certification Council for a decision.
5. The Manager shall make the decisions described above and provide the notices required here under within 60 days of receipt of the complaint.

#### D. Review of Complaint

1. For each submission involving an alleged violation of the grounds for sanctions that the Manager concludes is a valid and actionable complaint, the Certification Council authorizes an investigation by HRCI staff into its specific facts or circumstances to whatever extent is necessary in order to clarify, expand, or corroborate the information provided by the submitter.
2. Both the individual submitting the complaint and the certificant who is the subject of the investigation (or his or her employer) may be contacted for additional information with respect to the complaint. HRCI may at its discretion contact such other individuals who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances surrounding the complaint.
3. All investigations and deliberations of the Certification Council are conducted in confidence, with all written communications sealed and marked "Personal and Confidential," and they are conducted objectively, without any indication of prejudgment. An investigation may be directed toward any aspect of a complaint which is relevant or potentially relevant. Formal hearings are not held, and the parties are not expected to be represented by counsel, although the Certification Council may consult HRCI's counsel.
4. HRCI shall undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that the review process set forth in this section shall be completed within 90 days of the determination to investigate unless HRCI extends this time period in its sole discretion to obtain or analyze additional data or information relevant to the matter under investigation.
5. HRCI initially determines whether it is appropriate to review the complaint under these Procedures or whether the matter should be referred to another regulatory, administrative, or other entity engaged in the administration of law.
6. HRCI may be assisted in the conduct of its investigation by additional HRCI staff and/or legal counsel. The Manager, Customer Experience exercises general supervision over all investigations and is responsible for presenting the findings of any complaint investigation that has been escalated to the Certification Council for disciplinary action.



## E. Determination of Violation

Upon completion of an investigation, the Certification Council may make a determination that there has been a demonstrable and serious violation based on the grounds for sanction. The determination of the disciplinary decision is prepared under the CEO's supervision and is presented to the Certification Council along with the record of the investigation.

1. If the Certification Council determines that a violation has not occurred, the complaint is dismissed with notice to the certificant and the individual or entity who submitted the complaint. The complaint is included in an annual summary Certification Council report.
2. If the Certification Council determines that a violation has occurred, the Council will decide on an appropriate sanction.
3. This determination and the imposition of a sanction are promulgated by written notice to the certificant and to the individual submitting the complaint, if the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain in confidence whatever portion of the information is not made public by the Council.
4. In certain circumstances, the Certification Council may determine that the certificant who has committed an actionable sanction, should be offered an opportunity to submit a written assurance that the conduct in question has been terminated and will not recur. The decision of the Certification Council to make such a determination is within their discretionary power. If such an offer is extended, the certificant at issue must submit the required written assurance within 30 days of receipt of the offer, and the assurance must be submitted in terms that are acceptable to the Certification Council. If the Certification Council accepts the assurance, notice is given to the certificant and to the submitter of the complaint, if the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain the information in confidence.

## F. Sanctions

1. Any of the following sanctions may be imposed by the Certification Council upon a certificant whom the Certification Council has determined to have violated the grounds for sanctions, although the disciplinary decision applied must reasonably relate to the nature and severity of the violation, focusing on reformation of the conduct of the member and deterrence of similar conduct by others:
  - a. Written reprimand to the certificant;
  - b. Prohibition of the certificant from taking any HRCI certification examination for a fixed period of time or permanently;
  - c. Suspension of the certificant for a fixed period of time;
  - d. Termination or revocation of the certificant's certification from HRCI; and
  - e. Any other reasonable and proportionate sanction determined by HRCI in its sole discretion.

The HRCI database and certificant's file will be promptly updated to reflect any certification suspension or termination.

2. Reprimand in the form of a written notice from the Certification Council normally is sent to a certificant who has received his or her first substantiated complaint. Suspension normally is imposed on a certificant who has received two substantiated complaints. Termination normally is imposed on a certificant who has received two substantiated complaints within a two (2) year period, or three (3) or more substantiated complaints. The Certification Council may at its discretion, however, impose any of the sanctions, if warranted, in specific cases.
3. Certificants who have been terminated shall have their certification revoked and may not be considered for HRCI certification in the future. If certification is revoked, any and all certificates or other materials requested by HRCI must be returned promptly to HRCI.

### G. Appeal

1. Within 30 days from receipt of notice of a determination by the Certification Council that an individual committed an action resulting in grounds for sanctions, the affected certificant may submit to HRCI in writing a request for an appeal. Upon receipt of a request for appeal, the Chair of the Certification Council will appoint a three (3) person Appeal Panel. Individuals appointed to serve on the Appeal Panel cannot be current members of the HRCI Board of Directors or Certification Council. Appeal Panel members will sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest statement prior to beginning their service on the committee.

This Appeal Panel may review one or more appeals, upon request of the HRCI Certification Council Chair. No HRCI staff may serve on the Appeal Panel; further, no one with any personal involvement or conflict of interest may serve on the Appeal Panel.

2. The Appeal Panel may only review whether the determination by the Certification Council was inappropriate because of:
  - a. material errors of fact, or;
  - b. failure of the Certification Council or HRCI to conform to published criteria, policies, or procedures.

Only facts and conditions up to and including the time of the Certification Council's determination as represented by facts known to HRCI are considered during an appeal. The appeal shall not include a hearing or any similar trial-type proceeding. Except as otherwise set forth herein, legal counsel is not expected to participate in the appeal process, unless requested by the appellant and approved by the HRCI Certification Council and the Appeal Panel. The Certification Council and Appeal Panel may consult HRCI legal counsel.

3. The Appeal Panel conducts and completes the appeal within 90 days after receipt of the request for an appeal. Written appellate submissions and any reply submissions may be made by authorized representatives of the appellant and of the Appeal Panel. Submissions are made according to whatever schedule is reasonably established by the Appeal Panel.

4. The decision of the Appeal Panel either affirms or overrules the determination of the Certification Council but does not address a sanction imposed by the Certification Council. The decision of the Appeal Panel, including a statement of the reasons for the decision, is reported to the HRCI Certification Council in writing. The Appeal Panel decision is binding upon the Certification Council, the certificant who is subject to the sanction, and all other persons.

#### H. Resignations

If a certificant who is the subject of a complaint voluntarily surrenders his or her HRCI certification(s) at any time during the pendency of a complaint under these Procedures, the complaint will be dismissed without any further action by the Certification Council or an Appeal Board established after an appeal. If this occurs, the information will be retained in HRCI's permanent file for future reference. However, the Certification Council may authorize the Certification Chair to communicate the fact and date of resignation, and the fact and general nature of the complaint which was pending at the time of the resignation, to or at the request of a government entity engaged in the administration of law. Similarly, in the event of such resignation, the person or entity who submitted the complaint are notified of the fact and date of resignation and that Certification Council has dismissed the complaint as a result.



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