

PHRca®

2020 EXAM CHANGES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q: What is changing with the PHRca® exam?

A: Effective January 1, 2021, a new Exam Content Outline (ECO) will go into effect for the PHRca exam. The functional areas on the new ECO will be expanded from four to five, with new naming conventions and percentage weightings.

Q: What is the new PHRca Exam Content Outline (ECO) and how does it compare to the old exam?

A: The ECO was expanded from four to five exam functional areas with new naming conventions and percentage weightings. The table below shows a side-by-side comparison of the current ECO and new PHRca ECO, taking effect on January 1, 2021:

Current Content Outline (eff. through 12/31/20)	%	New Content Outline (eff. 1/1/21)	%
Compensation/Wage and Hour	22%	Compensation/Wage and Hour	21%
Employment and Employee Relations	46%	Employment Lifecycle and Employee Relations	26%
Benefits and Leaves of Absence	20%	Leaves of Absence and Benefits	14%
Health, Safety and Workers' Compensation	12%	Health, Safety and Workers' Compensation	10%
		Compliance and Risk Management	29%

Q: Are the eligibility requirements for the PHRca certification changing?

A: No, the eligibility requirements for the exam remain the same. To be eligible for the PHRca certification, candidates must have:

- A minimum of 1 year of professional-level HR experience with a master's degree or higher.
- A minimum of 2 years of professional-level HR experience with a bachelor's degree.
- A minimum of 4 years of professional-level HR experience with a high school diploma.

Q: What is the definition of "Professional-Level" HR experience?

A: HR experience is considered "Professional-level" if it includes the following:

- The ability to use independent judgment and discretion in performing work duties.
- A level of specialized knowledge in the HR field, with some authority for decision-making.
- In-depth work requirements, such as data gathering, analysis and interpretation.
- Interaction with a broad range of individuals, including key personnel.
- Individual accountability for results.

Q: Will the PHRca recertification requirements remain the same?

A: Yes, recertification requirements will remain the same. Every three years, you must recertify to maintain the PHRca designation. A total of 60 credits are required: 15 California credits plus 45 General HR credits.

Q: I have an active application and am planning to take the exam before January 1, 2021. Will these changes impact me?

A: No. Candidates with active applications planning to take the PHRca exam by December 31, 2020, should refer to the current exam content outline. All current requirements will be honored through that date.

Q: What happens if I fail the PHRca exam and the 90-day retake waiting period moves my retest date on or after January 1, 2021?

A: Your next exam will be based on the new exam content outline. Therefore, you should use the 90-day waiting period to evaluate how your experience compares to the new outline and, if necessary, pursue additional cert preparation for your next testing appointment.

Q: I have Second Chance Insurance. Can I still use the insurance to retake if I do not pass?

A: Yes. Second Chance Insurance provides the ability to take the same exam type again after a 90-day waiting period. However, depending on when you choose to test the first time, your 90-day re-testing period may coincide with the change from the current exam to the new exam on January 1, 2021.

Q: What is the format of the exam?

A: The PHRca is a two-hour and fifteen-minute, computer-based exam that consists of 100 scored questions (mostly multiple-choice) plus 25 pre-test questions.

Q: Is online proctoring available for the PHRca exam?

A: Yes. Effective July 1, 2020, HRCI offers online proctoring for the PHRca exam through OnVUE online exam delivery system by Pearson VUE. The process uses live monitoring with enhanced security features allowing you to take the exam at your convenience. Learn more about online testing [here](#).

Q: Is there any change to the price of the PHRca exam?

A: The exam fee will remain \$395, plus a \$100 application fee.

Q: What PHRca exam preparation materials are available and recommended?

A: You are encouraged to use a variety of study methods and materials when preparing for the PHRca exam. However, optional preparation materials are available. HRCI offers various preparation materials and resources. Browse for options at hrci.org/byob.

Q: What is the difference between the PHRca exam and the California upSkill e-learning module?

A: The PHRca® is the only practice-based and fully accredited certification available. It is designed to assess a professional's expertise in understanding and applying California laws and HR practices in the workplace. The PHRca designation allows the use of the PHRca letters after the certificant's name, on their LinkedIn profile, email signature, resume and business cards. It also provides a secure and renewable digital badge that demonstrates and verifies details of the PHRca designation.

The California upSkill™ micro-credential is knowledge-based assessment. It is designed to only measure the education provided in the micro-learning module. Upon completion, the learner obtains a static digital badge of completion which looks different from the PHRca certification badge.



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