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

Recertification Guide
Maintenance of Certification

RHIA  RHIT  CCA  CCS  CCS-P  CHDA  CHPS

AHIMA
www.ahima.org
CCHIIM Mission
Through certification, the CCHIIM ensures the competency of professionals practicing health informatics and information management (HIIM) worldwide.

CCHIIM Vision
Professional excellence in health informatics and information management through certification.

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

CCHIIM Recertification Program

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

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

Enhancement: Completion of educational programs that result in expanded knowledge and skills to enhance professional growth in HIIM by earning additional continuing education units (CEUs) in a specific HIIM domain. This is beyond the requirement to maintain certification.
Congratulations on earning your AHIMA professional credential! You’ve marked yourself as a leader and HIIM expert, and shown your support for the healthcare profession. But there’s more to certification than that. Through it you’ve increased your chances for success in your chosen career.

AHIMA Certification—Your Best Professional Value

Receiving an AHIMA Credential Means…

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

What Are the Biggest Benefits of Recertification (Maintenance of Certification)?

• Return on investment from the high value of being certified by AHIMA
• Professional prestige helps you remain competitive in a tough job market
• Demonstration of your ongoing commitment and competence in HIIM
• Networking opportunities with similarly credentialed peers at your level of expertise
• Reasonable recertification (maintenance of certification) fees

To Recertify You Need To:

1. Obtain the required number of continuing education units (CEUs) during your recertification cycle.
2. Participate in accepted and qualified CEU activities.
3. Report your CEUs on time.
5. Ensure your recertification fee is paid.

Recertification Process

CEU Requirements for Single Credential

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*AHIMA no longer offers these certification exams.
Recertification Requirements for Multiple Credentials

If you have more than one AHIMA credential, you must earn ten (10) additional CEUs per credential during your two-year recertification cycle. These CEUs may not be duplicated or used for more than one credential.

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<th>Credential</th>
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<td>40 (30 +10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHIA with CHDA</td>
<td>40 (30 +10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHIT with CCS and CCS-P</td>
<td>40 (20 +10 +10)</td>
</tr>
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Recertification Cycle

**Initial:** The initial recertification cycle for newly credentialed certificants (first credential obtained) begins the day after the credential is awarded, plus the additional two (2) calendar year recertification period. A credential is awarded when a candidate:

- Passes the certification examination, OR
- Passes the certification examination AND has successfully completed the academic requirements of an HIIM program accredited by CAHIIM (RHIA and RHIT early testing candidates). The academic prerequisite is confirmed when an official transcript is submitted and approved.

**Ongoing:** The recertification cycle for subsequent credential(s) obtained begins with the next cycle date for the first or initial credential. The next cycle date begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the following year.

**Example**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If existing credential is:</th>
<th>Current cycle is:</th>
<th>Then obtains:</th>
<th>The new cycle for both credentials is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RHIA</td>
<td>1/1/08–12/31/09</td>
<td>*CCS on 6/8/08</td>
<td>1/1/10–12/31/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*CEUs earned between June 9, 2008 and December 31, 2009 can be reported for the first recertification cycle only.

Continuing Education Content

CEUs have to be earned within your recertification cycle and must be relevant to the HIIM field as presented in the HIIM domains to be eligible for continuing education credit. Eighty (80) percent of all continuing education units must be earned within the HIIM domain. The remaining twenty (20) percent can include participation in continuing education activities on topics not relevant to health informatics and information management.

Reporting your CEUs

To recertify, you can report your CEUs and pay the recertification fee online at www.ahima.org/certification. You can also report your CEUs by mail by submitting the following:

- CEU Report Form (located at www.ahima.org/certification)
- Recertification fee

Mail completed CEU Report Form with payment to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Non-members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| AHIMA Recertification  
233 N. Michigan Ave., 21st Fl.  
Chicago, IL 60601 | AHIMA Recertification  
Dept. 77-3081  
Chicago, IL 60678-3081 |
Recertification Fees (plus any applicable late fees):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Credential</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RHIA</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHIT</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>$50</td>
</tr>
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<td>CHDA</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHPS</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Multiple Credentials**

Primary credential (based on credential hierarchy) fee plus an additional $50 for each additional credential.

Credential Hierarchy:

- Upon completion of the requirements, a mastery-level coding credential replaces an entry-level coding credential. Once granted, the mastery-level credential is recognized and CEUs for this credential need only be maintained.
- Upon completion of the requirements, a baccalaureate or higher-level HIM credential replaces an associate-based HIM credential. Once granted, the baccalaureate-based credential is recognized and CEUs for this credential need only be maintained.

*Note: Credential holders who are AHIMA members already have their recertification fees included with the annual membership fee (does not include mandatory annual coding self-review fee).*

For CCS, CCS-P, or CCA Certificants

An additional mandatory annual coding self-review (self-assessment) fee per coding credential held is required.

Additional Recertification Processes

For additional recertification guidelines, please refer to the Recertification Policies and Procedures by visiting www.ahima.org/certification.
Qualifying Continuing Education Activities and Calculation of CEUs

**Calculation of CEUs**

Continuing education units are based on educational contact hours. Sixty minutes of attendance at an educational program equals one (1) CEU.

**CE Activities**

1. Participation in educational programs on topics relevant to HIIM.
   a. Educational portions of AHIMA meetings (national convention, state, local, or regional meetings).
      *One (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*
   b. Educational portions of programs of allied health and other relevant professional associations.
      *One (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*
   c. Educational portions of programs sponsored by organizations or vendors on topics, which maintain, update, or enlarge knowledge and/or skills relevant to the HIIM profession.
      *One (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*
   d. Telecommunications/teleseminars relevant to the HIIM profession.
      *One (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*

2. Participation in formal educational programs of study that address subject areas relevant to HIIM.
   a. Post-secondary courses attended for credit, including guided independent study and regular college or university courses. Courses taken in pursuit of associate, baccalaureate, master, or doctorate degrees, that are relevant to the HIIM profession, are included. All coursework and final exams must be completed by the December 31 recertification cycle end date.
      *Fifteen (15) CEUs for each semester/trimester credit; Ten (10) CEUs for each quarter credit*
   b. Audit of academic course or relevant non-credit adult education course, including attendance at a college or university course with permission and following regulations, without completing necessary requirements for full formal credit. Course must be completed by the December 31 recertification cycle end date.
      *Six (6) CEUs for each semester/trimester credit; Four (4) CEUs for each quarter credit*
   c. Correspondence and other formal, independent, online, or distance education study programs accredited by the National Home Study Council or prior-approved by AHIMA, which consist of readings and exercises submitted to a knowledgeable instructor for evaluation. Courses normally cover several lessons to be completed in a specific time period. Certificate of completion must show that all coursework and exams were completed by the December 31 recertification cycle end date. (CEUs must be determined on an individual basis by CCHIIM)

3. Publication/presentation of material relevant to HIIM.
   a. Publication is the development of an original work, relevant to the HIIM profession, which has been reproduced by written or electronic means for general dissemination to the public (unless required as part of work responsibilities—see section VI.6.a and VI.6.b).
      • Author of a textbook, workbook, or manual—*thirty (30) CEUs*
      • Editor of a textbook, workbook, or manual—*twenty (20) CEUs*
      • Author of an article in a research journal—*fifteen (15) CEUs*
      • Author of a chapter in a textbook, workbook, or manual—*ten (10) CEUs*
      • Author of an educational article in a professional or trade journal—*five (5) CEUs*
      • Editor of a professional or trade journal—*five (5) CEUs*
• AHIMA course writing (for example, Virtual Lab, Courseshare, EHR Hybrid Environment 6 lesson course)—five (5) CEUs
• Author of an educational article in a local or state newsletter—two (2) CEUs
• Reviewer of book manuscripts prior to publications—one (1) CEU per chapter

b. Presentation is the development of an original work delivered to an audience.
• Speaker at an educational program—one (1) CEU for each 15 minutes of podium time
• Panel participant at an educational program—one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of podium time

4. Independent study activities relevant to the HIIM profession.
   a. Study groups devoted to topics relevant to HIIM.
      One (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation
   b. Enrollment in one or more AHIMA independent study program modules (CEUs pre-determined by CCHIIM)
   c. Enrollment in home study programs relevant to AHIMA core education content areas from organizations other than AHIMA (AHIMA prior approval required)
   d. AHIMA post-test offerings accompanying a Journal of the AHIMA article or book published by AHIMA (CEUs pre-determined by CCHIIM)
   e. Advanced research (for example, reading and analyzing material that is above and beyond one’s knowledge of the subject matter) in an HIIM topic area to support activities associated with an expert panel, workgroup, or task force of AHIMA or its affiliate.
      One (1) CEU per each year

5. Item writing
   • Item writing for AHIMA’s certification exams (CEUs pre-determined by CCHIIM)

6. Other activities
   • Substantive oversight and involvement of directed clinical practice on behalf of a Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) accredited program.
      Five (5) CEUs per student supervised with a maximum of ten (10) CEUs for student supervision allowed in each recertification cycle.
   • Visiting AHIMA exhibits at a national or state meeting.
      One (1) CEU per meeting
   • Participation in an AHIMA volunteer leader conference or work group (CEUs pre-determined by AHIMA).
   • Internet educational offerings relevant to AHIMA core education content areas (AHIMA prior-approval required).
   • Facilitator for an AHIMA Community of Practice (CoP).
      Five (5) CEUs for one year service, per community, each year of the two-year cycle
   • Activities defined by the guidelines for approval of CE programs for state, local, and regional HIM associations.
   • Exceptional events recognized by the CCHIIM as defined in section II.H.
Non-Qualifying Continuing Education Activities

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

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

HIIM Domains

HIIM Professional Domain Definition: HIIM improves the quality of healthcare by ensuring the most timely and accurate information is available to make any healthcare decision. HIIM professionals manage healthcare data and information resources. The profession encompasses services in planning, collecting, aggregating, analyzing, and disseminating individual patient and aggregate clinical data. It serves the following healthcare stakeholders: patients, providers, patient care organizations, research and policy agencies, payers, and other healthcare-related entities. Eighty percent of all CEUs must be earned within the HIIM Domain, which is divided into the domain areas below.

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

1. **Technology**: Application of existing and emerging technologies for the collection of clinical data, the transformation of clinical data to useful health information, and the communication and protection of information on analog medium, (for example, paper, analog photographic film, and so on) or digital medium, (for example, magnetic tape, optical disk, CD, DVD, and so on).

   Topics include but are not limited to:
   - Electronic health records (EHRs)
   - HIIM software applications (encoders, patient information management systems, chart management, and so on)
   - Personal health record (PHR)
   - Health information exchange (HIE)
   - Speech recognition

2. **Management Development**: Application of organizational management theory and practices in addition to human resource management techniques to improve departmental adaptability, innovation, service quality, and operational efficiency.

   Topics include but are not limited to:
   - Project management
   - Training and development
   - Work design
   - Employee hiring and retention
3. **Clinical Data Management:** Applications and analysis of quality and clinical resources appropriate to the clinical setting to include database management, and coding compliance using CPT, ICD-9-CM or other specialized coding systems within the prospective or payment system to ensure quality and cost effectiveness of the services rendered; i.e., data integrity, quality of documentation, clinical efficiency.

Topics include but are not limited to:
- ICD-9-CM/CPT/HCPCS
- Prospective payment systems (DRG, APC, etc.)
- ICD-10
- Registries

4. **Performance Improvement:** Development and application of quality processes to ensure quality data is generating consistent, timely quality information; to develop systems that are flexible and adaptable in a constantly changing healthcare environment (for example, e-HIM, regulatory changes, new technology.)

Topics include but are not limited to:
- Outcomes data management
- Revenue cycle management
- Clinical practice guidelines
- Remote coding or computer-assisted coding

5. **External Forces:** Study of regulatory requirements and the development of appropriate compliance initiatives for policies, procedures, protocols, and technology for hospitals, specialty facilities, and other healthcare providers to include the development of systems (for example, e-HIM) and to implement required practices for the Joint Commission and other accrediting bodies, federal and state appropriate rules and regulations; (i.e., Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, HIPAA.

Topics include but are not limited to:
- OIG work plan
- HIPAA
- Compliance
- Legal or regulatory update
- CCHIT accreditation

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

Topics include but are not limited to:
- Pathophysiology
- Pharmacology
- Clinical intervention
- Diagnostic and laboratory testing
- Telemedicine
7. **Privacy and Security**: Understanding and application of current healthcare regulations that promote protection of medical information and the electronic transmission of health information; to act as the patient’s advocate for their understanding of their rights in regard to protected health information on any applicable analog or digital medium.

Topics include but are not limited to:
- Release of information
- Confidentiality
- Personal health information
- Security risk assessment
- Security audit
- Privacy risk assessment
Frequently Asked Questions

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

What is certification maintenance?
Certification maintenance is the completion of educational programs that provide updated training and skills to allow continued competence in HIIM by earning the required number of continuing education units (CEUs) in any of the HIIM domains.

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

What is the initial recertification cycle?
The initial recertification cycle for newly credentialed certificants (first credential obtained) begins the day after the credential is awarded plus the additional two (2) calendar year recertification period.

Example: If you passed the RHIA examination on June 8, 2009, your recertification cycle begins on June 8, 2009, and ends on December 31, 2011, for a period of two (2) years. CEUs earned during this period can be reported when you recertify.

What do I need to do in order to recertify or maintain my certification status?
To recertify or maintain your certification, you need to earn your required continuing education units (CEUs) within your recertification cycle.

I currently have only one (1) AHIMA credential—how many CEUs must I accumulate during the reporting period?
CEU Requirements for Single Credential

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I currently have multiple (2 or more) AHIMA credentials—how many CEUs must I accumulate during the reporting period?

CEU Requirements for Multiple Credentials

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How can I earn AHIMA CEUs?

AHIMA offers many opportunities to earn CEUs through meetings, audio and web seminars, distance learning courses and other activities that qualify for continuing education units. For additional information on these products, please visit www.ahima.org.

Can I use CEUs earned through organizations other than AHIMA?

Yes. CCHIIM accepts CEUs earned through other organization provided they qualify as valid CE activities and are relevant to HIIM.

Can I get CEUs for college courses?

Yes. CCHIIM accepts CEUs earned through participation in formal educational programs of study that address subject areas related to HIIM. For additional information, see section on Qualifying Continuing Education Activities, CE Activities number two.

Can I earn AHIMA CEUs by earning another AHIMA certification?

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

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

Currently, certificants will have to track how many CEUs they’ve earned during their recertification cycle. AHIMA is working on a technology solution that will have the ability to collect and store CEUs earned by completing AHIMA-related educational activities.

What are the fees required for renewing my certification?

For AHIMA-certified, nonmembers:

Single Credential

- RHIA/RHIT/CHS/CHP/CHDA $150 per cycle
- Coding credentials $50 for each coding credential held per cycle
- CHPS $250 per cycle

Multiple Credentials

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

*Additional Fees:

CCS, CCS-P, and CCA credential holders must pay an additional mandatory annual coding self-review fee of $50 per coding credential held.
Examples:
1. RHIT earns RHIA
   • Year 1 = no fee
   • Year 2 = $150 recertification fee for RHIA

   Based on credential hierarchy the RHIA credential replaces the RHIT

2. CCA earns CCS
   • Year 1 = $50 annual CCS coding self-review (self-assessment) fee
   • Year 2 = $50 annual CCS coding self-review (self-assessment) fee plus $50 recertification fee for CCS

   Two-year total fees = $150

   Based on credential hierarchy the CCS credential replaces the CCA

3. RHIA then earns CHDA
   • Year 1 = no fee
   • Year 2 = $150 recertification fee for RHIA, plus $50 recertification fee for CHDA

   Two-year total fees = $200

4. RHIT then earns CCS
   • Year 1 = $50 annual coding self-review (self-assessment) fee
   • Year 2 = $50 annual coding self-review (self-assessment) fee plus $150 recertification fee
     (first credential—RHIT) plus $50 recertification fee (second credential—CCS) = $250

   Two-year total fees = $300

For AHIMA Members:
Credential holders who are AHIMA members already have their recertification fees included with the annual membership fee (does not include mandatory coding self-review fee of $25 per year).

What should I do with all of my CEU documentation?
AHIMA does not require CEU documentation at the time of recertification, and you should not submit any paperwork, other than your recertification application and the accompanying fees. Please save all CEU documentation for one full calendar year following the date of your certification renewal in case you are audited.

Do CEUs carry over from one reporting period to another?
No. You can only report CEUs earned during the current recertification cycle.