

# CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

*Step-by-step instructions for candidates  
seeking the BC-HIS credential*



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February 2023

NBC-HIS reserves the right to make updates to this Handbook.  
Use of the Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Sciences badge  
and designation BC-HIS is reserved for board certificants.

# NBC-HIS CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

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## INTRODUCTION

The unique preparation a hearing healthcare professional receives makes it difficult to judge the needed skills and expertise with standard assessments used in classroom study. Individuals who dispense hearing aids learn a multitude of needed skills through “hands-on” training with individuals with hearing loss as well as ongoing continuing learning. This “hands-on” experience and continual learning, above and beyond the minimum requirements for licensure, is necessary for successful completion of the National Competency Exam (NCE).

Meeting the eligibility requirements to sit for the NCE and passing the NCE is the only way to earn the Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Sciences (BC-HIS) designation.

Board Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences accredits the skills and competency achieved by a hearing healthcare professional. By earning the BC-HIS designation, you will demonstrate your competency to the public and hearing healthcare professionals.

The NCE is the only board certification exam for hearing healthcare professionals accredited by the [\*National Commission for Certifying Agencies \(NCCA\)\*](#), a nationally recognized organization that reviews and accredits international competency testing for certifying organizations. NCCA is part of the [\*Institute for Credentialing Excellence\*](#).

## PURPOSE OF THE CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

The Candidate Handbook is a companion to the [\*Candidate Self-Study Guide\*](#). Together, the pieces are designed to provide candidates with the information needed throughout the process of seeking Board Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences. The Handbook provides step-by-step directions and related policies for:

- Applying for board certification,
- Registering for the exam,
- Sitting for the exam, and
- Maintaining board certification.

The Candidate Self-Study Guide provides additional information about the domains assessed by the exam and guides candidates through the process of self-identifying areas for additional study.

**Please note:**

*Use of this Candidate Handbook or the Candidate Self-Study Guide does not imply you will receive a passing score on the NCE. The design and purpose of the NCE is to test your skill as a hearing healthcare professional. The accomplishment of the designation rests upon your successful completion of the NCE.*

# APPLICATION PROCESS AND ELIGIBILITY

## Application Process

Access the application from the [NBC-HIS website](#). Complete the application and include a copy of the following items:

- Your state/provincial/jurisdictional license or certificate of registration,
- A letter on company letterhead from a current employer or person that supervised your training attesting to your two years of full-time dispensing experience *OR* a diploma from one of the approved two-year post-secondary educational programs, and
- The applicable exam fee, which is indicated on the exam application.

Your submitted application and documentation are reviewed for eligibility. Once you are determined to be an exam candidate, your application will remain valid and on file for a period of two (2) years.

## Eligibility Requirements

Exam candidates must have a current state/provincial/jurisdictional dispensing license or certificate of registration (where applicable) and meet a minimum of two (2) years of full-time dispensing experience within the last five (5) years **or** provide a diploma from an approved two-year post-secondary educational program (see below for complete listing of approved programs) to be eligible to take the NCE. Eligibility is obtained by submitting:

- A current state/provincial/jurisdictional dispensing license *OR* certificate of registration (where applicable), and
- A letter on company letterhead from a current employer or the person that supervised your training attesting to your two years of full-time dispensing experience **or** a diploma in Hearing Instrument Sciences from:

### **In Canada:**

- Conestoga College
- Douglas College
- MacEwan University
- George Brown College

### **In the United States:**

- Bates Technical College
- Ozarks Technical Community College
- Rowan College at Burlington County College
- Spokane Falls Community College

**Note:** If you are self-employed or a business owner, please [email the NBC-HIS office](#) for options to provide proof of the two-year dispensing requirement.

## Board Eligible

Hearing Instrument Specialists who have completed fifteen (15) or more months of the two-year dispensing requirement are eligible to sit for the exam. Upon successfully passing the exam, they will remain "Board Eligible" until such time that the two-year requirement is fulfilled. The license/registration requirement depends on the laws and regulations currently in effect in the candidate's locality.

## Eligibility Appeal Process

If you have been denied the opportunity to take the NCE and believe you have met the requirements, you may appeal to the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences (NBC-HIS) Executive Director by writing a letter indicating the reason(s) you should not be denied. In the event you are not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, you may appeal in writing to the Executive Council for further consideration. The appeal must be submitted to NBC-HIS within thirty (30) days of denial.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

No applicant who has otherwise satisfied the application requirements shall be denied eligibility to the NCE because of age, sex, marital status, national origin, sexual preference, religious preference, race, or physical disability. Any individual who wishes to question any of the eligibility requirements of the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences (NBC-HIS) shall submit these concerns in writing to the NBC-HIS office.

## Accommodation Requests

NBC-HIS is committed to complying with the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* ("ADA") and the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). To request accommodations, a candidate may contact NBC-HIS at [info@nbc-his.com](mailto:info@nbc-his.com) to obtain a "[Candidate Accommodation Request Form](#)." A candidate must submit the completed request form along with the required supporting documentation prior to scheduling an exam appointment.

NBC-HIS will conduct an individualized assessment of each request for accommodation based upon the documentation submitted by the candidate in accordance with the Candidate Accommodation Request Form requirements. The accommodation assessment period is typically sixty (60) days.<sup>1</sup> Upon completing the assessment, NBC-HIS will notify the

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the submission of an incomplete application and/or incomplete/missing supporting documentation may delay the assessment process.

candidate whether the accommodation request has been approved or denied. If approved, the candidate will then receive scheduling assistance from NBC-HIS staff.

Under the ADA and ACA, NBC-HIS is not required to provide accommodations that would fundamentally alter what the exam is intended to test, jeopardize exam security, or result in an undue burden.

## Certification Process Overview

- 1 Apply for the exam by submitting a formal application and fee. The application is available on the NBC-HIS website, [www.nbc-his.com](http://www.nbc-his.com). The application is reviewed and all information verified.
- 2 Upon approval, NBC-HIS will email you a voucher code and a link to **Webassessor**.
- 3 Create a test-taker account in the Webassessor system.
- 4 You will receive a "Welcome" message from the Webassessor system. The message includes your personal login name and password.
- 5 Schedule the examination appointment and apply the voucher code when prompted for payment.
- 6 You will receive a "transaction" message. This receipt includes exam date, time (military digits), location, and **authorization code**.
- 7 Take the exam. In step 6, you received a personal **authorization code**. You must bring this code and two (2) valid forms of identification with you to the appointment. Acceptable forms of ID are listed in later in this handbook.
- 8 Once complete, you will receive a test completion message from the testing system.
- 9 NBC-HIS sends the pass/fail results directly to you via email immediately following exam completion.
- 10 NBC-HIS sends a welcome email and welcome kit to successful candidates. Examinees who do not pass must wait 30 days before retaking the exam. Second and subsequent fail results require a six months' wait before another retake.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL COMPETENCY EXAM (NCE)

### Exam Composition

The NBC-HIS Exam and Item Writers Committees are composed of experienced and practicing board-certified hearing healthcare professionals. These individuals volunteer their time to research and draft items for the NCE based upon the NBC-HIS Role Delineation Study results and performance objectives required to be considered a competent hearing healthcare professional.

During the developmental stages of this exam in 1981, 1991, 1999, 2006, 2012, and 2017, a Role Delineation Survey was distributed to members of the hearing healthcare profession. From these studies, a Competency Model was developed. Each competency area (domain) is weighted based on its importance to the overall performance of the hearing healthcare provider's day-to-day activities. The percentage of importance determines the approximate number of questions in each area used on the NCE.

Additional information about the exam is available in the [Self-Study Guide](#).

### NCE Competency Model (rev. 2017)

#### **DOMAIN 1: Assess patient presenting problem and needs (22%)**

- 1) Given a patient scenario that includes a family history of hearing loss, identify the most likely type/degree/slope of hearing loss or potential impact to hearing.
- 2) Given a patient scenario that includes childhood hearing-related illnesses, identify the most likely type/degree/slope of hearing loss or potential impact to hearing.
- 3) Given a patient scenario that includes hearing loss duration and/or dizziness and/or loss of balance and/or trauma and/or discomfort and/or tinnitus, identify the most likely type/degree/slope of hearing loss or potential impact to hearing.
- 4) Given a patient scenario that includes past and/or current health conditions and/or medication/drug history, identify the most likely type/degree/slope of hearing loss or potential impact to hearing.
- 5) Given a patient scenario that includes occupations or recreational activities that include exposure to noise and acoustic trauma, identify the most likely type/degree/slope of hearing loss or potential impact to hearing.
- 6) Given a patient scenario including history of ear surgeries, diseases and treatments, identify the most likely type/degree/slope of hearing loss or potential impact to hearing.
- 7) Given a patient scenario with different types of hearing loss, identify the potential impact on patient's lifestyle (family, work and social activities).



- 8) Given a patient scenario, identify which symptom would MOST likely require a medical referral.
- 9) Given a patient scenario involving noise exposure, identify the most appropriate type of preventative hearing protection.
- 10) Differentiate between scenarios that indicate a hearing loss vs. lack of understanding.

## **DOMAIN 2: Test and analyze patient hearing (26%)**

- 1) Identify irregularities/obstructions during an otoscopic examination.
- 2) Identify when the patient would benefit from cerumen management, removal, and/or precautions in cerumen management.
- 3) Given an audiogram, identify the degree and type of hearing loss based on the pure-tone air and bone-conduction results (revised) or proper technique modifications.
- 4) Given tympanogram and/or reflex results, identify condition(s) that would cause the tympanogram and/or reflex configuration.
- 5) Identify potential methods for managing tinnitus.
- 6) Identify when to conduct speech awareness and/or speech reception threshold test.
- 7) Given speech discrimination test results, identify how it would impact the patient's hearing OR most appropriate treatment option/additional testing.
- 8) Given audiometric test results showing air- and/or bone-conduction testing and masking levels, determine whether was this over masked, under masked, effectively masked, masking was not necessary, or a masking anomaly.
- 9) Given a patient scenario and Most Comfortable Listening Level (MCL) and Uncomfortable Loudness Level (UCL), identify the potential impact on fitting.
- 10) Interpret Speech in Noise (SIN) results and impact on treatment plan.
- 11) Identify when appropriate to use specialized tests or screenings and/or how to interpret the results.
- 12) Identify irregular test results or the potential causes of irregular test results.
- 13) Given otological or hearing test results, identify the results that require medical referral.

## **DOMAIN 3: Prescribe and analyze hearing instruments (19%)**

- 1) Given a patient scenario that includes physical and/or cognitive limitations, identify the appropriate hearing instrument (e.g., style, configuration, matrix).
- 2) Given a patient scenario including physical/cognitive limitations or knowledge of technology, identify which telephone use options are most appropriate.

- 3) Given a patient scenario that includes lifestyle, physical/cognitive limitations or knowledge of technology, identify which Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) are most appropriate.
- 4) Given a patient's ear canal, size, hearing loss and lifestyle, identify the contraindications for Invisible-in-Canal (IIC) hearing instruments, i.e., extended or daily wear use.
- 5) Given a patient scenario, identify the most appropriate modification to the procedures and/or materials during an ear impression.
- 6) Given a patient scenario, identify the most appropriate tube/wire length, dome size, earmold, or receiver power for over-the-ear (OTE), receiver-in-canal (RIC), and behind-the-ear (BTE) hearing instruments.
- 7) Given a patient scenario, evaluate and explain advantages and disadvantages of custom hearing instruments versus OTE, RIC, and BTE.
- 8) Evaluate possible treatment options for asymmetrical and single-sided deafness (SSD).
- 9) Given a patient scenario that includes lifestyle, history, test results, and ear canal characteristics, determine the most appropriate hearing instrument.

#### **DOMAIN 4: Fit, adjust, program, and service hearing instruments and equipment (18%)**

- 1) Given subjective verification outcome results (e.g., sound field aided/unaided discrimination, sound field aided/unaided warble tones or narrow band noise), identify the appropriate adjustment.
- 2) Given results from real ear or speech mapping, identify potential causes of problems or identify the appropriate modification.
- 3) Given a patient complaint, identify the appropriate methodologies for modifying the physical fit of earmolds, custom shells, OTE, BTE, and RIC instruments.
- 4) Given a patient complaint, troubleshoot and adjust/modify programming of hearing instrument.
- 5) Identify or resolve potential hearing instrument problems caused by obstructions or moisture.
- 6) Troubleshoot pairing and wireless connectivity between hearing-related devices.

#### **DOMAIN 5: Counseling, rehabilitation, and professional practice (15%)**

- 1) Given results of otoscopic examination and audiometric examination, which is the most appropriate patient explanation?
- 2) Identify potential limitations and benefits of amplification.

- 3) Identify helpful strategies and information for improved hearing and communication in various situations or environments.
- 4) Identify appropriate manual hearing instrument adjustments that patients, family members, or caregivers can make.
- 5) Identify principles of NBC-HIS Code of Ethics.
- 6) Identify when a client is a possible candidate for a surgical solution, e.g., cochlear implant, Bone-anchored Hearing Aid (BAHA), etc.

## Exam Scoring

The NCE consists of 100 scored multiple-choice items and **sometimes will include as many as 30 additional non-scored beta items**. Exam candidates will receive a score based upon their performance on the one hundred (100) scored items. Administering beta (non-scored) items allows NBC-HIS to collect data on new items and assemble subsequent exams. **Your exam length and allotted time will be posted when you register for the exam** (as shown below).



Items from each competency area are randomly distributed throughout the exam. A successful exam candidate should be familiar with the following areas of competency:

### Competency Areas

Domain 1 Assess patient presenting problem and needs	22%
Domain 2 Test and analyze patient hearing	26%
Domain 3 Prescribe and analyze hearing instruments	19%
Domain 4 Fit, adjust, program and service hearing instruments and equipment	18%
Domain 5 Counseling, rehabilitation, and professional practice	15%

Even though the NCE has five competency areas, it is scored as a single exam. Each item is scored as either correct or incorrect; there is no partial credit given for any item. The percentage associated with each competency area reflects the proportion of items pertaining to that area that will be on the exam.

Computer-based exam results will be reported to you when your exam is submitted and will list either a pass or fail for the entire exam. The percentage of correct responses for each domain will be disclosed only if you fail. Additional instructions based on pass or fail results will be provided as necessary.

# SCHEDULING YOUR EXAM

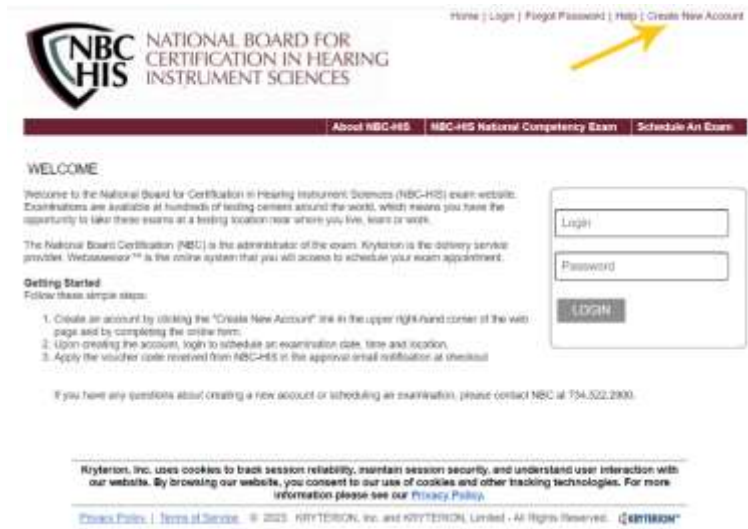
## Creating a Test-Taker Account

Webassessor is the online system that you will access to schedule your exam appointment. Kryterion is the owner of the system. NBC-HIS is the administrator of the exam. Because of our relationship with Kryterion, this exam is available at hundreds of testing centers around the world, which means you can take the licensing exam at a testing location near where you live, learn or work.

NBC-HIS determines candidate eligibility to take the exam. Following the determination and confirmation of your eligibility as well as payment of the exam fee to NBC-HIS, you will receive an email message from NBC-HIS with instructions for creating a Webassessor test-taker account, which enables you to schedule and use a voucher code to apply for the exam appointment.

**AFTER** applying with NBC-HIS and having eligibility confirmed by NBC-HIS, follow these simple steps to create an account:

**Step 1:** Access the Webassessor system at [www.webassessor.com/nbchis](http://www.webassessor.com/nbchis)



**Step 2:** Create a test-taker account by clicking the “Create New Account” link in the upper right-hand corner of the web page.

**Step 3:** Enter the required information and Click **SAVE**. After creating a test-taker account, you will receive a “Welcome to Webassessor” email message containing your personal login and password.

*Tip: It is important to note that you will be able to login to schedule an exam date, time, and location immediately. When prompted for payment, since you have already supplied the exam fee to NBC-HIS, you will apply the **voucher code** at this time. No additional payment is required when scheduling your exam.*

Home | Login | Forgot Password | Help | Create New Account

LogIn:  \*

Must be an email address or alphanumeric characters.

Password:  \*

The password must be at least 8 characters long and contain at least one uppercase character, one lowercase character, one digit, and one special character: (@#%N^&\*') !!! (!!@, !@#%\*^&\*')

Re-Enter Password:  \*

Legal First Name:  \*

When taking an exam at a testing center, the name on your test form of identification must match exactly with your name as specified below. Additionally, all identification must be current. Expired identification will not be accepted.

Legal Last Name:  \*

Email Address:  \*

Primary Phone:

Address 1:

Address 2:

City:

Province/State:  \*

Postal Code:

Country:  \*

Save Cancel

Save Cancel

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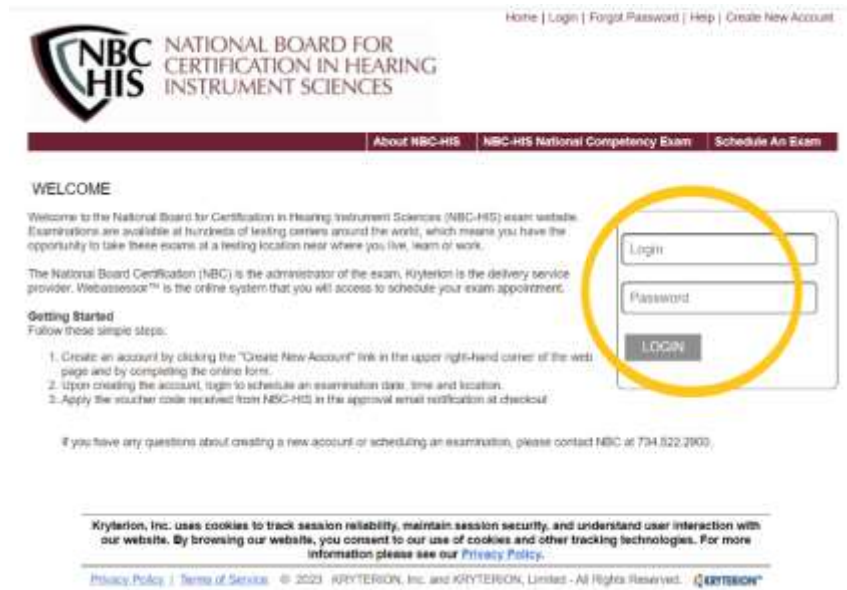
## Scheduling an Exam Appointment

Following your creation of the test-taker account, you may log into Webassessor to schedule an exam appointment. You will select a testing center, schedule the exam, and apply the **voucher code** at the payment screen.

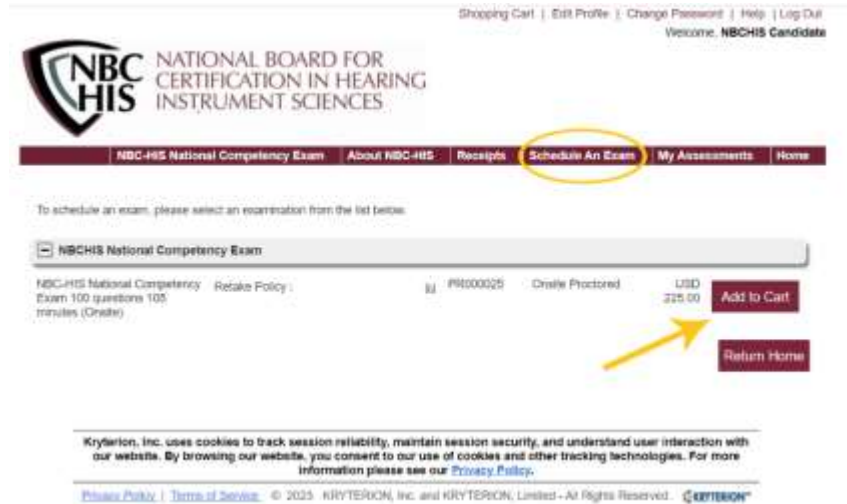
A **voucher code** from NBC-HIS will be necessary each time a candidate schedules an appointment to take the exam, including retakes. The exam fee of \$225 (USD) for United States & Canada or \$250 (USD) for International must be paid directly to NBC-HIS prior to scheduling. You may pay by credit card (American Express, Discover, Mastercard, or Visa) or provide a check in U.S. funds written on a U.S. bank only. Upon payment to NBC-HIS, a voucher code will be supplied to apply to the payment screen upon checkout. You will receive an individual **authorization code** in an email message following the Webassessor scheduling process.

Follow these steps to schedule an exam appointment:

**Step 1:** Using your credentials, log into [www.webassessor.com/nbchis](http://www.webassessor.com/nbchis) to schedule the exam.



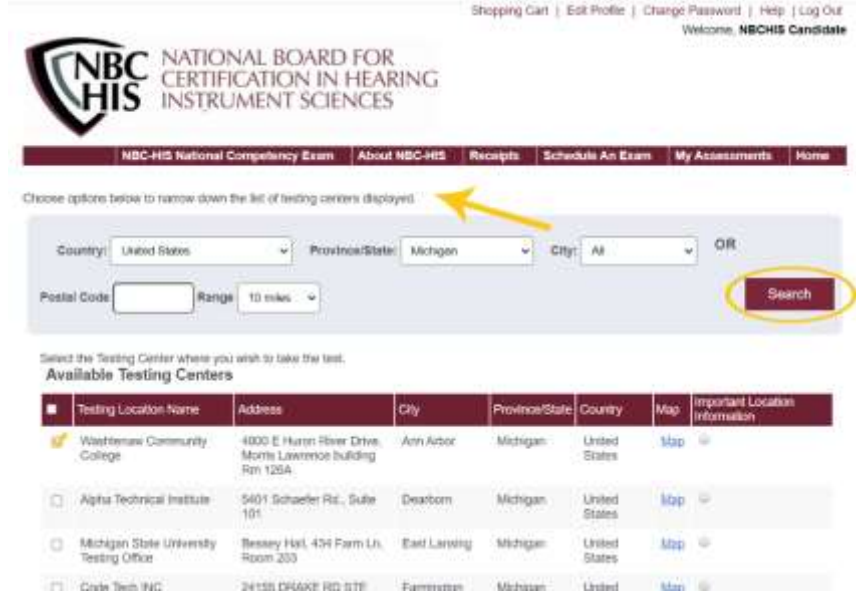
**Step 2:** Click on the “Schedule An Exam” tab at the top of the screen. Choose the National Competency Exam and then click on the “Add to Cart” button on the right-hand side.





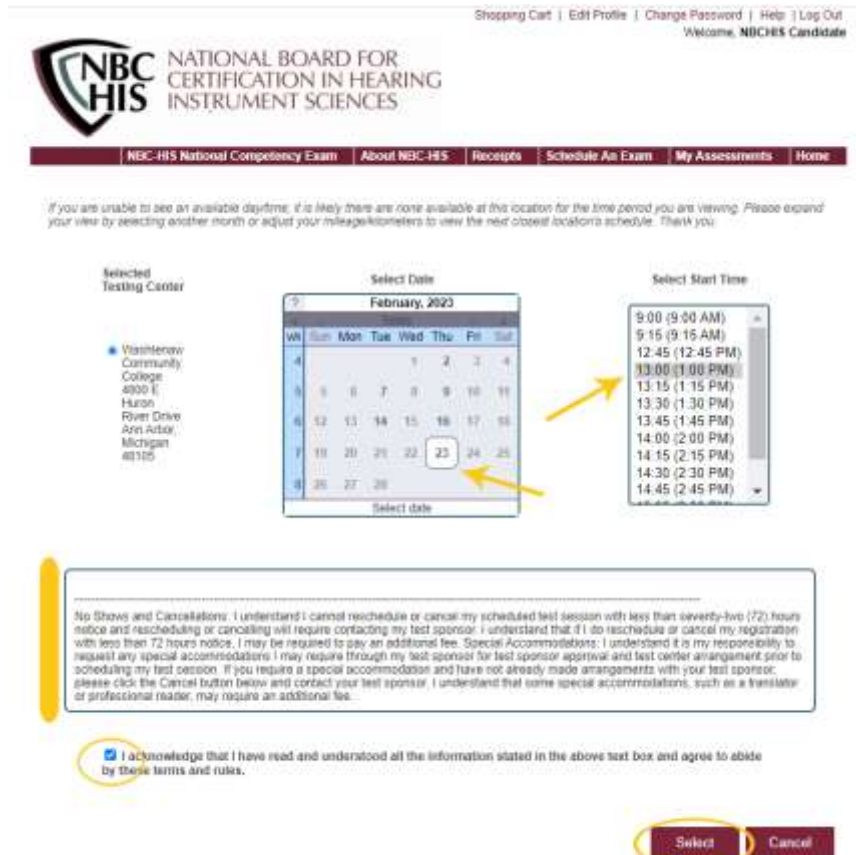
**Step 3:** Select a testing center. Enter your desired search criteria and click on the “Search” button. A list of testing centers will appear. Click the box to the left of the center that works best for you.

*Tip: You may choose to take the exam at a testing center in a neighboring state or province, which may be more convenient for you. Refine the search using the postal code or range.*



**Step 4:** Choose a date and time. Based on the chosen testing center, a calendar of availability will display. This is the real-time availability of that particular testing center. Only the days and times that the chosen testing center is open/available are shown. Click on the desired day and time and agree to the acknowledgement at the bottom of the screen. Then, click “Select.”

*Tip: If the displayed dates and times are not convenient for you, you may search the availability of a different testing center. Click the back arrow to return to the previous screen. If desired dates and times are not available, select a different testing center.*



**Step 5:** At check out, apply the voucher code to the exam since you already paid the exam fee directly to NBC-HIS. If scheduling a retake, you will need to contact NBC-HIS to pay the exam fee again and obtain a new voucher code. Scheduling is not complete until the voucher code is applied.

*Tip: The voucher code was sent to you from NBC-HIS via email.*

**Step 6:** Print the exam confirmation or click done to complete scheduling.

Shopping Cart | Edit Profile | Change Password | Help | Log Out  
Welcome, NBC-HIS Candidate

**NBC-HIS NATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION IN HEARING INSTRUMENT SCIENCES**

NBC-HIS National Competency Exam | About NBC-HIS | Receipts | Schedule An Exam | My Assessments | Home

Your cart contains voucher only exams. Please enter your voucher code to proceed.

Exam	Details	Price	Actions
Exam: NBC-HIS National Competency Exam 100 questions 105 minutes (Onsite) Length: 105 minutes	Schedule: Thursday, 23 February 2023 Start Time: 13:00 (UTC-05:00) Location: <a href="#">[Change]</a> Washtenaw Community College 4800 E Huron River Drive Morris Lawrence building Rm 126A Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106	225.00	<a href="#">Remove</a>

Please note that you will have to re-enter the voucher code at the time of purchase if you decide to leave this page without completing the current purchase.

Coupon/Voucher Code:  [Apply](#)

Shopping Cart | Edit Profile | Change Password | Help | Log Out  
Welcome, NBC-HIS Candidate

**NBC-HIS NATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION IN HEARING INSTRUMENT SCIENCES**

NBC-HIS National Competency Exam | About NBC-HIS | Receipts | Schedule An Exam | My Assessments | Home

Thank you for scheduling your exam.

An email has been sent to you to confirm your purchase and provide details on the examination(s).

An exam date may be RESCHEDULED if necessary. However, an additional exam fee will be assessed for any schedule changes made 72-24 hours prior to the exam date. A candidate may not reschedule his or her exam appointment on the examination date (less than 24 hours). This is considered a no show, and the candidate forfeits their examination fee.

Candidate Name: NBC-HIS Candidate

Exam:	NBC-HIS National Competency Exam 100 questions 105 minutes (Onsite)
Scheduled Date:	Thursday, 23 February 2023
Start Time:	13:00 (UTC-05:00)
Candidate Authorization Code:	6x22963
Testing Center Location:	Washtenaw Community College 4800 E Huron River Drive Morris Lawrence building Rm 126A Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106 United States

Quantity	Item	Price	Total
1	NBC-HIS National Competency Exam 100 questions 105 minutes (Onsite)	USD 225.00	USD 225.00
	Applied Voucher NBC-HIS National Competency Exam 100 questions 105 minutes (Onsite) Add62j22zeVDrPhSV	-USD 225.00	
Total Price:			USD 0.00

Order Date: 27 January 2023

Kryteron, Inc. 7776 S Peoria Pkwy W #200, Phoenix, AZ 85044 | U.S. Federal ID 88-0040055

[Print](#) [Done](#)



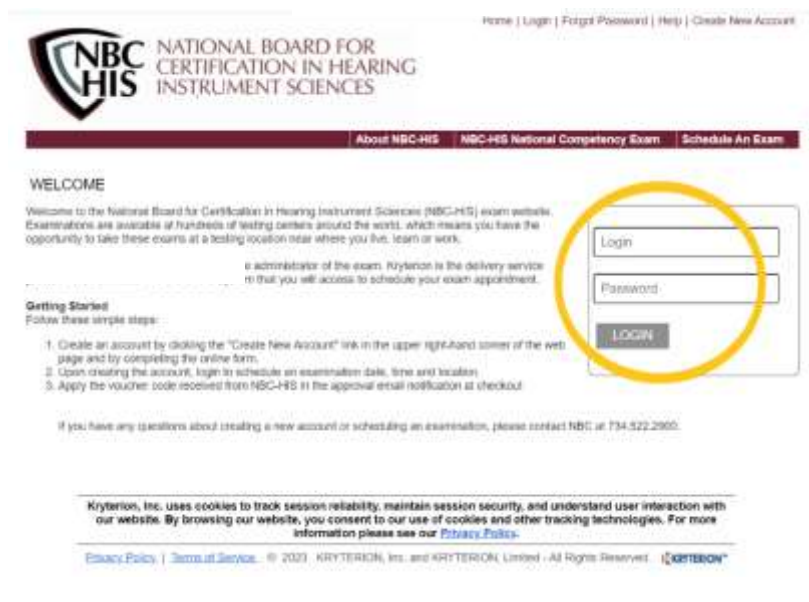
## Rescheduling an Exam Appointment

Please note the following parameters regarding rescheduling an exam:

- You may reschedule your exam appointment more than 72 hours (exactly) before the appointment time at no charge.
- You may reschedule your exam appointment 1 to 3 business days (24-72 hours) before the appointment time by submitting an additional \$95.00 rescheduling fee.
- You may not reschedule your exam appointment on the exam date (less than 24 hours). This is considered a no show, and you will forfeit your exam fee.

Follow these steps to reschedule an exam appointment:

**Step 1:** Log into the Webassessor system at [www.webassessor.com/nbchis](http://www.webassessor.com/nbchis)



**Step 2:** Click on the "My Assessments" tab in the top menu. Under "Scheduled Exams," click on Reschedule/Cancel link.



**Step 3:** Click the Reschedule button in the lower right corner.

**Step 4:** Follow the steps from the previous “scheduling an exam appointment” section to select your new testing center location and time/date.

**Step 5:** Reschedule Confirmation: You will see a note that your exam has been rescheduled and will receive an email notification with the new exam details.



## Exam Fee Refunds

If you are unable or decide not to take the NCE, you are entitled to a refund of your exam fee (less a \$75 application processing fee) if your request is received and acknowledged by NBC-HIS staff at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled exam date.

The exam date may be rescheduled for another date and/or time if necessary. There is no fee to reschedule an exam more than 72 hours prior to the exam. An additional exam fee will be assessed for any schedule changes made less than 72 hours prior to the exam date.

<u>TIME FROM SCHEDULED EXAM</u>	<u>EXAM FEE REFUND</u>
More than 72 hours prior to exam	100 percent, less a \$75 application processing fee
Less than 72 hours	0 percent
No show at scheduled exam time	0 percent

NBC-HIS recognizes that emergencies do occur that prohibit taking the scheduled exam. In these instances, a paid exam fee will be applied to a future exam but only under the following circumstances:

- Death of an immediate family member,
- Sudden illness (you must submit a letter from your doctor), or
- Extreme emergency over which you have no control.

You must submit in writing a statement detailing the circumstances that prohibited you from taking the scheduled exam.

The NBC-HIS Executive Council or Executive Director shall exercise reasonable judgment to determine whether the circumstances warranted failure to appear for the scheduled exam. Decisions rendered by the Executive Council or Executive Director are final.

## No Shows

If you fail to appear for your scheduled exam appointment, you will not receive a refund and will need to pay the full exam fee directly to NBC-HIS before rescheduling. Please note that a new voucher code is required to complete the rescheduling process.

## Webassessor Help

This information is provided to help you navigate the Webassessor system and answer some frequently asked questions. If you continue having trouble after reviewing and applying these instructions, please contact NBC-HIS at [info@nbc-his.com](mailto:info@nbc-his.com) for assistance.

**I forgot my password:** Click on "Forgot Password" in the upper right-hand corner of the Webassessor screen.

[www.webassessor.com/nbchis](http://www.webassessor.com/nbchis)

Complete user login ID and click submit.

Home | Login | **Forgot Password** | Help | Create New Account

**NBC-HIS** NATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION IN HEARING INSTRUMENT SCIENCES

About NBC-HIS | NBC-HIS National Competency Exam | Schedule An Exam

**WELCOME**

Welcome to the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences (NBC-HIS) exam website. Examinations are available at hundreds of testing centers around the world, which means you have the opportunity to take these exams at a testing location near where you live, learn or work.

The National Board-Certification (NBC) is the administrator of the exam. Kryterion is the delivery service provider. Webassessor™ is the online system that you will access to schedule your exam appointment.

**Getting Started**  
Follow these simple steps:

1. Create an account by clicking the "Create New Account" link in the upper right-hand corner of the web page and by completing the online form.
2. Upon creating the account, login to schedule an examination date, time and location.
3. Apply the voucher code received from NBC-HIS in the approval email notification at checkout.

If you have any questions about creating a new account or scheduling an examination, please contact NBC at 734.522.2900.

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Home | Login | **Forgot Password** | Help | Create New Account

**NBC-HIS** NATIONAL BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION IN HEARING INSTRUMENT SCIENCES

About NBC-HIS | NBC-HIS National Competency Exam | Schedule An Exam

**Forgot Password**

Enter your login in the field below to receive your password.

Login:

NBCHISCandidate1

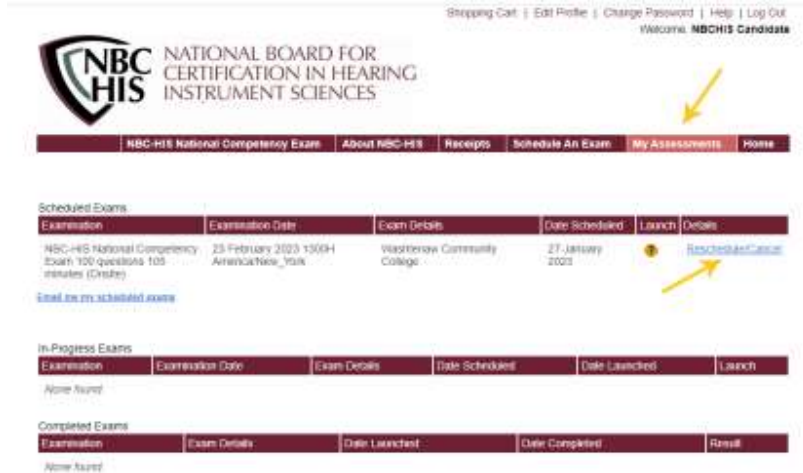
Submit

**What time is my exam**

**appointment?** The time of the exam appointment is listed in Military Time. In order to see the exam time, date, location, and Authorization Code:

1. Click the "Reschedule/Cancel" link.  
NOTE: Clicking this link will NOT reschedule or cancel the exam.
2. The Registration Details will appear.

*Tip: You will also find the exam appointment time on the Transaction/Receipt message you received via email.*



**I don't have a Voucher Code:** In order to obtain a Voucher Code, payment must be made directly to NBC-HIS. Please contact the NBC-HIS office if you misplaced the original code or need a new code.

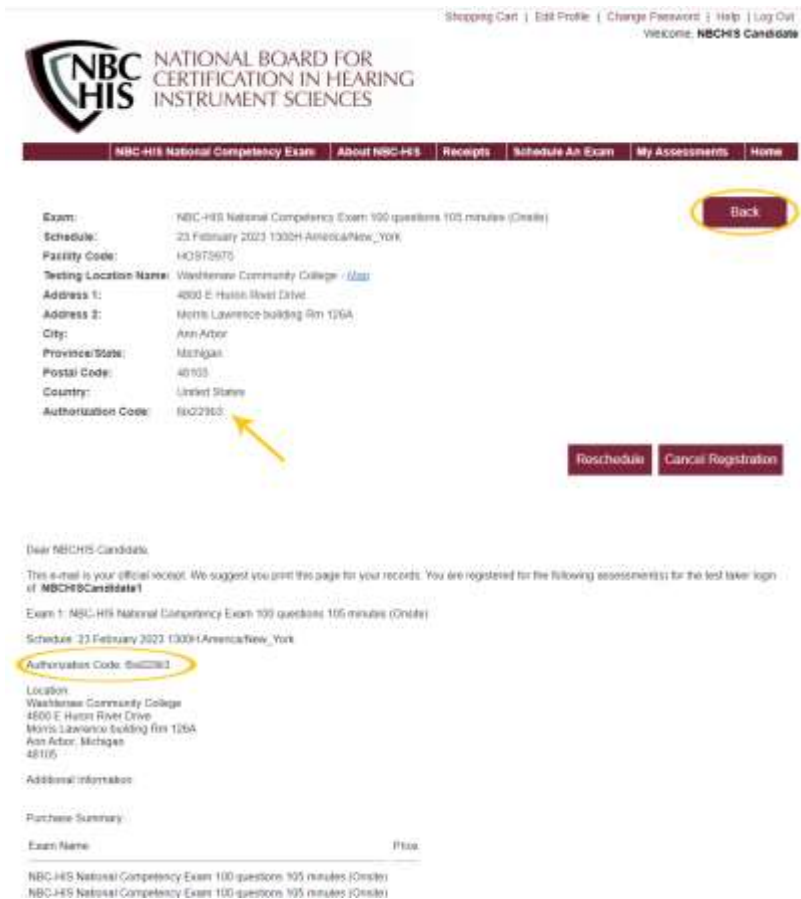
**My account is "inactive" or unresponsive to my requests:** Your account may be "inactivated" for a reason. Call NBC-HIS at 734-522-2900 to ask for Webassessor help.

**I don't have an authorization**

**code:** In order to see the authorization code, click the "Reschedule/Cancel" link highlighted above.

NOTE: Clicking this link will NOT reschedule or cancel the exam. The registration details will appear. Click the "Back" button when done.

*Tip: You will also find the authorization code on the Transaction/Receipt message you received via email when you scheduled the exam appointment.  
Important: You will need your authorization code when you arrive for your exam appointment.*



**The computer froze at the testing center:** Computer glitches do happen. Web-based systems get overloaded. Technical difficulties occur. In the event of a technical issue during the exam, please immediately contact the proctor. The proctor will follow standard procedures for re-setting your exam. Time will not be deducted from the time allowed. However, if you experienced a very unusual circumstance or issue during testing, please follow the instructions in the [Exam Appeals](#) section (see page 26).

**For Technical Assistance with Webassessor or the Testing Centers Network, contact:**

Kryterion, Inc.

<https://kryterion.my.site.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Or, select the Help button on the main menu of the Webassessor system.

## TAKING THE EXAM

### Identification & Authorization Code

To be admitted to the testing center, you **must** bring the following three (3) items with you to the testing center for your exam appointment. **There will be no exceptions.**

1. Photo identification
  - Acceptable photo identification: A government-issued identification card, driver's license, passport, or military identification.
2. Second form of identification
  - Acceptable second form of identification: either a second form of government-issued identification, major credit card (i.e., Visa, MasterCard, or American Express), check cashing card, or bank debit card. Please note that a Social Security Card is not an acceptable form of identification.
3. Authorization code
  - This is the Authorization Code you received in an email following the Webassessor scheduling process.

Plan to arrive at the testing center up to 20 minutes early. Late arrivals **will not** receive a time extension. Late arrival may result in cancellation of your scheduled exam time and forfeiture of your exam fees.

### Taking the Exam

The exam includes a total of 100 multiple-choice questions across the five (5) competency areas. They are randomly distributed throughout the exam allowing all exam candidates an opportunity to answer questions from each of the competency areas. Be sure to confirm the total time of your exam at the time of scheduling. Without additional beta questions, the 100-question exam has a time limit of 105 minutes to complete the exam. If additional beta questions are added, the total time allowed is adjusted automatically and the time allowed as well as the total number of items will be noted on the exam you schedule (see example below).





## Exam Security

NBC-HIS owns all proprietary rights and interests of the exam, including but not limited to copyright, trade secret, and/or patented information, as well as all exam materials, including but not limited to the Candidate Handbook, the Candidate Self-Study Guide, the NCE, and the answer key to the exam.

The exam is confidential. It will be made available to the candidate solely for the purpose of assessing the candidate's proficiency level in the hearing healthcare professional skill areas. To protect the integrity of the exam, candidates are prohibited from disclosing the contents of this exam, including but not limited to questions, form of questions and/or answers, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means (i.e., verbal, written, or electronic) to any third party for any purpose. Copying or communicating exam content is prohibited and may result in the cancellation of exam results and/or possible revocation of board certification.

## Conduct and Acceptable Items

Candidates are at all times to maintain a professional attitude toward other candidates, proctors, and other exam personnel. In NBC-HIS' sole discretion, conduct that is or results in a violation of security or disrupts the administration of the exam may result in immediate disqualification and ejection from the exam. Such conduct includes but is not limited to cheating, failing to follow all rules and instructions governing the administration of the exam, or otherwise compromising the security or integrity of the exam.

**Pocket Turnouts:** Test takers will be asked to turn out exterior pockets (on jackets, jeans, slacks, etc.) to verify that the pockets are empty and do not contain any prohibited items. Ideally, you may wish to empty your pockets prior to entering the Testing Center.

**Eyewear Inspections:** Due to the release (or upcoming release in some countries) of technology such as "Google Glass," all test takers who enter the Testing Center wearing external eyewear must hand their eyewear over to the proctor for inspection to ensure the eyewear is not technology-enabled.

**Books, papers, notes, or devices with memory capabilities:** Laptops, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), text enabled pagers, voice recorders, calculators, etc., will not be permitted in the testing room. Personal possessions such as cellular phones, briefcases, or backpacks may be collected by the proctor, stored in a secured area, and returned after the test session.

Kryterion will notify NBC-HIS of any known exam security violations.



## AFTER THE EXAM

Upon completion of the exam, the candidate will receive a "Test Completion" email message from Webassessor with exam results.

### Exam Scoring

The examination is comprised of one hundred scored items. An examination pass/fail result will be sent to your email upon completing the exam. Actual percentage on passing scores will not be provided. Candidates who fail the exam are provided with the percentage of correct responses for each domain.

### Results

A passing score is required to earn the Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Specialist (BC-HIS) designation. The National Competency Exam uses a modified Angoff methodology to establish a criterion referenced passing standard. This passing standard takes into consideration the difficulty of the individual items on the test form. When creating new test forms for the National Competency Exam, the passing standard remains consistent while the actual passing score may be adjusted up or down depending on the difficulty of the new test forms being created. This allows results between candidates on different test forms to be equivalent and fair to each individual.

### Passing the Exam

A passing score for the entire exam is required to become Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Sciences. Scores for each area of competency are not provided.

Shortly after passing the exam, you will receive a welcome email and then a welcome kit including a branding guide, information about how to access your digital badge and other materials to promote your new credential. Your wall certificate will come in a separate mailing several weeks after that.

### Failing the Exam

To successfully complete the National Competency Exam, candidates must receive an overall passing score. When a failing score results, you will be notified of the percentage of correct responses for each domain.

If you do not successfully complete/pass the National Competency Exam (NCE), you may retake the NCE after a 30-day waiting period. An examination fee must be submitted each time you sit for the exam. After you sit for the exam a second time or subsequent times, a six (6) month waiting period will be engaged moving forward.

If you do not pass the NCE within two years from the initial exam date, you must file a new application for approval and pay an application fee. The six (6) month waiting period carries forward with the candidate and is not started anew with the application.

## Exam Appeals

An exam appeal will only be considered if there was an issue at the exam site that resulted in a problem taking the exam. There will be no appeals for a rescore of an exam since the chance of a scoring mistake is virtually nonexistent. Requests for exam appeals must be submitted in writing within sixty (60) days of the exam date and must be accompanied by a payment of \$75. A candidate may appeal an exam score for the following reasons:

- Excessive noise or confusion during the exam which inhibited concentration.
- Exam room conditions (lighting, temperature, etc.).
- Faulty computer operation.

If the review is found in your favor, you will be issued a refund of the appeal fee.

## Responsibilities of Board Certificants

### Code of Ethics

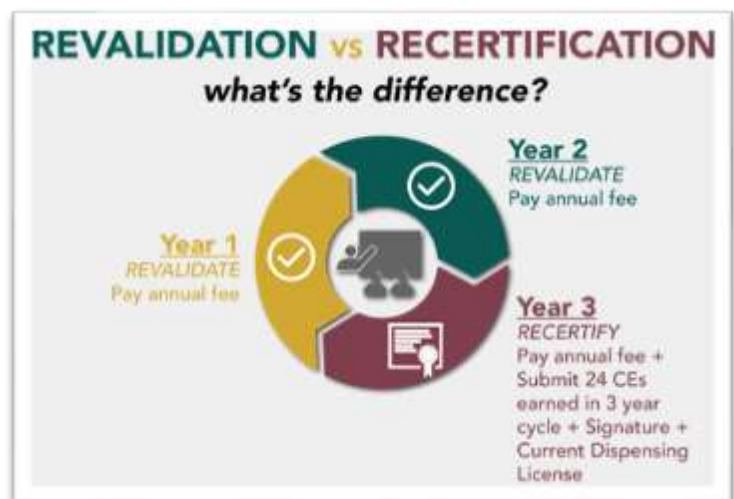
Individuals who are Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Sciences are expected to deal with their patients and peers in a professional manner as required by the [\*\*NBC-HIS CODE OF ETHICS\*\*](#) (see page [\*\*28\*\*](#)).

### Certificate Maintenance

Maintenance of your board certification is required to retain your credential, and action on your part is needed each year. When you revalidate your credential annually and then recertify every three years, you demonstrate your continued commitment to professional development and growth and assure your clients that you are maintaining your knowledge base.

Certification maintenance is on a three-year cycle as illustrated on the right. Continuing education is important because it ensures your continued excellence in the hearing healthcare profession.

Maintenance of your credential is an ongoing process and continues



throughout your professional career. Twenty-four (24) approved continuing education credits are required in each three-year recertification cycle.

**Required annually by June 30:**

- A revalidation fee and confirm/update contact information.

**Required every three years by June 30:**

- A current dispensing license that is in good standing,
- Twenty-four (24) approved continuing education credits, and
- A signed statement.

Additional information about certification maintenance, including information about how to earn CEs and have them added to your record, is posted on the [NBC-HIS website](#). You can check on your status and provide the information and fees necessary to maintain your certification through the [Certificant Center](#).



Failure to comply with the revalidation/recertification requirements outlined above will result in a revocation of your board-certified credentials, and the only way to earn board certification again will be to meet all eligibility requirements and retake and pass the NCE.

All certificates issued by the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences remain the property of NBC-HIS and must be returned if you choose not to or are unable to maintain your board certification.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

### **of the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences**

Revised May 2013

#### **PREAMBLE**

The Code of Ethics of the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences ("Code of Ethics") delineates the ethical obligations of all hearing healthcare professionals that have achieved Board Certification by the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences ("NBC-HIS"), as well as of the candidates for Board Certification ("Certificant").

This Code of Ethics, adopted by NBC-HIS, is binding upon all Certificants. Strict adherence to this Code of Ethics is required to maintain Board Certification. Further, this Code of Ethics promotes honorable conduct that assures public confidence in the integrity of Board-Certified hearing healthcare professionals' services.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PATIENT/CLIENT**

The Certificant, as a practitioner in the hearing healthcare profession, shall hold paramount the welfare of the patient/client. The Certificant shall respect the inherent dignity and rights of all individuals.

The Certificant shall adhere to the core values of the profession and shall act in the best interest of the patient/client over the interest of the Certificant. The Certificant shall not engage in conflicts of interest that interfere with professional judgment.

#### ***REFERRAL***

The Certificant shall utilize all resources available, including referral to other professionals, as needed, to provide the best possible service to the patient/client.

#### ***SERVICES RENDERED***

The Certificant shall fully inform the patient/client of the nature and possible results of the services rendered.

The Certificant shall not guarantee results from the use of any hearing instrument(s), product(s), service, or counseling. A reasonable statement of prognosis may be in order, but caution must be exercised in order to assure the patient/client is not led to expect results that cannot be accurately predicted.

### ***CONFIDENTIALITY***

All information relating to the condition of the patient/client, regardless of the source, is and shall always remain confidential.

The Certificant shall protect confidential patient/client information and may only disclose confidential information to appropriate authorities when allowed or as required by law.

### ***DISCUSSION OF THE PATIENT/CLIENT***

The fundamental obligation of the hearing healthcare professional is to advance the welfare of the patient/client. This obligation requires deliberate care in the manner that the hearing healthcare professional discusses findings and recommendations with the patient/client.

The Certificant shall never make any statement to persons, members of person's family, or any other individual that would cast doubt as to the credibility of other professionals rendering professional services to patients/clients.

In the event the Certificant has questions and/or reservations about the recommendations of other professionals, he/she shall communicate the concerns to the professional involved.

### ***MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS***

A fundamental factor in the delivery of professional services is the continuing knowledge of the patient's/client's condition. Such knowledge can effectively exist only if the Certificant initiates, secures and maintains as their property records to specifically include the professional services he/she provides to the patient/client.

### ***FEES FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES RENDERED***

The Certificant shall provide full disclosure of the ultimate cost of the hearing instrument(s), product(s) and/or service(s) rendered, at the earliest time possible.

### ***DELAY IN PROVIDING SERVICE***

The Certificant shall not unreasonably delay or allow for the unreasonable delay of hearing healthcare services.

### ***DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE***

The Certificant shall only discontinue service to the patient/client after providing reasonable notice and after all contractual agreements between the parties have been met.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES AND THE PROFESSION**

At all times, the Certificant's conduct shall be in a manner that will enhance the status of the hearing healthcare profession. The Certificant shall be supportive of individuals and organizations with whom they are associated for their mutual benefit.

The Certificant shall not criticize--by action or inference--to the patient, the character, qualifications, services, fees, or products of another hearing healthcare professional.

The Certificant shall not offer for sale any Class I medical device (hearing aid) when direct face-to-face contact has not been established (i.e., sale by internet or mail order).

The Certificant shall inform NBC-HIS of violations of this Code of Ethics.

## **STANDARDS AND COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

The Certificant shall comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

The Certificant shall provide truthful, accurate, and relevant information and shall not make misleading representations.

The Certificant shall not exploit persons, including but not limited to patients/clients, employees, or interns over whom they have supervisory, evaluative, or other authority.

The Certificant shall not harass anyone verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually.

The Certificant shall promote organizational behaviors and business practices that benefit patients/clients as well as society as a whole.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

The Certificant shall not discriminate in the delivery of professional services on the basis of sex, marital status, age, religious preference, nationality, sexual orientation, or race.

## **ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**

The Certificant shall not engage in any representation which is false, misleading, deceptive, or unfair. The Certificant shall not participate in false advertising. The Certificant's communications/advertisements shall not:

- Contain a false, fraudulent, misleading, deceptive, unfair, or sensational statement or claim;
- Be misleading due to the omission of necessary material information, or
- Otherwise operate to deceive.

The Certificant shall only use the NBC-HIS board certification in the manner designated by NBC-HIS.

## REPORTING

The Certificant must maintain and promote ethical practice by reporting illegal or unethical acts to the relevant authorities. The Certificant shall promptly, fully, and accurately report to NBC-HIS any departure from this Code of Ethics or failure to conform to applicable federal, state, or local laws and regulations.

The Certificant shall report to NBC-HIS any conduct about which the Certificant is aware and that reasonably appears to violate this Code of Ethics. This reporting requirement includes, but is not limited to, self-reporting and reporting about other Certificants. The Certificant is required to promptly, fully, and accurately report the potential violation(s) to NBC-HIS.

Prompt reporting requires the Certificant to report the potential violation(s) no later than 30 days from the date of the Certificant's receipt of knowledge.

Each Certificant must fully cooperate with NBC-HIS throughout its investigations of potential Code of Ethics violations.

## VIOLATION

Violation of any provision of this Code of Ethics may result in sanction(s) up to and including revocation of board certification. Examples of a violation of this Code of Ethics include but are not limited to:

- Conviction of a Felony;
- Conviction of a misdemeanor related directly or indirectly to the testing, fitting, and/or sale of a hearing instrument;
- Disciplinary action by a State Regulatory authority resulting in a Certificant's hearing aid dispensing privileges being placed on probation, suspended, or revoked;
- Engaging in false, misleading, deceptive or unfair advertising;
- Improper use of the NBC-HIS board certification credential or trademark;
- Revocation of State licensure;
- Failure to properly maintain confidential patient information;
- Statement(s) to persons, members of persons' family, or any other individual which would cast doubt as to the credibility of other professionals rendering professional services to patients/clients;
- Offering for sale any class I medical device (hearing aid) when direct face-to-face contact has not been established, i.e., sale by internet or mail order.

Those holding board certification awarded by NBC-HIS pledge themselves to observe and support the NBC-HIS Code of Ethics. As stated above, by violating any part of this Code of Ethics, Board Certification may be revoked. This Code of Ethics is interpreted and enforced by the NBC-HIS Executive Council.

## KEY TERMS INDEX

*Note: This index is intended to provide a quick reference to frequently used terms that aren't already listed in the Table of Contents.*

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