

# Credentialing Guidelines and Requirements

A Candidate Guidebook

## Table of Contents

### Certification Overview

- Who We Are
- Definition of Certification/Adoption by State Licensing Boards
- The Benefits of PTCB Certifications
- Construction of the PTCB Certification Exams
- Scaled Scores and Equating

## Certification Overview

### Who We Are

The Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) was established in January 1995 and is governed by five organizations: the American Pharmacists Association; the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists; the Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists; the Michigan Pharmacists Association; and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. PTCB is a national certification program that enables pharmacy technicians to work more effectively with pharmacists to offer safe and effective patient care and service. PTCB develops, maintains, promotes, and administers a nationally accredited certification program for pharmacy technicians, Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT). In addition, PTCB offers a specialty certification program for CPhTs that perform sterile compounding, Certified Compounded Sterile Preparation Technician® (CSPT®). PTCB Certification exams were developed to determine whether individuals have demonstrated the knowledge and skills required to earn these credentials.

### Definition of Certification/Adoption by State Licensing Boards

Individuals who meet eligibility requirements and pass the appropriate PTCB certification exams may use the CPhT (Certified Pharmacy Technician) or the CSPT® (Certified Compounded Sterile Preparation Technician®) designation. To maintain certification, PTCB certificants must recertify in accordance with PTCB's recertification requirements. For additional information, please refer to [recertification section](#) for specific program requirements.

### The Benefits of PTCB Certifications

Certification is the process by which a non-governmental association or agency grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications specified by that association or agency. PTCB certifications are valid nationwide. However, regulations to work in a pharmacy as a pharmacy technician vary from state to state. Individuals should contact their local state board of pharmacy or visit the [National Association of Boards of Pharmacy](#) for more information regarding pharmacy technician requirements. Benefits of PTCB certifications may include an increase in job promotion opportunities, recognition within the pharmacy profession and an increased focus on patient safety. Pharmacists recognize that PTCB Certified technicians demonstrate their qualifications and the knowledge necessary to function as a pharmacy technician through the examination.

### Construction of the PTCB Certification Exams

The methods used to construct PTCB Certification Exams adhere to the procedures for certification exams recommended in the Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests (APA, NCME, AERA; 1999), and in the guidelines published by the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA) and the Council on Licensure, Enforcement, and Regulation (CLEAR). PTCB's Exam Development Committees consist of pharmacists, CPhTs and pharmacy technician educators from various practice settings and geographic areas. Each question is carefully written, referenced and reviewed to determine its relevance and accuracy. All questions and exams are reviewed by Exam Development Committees to ensure that they are current and reflect the content outline.

### Scaled Scores and Equating

The use of scaled scores is necessary because different exam forms are administered every year and forms may fluctuate slightly in difficulty. A candidate's scaled score, rather than raw score, is reported and used to determine Pass/Fail. This is because scaled scores are comparable across candidates despite slight differences in exam difficulty from one exam to another, and therefore allow all candidates to be held to the same scoring standard.

PTCB uses multiple forms containing different items to minimize item exposure and ensure the continuing relevance of test items. To ensure the Pass/Fail results of candidates taking two different forms are equivalent, PTCB uses a process known as Item Response Theory (IRT) pre-equating. Equating ensures that the same passing standard is applied from exam to exam regardless of fluctuations in the overall difficulty level from one exam form to another.