

Credentialing Guidelines and Requirements

A Candidate Guidebook

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PTCB Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT) Program

Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT)

Pharmacy technicians who want to work more effectively with pharmacists to offer better patient care and service take the Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam® (PTCE®) to earn the national PTCB Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT) Certification.

PTCB's CPhT Program is nationally accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

Scope

PTCB CPhTs support pharmacists in delivering patient care in a variety of settings, including community pharmacies, hospitals, and other facilities. Although CPhTs typically support the medication dispensing process, the legal scope of practice for CPhTs is defined by individual State Boards of Pharmacy.

Eligibility Requirements

PTCB credentials are designed for use exclusively in the United States of America and its territories (US). Therefore, PTCB exams are generally only administered in the US. Active members of the US military and their spouses are eligible to test anywhere in the world. Other applicants outside of the US are only eligible to take a PTCB exam at a US-based Pearson VUE test center if they meet specific criteria. [Learn more.](#)

To be eligible to apply for PTCB CPhT Certification, an applicant must complete one of the following requirements:

Pathway 1: A [PTCB-Recognized Education/Training Program](#) (or completion within 60 days)*

Pathway 2: [Equivalent](#) work experience as a pharmacy technician (min. 500 hours).** This alternative path will serve experienced pharmacy technicians who were not in a position to attend a PTCB-Recognized Education/Training Program. [Learn more.](#)

*A Pharmacy degree is acceptable in lieu of a recognized pharmacy technician training/education program. [Learn more.](#)

**500 hours must be complete at the time of application.

In addition to completing a PTCB-Recognized Education/Training Program or equivalent work experience, applicants must also satisfy the following:

- Full disclosure of all criminal and State Board of Pharmacy registration or licensure actions
- Compliance with all applicable PTCB Certification policies
- Passing score on the Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam (PTCE)

PTCB-Recognized Education/Training Program Verification

CPhT applicants who are within 60 days of completing a PTCB-Recognized Education/Training Program will be eligible to take the PTCE. PTCB CPhT Certification will not be granted until proof of education/training completion is provided to PTCB. Examples of acceptable documentation include but are not limited to the following:

- Certificate of completion indicating your name, the education/training program title, and completion date
- Letter from an education/training provider official on letterhead indicating your name, the education/training program title, and completion date
- Unofficial transcript or diploma

Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam (PTCE)

Candidates are required to pass the Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam (PTCE) to earn the CPhT credential. The PTCE is a computer-based exam administered at Pearson VUE test centers nationwide. The exam is multiple-choice and contains 90 questions: 80 scored questions and 10 unscored questions. Each question lists four possible answers, only one of which is the correct or best answer. Unscored questions are not identified and are randomly distributed throughout the exam. A candidate's exam score is based on the responses to the 80 scored questions. Be prepared to commit 2 hours for the exam (5-minute tutorial, 1 hour and 50-minute exam, and 5-minute post-exam survey).

Content Outline

PTCB implemented its most recent update to the PTCE in 2020. The content of the PTCE is updated periodically to reflect changes in pharmacy technician practice. Questions are not presented in the knowledge area order shown in the PTCE content outline, but are randomly distributed throughout the exam. A complete version of the content outline, which lists the knowledge required to perform the activities associated with each function, can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Passing Score

A panel of subject-matter experts established a passing score for the PTCE using industry best practices. The method used by the panel, as directed by a psychometrician, is the modified-Angoff method. This method requires experts (panel members) to evaluate individual test questions and estimate the percentage of qualified pharmacy technicians that would be able to answer each question correctly. These estimates were analyzed for consistency and averaged to produce the passing score. The passing score and candidate results are reported as scaled scores. The passing scaled score for the PTCE is 1,400. The range of possible PTCE scores based on the exam outline is 1,000 to 1,600.

Preparing for the PTCE

PTCB has made two essential resources available to assist candidates in preparing for the PTCE:

1. [PTCE Content Outline](#)
2. [PTCE Reference List](#)

Familiarity with material contained in basic pharmacy technician training manuals or books may be helpful. Supervising pharmacists may also be helpful in designing a study plan. PTCB does not endorse, recommend, or sponsor any review course, manuals, or books for any PTCB exam.

Official PTCB Practice Tools

PTCB offers two unique ways for CPhT candidates to prepare for the Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam® (PTCE®)—the PTCE Practice Bank™ and the Pre-PTCE™. We recommend that candidates first study using the Practice Bank and then take the Pre-PTCE as a final check of readiness before attempting the PTCE. [Learn more](#).