



## **Certification Procedures Manual**

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)  
Subcommittee on Certification for Ecclesial Ministry and Service (SCEMS)**



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NACC Certification Commission**

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## Certification Procedures Manual

### Part Nine – Certification Appeals Procedures

CP91 When an Applicant for certification receives notification of denial of certification and believes that NACC Procedures for Certification of Associate Chaplains, Chaplains, Chaplains in Veterans Affairs, or Recognition of Board Certified Strategic Partner Applicants were violated, resulting in a negative certification decision, the right to a timely appeals procedure is ensured. The Certification Appeals Panel strives to resolve all appeals according to the time line established below.

CP92 Procedures

921 With the notification of denial of certification, the Applicant will receive information about the appeals process including:

921.1 Appeals Procedure Letter.

921.2 A copy of the NACC Certification Appeals Procedures.

922 If an Applicant chooses to appeal the decision of the Certification Commission, the Applicant has twenty (20) calendar days from the postmark of the notification of denial of certification to send a formal appeal to the Chair of the Certification Appeals Panel in care of the NACC National Office via certified mail or email with a read-receipt for verification by NACC office that appeal was received within twenty (20) days of postmark of the notification of denial.

Additionally, if an applicant submits an appeal of the decision of the Certification Commission, the Chair of the Certification Appeals Panel may request to speak with the Interview Team Educator and/or the appropriate members of the Interview Team so that additional pertinent information relevant to the applicant's interview can be provided. All members involved in the certification process understand that confidentiality must be maintained during this timeframe.

The Appellant materials will include:

922.1 Formal letter requesting an appeal and citing relevant NACC - Procedures that are alleged violations. An appeal must be based upon the grounds that the decision of the Certification Commission was in disregard or violation of NACC procedures, and that the violation had an impact on the outcome of the certification process. Examples of grounds for appeal may include:

- Substantial inaccurate representation of the Applicant's application materials as presented by the Applicant's interview team.
- Failure of the Interview Team, the ITE, or the Certification Commission to uphold the policies or follow the procedures of the certification process.

922.2 Presenter's Reports Part I and II from Associate Chaplain, Chaplain, or Chaplain in Veterans Affairs certification interview, or a copy of the letter

from the Certification Commission denying the Certification of Recognition request.

923 Within fifteen (15) days of the postmark (or email receipt) of the formal appeal from the Appellant, the Chair of the Certification Appeals Panel reviews copies of the Appellant's formal appeal with at least one additional member of the Certification Appeals Panel for the purpose of determining whether the formal appeal:

923.1 Demonstrates probable cause which indicates a potential violation of the NACC Procedures, or

923.2 Does not demonstrate probable cause and it is determined that there are no grounds to proceed.

924 If it is determined that there are no grounds to proceed, the Appellant is notified by the Chair of the Certification Appeals Panel via the NACC National Office. The decision is final.

If it is determined there is probable cause to proceed with the formal appeal, the Chair of the Certification Appeals Panel, in consultation with the NACC National Office, appoints a three (3) member Certification Appeals Review Team consisting of a Chair, a Presenter, and a Reader from among the Certification Appeals Panel members. The three (3) Review Team members will not have participated in the initial review of the appeal or have a conflict of interest with the Appellant.

925 The Appellant is notified of the composition of the Certification Appeals Review Team by certified mail and has ten (10) days from the postmark of the notification of the composition of the Certification Appeals Review Team to indicate a conflict of interest with a member of the team by notifying the Chair of the Certification Appeals Panel via the NACC National Office.

926 Within ten (10) days from the postmark of notification of the composition of the Certification Appeals Review Team to the Appellant, the Appellant sends a copy of the following materials to the Presenter, Chair and Reader of the Certification Appeals Review Team:

926.1 A copy of the Appellant's formal appeal.

926.2 A copy of Presenter's Reports Part I and II from Associate Chaplain, Chaplain, or Chaplain in Veterans Affairs interview, or a copy of the letter from the Certification Commission denying the Recognition request.

926.3 A copy of the supportive materials submitted for applicable certification interview.

926.3a For Chaplain Certification, materials referenced in CP131.3a-131.3j are submitted.

926.3b For Associate Chaplain Certification, materials referenced in CP231.3a-231.3h are submitted.

926.3c For Chaplain in Veterans Affairs Certification, materials referenced in CP13.31.3a-13.31.3k are submitted.

926.3d For Certification Recognition, materials referenced in CP431.3a-431.3h are submitted.

- 927 No other written or electronic documents are considered in the Certification Appeals Review Team deliberations. The Interview Team Educator that supervised the work of the original interview team and or the appropriate members of the Interview Team that supervised the work of the original interview team may be consulted by the Certification Appeals Review Team, if needed. If this consultation is deemed necessary, the Certification Appeals Review Team will contact the NACC National Office and the Administrative Specialist/Certification will arrange the communication.
- 928 Within twenty (20) days of the receipt of the Appellant's materials by the Certification Appeals Review Team, the Certification Appeals Review Team deliberates and renders a decision to:
- 928.1 Uphold the decision of the Certification Commission to deny certification or,
  - 928.2 Refer the matter back to the Certification Commission, if a violation of the Procedures exists, with a recommendation to either:
    - 928.2a Grant certification or certification recognition, or
    - 928.2b Grant a new interview.
- 929 The Chair of the Certification Appeals Review Team notifies the Chair of the Certification Appeals Panel of the outcome. The Chair of the Certification Appeals Panel notifies the NACC National Office.

#### CP93 Outcomes

- 931 When the Certification Appeals Review Team upholds the decision of the Certification Commission to deny certification, the Appellant is notified via certified mail by the NACC National Office. The decision of the Certification Appeals Review Team regarding upheld denials is final.
- 932 When the matter is referred back to the Certification Commission, it has thirty (30) days to render a decision on the recommendation.
- 933 The Certification Commission's decision to grant or deny certification or certification recognition, or to offer the Appellant a new interview (not applicable to certification recognition), is communicated to the Appellant via certified mail through the NACC National Office within thirty (30) days of the Certification Commission's action. The decision of the Certification Commission is final.
- 933.1 When an Appellant is granted certification or certification recognition and the ecclesiastical endorsement has been received, the Appellant is sent a notification packet. The certificate is presented at the Missioning Ceremony of those newly certified during the Eucharist Celebration at the next annual conference. If the Appellant is unable to attend the ceremony, or upon request, the certificate is mailed.

- 933.2 When an Appellant is denied certification or certification recognition, the Appellant will have the opportunity to reapply for certification. If the Appellant decides to apply again, all Competencies will be considered in subsequent process(es) including but not limited to Competencies cited as not met in previous process(es).
- 933.3 When an Appellant is offered a new interview by the Certification Commission (not applicable to certification recognition), the interview that initiated the current appeals process will be officially expunged from the Appellant's certification record. If the Appellant engages in a subsequent interview process, all materials are submitted according to established dates and guidelines. Normal and reasonable interview expenses incurred by the Appellant are paid by the NACC. The Appellant has the subsequent two application deadlines to submit new materials and engage in a new interview process at the expense of NACC. If the Applicant does not submit new materials and engage in a new interview process in that time frame, the right to a new interview at NACC's expense is relinquished.

934 When an Appellant is granted certification or certification recognition, the NACC National Office retains the following in the NACC's long-term certification files:

- 934.1 For Chaplain Certification reference Certification Procedure 133.3 for items retained in file.
- 934.2 For Associate Chaplain Certification reference Certification Procedure 233.3 for items retained in file.
- 934.3 For Chaplain in Veterans Affairs Certification reference Certification Procedure 13.33.2c for items retained in file.
- 934.4 For Certification Recognition reference Certification Procedure 433.4 for items retained in file.

All other written and electronic documents from the appeals process are destroyed.

935 At the conclusion of the appeal process, the NACC National Office retains the following in the NACC's long-term certification files:

- 935.1 A copy of the Appellant's formal appeal.
- 935.2 A copy of the completed Certification Appeals Report Form.
- 935.3 A copy of the notification letter alerting the Appellant of the decision.

All other written and electronic documents from the appeals process are destroyed.