



Certification Procedures Manual

**Approved by
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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Part Three – Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification Procedures

CP31 NACC Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC) Chaplains are Catholics who manifest proficiency in utilizing Catholic theology, holistic care, and ethical principles within interdisciplinary palliative and end-of-life ministry through the development of specialized Competencies.

The Interview Team recommends or does not recommend the Applicant to the Certification Commission for advanced certification. It is the decision of the Certification Commission to uphold the decision of the Team.

The NACC encourages Applicants for Advanced Certification to engage in a mentoring relationship with a NACC or BCCi Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certified Chaplain upon entering the certification process.

CP32 Prerequisites

- 321 Chaplaincy Ministry membership in the NACC. (Qualification 601.QUA1)
- 322 Board Certification as a NACC Chaplain or Educator for a minimum of one year. (Qualification 601.QUA2)
- 323 Direct clinical palliative care and/or hospice work experience spanning three (3) consecutive years at a minimum of 520 hours per year. (Qualification 601.QUA3)
- 324 Completion of an intensive palliative care and/or hospice course equivalent to three (3) credit hours (45 hours). (Qualification 601.QUA4)
- 325 Suggested reading: Improving the Quality of Spiritual Care as a Dimension of Palliative Care: The Report of the Consensus Conference; Gone From My Sight: The Dying Experience; Hard Choices for Loving People: CPR, Artificial Feeding, Comfort Care, and the Patient with a Life-Threatening Illness.

CP33 Procedures

- 331 Written Application and Interview Application Process
 - 331.1 The Applicant can download the application and supporting materials directly from the NACC website under the heading for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification materials.
 - 331.2 The NACC website provides the following information:
 - 331.2a Application for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification.
 - 331.2b Checklist for Supportive Materials required for Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification Interview.
 - 331.2c NACC Certification Procedures Manual - Part Three (3).
 - 331.3 Applicant submits electronically, in order and in one (1) email, the following written materials to the NACC National Office by the applicable deadline

and retains a copy of all materials submitted, including the application form. All applicable materials must be formatted in single-spaced, 12-point type (Arial, Garamond, or Times New Roman), with one-inch margins.

- 331.3a Completed application form.
- 331.3b The Advanced Certification application fee. (Reference CP332.3 for refund policy)
- 331.3c A 1-2-page Progression Essay describing the following:
 - 331.3c1 Professional setting: A description of the palliative care or hospice program in which the Applicant works, including the programs' disciplines, organizational structure, number of palliative care or hospice consults per month, and the Applicant's role in the palliative care or hospice program.
 - 331.3c2 The Applicant's passion for palliative care and hospice work written narratively. Narrative must include why the Applicant is seeking this advanced certification.
 - 331.3c3 Ten (10) to twelve (12) page Major Essay incorporating all of the Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification Competencies. The major essay has three (3) required components, which may be woven into a single document or may be submitted as three separate documents, in either instance totaling no more than 10-12 pages for all three components. PLEASE NOTE: The applicant must demonstrate all 14 competencies and also demonstrate advance practice integration in this essay. Applicant must annotate throughout the essay where each competency is demonstrated. The following components must be included in the major essay:
 - 331.3c3a Theory and practice of chaplaincy care in palliative care and hospice ministry.
 - 331.3c3b Case study within the past year that is comprehensive in scope of care addressing, but not limited to, an evolving, comprehensive spiritual plan of care; progression of spiritual practice over the case; and integration of chaplaincy care to enhance other palliative care and hospice disciplines in providing holistic service to patient and/or family.
 - 331.3c3c Written demonstration of participation in a quality improvement (QI) process that enhances the delivery of chaplaincy care in palliative care and hospice.
- 331.3d Three (3) current letters of recommendation. One (1) letter from the Applicant's palliative care and/or hospice supervisor (can include verification that clinical experience requirements have been met), and two (2) letters from palliative care and/or hospice

interdisciplinary care team members (limited to one (1) chaplain colleague who served with the Applicant).

The letters must include the quality of the Applicant's interaction with patients, families and team members as well as the Applicant's team collaboration, leadership and educational contributions within a hospice and palliative care team. Each letter is to be submitted with the application to the NACC National Office. Each letter is to be signed and dated. Current is defined as within one (1) year of application for certification.

331.3e If applicable, add Presenter's Report I and Presenter's Reports II from each previous PCHAC interview and/or Action/Reflection Certification Process to accompany the application.

332 NACC National Office Action –

332.1 Upon receipt of Applicant materials, the NACC National Office starts a file on the Applicant and reviews the Applicant's materials in order to assess the completion of Certification Procedures 331.3a through 331.3e.

332.2 The NACC National Office forwards Applicant materials to the PCHAC Process Committee who evaluates the materials and determines whether the Applicant meets the requirements to move forward with an interview. The PCHAC Process Committee is comprised of NACC and BCCi Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certified Chaplains.

332.3 If any materials are missing or deemed unacceptable, the Applicant will have the opportunity to:

332.3a Continue in the certification process with the understanding that if they are denied advanced certification that no refund of application fee will occur, or

332.3b Withdraw their application for advanced certification and not proceed to an interview. Applicant will receive a full refund of the application fee. If application is withdrawn, all documents are destroyed except those documents cited below in CP334.5.

332.4 If an interview is scheduled, the NACC National Office sends the Applicant:

332.4a The names of the interview team

332.4b The date and time of the video conference interview.

332.5 The Applicant reviews interview team names for potential conflict of interest and alerts the NACC National Office if any conflict exists.

332.6 The NACC National Office sends a complete copy of materials 331.3a-331.3e (excluding 331.3b) to members of the Interview Team via electronic communication methods.

333 Interview Process

- 333.1 The Advanced Certification interview is a virtual interview in which the Applicant meets with an Advanced Practice Chaplain Interview Team to determine if the Applicant meets the Competencies for the Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC).
- 333.2 The Interview Team is composed of a minimum of three (3) NACC or BCCJ Board Certified Chaplains with Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification.
- 333.3 The Interview Team meets to collaboratively draft the Presenter's Report Part I.
- 333.4 The Interview Team prepares and makes available the Presenter's Report Part I to the Applicant electronically by email at least seven (7) days prior to the interview.
- 333.5 The interview lasts approximately sixty (60) to ninety (90) minutes via Video Conferencing Call.
- 333.6 Following the interview, the Interview Team deliberates and decides to either recommend or not to recommend the Applicant to the Certification Commission for Advanced Certification.
- 333.7 ALL competencies must be met in order to attain the Palliative Care and Hospice Advanced Certification (PCHAC).
- 333.8 Within approximately one hour of the deliberation process, the Applicant is provided an oral summary of the Interview Team's recommendation. Presenter's Report Part II, along with Presenter's Report Part I, is forwarded to the Certification Commission for action within fourteen (14) days of the interview.
- 333.9 The Presenter's Report Part II is sent to the Applicant within twenty-one (21) days of the interview.

334 Certification Commission Action –

- 334.1 The Certification Commission reviews Presenter's Reports, Part I and II, and the recommendation of the Interview Team and determines whether to uphold the recommendation of the interview team.
- 334.2 The Presenter's Report Part II and the Certification Commission's decision is communicated to the Applicant within twenty-one (21) days of the Certification interview.
 - 334.2a When advanced certification is granted, the Applicant receives a notification packet. The certificate is presented at the Missioning Ceremony of those newly certified during the Eucharistic Celebration at the next annual conference. If the Applicant is

unable to attend the ceremony, or upon request, the certificate is mailed.

334.2b When advanced certification is denied, the Applicant has a right to appeal the decision (Competency 604.ACD) or reapply for advanced certification. Information about the appeals process is included with the notification of denial of advanced certification. The NACC National Office maintains a copy of the Applicant's materials until the time of appeal has lapsed. If the Applicant decides to apply again, all PCHAC Competencies will need to be demonstrated and met in the reappearance. If the applicant elects to reapply, the Applicant will be eligible for a discounted application fee.

334.3 When an Applicant is granted advanced certification, the NACC National Office retains the following in its long-term certification files:

334.3a The Advanced Certification Application.

334.3b A copy of the certificate.

334.3c Interview Team Presenter's Reports, Part I and II.

334.3d A copy of the NACC letter confirming advanced certification.

334.3e Certification Waivers (if applicable).

334.3f Copies of the notification letters.

All other written and electronic documents are destroyed.

334.4 When an Applicant is denied advanced certification, the NACC National Office retains the following items in its electronic certification files:

334.4a The Advanced Certification Application.

334.4b Interview Team Reports, Part I and II.

334.4c A copy of the NACC letter denying advanced certification.

334.4d Certification Waivers (if applicable).

334.5 When the Applicant withdraws their application or is denied advanced certification, the NACC National Office retains the following items in its temporary files for the period of time indicated:

334.5a Three (3) current letters of recommendation in total. One from the Applicant's palliative care and/or hospice supervisor. And, two (2) from palliative care and/or hospice interdisciplinary care team members (limited to one (1) chaplain colleague who served with the Applicant).

All other written and electronic documents are destroyed.