



Certification Procedures Manual

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



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NACC Certification Commission**

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Part Six – Certified Associate Chaplain Renewal of Certification Procedures

CP61 Certified Associate Chaplain Renewal of Certification is the process by which Catholic Certified Associate Chaplains certified by the NACC demonstrate their ongoing proficiency as spiritual care providers within the current NACC Competencies for Catholic spiritual care theology and praxis, and selected Competencies in the Common Competencies for Certification for Professional Spiritual Care. Renewal of Certification is the continuation of the Certified Associate Chaplain certification process, building on recommendations from the previous renewal of certification or the original certification. This renewal is achieved primarily through continuing education in the Competencies for Certification and Renewal of Certification for Certified Associate Chaplains. The Certified Associate Chaplain incorporates the recommendations from the previous renewal of certification or the original certification in formulating plans for education and/or development through a peer review process.

A Retired Certified member of the NACC who has been certified as an Associate Chaplain for at least five (5) years and has successfully engaged in at least one (1) five (5) year renewal process may maintain certification without the expectation of fulfilling Certification Competencies 706.MNT1 – 706.MNT3 (Certification Procedures 622-625). See the Certification Procedures Manual, Part Eight: Retired Chaplain, Retired Educator Renewal, or Retired Certified Associate Chaplain of Certification Utilizing Reduced Certification Requirements Procedures.

The renewal of certification process takes place every five (5) years.

Note: Given the COVID-19 pandemic, the Certification Commission and Competencies Commission approved special exceptions for the 2021, 2022 education years. See specific details in the following Procedures: CP632.9, CP632.12d.

CP62 Prerequisites:

- 621 Chaplaincy Ministry or Retired Certified membership in the NACC (Competency 706.MNT4).
- 622 Completion of thirty (30) hours of educational activities per year for the five (5) year renewal period (Competency 706.MNT2).
- 623 If the Certified Associate Chaplain is a lay person, the Certified Associate Chaplain requests a current letter of recommendation from his/her pastor or from a priest in active ministry within the applicant's Diocese of Ministry; be submitted by the pastor/priest directly to the NACC National Office (Competency 706.MNT3). Letter is to be a signed original on letterhead. Current is defined as within one year of application for renewal of certification. This letter accompanies the request for ecclesiastical endorsement as a lay ecclesial health care minister initiated by the NACC National Office.
- 624 The NACC National Office requests a current letter of ecclesiastical endorsement (Competency 706.MNT3). Current is defined as within one year of application for renewal of certification. The NACC will complete the endorsement request on the

Certified Associate Chaplain's behalf. Ecclesiastical endorsement is formal approval for ministry by:

- 624.1 The Bishop of the diocese of the Certified Associate Chaplain's ministry if the Certified Associate Chaplain is a lay person, or
- 624.2 The major superior if the Certified Associate Chaplain is a member of a religious order, or
- 624.3 The Ordinary (understood as the Bishop of the diocese where the priest or deacon is incardinated) if the Certified Associate Chaplain is a diocesan priest or deacon.

Ecclesiastical endorsement also assures NACC that any Safe Environment Training requirements (of the endorsing body) have been met by the Associate Chaplain.

- 625 Participation in a peer review with an active or retired Certified Associate Chaplain or Certified Chaplain who is a current member of the NACC (Competency 706.MNT1) with whom you do not share a reporting relationship (renewing Certified Associate Chaplain reports to the Peer Reviewer or vice versa) and who is not an Inactive or Emeritus member of the NACC.
- 626 Adherence to the Code of Ethics for Spiritual Care Professionals and knowledge of the requirements of that Code (Competency 706.MNT5).
- 627 Current completion of the NACC Ethics Accountability Statement (Code of Ethics 206.11.1). Current is defined as within one year of application for renewal of certification.

CP63 Procedures

631 Application Process

- 631.1 The renewal process occurs every five (5) years, beginning with the year of initial certification. During the month of December of the calendar year prior to the year in which renewal of certification is required, the Certified Associate Chaplain receives a letter directing him/her to the NACC website for materials for renewal.
- 631.2 The Certified Associate Chaplain completes the renewal of certification application, the NACC Ethics Accountability Statement, the peer review form, and the continuing education reporting form(s). All forms are available on the NACC website.
- 631.3 If the Certified Associate Chaplain is a lay person, the Certified Associate Chaplain requests a current letter of recommendation from his/her pastor or from a priest in active ministry within the applicant's Diocese of Ministry, be submitted by the pastor/priest directly to the NACC National Office (Competency 706.MNT3). Letter is to be a signed original on letterhead. Current is defined as within one year of application for renewal of certification. This letter accompanies the request for ecclesiastical endorsement initiated by the NACC National Office.

- 631.4 After all materials are received, the NACC National Office requests a current letter of ecclesiastical endorsement on behalf of the Certified Associate Chaplain. Current is defined as within one year of application for renewal of certification.
- 631.5 The Certified Associate Chaplain completes the renewal of certification process within the calendar year in which renewal is required.
- 631.6 If unable to complete the renewal process within the calendar year in which renewal is required, the Certified Associate Chaplain may request, in writing, an extension from the Chair of the Certification Commission. Extensions are granted in one (1) year increments for a maximum of two (2) years and do not alter the original renewal of certification schedule. If requesting an extension, the Certified Associate Chaplain must submit the appropriate extension fee. Extension request and payment must be received at the NACC National Office by December 31 of the year in which renewal of certification is required.

632 Continuing Education Documentation Process

- 632.1 The Certified Associate Chaplain maintains an annual record of his/her continuing education hours over the five (5) year period to reflect consistent and intentional educational updating. This annual record must be logged on the current NACC Continuing Education Hours form and must be electronically produced by computer or typewriter. Handwritten forms will not be accepted.
- 632.2 Categories for continuing education parallel the current Competencies for Certified Associate Chaplains. Refer to the NACC website for a current version of the Competencies for Certification and Renewal of Certification of Associate Chaplains.
- 632.3 Completion of thirty (30) hours of educational activities per year is required for the five (5) year renewal of certification cycle (Competency 706.MNT2).
- 632.4 When educational activities are recorded, an “hour” equals sixty (60) minutes. Certified Associate Chaplains may have continuing education hours in all four categories of Competency (see Associate Chaplain Certification Competencies 702, 703, 704, 705). Based on the recommendations of his/her previous peer review, certification interview, or the areas where one determines a need for growth, the thirty (30) continuing education hours can be divided between the four sections.
- 632.5 A continuing education activity is only counted once regardless of the Certified Associate Chaplain’s role as an attendee or presenter. If presenting, one can also include preparation time. If one is presenting the program multiple times, the presentation and preparation time may be counted only once.

- 632.6 When a continuing education activity includes time both as a presenter and as an attendee, one may record the number of hours spent in presenting/preparing and the number of hours spent in attendance.
- 632.7 When a continuing education activity provides updating in more than one of the four Categories of Competency (see CP632.4), one may elect to record the education hours in multiple categories. The total number of hours recorded should not exceed the total education hours for the activity.
- 632.8 Routine activities which occur as part of the Certified Associate Chaplain's professional ministry responsibilities (e.g. liturgical rites, patient visitation, mentoring CPE students, etc.) may not be submitted as continuing education activities. Training mandated as part of a Certified Associate Chaplain's professional ministry requirements may not be submitted as continued education activities.
- 632.9 At least twelve* (12) hours of continuing education documented annually are to reflect the Certified Associate Chaplain's attendance at seminars, workshops, conferences or live audio conferences/webinars. *Note: Certification Commission approved waiving the "attended" hour requirement for education years 2021, 2022.
- 632.10 Designate each activity as "A" for attended, "P" for presented, "M" for review of education materials, or "V" for volunteer service to the NACC of an educational value. Live presentations and/or attendance at live webinars/audio conferences are considered attending educational events and should be designated "A" for attended. Reading of books/articles and listening/viewing of recorded events (videos/audio conference/webinars) are considered reviewing of educational materials and should be designated as "M."
- 632.11 For attended activities (workshops, live webinars, retreats, etc.) include title of program, presenter name, and location or sponsor of program. For reading books or articles include title and author of books/articles. For listening/viewing of recorded events (videos/audio conferences/webinars) include title of program and presenter name. If using an acronym or abbreviation, define it at least once in the written record.
- 632.12 The following limits of continuing education activities are:
- 633.12a Spiritual Direction – Up to five (5) hours per year.
 - 632.12b Retreat –Up to nine (9) hours total per year. Report each retreat utilizing the following parameters: Three (3) hours per day for directed, guided, preached, individual retreats. Conference type retreats report total hours of participation.
 - 632.12c Therapy/Professional Supervision – Up to five (5) hours per year.
 - 632.12d Educational Materials (M) including books, articles, and recorded events (videos/audio conferences/webinars) – Up to fifteen (15) hours per year. *Note: Certification Commission approved waiving the limitation set for Educational Materials for education years 2021, 2022.

- 632.12e Volunteer Service to the NACC that is of an educational value – Up to eight (8) hours per year. If the Volunteer Service to the NACC includes serving as a volunteer for a Certified Associate interview weekend (interviewer, interview team educator, etc.), the Associate Chaplain may report up to ten (10) hours per year.
- 632.12f Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Units (*additional accredited CPE Units or Supervisory CPE Units*):
 - 632.12f1 Didactic activity – Number of hours of participation or presentation; activity should be listed by session and include the topic and date.
 - 632.12f2 Supervisory sessions (as part of the Unit) – Up to ten (10) hours per year.
 - 632.12f3 Ministerial activities (patient visitation, conducting worship services, etc.) may not be submitted as continuing education activities.

633 Peer Review Process

- 633.1 The Certified Associate Chaplain arranges for and completes an hour-long peer review session. The peer review session does not need to be an in-person session. The peer review session may be completed by telephone or Voice Over Internet Protocols (VoIP) technologies (e.g. Skype or Zoom). The peer review report must be recorded on the current NACC Peer Review form and must be electronically produced (computer or typewriter). Handwritten forms will not be accepted.
- 633.2 The peer reviewer is a Certified Associate Chaplain or Certified Chaplain, active or retired, who is a current member of the NACC with whom the renewing Certified Associate Chaplain does not share a reporting relationship (the renewing Certified Associate Chaplain reports to the Peer Reviewer or vice versa) and who is not an Inactive or Emeritus member of the NACC.
- 633.3 Prior to the peer review, the Certified Associate Chaplain sends the following materials to the reviewer allowing ample time for review:
 - 633.3a A copy of recommendations from the last interview or peer review.
 - 633.3b A completed copy of the Renewal of Certification Education Report Forms
 - 633.3c Renewal of Certification Peer Review Form
- 633.4 The electronically produced (computer or typewriter) Peer Review Form contains three (3) sections:
 - 633.4a Process – In this section, the peer reviewer summarizes the process of the peer review: beginning, middle, and end.
 - 633.4b Content – In this section, the peer reviewer notes the content of the peer review, identifying:
 - 633.4b1 The meaning and effectiveness of the continuing education activities for the Certified Associate Chaplain.

- 633.4b2 An update regarding the Certified Associate Chaplain’s development related to all current NACC-Specific Competencies and Common Competencies in the Professional Identity and Conduct (PIC) and Professional Practice Skills (PPS) sections, with significant changes in the five (5) year period.
- 633.4b3 Progress on recommendations made by the Certified Associate Chaplain during the previous interview or peer review.
- 633.4b4 Discussion of the Certified Associate Chaplain’s plans for future development.
- 633.4c Recommendations – In this section, the peer reviewer writes recommendations that flow from the process and content of the peer review. Recommendations are related to the current Competencies for Certification and Renewal of Certification of Associate Chaplains and include future plans for maintaining and enhancing competencies. Certification Competency number(s) must be listed after each recommendation.
- 633.5 The peer reviewer signs the Peer Review Form and sends it back to the Associate Chaplain for review and signature.
- 634 The Certified Associate Chaplain sends the following materials (CP634.1-634.5) to the NACC National Office and also retains copies of these documents for future purposes:
 - 634.1 The Renewal of Certification Application.
 - 634.2 The Renewal of Certification Fee.
 - 634.3 The Renewal of Certification Education Report Form(s).
 - 634.4 A signed copy of the Renewal of Certification Peer Review Form.
 - 634.5 Completed NACC Ethics Accountability Statement.
- 635 Certification Commission Action
 - 635.1 The Certification Commission reviews the materials and determines if the Associate Chaplain meets the Competencies for Renewal of Certification.
 - 635.2 The NACC National Office notifies the Certified Associate Chaplain of the Certification Commission’s decision within thirty (30) days of the decision.
 - 635.2a When renewal of certification is granted and the ecclesiastical endorsement has been received, the Certified Associate Chaplain is issued a new certificate.
 - 635.2b When additional information and/or clarifications are required by the Certification Commission before a decision can be made, the Certified Associate Chaplain will receive a letter requesting

clarifications and/or additional information. The Certification Commission sets the deadline by which the revised/additional materials must be received. The Certification Commission will review the submitted material(s) at the next scheduled Commission meeting and determine if the Certified Associate Chaplain meets the Competencies for Renewal of Certification.

635.2c When renewal of certification is denied, the Certified Associate Chaplain is issued a letter outlining the reason(s) for denial. The Certification Commissions' decision is final.

635.3 When a Certified Associate Chaplain is granted renewal of certification, the NACC National Office retains the following in the NACC's long-term certification files:

635.3a The Renewal of Certification Application.

635.3b The Renewal of Certification Peer Review Form.

635.3c The Ecclesiastical Endorsement letter.

635.3d A copy of the certificate.

635.3e A copy of the NACC letter confirming renewal of certification.

635.3f A copy of the NACC letter stating exceptions, if applicable.

635.3g The completed NACC Ethics Accountability Statement.

All other written and electronic documents are destroyed.

635.4 When a Certified Associate Chaplain is denied renewal of certification, the NACC National Office retains the following in the NACC's electronic certification file:

634.4a The Renewal of Certification Application.

634.4b The Renewal of Certification Peer Review Form.

634.4c A copy of the NACC letter denying renewal of certification.

All other written and electronic documents are destroyed.