



CCBMA

APPLICANT HANDBOOK

CALIFORNIA CERTIFIED MEDICAL ASSISTANT EXAMINATION

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Introduction

The California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants (CCBMA) is a private non-profit 501c3 corporation that has been administering the California Certified Medical Assistant (CCMA) exam since 1990. CCBMA is recognized by the Medical Board of California as an approved certification agency.

The goals of the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants (CCBMA) are to provide a pathway for California medical assistants to demonstrate professional competency in the specialty of their choice; to encourage career development through continuing education and recertification; and to continually improve the certification programs to reflect the changing requirements of healthcare in California.

This handbook is intended to be a resource for understanding the CCBMA exam application and testing process. It should be used in conjunction with other information available on the CCBMA website.

Please note that CCBMA policies and fees are subject to change without notice.

About the CCMA Examination

The California Certified Medical Assistant examination is a comprehensive objective examination of the candidate's knowledge of medical assisting. It is designed for the Advanced Entry Level medical assistant.

What is a CCMA?

A California Certified Medical Assistant (CCMA) is a medical assistant who has met the qualifications established by the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants (CCBMA) and has passed a comprehensive objective examination administered by CCBMA.

Code of Conduct

The following principles are core values for the CCMA applicant and certificant:

Professional Standards: Respect and understand that as a healthcare professional the medical assistant is dedicated to providing competent support, within the scope of practice as set forth by the Medical Board of California, with compassion and respect for human diversity and dignity.

Confidentiality: Provide services with full respect of the rights of patients and colleagues, and safeguard patient confidence and privacy in accordance with the law, including but not limited to HIPAA compliance requirements.

Professionalism with Integrity: Practice the profession with honesty, integrity and accountability, respecting all laws and regulations and avoiding any false, fraudulent or deceptive activities.

Improve Knowledge and Skills: Continue to learn, maintaining and improving all knowledge and skills necessary for the ever-changing healthcare environment.

Improve the Health and Well Being of the Community: Recognize a responsibility to contribute to the improvement of the community and betterment of public health.

Examination Information and Policies

Nondiscrimination Policy

The California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants does not discriminate among applicants as to age, race, sex, religion or national origin.

Eligibility Requirements Required Documentation

It is the responsibility of each applicant to prove they meet eligibility criteria.

All applicants must be at least 18 years of age to apply for the certification exam.

All applicants must provide proof of current CPR certification.

All applicants must include a copy of a U.S. government issued ID (driver's license, ID card or passport). The legal name submitted on the application must match the U.S. government issued ID/Driver's License. Name change corrections after submission of the application are subject to a \$50.00 fee. All required documentation must be included with the completed application.

Applicants for the Clinical specialty examination must provide proof of training in administering injections and performing skin tests and/or training in venipuncture and skin puncture for the purpose of withdrawing blood, as required by the California Medical Assistant Regulations, Section 1366.1. A signed Certificate of Competency for Injections and/or Venipuncture or Statement of Proficiency must be dated within one year preceding the application.

An applicant must satisfy at least one of the following requirements:

Currently employed as a medical assistant by a licensed physician or podiatrist in the United States.

- Attach verification of employment, such as a copy of a pay stub or physician-employer signed statement on office letterhead.
- Attach a signed injection/venipuncture proficiency statement.

OR

Graduate of an accredited medical assisting program in the United States or a program approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education, California Department of Consumer Affairs, within one year preceding the application. An accredited medical assisting program is training in a secondary, post-secondary or adult education program in a public school authorized by the Department of Education or in a community college program or in a post-secondary institution approved by the Bureau of Private Post-Secondary and Vocational Education or Department of Consumer Affairs.

- Attach a photocopy of your certificate of completion.
- Attach a signed injection/ venipuncture proficiency statement.

OR

Have had at least two years employment comparable to full time (4160 hours) as a practicing medical assistant in the United States within the five years immediately preceding application.

- Attach statement from previous employer(s) verifying the number of hours worked in the last five years.
- Attach a signed injection/venipuncture proficiency statement.

OR

Currently employed as a medical assisting instructor in an accredited institution in the United States.

- Attach employment verification.
- Attach injection/ venipuncture proficiency statement signed by Program Director.

OR

United States Military Training. Served in the capacity of a medical assistant while enlisted or either separated from the Military within the last

year or served in that capacity for at least two of the previous five years.

- Attach copy of DT214 or proof of current military employment.
- Attach a signed injection/ venipuncture proficiency statement.

Special Accommodations

Applicants who require special accommodations on the day of examination must request such exceptions in writing and it must be included with the initial application. Physical disability must be currently documented by a medical doctor. If you are requesting special accommodations because of a learning disability, documentation must be provided from a psychologist dated within the last year. CCBMA will make every effort to accommodate such cases, but it reserves the right to deny requests that, in the judgment of the Board, would jeopardize the security of the examination materials or the integrity of scores derived from the examination.

Exam Format

There are three exams: BASIC, ADMINISTRATIVE AND CLINICAL. Each exam is in English. All new applicants must take the Basic examination and the Administrative and/or the Clinical specialty. You must pass the Basic examination and at least one specialty to become certified. Certifying for a second specialty is optional.

Each exam is divided into sections and questions within each section are chosen at random from the test bank. The exams are meant to test the knowledge, skills and abilities of the advanced entry level medical assistant.

Basic Exam

- 175 multiple-choice questions
- Two hour time limit

Administrative Exam

- 100 multiple-choice questions
- One hour time limit

Clinical Exam

- 125 multiple-choice questions
- One hour time limit.

Testing Fees

Basic and Clinical Specialty	\$145
Basic and Administrative Specialty	\$145
Basic, Administrative, Clinical Specialties	\$185
Expired Credential Reactivation Fee	\$ 50

- Payment may be made in the form of a money order or credit card payment. No personal checks will be accepted.
- A \$25 administrative fee will be assessed for chargebacks or declined charge payment.
- Fees include a \$50 nonrefundable processing fee.
- Fees are subject to change without prior notice.

Credentials

- Applicants who pass the Basic and Administrative examinations receive a CCMA-A credential.
- Applicants who pass the Basic and Clinical examinations receive a CCMA-C credential.
- Applicants who pass the Basic, Administrative and Clinical examinations receive a CCMA-AC credential.

Application Processing

You can download the application from the CCBMA website. Complete the application and mail with the required attachments and fee to CCBMA. Application packets sent to CCBMA with inadequate postage will be refused and returned via the US Postal Service.

When applications arrive in the CCBMA office they are processed in the order received. Incomplete applications will cause delays. Please allow up to four (4) weeks to receive your authorization letter via email with instructions for scheduling your exam with Pearson VUE.

If you wish to have your application expedited, there is an additional fee of \$50. This applies to applications that have all required documents and payment.

Release of Information

Certification status is a matter of public record and may be released. Unless otherwise indicated on the examination application, name, credential, email and mailing address may be released for educational and employment opportunities.

Grounds for Denial of Eligibility

Your application can be denied if one or more of the following applies:

- Failure to meet eligibility criteria
- Nonpayment of fees, insufficient fees, or a declined credit/debit card
- Failure to provide supporting documentation
- Failure to respond to CCBMA contact requests

The Testing Process

Scheduling with Pearson Vue

When your application is approved by CCBMA, you will receive a letter outlining the steps to schedule your appointment for testing with Pearson Vue, our testing company. The letter will include the exam sponsor name (CCBMA), an authorization number, the exams authorized, as well as a must-test-by date. You will need this information when scheduling. You may schedule on-line (preferred method) by going to personVue.com or by calling the Candidate Services Call Center at (866) 960-5609.

You will be required to select a specific test center location when scheduling your exam. There are numerous sites available. Testing Center locations can be found by visiting personVue.com/CCBMA. Maps and driving instructions are available for each testing center. All sites are open Monday through Friday, and many are open Saturdays.

You will receive a confirmation e-mail or letter from Pearson Vue after scheduling. Please review the exam details for accuracy. If any details are not correct, contact Pearson Vue immediately at the telephone number or email provided.

Failure to Schedule or No Show for Scheduled Examination

If you fail to schedule an authorized examination by the "must-test-by" date indicated on your authorization letter, you will forfeit all fees paid and will not be entitled to a refund.

If you fail to appear for a scheduled test (no show), arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time for taking the test and are refused admission to the exam, or change your exam date without providing 24-hour notice, you will forfeit all fees and will not be entitled to any refund. In addition, this will be considered as one of the three attempts to pass the examination.

Cancellation and Postponement Policy

If you need to reschedule, you must do so by contacting Pearson Vue at the phone number found on your authorization letter. You must test by the date that is specified in your eligibility letter.

If you wish to cancel your exam, you must do so in writing to CCBMA not less than 15 days prior to your scheduled exam or the "must-test-by" date as indicated on your authorization letter. You must contact Pearson Vue directly to have your scheduled appointment removed from their system. If you meet these deadlines, you will receive a refund of the application fee paid minus a \$50 processing

charge. Cancellation requests must meet these criteria or no refund will be given.

If your application is denied by CCBMA, you will receive a letter and a refund of your application fee minus a \$50 processing charge.

Test Center Policy

You are solely responsible for making and keeping your scheduled appointment date. Arrive at the Pearson VUE test center 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment time. This will give you adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures. Be prepared to show valid US government issued ID. The ID must include your signature and photo, and must match the name submitted on your application. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late for an exam and are refused admission, you will forfeit your test fee.

Test Center Regulations

Pearson Professional Testing Centers provide computer-based test services for academic assessment, professional licensure, and certification. To ensure security and uniformity for all testing candidates, Pearson test center environments are standardized. Pearson test centers provide the resources necessary for secure administration of the exam, including video and audio monitoring and recording, and use of digital cameras to record the identity of examinees. At the beginning of the exam you will be required to agree that both audio and video may be recorded in the testing room while you take the test. If you do not agree, you will not be allowed to complete the test and will forfeit your fee.

Any violation of the testing policies and regulations outlined in this handbook may result in dismissal from the testing center and forfeiture of fees.

Test center staff monitor all test sessions for the exam. You must follow the instructions of test center staff.

Test center staff are not authorized to answer questions regarding exam content, test software, or scoring.

You may not bring any personal belongings into the test area, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Mechanical or electronic devices (e.g. cellular phones, personal digital assistants [PDAs], personal calculators (will be provided upon request at the testing center), watches, electronic paging devices, recording or filming devices, or radios)

- Outerwear (e.g., coats, jackets, headwear, or gloves)
- Book bags, backpacks, handbags, briefcases, or wallets
- Books, notes, written materials, or scratch paper
- Food, candy, gum, or beverages

You will be provided with a locker for your personal items. Keep in mind that the storage lockers are small and that all stored mechanical or electronic devices must be turned off. Personal items and their contents may be subject to inspection.

When checking in, you will be asked to present eyeglasses to the test center administrator for inspection. Smart eyewear will not be permitted in the examination room under any circumstances.

Breaks are not scheduled into examination testing. If a break is needed, it is up to the examinee to determine when to do so. Keep in mind that once started, the test clock cannot be paused and consecutive exam(s) will begin when you click out (or end) the current exam module or time has expired.

You will be required to agree to the Non-Disclosure Agreement that will be presented at the beginning of your exam. Failure to read/accept the agreement within the allotted 5 minutes will result in your exam ending and forfeiture of your exam fee.

Prior to beginning the exam, you will have 10 minutes to complete a tutorial. Also, at the end of the exam, you will have 5 minutes to complete a brief survey.

The time for the Non-Disclosure Agreement, tutorial and survey will not count towards your allotted exam time. The timing of the exam will begin when the first exam question appears on the screen.

If a technical issue occurs during the test, you should notify test center staff immediately.

Upon completion of the exam and survey, you will receive preliminary results in the form of pass or fail, as well as an analysis of individual test sections. A pass result is not verification of CCMA certification. CCMA certification is released by CCBMA upon receipt of official testing results.

Certificate, Wallet Card and Pin

For passing applicants, a certificate suitable for framing, and a wallet card indicating the CCMA credential will be mailed from CCBMA. The name on the certificate and wallet card will be the same as the name indicated on the application for examination. The California Certified Medical

Assistant pin will be included and may be worn as long as certification remains current.

Replacement certificates, wallet cards and pins are available for a fee to actively credentialed medical assistants by calling the CCBMA office.

Retake Examinations

In the event a candidate fails one or more portions of the examination, the failed exam(s) may be taken again. A retake application will be mailed to the candidate once the official results are recorded by CCBMA. The candidate must submit the new application with the appropriate retake fee.

If a candidate fails the initial exam(s), it may be taken two more times for a maximum of three attempts. There is a mandatory 30-day waiting period between examinations attempts.

Retake Examination Fees

Retake Basic Exam	\$105
Retake Clinical Exam	\$ 90
Retake Administrative Exam	\$ 90

A candidate that fails the third attempt, must wait 90 days before reapplying. A new application with all supporting documentation and fees must be submitted.

Recertification

All California Certified Medical Assistants must recertify every five years in order to maintain their active status. The purpose of recertification is to prove competency and growth in their specialty areas as well as the basic category.

CCBMA will mail a reminder letter six months prior to the end of active status. The reminder letter will be mailed to the address on file with CCBMA. If you have a change of address, it is your responsibility to notify CCBMA.

Certification will be considered active only through the last day of the month/year in which you are certified. If needed, the Board does allow a one-year grace period in which to complete the recertification process. Please note that certification is considered non-active once the "active to" date has passed. There is an additional fee of \$50 for reactivation of an expired certification.

Recertification may be achieved by retaking the examination or by accumulating 60 continuing education units (CEU) credits every five years. Training must be category specific.

Certified medical assistants granted recertification, either by passing the recertification examination or by completed requirements for continuing education method, will receive a new wallet card, as well as an "active to" sticker to attach to their original certificate

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is the examination administered by the State of California?

A. No. The certification exam is given by the Certifying Board for Medical Assistants. CCBMA is a private non-profit 501c3 corporation and is recognized by the Medical Board of California.

Q. Do I need to be CPR certified to take the examination?

A. Yes. All applicants must provide proof of current CPR certification to be eligible to sit for the examination or qualify for recertification.

Q. What are the eligibility requirements?

A. The applicant must:

1. Be currently employed in the capacity of a medical assistant by a licensed physician or podiatrist in the United States
- or
2. Have graduated from a medical assisting program in an approved accredited institution in the United States within one year preceding the examination
- or
3. Have been employed in the capacity of a medical assistant comparable to full time (4160 hours) within the previous five years.
- or
4. Be currently employed as a medical assisting instructor in an approved accredited institution in the United States
- or
5. United States Military training (separated from the Military within the last year or served in the capacity of a medical assistant for at least two of the previous five years.).

Q. What is included in the comprehensive examination?

A. There are three components of the exam:

1. Basic
2. Administrative
3. Clinical

In order to receive a certificate, the applicant must pass the Basic examination plus at least one specialty, either Administrative or Clinical. A second specialty is optional.

Q. How can I prepare for the examination?

- A. A free Study Outline is available by visiting our website at www.ccbma.org. It is recommended that you study from current comprehensive medical assisting textbooks. A Review Guide is available from the CCBMA office for \$40. It contains 28 quizzes to help you prepare for the exam. A Practice Test booklet is also available for \$15.00. This contains 50 Basic, 25 Administrative and 25 Clinical questions. Also available is a Medical Math and Dosage Calculations Workbook for a cost of \$15. All of the study materials contain answer keys. As you complete these booklets, you will be able to identify areas where you may need to concentrate your study. The study material is meant to help those who wish to practice taking the exam in the multiple choice format. **None of the questions presented in the study material will be on the examination. The study material is intended only to help identify your knowledge of the subject.**

Q. Where is the exam given?

- A. Pearson Vue has locations through the United States. You can test in any location for California certification. You can locate the five nearest sites to your location by going to www.pearsonvue.com/CCBMA.

Q. How often is the examination given?

- A. Test centers are open Monday-Friday with some Saturday locations. You will be able to choose your test location, date and time to fit your schedule.

Q. Is there a fee for taking the examination?

- A. Yes. The fee to take Basic and one specialty is \$145. If you would like to take Basic and both specialties, the cost is \$185.

Q. Where can I get an application?

- A. You can download a copy from www.ccbma.org on the Exam page.

Q. I want to certify as a CCMA-C (Clinical). What do I need to send with the application?

- A. You must provide proof of training in venipuncture and/or injections. Upon graduation from a medical assisting program, you are provided with a card or certificate. You will need to send this documentation with the application. If you do not have it, the instructor must sign on page 3 of the application. If employed, you may have your physician-employer sign on page 3 of the application or write a letter stating that you are proficient in venipuncture and/or injections. **THE DOCUMENTATION MUST BE CURRENT (WITHIN THE LAST YEAR).**

Q. What if I pass one part of the exam and fail another?

- A. You will receive credit for the examination that you passed and you may repeat the failed examination up to two times. You will be sent a retake application after each failed attempt. You must wait 30 days before attempting the exam(s) again. If you do not pass within the three attempts, you will have to wait 90 days, reapply and retake the entire examination. Any examination previously passed will no longer be counted.

Q. If I fail an examination, will I automatically be sent a retake the exam(s)?

- A. Yes. CCBMA will send you a retake application, but it is your responsibility to complete the application within the allotted time noted in the fail letter and on the retake application. There is a waiting period between retakes.

Q. If I take Basic, Clinical and Administrative and pass the Basic and the Clinical does that mean that I am not certified because I did not pass all the tests?

- A. If you pass Basic and either specialty, you are certified in the specialty you passed. You can choose to retake the portion that you fail. If you pass the specialties only, you are not certified until you retake and pass the Basic. You must wait 30 days before you are eligible to retest.

Q. I am nervous about taking a computer-based

exam. What can you tell me about the process?

A. You will find the process very user friendly. You will begin with a computer tutorial to help you feel more comfortable. It will show you how to move about the exam (you can review your answers). You can only move around the current section. Once you exit an exam you cannot return.

Q. Are there restroom breaks offered?

A. No, breaks are not offered. The majority of people will finish the exam under the allowed time. You can choose to let your time run down on the exam for a quick break. Remember that the next exam will automatically load and the next timer will start once you click out of the module, so you don't want to be gone long.

Q. When will I be notified of the results of my examination?

A. Your preliminary exam results will be given to you the same day you test. Once the results are confirmed, your certificate, wallet card and pin will be mailed to you from the CCBMA office. You can expect these items within six to eight weeks.

Q. Must I pay the full fee again when I repeat a part of the examination?

A. No. You pay only for the examination(s) you are retaking. The fees are listed on the application.

Q. After I am certified, how will I keep my certification?

A. Recertification is required every five years to maintain a current certification status. This may be accomplished by either retesting or by the Continuing Education (CEU) method. If you choose to recertify by the CEU method you will need 60 credits in the five-year period. The credits must be in specific categories.

If you are certified CCMA-AC, you will need 30 credits in Basic and 15 in each of your specialties - Administrative and Clinical.

If you are certified CCMA-A or CCMA-C, you will need 30 credits in Basic, 15 in your specialty and the other 15 can be Basic, Administrative or Clinical credits.

Q. How do I find out more about my recertification requirements?

A. You will find a helpful Recertification Guidelines Booklet on our website.

Disciplinary Policies and Procedures

Grounds for Denial of Certification/Recertification or Revocation of Credentials

1. Certification or recertification obtained by fraudulent or deceptive means.
2. Falsifying information.
3. Cheating by copying answers or permitting another to copy answers from the exam. This includes reproduction of exam materials or any portion thereof.
4. Violation of the "Code of Ethics" or any laws relating to the medical assisting practice which may include but are not limited to:
 - Possession, use or distribution of a controlled substance or drug, including alcohol.
 - Self-prescribing a controlled substance or drug.
 - Authorizing any prescription not prescribed by a physician.
 - Sexual harassment.
 - Breach of Non-Disclosure Agreement

Possible Disciplinary Penalties

1. Denial of certification or recertification
2. Temporary suspension/revocation of credentials
3. Permanent suspension/revocation of credentials

Appeals Process

1. An appeal of a denial of certification/recertification by an applicant may be made in writing within sixty (60) days of notification of the decision of the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants.
2. A Medical Assistant holding credentials (CCMA) that have been suspended or revoked may appeal the decision of the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants in writing within sixty (60) days of the notification.

3. CCBMA may communicate to consider the appeal in person, by telephone or other electronic means.
4. All decisions of the California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants are final.

RESOURCES

CCBMA

www.ccbma.org

- FAQs
- Examination Application
- Examination Study Guide
- Recertification by CEU Application
- Recertification Guidelines
- FAQs
- Company Store

Pearson Vue

www.pearsonVue.com

- FAQs
- Find a test center
- View CCBMA's testing policies
- Preview CCBMA's NDA Agreement
- Pearson VUE testing tutorial and practice exam
- Take an online tour of a Pearson Professional Center
- What to expect in a Pearson VUE test center

Application Checklist

Please read over the checklist below to verify you have provided all necessary items with your application. Failure to provide a completed application will result in delay in processing the application for testing authorization.

- Candidate Information: Completed all personal applicant information, including printing your legal name EXACTLY matching your US Government issued identification or Driver's License
- Test selection: Checked the boxes for the exams for which you are requesting authorization
- Eligibility Criteria: Filled in the necessary information pertaining to how you qualify for the CCBMA examination
- Clinical Proficiency: Provided proof and/or authorized signature for Injection and/or Venipuncture Training required for the Clinical specialty
- Provided supporting documentation.
 - Attached the documentation to support the criteria under which you are applying
 - Provided copy of your valid US Government issued ID/License
 - Provided copy of current CPR certification training
- Application signed and dated
- Payment for related testing fee and expired certification reactivation fee (if applicable)