



# CCBMA

CALIFORNIA CERTIFYING BOARD FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANTS

## 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 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.

### CCMA Core Values

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

Applicants must meet the following requirements, in addition to one of the eligibility requirements outlined below. Clinical certification requires some additional criteria, as detailed at the bottom of the page.

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Provide proof of current CPR certification
- Provide a copy of a US Government issued ID with your signature (driver's license, ID card or passport)
- Name on ID must match the application

Name change corrections after submission of the application will be assessed a \$50.00 fee.

Applicants must create an account on the CCBMA.org website. All required documents can be uploaded to their account.

Applicants applying for the Clinical specialty examination, must provide proof of training (a signed Statement of Proficiency dated within one year preceding the application) 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. This form can be found on the requirements page on the website.

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

Currently employed as a medical assistant by a licensed of a physician (MD/DO/DPM) in the United States or working as an administrative medical assistant in the United States.

- Upload verification of employment (current paystub).
- Upload a signed injection/venipuncture Statement of Proficiency (for clinical certification)

OR

Graduate of an accredited medical assisting program in the United States within one year of graduation from a secondary, post-secondary or adult education program in a public school authorized by the Department of Education or a graduate of a community college or a post-secondary institution accredited by an accreditation agency recognized by the US Department of Education or approved by the Bureau for Private and Postsecondary Education.

- Upload a copy of your certificate of completion.
- Upload a injection/ venipuncture Statement of Proficiency (for clinical certification)

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 last five years as a medical assistant.

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

OR

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

- Upload employment verification.
- Upload injection/ venipuncture Statement of Proficiency signed by Medical Program Director for clinical certification.

OR

Member of the US military with relevant training or either separated from the Military within the last year or served in that capacity for at least two of the previous five years.

- Upload a copy of DD214 or proof of current military employment.
- Upload a Statement of Proficiency signed by your commanding officer.

### 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 qualified professional dated within the last year. We will make every effort to accommodate such cases, but we reserve the right to deny requests that would jeopardize the security of the examination materials or the integrity of scores derived from the examination. The special accommodations form is provided on the CCBMA.org website.

### 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

- Payments are made online via debit card, credit card or by e-check.
- A \$25 administrative fee will be assessed for chargebacks.
- A \$50 nonrefundable processing fee will be assessed on withdrawn and denied applications.
- 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**

CCBMA accepts applications online to provide an efficient, straightforward and convenient experience for all applicants. Applications are processed in the order they are received. Please allow 15 business days to receive your authorization letter via email with scheduling instructions. You may choose to utilize our expediting service, which includes providing your authorization via email along with a courtesy follow-up call within seven (7) business days. This service costs an additional \$50.

**Confidentiality of Applicant Information**

All applicant information received by CCBMA (e.g., application, driver's license or US government issued identification number, credit card information) is confidential and will not be shared without written permission. All test scores are confidential and will not be released to any person other than the candidate. Certification status is a matter of public record and will be maintained on CCBMA's website under the "Verify A Certification" tab. The information contains the certificant's name, credential, city and state, certificate number and active certification date.

**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

If your application is denied by CCBMA, you will receive an email and a refund of your application fee minus a \$50 processing charge. **No refunds on expediting fees, reactivation of expired credentials or study material.**

**The Testing Process  
Scheduling with Pearson Vue**

Upon approval of your [application](#), you will be contacted via email with scheduling instructions for the exam. CCBMA offers year-

round testing at several locations through [Pearson VUE](#). You will not be able to register for your exam until your application is approved.

### **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.

### **Withdraw, Cancellation and Postponement Policy**

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 indicated on your authorization letter. You must contact Pearson VUE directly to have your scheduled appointment canceled and removed from their system. You will be required to provide proof of the cancellation. 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.

Failing to appear for a scheduled test, arriving more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time, refusing admission to the exam, or changing the exam date **without providing 24 hours' notice** will result in forfeiture of the entire fee.

To reschedule the exam, do so by directly contacting Pearson VUE, our testing company, at the phone number found on the eligibility letter. You must test by the date that is specified in your eligibility letter.

### **Test Center Policy**

Pearson VUE 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.

### **Test Center Rules**

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., cell phones, personal digital assistants [PDAs], calculators [will be provided upon request at the testing center], smart watches, electronic paging devices, recording or filming devices, or radios). Use of electronic devices while at the test will not be permitted.
- 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
- A locker will be provided for your personal items. Keep in mind that the lockers are small. 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 offered. The majority of people will finish the exam in under the allowed time. You can choose to let your time run down on an 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.

### Certificate, Wallet Card and Pin

For passing applicants, a certificate suitable for framing, and a wallet card indicating the CCMA credential will be mailed to the certificant. 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 purchase in the CCBMA website store to actively credentialed medical assistants.

### Retake Examinations

In the event that you fail an exam, you will receive credit for the examination that you passed and may repeat the failed examination up to two times. You will be invited to complete a **retake application** explaining that you will have to 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, complete the application, and retake the entire examination. Any examination previously passed will no longer be counted. You cannot reapply to retest after

three failed attempts if you are not employed as a medical assistant.

### Retake Examination Fees

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

### Recertification

The purpose of recertification is ensure that medical assistants certified by CCBMA continue to maintain the level of knowledge tested at the time of initial certification and demonstrate growth in their specialty areas with continued education and training. Recertification ensures that certificants maintain a commitment to learning and encourages career development by staying abreast of evolving knowledge and skills.

All California Certified Medical Assistants must recertify every five years in order to maintain their active status. This time frame is a standard mandated by the Medical Board of California as being appropriate for the scope of the CCBMA credentials.

Recertification is achieved by accumulating 60 continuing education units (CEUs) that are relevant to the medical assisting profession, promote continuing competence, and fall within the scope of practice as defined by the Medical Board of California's Medical Assistant Regulations and CCBMA's Examination Content Outlines.

### Recertification Fees

Recertification Fee	\$150
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An email reminder will be sent out six months prior to the end of active status. This reminder will be sent to the email address on file.

You will be sent an email reminder when you are entering your "grace period and when your "grace period" has expired. 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.

Certification will be considered active only through the last day of the month/year of the "active to" date. If needed, CCBMA will allow a one-year grace period in which to complete the recertification process but certification is no longer active during this time.

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

## **Disciplinary Policies and Procedures**

### **Grounds for Denial Certification/Recertification Or Revocation of Credentials**

1. Certification or recertification obtained by fraudulent or deceptive means.
2. Falsifying information including use of the certification mark when it has not been earned or when it has expired.
3. Candidates suspected of cheating will be subject to CCBMA Disciplinary Policies and Procedures.
4. Violation of the "CCMA Core Values" 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.
  - Self-prescribing a controlled substance or drug.
  - Authorizing any prescription not prescribed by a physician.
  - Sexual or discriminatory harassment.
  - Performing work duties outside the medical assistant "Scope of Practice".
  - Breach of Non-Disclosure Agreement

### **Possible Disciplinary Penalties**

1. Denial of certification or recertification

2. Reprimand
3. Temporary suspension/revocation of credentials
4. 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.
5. The final disciplinary decision may be posted on the CCBMA website "verify a credential".

## **RESOURCES**

**CCBMA**  
[www.ccbma.org](http://www.ccbma.org)

**Pearson Vue**  
[www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com)

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

**Medical Board of California**  
[www.mbc.ca.gov](http://www.mbc.ca.gov)