

Certification and Recertification Requirements

What Will Change?

CERTIFICATION

Criminal Background Checks

Criminal background checks will be required for new candidates applying for PTCB certification by 2014.

In a March 2012 survey, 88% of 17,400 respondents recommended that PTCB require background checks for technicians applying for the PTCB Certification Program. Many employers already require background checks as a condition of employment.

PTCB will:

- Work with state Boards of Pharmacy and ASHP-accredited pharmacy technician education programs to determine how to efficiently implement background checks for new PTCB candidates and ensure no duplication of effort.
- Conduct research regarding the processing and cost implications of background checks.

ASHP-accredited Pharmacy Technician Education Program

Successful completion of an American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP)-accredited pharmacy technician education program will become a requirement for initial PTCB certification by 2020.

Leaders in the profession have demonstrated a desire for pharmacy technicians to follow the same credentialing model as pharmacists by becoming certified and registered with the state. Pharmacists are required to graduate from an accredited pharmacy school before they sit for the NAPLEX board exam and become licensed by their state Board of Pharmacy.

The number of ASHP-accredited pharmacy technician education programs is growing. ASHP-accredited programs include practical experience in addition to didactic course work, thereby providing well-rounded training for technicians. Many large employers have also begun developing their own training programs and seeking ASHP accreditation.

In the March 2012 survey, 78% of respondents agreed that 2020 is a reasonable year by which to implement accredited education.

- PTCB will consult national pharmacy technician associations to successfully complete this transition.
- This requirement will affect new individuals applying for national certification following the implementation date. It will not affect already certified pharmacy technicians applying for PTCB recertification.



PHARMACY TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION BOARD

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RECERTIFICATION

Medication Safety CE

As part of the 20 hours of CE currently required for PTCB recertification, CPhTs will need to complete one CE hour of medication safety by 2014, in addition to the one hour of law CE currently required.

Pharmacy technicians assist pharmacists with duties that impact patient care and safety. It is important that technicians continue to be educated on how their routine responsibilities shape the medication distribution system. By learning to identify potential errors in the system and how to report these, pharmacy technicians can affect the medication safety culture within pharmacies.

PTCB will:

- Encourage pharmacy associations and other national CE providers to create medication safety CE programs specifically for pharmacy technicians.
- Highlight new medication safety CE programs on ptcb.org.

Pharmacy Technician-specific CE

PTCB will require all CE hours to be pharmacy technician-specific by 2015.

It is important for pharmacy technicians to be educated through programs designed specifically to address their responsibilities and knowledge requirements in the workplace. Many CE providers currently offer pharmacy-technician specific CE, while others are looking to expand their offerings.

In order to qualify for this designation, CE programs must have pharmacy technician-specific objectives written for the course. An acceptable CE program may have two sets of objectives written for it, one for pharmacists and one for pharmacy technicians. Pharmacy technician-specific objectives will be based upon the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) CE designations; however, PTCB will not require programs to be offered only by ACPE-accredited providers.

PTCB will:

- Work with CE providers to encourage the creation of pharmacy technician-specific objectives for all CE programs.
- Continue to feature CE programs for pharmacy technicians on ptcb.org.

Acceptable CE: College Courses

PTCB will reduce the number of CE hours that can be earned via college/university coursework from 15 to 10 by 2016.

Due to the importance of pharmacy technicians completing technician-focused CE, leaders from the pharmacy profession encouraged greater emphasis on attaining technician-specific knowledge, with less allowance for broad academic courses.

Acceptable CE: In-service Courses

PTCB will reduce the allowable number of CE hours to be earned through in-services from 10 to 5 in 2015, and from 5 to 0 in 2018.

It is important that pharmacy technicians be educated through quality, standardized CE programs. In-service CEs will be phased out to eliminate inconsistencies.

PTCB will:

- Work with employers through the target implementation date to standardize the information being provided through in-services.
- Inform technicians about new eligibility requirements for recertification and reinstatement prior to their certification expiration dates.

ONLINE COMMENT PERIOD

PTCB is conducting an open comment period through May 31, 2013, inviting members of the pharmacy community to share best practices and insight on implementing the new requirements. Visit ptcb.org to submit comments. Pharmacists and technicians are encouraged to share recommendations before final implementation decisions are made.

PTCB requirements have remained largely unchanged since the organization's founding in 1995. The decisions were initiated by a 2011 summit focused on five areas related to pharmacy technicians: Consumer Awareness, Resources, Education, State Policy and Testing (C.R.E.S.T.). Summit findings, combined with results from two profession-wide surveys, called for PTCB and the pharmacy profession to make decisive changes in certification standards.

