

December 2023



# Candidate Handbook

Advanced Palliative Hospice Social Worker - Certified



The Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center  
400 Lydia Street, Suite 103, Carnegie, PA 15106  
412.787.1057 | [advancingexpertcare.org/hpcc](https://advancingexpertcare.org/hpcc)

The Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC) provides specialty certification examinations for health care professionals: advanced practice registered nurses, registered nurses, pediatric registered nurses, licensed practical/vocational nurses, nursing assistants, and social workers. Information regarding the hospice and palliative social worker examination, testing policies and procedures and an application form can be found in this Candidate Handbook. Candidate Handbooks for other HPCC certification examinations are also available. HPCC certification exams are computer-based and offered at PSI Test Center locations and by live remote proctoring. Deadlines are firm and strictly enforced.

All inquiries regarding the certification program should be addressed to HPCC.

HPCC  
400 Lydia Street, Suite 103  
Carnegie, PA 15106  
Telephone: 412-787-1057  
Fax: 412-787-9305  
Email: [hpcc@goHPCC.org](mailto:hpcc@goHPCC.org)  
Website: [advancingexpertcare.org/certification](http://advancingexpertcare.org/certification)

PSI is the professional testing company contracted by HPCC to assist in the development, administration, scoring and analysis of the HPCC certification examinations.

All inquiries regarding the application process, test administration and the reporting of scores should be addressed to PSI.

PSI  
18000 W. 105th St.  
Olathe, KS 66061-7543  
Telephone: (Toll free) 833-256-1422  
Fax: 913-895-4651  
Email: [info@psionline.com](mailto:info@psionline.com)  
Website: <http://schedule.psiexams.com>

Your signature on the application certifies that you have read all portions of this Candidate Handbook and application.

### HPCC MISSION STATEMENT

HPCC is the premier national credentialing organization that advances expert care in serious illness through state-of-the-art certification of continuing competency in hospice and palliative care.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION .....	1	Recognition of Certification .....	7
About the HPCC.....	1	Renewal of Certification .....	8
Statement of Non-Discrimination Policy .....	1	Ethical Code.....	8
Certification.....	1	Misuse of Certification Credentials .....	8
Testing Agency.....	1	Grounds for Disciplinary Action.....	8
HPCC Processing Agreement .....	1	Revocation of Certification .....	9
Examination Administration .....	2	Questions and Appeals .....	9
Live Remote Proctoring (LRP) .....	2	Re-Examination .....	9
Examination Windows and Application Deadlines.....	2	Retest Assured Program .....	9
Test Center Locations.....	2		
Applying for an Examination .....	2	SECTION 2: CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION FOR	
Examination Appointment Changes .....	3	HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE SOCIAL WORKERS .....	11
Requests for Special		Examination.....	11
Examination Accommodations .....	3	Definition of Hospice and Palliative Care .....	11
HPNA, NHPCO, SWHPN Membership Benefit .....	3	Eligibility Requirements .....	11
Forfeiture of Fee .....	4	Examination Fees .....	11
Audits.....	4	Renewal or Reactivation of Certification .....	12
Transfer to the next testing window .....	4	Renewal/Reactivation Fees .....	12
Refunds.....	4	Receipts.....	12
On the Day of Your Examination (Test Center) .....	4	Examination Content.....	12
On The Day of Your Examination (Live Remote Proctoring) ..	4	Detailed Content Outline Information.....	12
Security.....	5	Drug Names.....	13
Personal Belongings.....	5	Detailed Content Outline .....	14
Examination Restrictions - Test Center .....	5	Sample questions .....	17
Examination Restrictions - LRP.....	5	Suggested References.....	18
Misconduct .....	5	2024 HPCC RETEST ASSURED EXAMINATION APPLICATION ...	19
Copyrighted Examination Questions.....	6	TRANSFER OF APPLICATION .....	23
Exam functionality Check.....	6	REQUEST FOR SPECIAL EXAMINATION	
Timed Examination.....	6	ACCOMMODATIONS.....	25
Candidate Comments .....	6	DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY-RELATED NEEDS.....	26
Inclement Weather, Emergency, or Technical problems.....	6		
Report of Results .....	7		
Duplicate Score Report.....	7		
Confidentiality .....	7		

This page is intentionally left blank.

## SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

### ABOUT THE HPCC

The Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC) was incorporated in 1993 as the National Board for Certification of Hospice Nurses (NBCHN) to develop a program of certification for the specialty practice of hospice and palliative nursing. The HPCC has been affiliated with the Hospice Nurses Association (HNA), now Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association (HPNA), since its inception. The first certification examination for Hospice Nurses was given in 1994, and in 1998, initial certificants were required to renew their credential for the first time. HPCC has expanded its mission and now provides specialty Exams for several members of the interdisciplinary team: advanced practice registered nurses, registered nurses, pediatric registered nurses, licensed practical/vocational nurses, nursing assistants, and social workers. Currently there are nearly 15,000 individuals certified by HPCC.

The HPCC Board of Directors is a competency-based Board that oversees all aspects of the certification program. The composition of the Board includes certified representatives from HPCC certification programs and may include a certified nurse in a nursing specialty other than hospice and palliative care, and a public Board member. HPCC has the responsibility for development, administration and maintenance of the examinations in conjunction with a testing agency, PSI.

### STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The HPCC does not discriminate among applicants on the basis of age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or marital status.

### CERTIFICATION

The HPCC endorses the concept of voluntary, periodic certification for all hospice and palliative advanced practice registered nurses, registered nurses, pediatric registered nurses, licensed practical/vocational nurses, nursing assistants, and social workers. It focuses specifically on the individual and is an indication of current competence in a specialized area of practice. Certification in hospice and palliative care is highly valued and provides formal recognition of competence.

The purpose of certification is to promote delivery of comprehensive hospice and palliative care through the certification of qualified hospice and palliative professionals by:

1. Recognizing formally those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements for and pass an HPCC certification examination or complete the recertification process.
2. Encouraging continuing personal and professional growth in the practice of hospice and palliative care.

3. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification in hospice and palliative care.
4. Providing a national standard of requisite knowledge required for certification; thereby assisting the employer, public and members of the health professions in the assessment of hospice and palliative care.

### TESTING AGENCY

PSI Services is the professional testing agency contracted by the HPCC to assist in the development, administration, scoring and analysis of the HPCC certification examinations. PSI services also include the processing of examination applications and the reporting of scores to candidates who take the examinations. PSI is a leader in the testing industry, offering certification, licensing, talent assessment and academic solutions worldwide.

### HPCC PROCESSING AGREEMENT

HPCC agrees to process your application subject to your agreement to the following terms and conditions:

1. To be bound by and comply with HPCC rules relating to eligibility, certification, renewal and recertification, including, but not limited to, payment of applicable fees, demonstration of educational and experiential requirements, satisfaction of annual maintenance and recertification requirements, compliance with the HPCC Grounds for Sanctions and other standards, and compliance with all HPCC documentation and reporting requirements, as may be revised from time to time.
2. To hold HPCC harmless and to waive, release and exonerate HPCC, its officers, directors, employees, committee members, and agents from any claims that you may have against HPCC arising out of HPCC's review of your application, or eligibility for certification, renewal, recertification or reinstatement, conduct of the examination, or issuance of a sanction or other decision.
3. To authorize HPCC to publish and/or release your certification status and any final or pending disciplinary decisions to state licensing boards or agencies, other healthcare organizations, professional associations, employers or the public.
4. To only provide information in your application to HPCC that is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge. You agree to denial of eligibility, revocation or other limitation of your certification, if granted, should any statement made on this application or hereafter supplied to HPCC is found to be false or inaccurate or if you violate any of the standards, rules or regulations of HPCC.

## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

The HPCC Examination is delivered by computer at approximately 500 PSI Test Centers geographically located throughout the United States and by live remote proctoring (LRP). The examination is administered by appointment only Monday through Friday. Appointment starting times may vary by location and the availability of a remote proctor. Evening and Saturday appointments may be scheduled based on availability. Candidates are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. The examination is not offered on holidays during the four offered windows – Labor Day and the Christmas Holiday (December 24-26).

## LIVE REMOTE PROCTORING (LRP)

HPCC offers candidates the option to take an examination through live remote proctoring. LRP is a secure way for a candidate to take an examination outside of a test center utilizing technology to connect with a live professional proctor. All exam windows and application deadlines remain the same for exams administered at a testing center or via live remote proctoring. **For additional information and specifications for LRP, visit <https://www.advancingexpertcare.org/hpcc/live-remote-proctoring>.**

## EXAMINATION WINDOWS AND APPLICATION DEADLINES

Applications that are received before the application “Start Date” or after the application “Deadlines” as posted below will be returned to the applicant **unprocessed**.

**Applications are processed for the corresponding testing window ONLY as indicated in the chart below.**

TESTING WINDOW	Application Start Date	Online Application Deadline
<b>March 1 – March 31</b>	December 1	February 15
<b>June 1 – June 30</b>	March 1	May 15
<b>September 1 – September 30</b>	June 1	August 15
<b>December 1 – December 31</b>	September 1	November 15

To apply for an HPCC examination, complete the application online. All applications must be **RECEIVED** at PSI by the application deadline. HPCC cannot accept applications. PSI only accepts online applications.

Incomplete applications will result in a delay of an applicant’s eligibility to test. PSI and HPCC make every effort to notify candidates of missing or incomplete documents.

Documents not received prior to the opening of the current

testing window, will decrease the time frame available to the candidate to test in that window. If a candidate does not submit the required documents for the selected testing window, they will be required to complete a transfer application and pay a \$100 transfer fee to move to the next window.

## TEST CENTER LOCATIONS

A current listing of approximately 500 Test Centers with specific address information can be viewed at [advancingexpertcare.org/certification](http://advancingexpertcare.org/certification).

## APPLYING FOR AN EXAMINATION

### THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Candidates may access the application process through the HPCC at [advancingexpertcare.org/certification](http://advancingexpertcare.org/certification). **PAPER AND FAXED APPLICATIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.**

- Online Application and Scheduling:** You may complete the application and scheduling process in one online session by visiting [advancingexpertcare.org/certification](http://advancingexpertcare.org/certification). The computer screens will guide you through the application/scheduling process. After the application information and payment using a credit card (VISA, MasterCard, AMEX, Discover) have been submitted, eligibility will be confirmed or denied and you will be prompted to schedule an examination appointment at a test center or for live remote proctoring, or supply additional eligibility information.

If eligibility cannot be confirmed, notification why the application is incomplete will be sent.

If a confirmation of eligibility notice is not received within 4 weeks, contact PSI at 833-256-1422.

If you contact PSI by 3:00 p.m. Central Time on...	Your examination may be scheduled as early as ...
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday (Saturday if available)
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Tuesday

When contacting PSI be prepared to confirm test center location or live remote proctored and a preferred date and time. You will be asked to provide your unique identification number that was provided on your confirmation notice. When you call to schedule an appointment for examination, you will be notified of the time to report to the Test Center or to sign-on for your live remote exam. Please make a note of it because you will **NOT** receive an admission letter with appointment confirmation. If an email address is provided you will be sent an email confirmation notice.



You are allowed to take only the examination scheduled. **Unscheduled candidates (walk-ins) are not tested.**

## EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT CHANGES

You may change your test center exam to an LRP exam or change your LRP exam to a test center exam. There is not a limit to the number of times a candidate can switch their testing mode between LRP and a Test Center as long as these changes are made within the greater than 24 hours prior to the exam timeframe we have laid out in the handbook. You may reschedule an appointment for examination at no charge by calling PSI at 833-256-1422 or rescheduling online at <http://schedule.psiexams.com> greater than 24 business hours prior to the scheduled examination session. Appointments **MUST** be rescheduled within the **SAME TESTING WINDOW**.

A candidate may change the testing date and time as many times as needed if it is within the testing window AND at least 24 hours before the scheduled exam. (i.e., A candidate has a test time for LRP at 10:00 AM on 06/04. On 06/02 the candidate changes the LRP test appointment to 06/20 at 2 PM. On 06/15 the candidate decides to take the exam at a test site, the candidate is permitted to change the test appointment again.)

A candidate may NOT change the test from a June window to a September window without cancelling the exam by contacting PSI (if scheduled), completing the transfer request form and submitting a \$100 transfer fee. If a candidate misses the exam (without cancelling), they forfeit the exam application fee and must reapply as a new applicant.

If your Examination is scheduled on ...	You must contact PSI to reschedule the Examination by 3:00 p.m. Central Time by the previous ...
Monday	Saturday
Tuesday	Sunday
Wednesday	Monday
Thursday	Tuesday
Friday	Wednesday
Saturday	Thursday
Sunday	Friday

## REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL EXAMINATION ACCOMMODATIONS

The HPCC and PSI comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and are committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities or impairments are not deprived of the opportunity to take the examination solely by reason of a disability or impairment, as required and defined by the relevant provisions of the law. Special testing arrangements will be considered for these individuals, provided that an appropriate written application request for accommodation is received by PSI by

the application deadline and the request is approved. Please complete the online form at [https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket\\_form\\_id=360000150872](https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=360000150872). Attach the Documentation of Disability-Related Needs form (which must be completed by an appropriate licensed professional) with your online request. Candidates with questions regarding exam accommodations may call PSI at 800-367-1565 ext. 6750.

## HPNA, NHPCO, SWHPN MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

Persons applying for a certification Exam who are current HPNA, NHPCO, or SWHPN members PRIOR to applying for the HPCC Exam are entitled to the member discounted examination fee as a membership benefit.

If applying for HPNA membership, the membership benefit must be obtained at least two business days before applying for a certification Exam. See "Exam Fees" section for the applicable Exam. Candidates MUST include their membership number on their exam application to receive the discounted fee.

Members of the Social Work Hospice and Palliative Care Network (SWHPN), and National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) are eligible to receive member pricing for the APHSW-C certification exam. If you are member of one of these partnering organizations, please utilize the following directions to secure member pricing within the APHSW-C online application.

Members of SWHPN: Please email SWHPN at [info@swhpn.org](mailto:info@swhpn.org) for the appropriate discount code to enter into Step 8 of the online application.

Members of NHPCO: Please utilize the following link: <https://www.nhpco.org/sw-exam/> to log into the NHPCO website and obtain the corresponding member number to enter into Step 8 of the online application.

Members of HPNA: Member pricing is automatically confirmed via membership number and calculated within the online application.

Please note: Special pricing codes and numbers are only valid for the APHSW-C certification program and not redeemable for other HPCC certifications. Additionally, special pricing cannot be combined with other membership related pricing offers. All special pricing is subject to administrative review.

## FORFEITURE OF FEE

A candidate who:

1. fails to cancel an examination greater than 24 hours prior to the scheduled testing session;
2. fails to report for an examination appointment;
3. arrives less than 15 minutes BEFORE the examination appointment start time;
4. fails to provide proper identification that matches your eligibility email at the Test Center or LRP; or
5. fails to submit required audit documentation if selected for audit
6. fails to pass LRP system requirement

will forfeit the examination fee and must reapply for the examination by submitting a new application, documentation and full examination fee, or request a transfer as outlined in the Transfers section below.

## AUDITS

To ensure the integrity of eligibility requirements, HPCC will audit a percentage of randomly selected applications each year. Candidates whose applications are selected for audit will be notified and required to provide documentation of their academic transcript, professional license (if applicable) and verification of practice hours.

The audit letter from PSI will indicate the date the documentation must be received. You will be notified by PSI when the audit is approved and you are eligible to schedule the exam. This process can take three weeks or longer.

## TRANSFER TO THE NEXT TESTING WINDOW

Candidates who, for any reason, are unable to sit for the examination in the window for which they applied AND canceled their examination greater than 24 hours before their scheduled appointment may request a transfer. This transfer will allow the candidates to forward their application fee to the **next testing window only**. Extensions of transfers will not be permitted.

Request for this transfer must be made in writing using the Transfer of Application form at the back of this handbook and sent to PSI via mail or facsimile along with a \$100 transfer fee payable to PSI Services Inc. by credit card, personal check, cashier's check or money order. The request must be received no later than 30 days following the last day of the original testing window. Once the request is received and processed, the candidate will receive notification from PSI with instructions regarding scheduling their appointment when the next application window opens.

Telephone calls and/or electronic mail messages are not accepted as transfer requests. However, a phone call must be made to PSI (833-256-1422) to **cancel** the scheduled appointment. The call to cancel must be made greater than 24 business hours prior to the scheduled appointment.

Transfer requests made after the timeframe outlined on page 3 will not be honored.

## REFUNDS

Due to the nature of computer-based testing and the ability to reschedule your appointment within the testing window, no refund requests will be honored. Candidate substitutions are not permitted.

## ON THE DAY OF YOUR EXAMINATION (TEST CENTER)

On the day of your examination appointment, report to the Test Center 15 minutes before your scheduled testing time. Once you enter the Test Center, look for the signs indicating PSI Test Center check-in.

To gain admission to the Test Center, you must present **two forms of identification**. The primary form must match the name on your eligibility email, be government issued, current and include your photograph. You will also be required to sign a roster for verification of identity. No temporary IDs are allowed.

Examples of valid primary forms of identification are:

1. Driver's license with photograph
2. State identification card with photograph
3. Passport with photograph
4. Military identification card with photograph
5. Green card
6. Alien registration
7. Permanent resident card
8. National identification card

Employment ID cards, student ID cards, social security cards and any type of temporary identification are **NOT** acceptable as primary identification, but may be used as secondary identification if they include your name and signature. Candidates are prohibited from misrepresenting their identities or falsifying information to obtain admission to the Test Center.

At the testing carrel, you will be prompted on-screen to enter your unique identification number. Your photograph, taken before beginning the examination, will remain on-screen throughout your examination session. This photograph will also print on your score report.

## ON THE DAY OF YOUR EXAMINATION (LIVE REMOTE PROCTORING)

Before your live remote proctoring exam:

- Failure to pass the system/compatibility check results in forfeiture of your exam
- Complete a system check prior to your scheduled exam



- Log-in from the comfort of your home, office, or testing environment at your assigned exam time
- Camera capable to complete a 360-degree room scan of your testing environment and work area and must have an external camera available if using a desktop computer
- Show your government issued ID (military ID is not accepted for LRP)

If you're using a work computer, you must have administrative rights for the secure download before the exam and you must be able to disable the firewall for remote access.

## SECURITY

PSI administration and security standards are designed to ensure all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. The Test Center and LRP is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes.

The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- Examinations are proprietary. No cameras, notes, tape recorders, pagers or cellular phones are allowed in the testing room. Possession of a cellular phone or other electronic devices is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the examination.
- No calculators are allowed.
- No guests, visitors or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

No personal items, valuables, or weapons should be brought to the Test Center. Only wallets and keys are permitted. Coats must be left outside the testing room. You will be provided a soft locker to store your wallet and/or keys with you in the testing room. You will not have access to these items until after the examination is completed. Please note the following items will not be allowed in the testing room except securely locked in the soft locker.

- watches
- hats
- wallets
- keys

Once you have placed everything into the soft locker, you will be asked to pull out your pockets to ensure they are empty. If all personal items will not fit in the soft locker you will not be able to test. The site will not store any personal belongings.

If any personal items are observed in the testing room after the examination is started, you will be dismissed and the administration will be forfeited.

## EXAMINATION RESTRICTIONS - TEST CENTER

- Pencils will be provided during check-in.
- You will be provided with one piece of scratch paper at a time to use during the examination, unless noted on the sign-in roster for a particular candidate. You must return the scratch paper to the supervisor at the completion of testing, or you will not receive your score report.
- No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the Test Center.
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Eating, drinking or smoking will not be permitted in the Test Center.
- You may take a break whenever you wish, but you will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks.
- You may request disposable ear plugs from the test center staff, if need. You may not bring your own ear plugs or ear buds to the test center.

## EXAMINATION RESTRICTIONS - LRP

- You may have 1 blank sheet of paper and 1 pencil. You will be asked to show the proctor both sides of the paper.
- You will be asked to tear up the paper in view of the proctor when the exam ends.
- Electronic devices are not allowed in the testing area
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Eating, drinking or smoking will not be permitted during the exam.
- No one is allowed in the testing area while the exam is in progress.
- If you take a break, you will be required to rescan the testing area and you will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks.

## MISCONDUCT

If you engage in any of the following conduct during the examination you may be dismissed, your scores will not be reported and examination fees will not be refunded. Examples of misconduct are when you:

- create a disturbance, are abusive, or otherwise uncooperative;
- display and/or use electronic communications equipment such as pagers, cellular phones;
- talk or participate in conversation with yourself or other examination candidates;
- give or receive help or are suspected of doing so;

- leave the Test Center during the administration;
- attempt to record examination questions or make notes;
- attempt to take the examination for someone else;
- are observed with personal belongings, or
- are observed with notes, books or other aids without it being noted on the roster.

## COPYRIGHTED EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

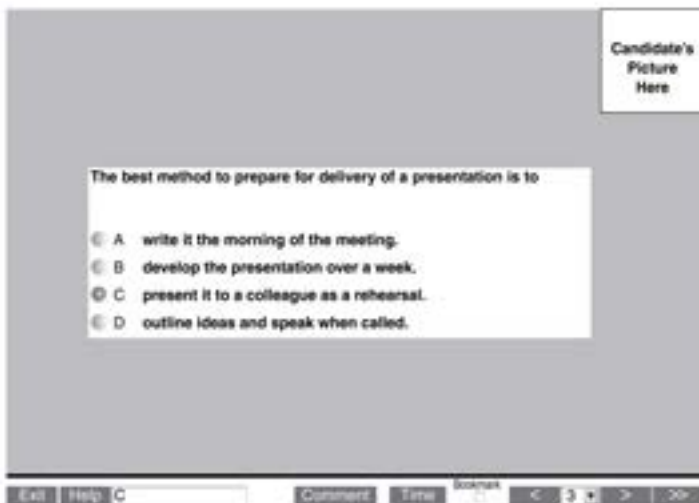
All examination questions are the copyrighted property of HPCC. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject you to severe civil and criminal penalties.

## EXAM FUNCTIONALITY CHECK

Prior to attempting the timed examination, you will be given the opportunity to practice taking an examination on the computer. The time you use for this practice examination is **NOT** counted as part of your examination time. When you are comfortable with the computer testing process, you may quit the practice session and begin the timed examination.

## TIMED EXAMINATION

Following the practice examination, you will begin the timed examination. Before beginning, instructions for taking the examination are provided on-screen. The following is a sample of what the computer screen will look like when you are attempting the examination.



The computer monitors the time you spend on the examination. The examination will terminate if you exceed the time limit. You may click on the Time button in the lower right portion of the screen to monitor your time. A digital clock indicates the time remaining for you to complete the examination. The time feature may also be turned off during the examination.

Only one examination question is presented at a time. The question number appears in the lower right portion of the screen. The entire examination question appears on-screen (i.e., stem and four options labeled – A, B, C and D). **Indicate your choice by either entering the letter of the option you think is correct (A, B, C or D) or clicking on the option using the mouse.** To change your answer, enter a different option by entering in the letter in the response box or by clicking on the option using the mouse. You may change your answer as many times as you wish during the examination time limit.

To move to the next question, click on the forward arrow (>) in the lower right portion of the screen. This action will move you forward through the examination question by question. If you wish to review any question or questions, click the backward arrow (<) or use the left arrow key to move backward through the examination.

The computer-based test (CBT) is set up in a linear format. In a linear format the candidate answers a predetermined number of questions. The examination questions do not become increasingly more difficult based on answers to previous questions. Answer selections may be changed as many times as necessary during the allotted time.

A question may be left unanswered for return later in the examination session. Questions may also be bookmarked for later review by clicking in the blank square to the right of the Time button. Click on the double arrows (>>) to advance to the next unanswered or bookmarked question on the examination. To identify all unanswered and bookmarked questions, repeatedly click on the double arrows (>>). When the examination is completed, the number of questions answered is reported. If not all questions have been answered and there is time remaining, return to the examination and answer those questions. Be sure to answer each question before ending the examination. **There is no penalty for guessing.**

## CANDIDATE COMMENTS

You may provide comments for any examination question during the computerized examination **by clicking on the Comment button** to the left of the Time button. This opens a dialogue box to enter comments. Because of test security considerations, you will not receive individual replies about the content of examination questions, nor will you be permitted to review examination questions after completing the examination. At conclusion of the examination, you will also be asked to complete a short evaluation and a survey about the examination administration conditions.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER, EMERGENCY, OR TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, the HPCC and PSI will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling, of an examination. The examination will usually not be rescheduled if the Test Center personnel are able to open the Test Center.

You may visit the [www.psonline.com/openings](http://www.psonline.com/openings) website prior to the examination to determine if PSI has been advised that any Test Centers are closed. Every attempt is made to administer the Exam as scheduled; however, should an Exam be canceled at a Test Center, all scheduled candidates will receive notification regarding rescheduling or reapplication procedures.

If power to a Test Center is temporarily interrupted during an administration, your examination will be restarted. The responses provided up to the point of interruption will be intact, but for security reasons the questions will be scrambled.

If you experience issues during an LRP exam, contact PSI technical/customer support 833-518-7459. PSI may ask to access your computer remotely to help resolve technical problems. HPCC is unable to assist with LRP technical issues.

## REPORT OF RESULTS

After completing the examination, you are asked to complete a short survey and an evaluation of your examination experience. Then, you are instructed to report to the examination proctor to receive your score report. Scores are reported in printed form only, in person or by U.S. mail. **Scores are not reported over the telephone, by electronic mail or by facsimile.**

LRP candidates will receive an on-screen “pass” or “fail” at the end of the exam. A detailed score report will be emailed to LRP candidates within 24 hours.

Your score report will indicate a “pass” or “fail.” Additional detail is provided as the percent correct in each major content category. Your overall test score is reported as a scaled score, which is statistically derived from the raw score. Your total score determines whether you pass or fail; it is reported as a scaled score ranging between 200 and 800.

The methodology used to set the minimum passing score for each examination is the Angoff method, applied during the performance of a Passing Point Study by a panel of content experts. The experts evaluated each question on the respective examination to determine how many correct answers are necessary to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required for the designation. The candidate’s ability to pass the examination depends on the knowledge and skill displayed during the examination, not on the performance of other candidates.

The minimum scaled score needed to pass the examinations has been set at 500 scaled score units. The reason for reporting scaled scores is that different forms (or versions) of the examinations may vary in difficulty. As new forms of the examinations are introduced each year, a certain number of questions in each content area are replaced. These changes may cause one form of the examination to be slightly easier or harder than another form. To adjust for these differences in difficulty, a procedure called “equating” is used. The goal of equating is to ensure fairness to all candidates.

In the equating process, the minimum raw score (number of correctly answered questions) required to equal the scaled passing score of 500 is statistically adjusted (or equated). For

instance, if an examination is determined to be more difficult than the previous form of the examination, then the minimum raw passing score required to pass will be slightly lower than the original raw passing score. If the examination is easier than the previous form of the examination, then the minimum raw score will be higher. Equating helps to assure that the scaled passing score of 500 represents the same level of competence no matter which form of an examination the candidate takes.

In addition to the candidate’s total scaled score and scaled score required to pass, percent correct are reported for the major categories on the content outline. Content categorical information is provided to assist candidates in identifying areas of relative strength and weakness; however, passing or failing the examination is based only on the candidate’s total scaled score.

## DUPLICATE SCORE REPORT

You may purchase additional copies of your score report at a cost of \$25 per copy. Requests must be submitted to PSI, in writing, within 12 months after the examination. The request must include your name, unique identification number, mailing address, telephone number, date of examination and examination taken. Submit this information with the required fee payable to PSI Services Inc. Duplicate score reports will be mailed within approximately five business days after receipt of the request and fee.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Individual examination scores are released **ONLY** to the individual candidate. Results will not be given over the telephone, fax or email for test center candidates. Results will not be given over the phone or via fax for LRP Candidates.

## RECOGNITION OF CERTIFICATION

Eligible candidates who pass an HPCC certification examination are eligible to use the respective registered designation after their names.

- **Advanced Certified Hospice and Palliative Nurse Examination: ACHPN®**
- **Advanced Palliative Hospice Social Worker Certified Examination: APHSW-C**
- **Certified Hospice and Palliative Licensed Nurse Examination: CHPLN®**
- **Certified Hospice and Palliative Nurse Examination: CHPN®**
- **Certified Hospice and Palliative Nursing Assistant Examination: CHPNA®**
- **Certified Hospice and Palliative Pediatric Nurse Examination: CHPPN®**

Each certification expires after a period of four years unless it is renewed by the individual (see “Renewal of Certification” section). A registry of certified hospice and palliative certificants will be maintained by the HPCC and may be used for: 1) employer, accrediting body or public verification of an individual’s credential; 2) publication; 3) special mailings or other activities.

## RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION

Attaining certification is an indication of a well-defined body of knowledge. Renewal of the certification is required every four years to maintain certified status. Initial certification or renewal of certification is valid for four years.

It is the certificant's responsibility to apply for renewal by the required application deadline, posted at [advancingexpertcare.org/certification](http://advancingexpertcare.org/certification). HPCC attempts to provide certificants with renewal notices, but failure to receive a notice does not relieve the certificant from the responsibility to apply for renewal by the application deadline.

***Certificants who do not renew before the expiration date of their credential will not be able to use the credential after that date.***

Please refer to Section 2 of the handbook for specific information regarding renewal of certification.

## ETHICAL CODE

HPCC has a responsibility to ensure the integrity of all processes and products of its certification programs to the public, the professionals, the employers and its certificants. Therefore, HPCC considers the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association (HPNA) Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers as the essential ethical frameworks for honoring human dignity and professional accountability for conduct. HPCC upholds the high standards for credentialing agencies established by two national accreditation organizations, the Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC) and the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

## MISUSE OF CERTIFICATION CREDENTIALS

Please be advised that once certified, the designated credential may only be used by the certified individual during the four-year time period designated on the certificate. Failure to successfully recertify requires the individual to **stop use of the credential immediately** after the credential has expired. Any other use, or use of the HPCC Trademark without permission from the HPCC Board of Directors, is fraudulent.

HPCC will thoroughly investigate all reports of an individual or corporation fraudulently using an HPCC credential and/or any other HPCC trademarks. If proof is obtained that an unauthorized individual or corporation has used the credential or trademark, HPCC will notify the appropriate individual with documented proof and state that HPCC has no record of the individual's or corporation's authorization to use the credential or trademark. Immediate remediation will be requested of the appropriate individual. If corrective actions are not completed and fraudulent use continues after 30 days, a letter will be sent by the Director of Credentialing to the appropriate individual's employer. Continued fraudulent use after 45 days of first notification will be reported to nursing boards and/or published

for professional or consumer notification at the discretion of the HPCC Board of Directors.

Failure to meet these standards may result in revocation.

HPCC may deny, suspend or revoke any individual's certification for due cause through disciplinary action.

## GROUND FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The following conditions or behaviors by applicants or certificants constitute grounds for disciplinary action by the HPCC:

1. Ineligibility for certification, regardless of when the ineligibility is discovered.
2. Any violation of an HPCC rule or procedure, as may be revised from time to time, and any failure to provide information required or requested by HPCC, or to update (within thirty days) information previously provided to HPCC, including but not limited to, any failure to report to HPCC in a timely manner an action, complaint, or charge that relates to rules 6-8 of these grounds for disciplinary action.
3. Unauthorized possession of, use of, distribution of, or access to:
  - a. HPCC examinations
  - b. Certificates
  - c. Logo of HPCC
  - d. Abbreviations related thereto
  - e. Any other HPCC documents and materials, including but not limited to, misrepresentation of self, professional practice or HPCC certification status, prior to or following the grant of certification by HPCC, if any.
4. Any examination irregularity, including but not limited to, copying answers, permitting another to copy answers, disrupting the conduct of an examination, falsifying information or identification, education or credentials, providing and/or receiving unauthorized advice about examination content before, during, or following the examination. [Note: the HPCC may refuse to release an examination score pending resolution of an examination irregularity.]
5. Obtaining or attempting to obtain certification or renewal of certification for oneself or another by a false or misleading statement or failure to make a required statement, or fraud or deceit in any communication to HPCC.
6. Gross or repeated negligence, incompetence or malpractice in professional work, including, but not limited to, habitual use of alcohol or any drug or any substance, or any physical or mental condition that currently impairs competent professional performance or poses a substantial risk to patient health and safety.
7. Limitation, sanction, revocation or suspension by a health care organization, professional organization, or other private or governmental body, relating to practice, public health or safety, or certification.
8. Any conviction of a felony or misdemeanor directly relating to social work practice and/or public health and safety. An



individual convicted of a felony directly related to social work practice and/or public health and safety shall be ineligible to apply for HPCC certification or renewal of certification for a period of three (3) years from the exhaustion of appeals.

Any disciplinary complaint must be written in a letter to the HPCC President, c/o Chief Executive Officer, HPCC, 400 Lydia Street, Suite 103, Carnegie, PA 15106.

## **REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION**

Admittance to the examination will be denied or certification will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of an application or documentation provided with the application.
2. Failure to pay the required fee.
3. Revocation or expiration of current social work license.
4. Misrepresentation, misuse or fraudulent use of the HPCC credentials.
5. Unauthorized possession of, use of, distribution of, or access to HPCC exams.
6. Any examination irregularity, including but not limited to, copying answers, permitting another to copy answers, disrupting the conduct of an examination, falsifying information or identification, education or credentials, providing and/or receiving unauthorized advice about exam content before, during, or following the examination.
7. Gross repeated negligence, incompetence, or malpractice in professional work.
8. Limitation, sanction, revocation or suspension by a healthcare organization, professional organization, or other private or governmental body, relating to social work practice, public health or safety, or social work certification.
9. Any conviction of a felony or misdemeanor directly relating to social work practice and/or public health and safety.

HPCC employs its vendor to conduct data forensic on HPCC examinations. In addition, PSI conducts additional security measures including web crawling to secure HPCC examinations.

## **QUESTIONS AND APPEALS**

HPCC provides an opportunity for candidates to question any aspect of the certification program. HPCC will respond to any question as quickly as possible, generally within a few days.

Candidates are invited to call 412-787-1057 or send an email message to [hpcc@goHPCC.org](mailto:hpcc@goHPCC.org) for any questions. In addition, HPCC has an appeals policy to provide a review mechanism for challenging an adverse decision, such as denial of eligibility for the examination or revocation of certification. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate the appeal process

by written request to the HPCC President, c/o Chief Executive Officer, HPCC, 400 Lydia Street, Suite 103, Carnegie, PA 15106 within 30 calendar days of the circumstance leading to the appeal.

## **RE-EXAMINATION**

Unsuccessful candidates may repeat the certification exam provided they meet HPCC's eligibility criteria at the time they apply for re-examination.

Candidates who do not pass the HPCC certification examination may follow these steps to reapply:

1. Submit a new application and test fee to PSI (See page 2).
2. Candidates are required to wait until the next testing window to retest.
3. Unlimited testing is allowed if candidates are unsuccessful.

## **RETEST ASSURED PROGRAM**

Unsuccessful candidates who applied to test may repeat the certification exam provided they meet HPCC's eligibility criteria at the time they applied for re-Exam.

Candidates who do not pass the HPCC certification examination may follow these steps to reapply for the reTEST Assured program:

1. Submit a new **paper** application and select "reTEST Assured" with the \$125 test fee.
2. Candidates may retest in one of the next three test windows.
3. Candidates submit the reTEST Assured paper application for the window candidates are going to retest.
4. Candidates can use the reTEST Assured program one-time after submitting a new paper application.
5. Candidates who do not pass the Exam after using reTEST Assured must submit an initial application and fee.
6. Candidates may not apply for reTEST Assured prior to initial examination.



This page is intentionally left blank.

## SECTION 2: CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION FOR HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE SOCIAL WORKERS

### EXAMINATION

The Certification Examination for Hospice and Palliative Social Workers consists of 150 multiple choice items, of which 135 have equal weight for scoring. The examination includes 15 non-scored “pretest” or “trial” items that are interspersed throughout the examination. Performance on the pretest questions does not affect your examination score. The examination presents each question with four response alternatives (A, B, C, D). One of those represents the best response. You will be permitted three hours to complete this examination. Candidates achieving a passing score on this examination will be awarded the **Advanced Palliative Hospice Social Worker-Certified (APHSW-C)** credential.

The HPCC, with the advice and assistance of PSI, prepares the examinations. Individuals with expertise in hospice and palliative social work practice write the questions and review them for relevancy, consistency, accuracy and appropriateness.

### DEFINITION OF HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE

Hospice and palliative care is the provision of care for the patient with serious illness and their family with the emphasis on their physical, psychosocial, emotional and spiritual needs. This is accomplished in collaboration with an interdisciplinary team in diverse settings including: inpatient, home, or residential hospice; acute care hospitals or palliative care units; long-term care facilities; rehabilitation facilities; home settings; ambulatory or outpatient palliative care primary care or specialty clinics; veterans’ facilities; correctional facilities; homeless shelters; and mental health settings.

Hospice and palliative interdisciplinary team members serve in a variety of roles including: expert clinicians, educators, researchers, administrators, consultants, case managers, program developers/coordinators, social workers and/or policymakers. Moreover, hospice and palliative care includes holistic assessment of the patient and family, offering information to allow more informed decision-making, meticulous pain and symptom management, determination and optimization of functional status, and support of coping patterns.

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for the APHSW-C Examination, an applicant must fulfill the following requirements.

#### 1. Education

Applicants must hold either a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work (BSW) or a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW)

from an institution accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or equivalent accreditation for degrees earned outside of the United States.

#### 2. Experience

- For BSWs: Applicants must have at least three (3) years of post-degree supervised experience in hospice and palliative social work and have at least (3) years of post-degree experience in hospice and/or palliative social work within the previous five (5) years. Supervision must be provided by a MSW or licensed professional experienced in hospice and/or palliative care.
- For MSWs: Applicants must have at least two (2) years of post-degree experience in hospice and/or palliative social work within the previous five (5) years.
- One year of experience is defined as working 2,000 hours

#### 3. Ethics

- Applicants must attest to practicing in accordance with the [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\)](#) Code of Ethics.

#### 4. Licensure

- If the applicant’s state requires licensure to practice based upon the applicant’s educational level and type of practice, licensure in good standing is required.

### EXAMINATION FEES

All exam fees remain the same for taking an examination at a Test Center or by live remote proctoring.

#### INITIAL CERTIFICATION

<b>Application Fee</b>	<b>\$415.00</b>
<b>HPNA, NHPCO, SWHPN members Fee</b>	<b>\$285.00*</b>

#### RETEST ASSURED

<b>Both members and non members</b>	<b>\$125.00</b>
-------------------------------------	-----------------

\*See “HPNA, NHPCO, SWHPN Membership Benefit” on page 3.

A candidate may use reTEST assured to retake the exam in one of the next three testing windows if they do not initially pass the certification exam. Applicant must submit a paper application for reTEST Assured during the window the applicant is retesting. See RETEST ASSURED PROGRAM on page 9.

Application fees may be paid by credit card (MasterCard, VISA, AMEX or Discover), personal check, cashier's check or money order (payable to PSI Services Inc.) in U.S. dollars. DO NOT SUBMIT CASH. All fees must be submitted with the application to be RECEIVED by PSI by the application deadline.

Insufficient funds checks returned to PSI or declined credit card transactions will be subject to a \$15 penalty. Repayment of an insufficient funds check or declined credit card must be made with a cashier's or certified check or money order.

## RENEWAL OR REACTIVATION OF CERTIFICATION

### RENEWAL

The Advanced Palliative Hospice Social Worker-Certified certificant must submit the Advanced Palliative Hospice Social Worker-Certified Hospice and Palliative Accrual for Recertification (APHSW-C HPAR) application for renewal of certification as early as one year before the certification expiration date.

The APHSW-C HPAR requires renewal of certification by fulfilling practice hour requirements and by accumulating required points through various professional development activities.

### REACTIVATION

Reactivation of credentials: Candidates who miss the deadline for recertification may reactivate their expired credentials using the HPAR process. Reactivation by testing is not an option and is not retroactive. Reactivation will be available for three years after the expiration of credential. If your credential has been expired for more than three years, you must retake the exam.

See the HPAR packet for details regarding submission and fees for renewal and reactivation. For more information contact the National Office at 412-787-1057 or visit the website [advancingexpertcare.org/certification](http://advancingexpertcare.org/certification) for details.

## RENEWAL/REACTIVATION FEES

HPAR application fees may be reduced if renewal is completed 2 months prior to your expiration date.

### RENEWAL FEE (Early Bird)

(Renewal through APHSW-C HPAR only)

Non-member	\$380.00
HPNA , NHPCO, SWHPN members	\$240.00*

### RENEWAL FEE (Standard)

Non-Member	\$480.00
HPNA , NHPCO, SWHPN members	\$340.00*

### Reactivation FEE

Non-Member	\$530.00
HPNA , NHPCO, SWHPN members	\$390.00*

\*See "HPNA , NHPCO, SWHPN Membership Benefit" on page 3.

Application fees may be paid by credit card (MasterCard, VISA, AMEX or Discover), personal check, cashier's check or money order (payable to PSI Services Inc.) in U.S. dollars. DO NOT SUBMIT CASH. All fees must be submitted with the application to be RECEIVED by PSI by the application deadline.

Insufficient funds checks returned to PSI or declined credit card transactions will be subject to a \$15 penalty. Repayment of an insufficient funds check or declined credit card must be made with a cashier's or certified check or money order.

## RECEIPTS

Receipts for fee payments are available from PSI. Contact PSI at 833-256-1422 or email [AMPEXamservices@psionline.com](mailto:AMPEXamservices@psionline.com) to request a receipt. Candidates also may print a receipt from the <http://schedule.psiexams.com> website. After entering your login information (either create a new user account or log in using your username/password), from your 'My Home Page' select 'Correspondence' to print off a receipt.

## EXAMINATION CONTENT

To begin your preparation in an informed and organized manner, you should know what to expect from the actual examination in terms of the content. The content outline will give you a general impression of the examination and, with closer inspection, can give you specific study direction by revealing the relative importance given to each category on the examination.

The content of the examination is directly linked to a national job analysis completed in 2023 that identified the activities performed by hospice and palliative social workers. Only those activities that were judged by hospice and palliative social workers to be important to practice for a social worker with the required years of practice in hospice and palliative care are included on the examination content outline. Each question on the examination is linked to the examination content outline and task statements.

The HPCC social worker certification examination requires the ability to apply the social work process (i.e., assess, plan, intervene and evaluate) in helping patients and their families (defined as including all persons identified by the patient) toward the goal of maintaining optimal functioning and quality of life within the limits of the disease process. The examination includes questions distributed across four domains of practice as shown in the exam content outline that follows.

## DETAILED CONTENT OUTLINE INFORMATION

The detailed content outline provides information that **MAY** be tested. Each and every area of the detailed content outline listed is not tested on any one form of the examination. The questions that are used for the examination serve as a representative sample of critical knowledge and skills identified in the job analysis.

### **DRUG NAMES**

Generic drug names are used throughout the examination except in individual situations as determined by the examination development committee.

## DETAILED CONTENT OUTLINE

- 1. Assessment and Reevaluation 25**
  - A. Initial Comprehensive Assessment of Patient & Family/Caregiver
    1. Use clinical interviewing and behavioral observation
    2. Gather biopsychosocial history
    3. Administer and interpret results from validated assessment tools
    4. Assess for suicide risk
    5. Identify support systems and strengths of the patient and family/caregivers
    6. Identify barriers and social determinants of health that may impede delivery of care
    7. Identify physical, behavioural, emotional, cultural, and spiritual characteristics of patient/family/caregiver
    8. Assess developmental stage of patient/family/caregiver
    9. Integrate the diagnoses and treatment findings into psychosocial assessment
  - B. Ongoing Assessment and Reevaluation
    1. Evaluate the psychosocial response to treatment and prognosis
    2. Update plan of care in accordance with re-evaluation of patient/family/caregiver
    3. Participate in ongoing assessment for program eligibility
- 2. Planning and Intervention 50**
  - A. Planning
    1. Use therapeutic techniques to help patients and families understand options and participate in healthcare decision-making
    2. Use assessment data to plan, coordinate, and follow-up with patient care
    3. Assist patient/family/caregiver in setting measurable goals
    4. Promote and protect patient autonomy and self-determination in decision making
    5. Develop a patient-centered treatment plan of care appropriate for the diagnoses
    6. Ensure continuity of care across practice settings
    7. Facilitate patient/family meetings for goal setting and care planning
  - B. Education
    1. Ensure patient understanding of medical language
    2. Tailor information about treatment and side-effects to patients and families
    3. Facilitate processing and integration of information provided
    4. Educate patient/family/caregivers regarding disease trajectory
    5. Educate patient/family/caregivers regarding hospice benefits
    6. Educate patient/family/caregivers regarding advance healthcare directives
    7. Educate patient/family/caregivers about transfer, discharge, or other care transitions
    8. Educate patient/family/caregivers about options for end-of-life care (e.g., palliative sedation, medical aid in dying)
  - C. Coordination of Care/Case Management
    1. Refer to other community programs, specialty services, and volunteer services
    2. Order and arrange for transportation, meals, medical translation/interpretation, medical supplies and/or equipment, etc.
    3. Assist patient/family/caregiver to navigate insurance, entitlement, survivor benefits, and financial programs
    4. Prepare and assist patient/family/caregivers with transfer, discharge, or other care transitions
    5. Facilitate completion of advance healthcare directives
    6. Facilitate communication among patient/family/caregivers and team members
    7. Monitor progress and modify interventions and plans based on patient/family/caregiver needs
    8. Ensure plan of care is communicated clearly with patient/family/caregivers, staff, and supporting agencies
    9. Advocate for patient-centered care within interdisciplinary team
    10. Collaborate with the care team in patient/family meetings
    11. Refer to other community programs, specialty services, and volunteer services
  - D. Counseling and Support
    1. Facilitate interventions that promote dignity, quality of life, coping, meaning making, and legacy building
    2. Provide psychosocial interventions based on evidence-based practice and clinical assessments/diagnoses
    3. Provide crisis intervention
    4. Support patient's identity after experiencing serious illness
    5. Provide individual and family counseling
    6. Apply psychosocial theory to practice situations
    7. Address barriers and risk factors identified in assessment
- 3. Death, Grief, and Bereavement 28**
  - A. Death Preparation and Death
    1. Assess and support patient through preparatory grief
    2. Assess and support family/caregiver through anticipatory grief
    3. Provide patient/family/caregiver education about signs



and symptoms of impending death

- 4.. Provide patient/family/caregiver education about funeral pre-planning
5. Provide patient/family/caregiver education about options for care of the body after death
6. Support family and caregivers at time-of-death
7. Identify and respect cultural and spiritual customs/practices related to death (e.g., rituals, care of the body)
8. Identify patient and family's preferences for place of death

## B. Grief and Bereavement

1. Screen and/or refer families for bereavement counseling
2. Provide bereavement follow-up after death as determined by the social work assessment
3. Provide family/caregiver education about grief and bereavement
4. Assess and support family/caregiver through complicated grief
5. Assess and support family/caregiver through ambiguous loss or disenfranchised grief
6. Assess and support family/caregiver through somatic and/or emotional manifestations grief
7. Identify and respect cultural and spiritual customs/practices related to grief and bereavement

## 4. Professionalism

32

### A. Quality Improvement

1. Use quality improvement process to identify and participate in improvement opportunities
2. Communicate social work assessments, goals, and plan of intervention with team and other staff to improve patient quality of care

### B. Collaboration

1. Cultivate and maintain community partnerships and relationships with health, welfare, and social agencies
2. Collaborate with other professionals as part of interdisciplinary team
3. Provide debriefings for end-of-life and death issues to physicians, residents, interns, nurses, and other providers
4. Model respect for privacy

### C. Personal, Professional, and Ethical Competence

1. Develop self-awareness and acknowledge signs of compassion fatigue, burnout, vicarious trauma, and moral distress
2. Practice self-care
3. Maintain professional boundaries
4. Pursue ongoing professional development activities
5. Identify ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest
6. Participate in activities that promote team wellness
7. Develop cultural awareness and humility in self and others

8. Address biases that may affect justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion

### D. Knowledge of laws, regulations, policies, and standards at the organizational, local, state, or national level

1. Maintain knowledge of state laws and regulations related to end-of-life care
2. Ensure compliance with NASW standards and codes of ethics
3. Identify and report abuse and neglect as mandated by law
4. Adhere to requirements regarding confidentiality and release of information
5. Inform policy regarding social work best practices (e.g., caseload, patient volume)
6. Document ongoing patient/family/caregiver assessments, progress, and response to treatment

### E. Provide training and education in hospice and palliative care at the organizational, local, state, or national level

1. Train and supervise social work and allied profession learners
2. Educate team members about social work role
3. Advocate for the unique skills and expertise social workers provide in hospice and palliative care



## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following actions should be taken FIRST in a person/family-centered palliative care psychosocial assessment?
  - A. documenting the interview in an efficient manner
  - B. collecting pertinent family data
  - C. hearing their story of the illness
  - D. discussing advance directives
2. The social worker on an inpatient palliative care team determines that a patient who is a recent immigrant does not seem to understand the diagnosis or planned treatment. Which of the following should the social worker do FIRST?
  - A. Ask if a family member is available to interpret.
  - B. Suggest the patient meet with an audiologist.
  - C. Tell the healthcare team to readdress goals of care.
  - D. Assess for health literacy across multiple domains.
3. How many months of bereavement services are covered under the Medicare Hospice Benefits Conditions of Participation?
  - A. 6 months
  - B. 12 months
  - C. 14 months
  - D. 18 months
4. A woman whose mother was diagnosed with a life-limiting illness asks to meet with a social worker. She expresses concern about her three young children understanding the grandmother's illness. The social worker should FIRST
  - A. meet with the children and prepare them for visits with a sick person.
  - B. meet with the children and ask what they understand about the illness.
  - C. refer the mother to a hospice program for bereaved children.
  - D. ask about the children's ages, personalities, and coping styles.
5. Under the Medicare Hospice Benefit, which of the following BEST describes the bereavement services that are provided to the family of a deceased patient?
  - A. The services continue for 6 months after the death.
  - B. Only licensed social workers can provide bereavement services.
  - C. Group therapy is preferred to individual therapy.
  - D. Bereavement services are mandated by Medicare.
6. A social worker's team is trying to improve the process of admitting patients to palliative care. Which of the following should the social worker suggest the team use in developing a plan?
  - A. quality improvement process for the institution
  - B. evidence-based practice
  - C. evidence-informed practice
  - D. clinical advocacy
7. The PRIMARY goal of a palliative care psychosocial assessment is to
  - A. understand the patient's life experience to get them to sign a DNR.
  - B. understand the whole person and how they are coping with their illness.
  - C. complete the assessment form and document in the chart.
  - D. explore how or why the patient got their serious illness.
8. Cecily Saunders' theory of the subjective complexities of the experience of pain is called
  - A. whole pain.
  - B. complete pain.
  - C. total pain.
  - D. complex pain.
9. Patients may directly or indirectly express a desire to hasten their death, which may cause anxiety for team members. The social worker should FIRST
  - A. request a psychiatry consult to assess for suicidal ideation.
  - B. address team anxiety and then explore patient concerns.
  - C. assess the patient's hopes or family dynamics that may be affecting their request.
  - D. consult with the hospital ethics team.
10. A team is consulted on a critically ill 106-year-old patient in the ICU. The social worker is in a family meeting in which the patient's adult child and only surviving family member needs to address goals of care specifically, whether to place a feeding tube. The child expresses concern about how lonely it will be if the patient dies. The BEST approach for the social worker is to
  - A. explain that it is time for the parent to go because they lived a good life.
  - B. explain that the feeding tube will extend life.
  - C. offer the idea of getting a pet for comfort.
  - D. offer the opportunity to share memories that provide comfort.

### ANSWER KEY

Question	Answer	Content Area
1.	C	1A
2.	D	1A
3.	B	3B
4.	D	3A
5.	D	3B
6.	A	4A
7.	B	1A
8.	C	1A
9.	C	2B
10.	D	2B

## SUGGESTED REFERENCES

The HPCC has prepared a list of references that may be helpful in preparing for the Certification Examination for Hospice and Palliative Registered Social Workers. The reference lists contain textbooks that include information of significance to hospice and palliative social work practice. Inclusion of certain textbooks on the lists does not constitute an endorsement by the HPCC of specific professional literature which, if used, will guarantee candidates successful passing of the certification examination. Test candidates are not required to purchase or review these resources. HPCC does not endorse specific resources, and does not receive compensation from the sale or use of any resources.

To prepare for the examination, review the Detailed Content Outline and develop a study plan based on your individual knowledge strengths and weaknesses. It is good practice to use a current, general resource for overall review, and supplement with resources on specific topics to address your individual needs.

### Primary Reference List (Used for APHSW-C exam item validation)

- Altilio, T., Otis-Green, S., and Cagle, JG. (Eds.) (2022). *The Oxford Textbook of Palliative Social Work* (2nd Ed.) New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Marks, S. (Ed.). (2018). *Fast Facts and Concepts*. Wisconsin: Palliative Care Network of Wisconsin.
- National Consensus Project (2018). *Clinical Practice Guidelines* (4th Ed.) Virginia: National Coalition for Hospice & Palliative Care.
- Sumser, B., Leimena, M., and Altilio, T. (Eds.) (2019). *Palliative Care: A Guide for Health Social Workers*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

### Secondary Reference List

- National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (2021). Code of Ethics: English ([socialworkers.org](https://www.socialworkers.org)).
- Williams, AL. (2020). *Death and Dying Sourcebook* (4th Ed.). (2020). Detroit, MI: Omnigraphics.

# 2024 HPCC RETEST ASSURED EXAMINATION APPLICATION

To apply using this form, provide the requested information and mail it to be RECEIVED by PSI by the online application deadline. Applications received after the deadline or postmarked on the deadline will be returned unprocessed. **FAXED APPLICATIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.** Read the Candidate Handbook before completing this application. **Mail the completed application and payment made by credit card, personal check, cashier's check or money order payable to PSI Services Inc. to: HPCC Certification Examination, PSI, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061-7543.**

## 1. Personal Information (please print using blue or black ink)

Last Name:	<input type="text"/>		
First Name:	<input type="text"/>	Middle Initial:	<input type="text"/>
Former Name (if applicable):	<input type="text"/>		
Date of Birth (xx/xx/xxxx):	<input type="text"/>		
Applicant Email Address:	<input type="text"/>		

### Your HOME Information

Address Line 1:	<input type="text"/>		
Address Line 2:	<input type="text"/>		
City:	<input type="text"/>		
State/Province:	<input type="text"/>	Zip/Postal Code:	<input type="text"/>
Country:	<input type="text"/>		
Home Phone:	<input type="text"/>	Cell Phone:	<input type="text"/>

## 2. I am a:

- ☐ reTEST Assured Applicant can retest one time in one of the next three windows and submit a completed a paper application to PSI. Candidates can use the reTEST Assured program one time after non-passing score. Do not submit the reTEST Assured application until you are ready to test.
- ☐ I am including a Special Examination Accommodations Request. Please include completed form at end of handbook.

## 3. Examination Fees

	reTEST Assured All Applicants
Advanced Pallative Hospice Social Worker - Certified Examination	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125

### Payment Information: Please indicate your method of payment.

- ☐ Check or money order (personal or cashier's check payable to PSI Services Inc.)
- ☐ Credit card: If payment is made by credit card, please provide the following information.
- ☐ MasterCard    ☐ VISA    ☐ AMEX    ☐ Discover

Account Number	Expiration Date (MO/YR)	Security Code
<hr/>		
Name as it Appears on Card	Signature	



**Attestation and Signature (Check each box to attest to your agreement to the statements below.)**

- ☐ I certify that I have read all portions of the Candidate Handbook and application, and I agree to all terms of the HPCC processing agreement. I certify that the information I have submitted in this application and the documents I have enclosed are complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that, if the information I have submitted is found to be incomplete or inaccurate, my application may be rejected or my examination results may be delayed or voided, not released or invalidated by HPCC.

**Non-disclosure of Exam Content**

- ☐ Submission of this application indicates my agreement to keep the contents of the exam confidential and not disclose or discuss specific exam content with anyone except HPCC. Per HPCC policy, sharing of exam content is cause for revocation of certification. I certify that I have read that all examination questions are the copyrighted property of HPCC and it is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or display the examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject me to severe civil and criminal penalties.

**Ethics**

- ☐ I understand the importance of ethical standards and agree to act in a manner congruent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

**Attestation and Signature (Your signature in ink attests to your agreement to the above statements.)**

Name (Please Print)

Signature

Date

**Audits of HPCC Applications** – To ensure the integrity of eligibility requirements, HPCC will audit a percentage of randomly selected applications each year. Candidates whose applications are selected for audit will be notified and required to provide documentation of their academic transcript, professional license (if applicable) and verification of practice hours. The audit letter from PSI will indicate the date the documentation must be received. You will be notified by PSI when the audit is approved and you are eligible to schedule the exam. This process can take three weeks or longer.

Please check below to confirm you currently meet the eligibility requirements for the examination you are registering for:

**Social Worker Examination**

- ☐ Education

Applicants must hold either a Bachelor's degree in Social Work (BSW) or a Master's degree in Social Work (MSW) from an institution accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or equivalent accreditation for degrees earned outside of the United States.

- ☐ Experience

- For BSWs: Applicants must have at least three (3) years of post-degree supervised experience in hospice and palliative social work and have at least (3) years of post-degree experience in hospice and/or palliative social work within the previous five (5) years. Supervision must be provided by a MSW or licensed professional experienced in hospice and/or palliative care.
- For MSWs: Applicants must have at least two (2) years of post-degree experience in hospice and/or palliative social work within the previous five (5) years.
- One year of experience is defined as working 2,000 hours

- ☐ Ethics

Applicants must attest to practicing in accordance with the [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#).

- ☐ Licensure

If the applicant's state requires licensure to practice based upon the applicant's educational level and type of practice, licensure in good standing is required.

Within the last five (5) years:

Yes No

- ☐ ☐ Have you ever been sued by a patient?
- ☐ ☐ Have you ever been found to have committed negligence or malpractice in your professional work?
- ☐ ☐ Have you ever had a complaint filed against you before a governmental regulatory board or professional organization?
- ☐ ☐ Have you ever been subject to discipline, certificate or license revocation, or other sanction by a governmental regulatory board or professional organization?
- ☐ ☐ Have you ever been the subject of an investigation by law enforcement?
- ☐ ☐ Have you ever been convicted of, pled guilty to, or pled nolo contendere to a felony or misdemeanor, or are any such charges pending against you?

If applicable, I further affirm that no licensing authority has taken any disciplinary action in relation to my license to practice in the aforementioned or any other state, and that my license to practice has not been suspended or revoked by any state or jurisdiction.

**I understand that no refunds will be issued once payment is processed.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Advanced Palliative Hospice Social Worker Certified Examination

#### Verification Statement:

**To the best of my knowledge, the individual listed above has completed the minimum required experience for this examination. Please select the requirements met below:**

- ☐ **BSW plus three (3) years of post-degree supervised experience in hospice and/or palliative social work within the previous five (5) years. Supervision must be provided by a MSW or license professional experienced in hospice and/or palliative care.**
- ☐ **MSW plus two (2) years of post-degree experience in hospice and/or palliative social work within the previous five (5) years.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Verifier's Name (Last)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(First)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Verifier's Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Verifier's Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Facility Name

***You may not list yourself or a relative as your verifier.***

HPCC reserves the right to contact you for further information as deemed necessary.

This page is intentionally left blank.

# TRANSFER OF APPLICATION

**Directions:** Use this form to transfer your application to the next testing window (one-time transfer). Complete all requested information. This form and \$100 fee must be received by PSI no later than thirty (30) days following the last day of the original testing window. Note: Refer to Transfers section, page 4, for the details.

Last Name	First Name	MI
-----------	------------	----

Home Street Address or PO Box

City	State	Zip Code
------	-------	----------

Home Phone	Work Phone	Cell Phone
------------	------------	------------

Email Address (required)

Is your employer a member of the Employer Partner Program with HPNA?

☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ I don't know

Fee: \$100

**Payment Method:** Acceptable forms of payment include personal check, money order, cashier check or credit card made payable to PSI Services Inc. Please check appropriate box and complete credit card information if necessary:

☐ personal check      ☐ money order      ☐ cashier check

Payment Information: If payment is made by credit card, please provide the following information.

☐ Credit card:

☐ MasterCard      ☐ VISA      ☐ AMEX      ☐ Discover

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date (MO/YR) \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it Appears on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to pay above amount according to card issuer agreement.

Signature	Date
-----------	------

**Please mail form with payment to:**

HPCC Certification Examination

PSI

18000 W. 105<sup>th</sup> St.

Olathe, KS 66061-7543

Or fax to: 913-895-4650

This page is intentionally left blank.



# REQUEST FOR SPECIAL EXAMINATION ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, **please complete this form and provide the Documentation of Disability-Related Needs on the next page at least 45 days prior to your requested examination date.** The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and your need for accommodation in testing will be treated with strict confidentiality.

## Candidate Information

Candidate ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Requested Test Center or LRP: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Last, First, Middle Initial, Former Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Telephone Number Email Address

## Special Accommodations

I request special accommodations for the examination below:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Practice Registered Nurse | <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Registered Nurse                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing Assistant                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pediatric Registered Nurse         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Worker                       |

Please provide (check all that apply):

- ☐ Reader  
☐ Extended testing time (time and a half)  
☐ Reduced distraction environment  
☐ Please specify below if other special accommodations are needed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## PLEASE READ AND SIGN:

I give my permission for my diagnosing professional to discuss with PSI staff my records and history as they relate to the requested accommodation.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form with your examination application and fee to:**

**PSI, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061-7543**

**or submit your accommodations request online at**

**[https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket\\_form\\_id=360000150872](https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=360000150872)**.

**If you have questions, call Candidate Services at 800-367-1565 ext. 6750.**





## DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY-RELATED NEEDS

Please have this section completed by an appropriate professional who is qualified to diagnose the condition (education professional, physician, psychologist, psychiatrist) to ensure that our testing administrator, PSI, is able to provide the required accommodations.

### Professional Documentation

I have known \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ in my capacity as a  
Candidate Name
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 My Professional Title

The candidate discussed with me the nature of the test to be administered. It is my opinion that, because of this candidate's disability described below, he/she should be accommodated by providing the special arrangements listed on the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form.

Description of Disability: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ License # (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form with your examination application and fee to:**

**PSI, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061-7543**

**or submit this form with your online request at**

**[https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket\\_form\\_id=3600000150872](https://psi-cdexp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=3600000150872)**

**If you have questions, call Candidate Services at 800-367-1565 ext. 6750.**





