WellSky Credential
Candidate Handbook

WellSky Credential CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

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The WellSky Credentialing Board

The WellSky Credentialing Board oversees all areas of the WellSky Certification Program. The WLC appoints members to committees to form a knowledge base from industry experts relevant to the examination. Each exam committee is staffed with experts within the individual field of study and job roles to ensure a comprehensive, accurate and fair examination development.

Committees for each exam may include (but are not limited to)

Job Task Analysis Committee

Blueprint Committee

Item Writing Committee

Exam Management Committee

Psychometric Review Committee

Our mission is to enhance the competency of home health and hospice stakeholders. We do this by providing certification programs that respond to the unique skills needed by the home health and hospice professionals and support professionals to improve patient care by promoting excellence in the home health and hospice industry. We do this through national programs that are recognized as the hallmark of quality. The WellSky Credentialing Board is composed of industry representatives, and experts specific to the credentials managed by the WCB.

How to Apply for Certification

There are varied eligibility requirements to register for WellSky Certifications. It is highly recommended that candidates have two years' experience in the area they are seeking to certify in and are prepared to be an expert in the industry on the topic. Alongside the recommendations for work experience, we suggest the following:

Board Certified Home Health Coder (BCHH-C)

- Working knowledge of the ICD-10 Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting
- Understanding of medical terms and anatomy and physiology (A&P).
- Foundational understanding of home health as it relates to ICD-10 coding
- Understanding of OASIS Guidance related to ICD-10 coding
- Ability to synthesize coding guidance to accurately apply ICD-10 codes
- Good critical thinking and logic skills, attention to detail
- Ability to read and understand clinical documentation.

Certified OASIS Quality Specialist (COQS)

- Clinical Background – RN (Registered Nurse), PT (Physical Therapist), OT (Occupational Therapist), SLP (Speech Language Pathologist) (field clinicians eligible to complete OASIS)
  - Recommended experience as a home health clinician with at least one year of experience in home health completing the OASIS
  - Understanding of home health documentation requirements
- Non-Clinical- reviewers
  - Understanding of home health and experience with CMS (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services) guidance on the OASIS document
  - Ability to read and understand clinical documentation.
  - Good critical thinking and logic skills, attention to detail

Clinical Care Specialist- Home Health

- Clinical Background with at least two years of work experience in the home health industry
- Non-Clinical Home health leaders should have at least two years of administrative experience
- Working knowledge of the Conditions of Participation
- Working knowledge of payment models (PDGM)
- Working knowledge of Value Based Care (HHVBP)
- Understanding of OASIS Guidance
- A level of comfort with analytics and using analytics to drive care decisions
- An understanding of risk-informed care planning
- An understanding of integration of analytics in care delivery
- Working knowledge of quality assurance and performance improvement
- Good critical thinking and logic skills, attention to detail
- Ability to complete/ review for accurate and complete clinical documentation.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The WCB does not discriminate in administration of its programs based on race, sex, religion, ethnicity, ancestry, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or age. The WCB complies with the American with Disability Act (ADA) by providing reasonable testing accommodations to qualified individuals. The WCB does not discriminate among candidates on any basis that would violate applicable laws.

Special Accommodations

All special testing accommodations must be requested at least 7 days in advance of the desired exam date by submitting the request to learning@wellsky.com. Candidates must submit their written request with any related documentation supporting the request and associated rationale for the special accommodation.

Requested testing accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Use of a reader or other visual enhancements
- Additional exam time

Documentation of the request must be submitted within 30 days of the purchase date. It will be reviewed by a WCB representative, and the candidate will be informed of the request's status. If the accommodation request is denied, a refund * will be issued.

* If the accommodation request is received by the WCB, 60 days after the original purchase, a WellSky Learning Center store credit will be issued.

The WCB strives to meet candidates' requests for all reasonable testing accommodations.

All information related to accommodation requests will be kept strictly confidential and only accessed by authorized personnel.

Exam Details

Scheduling an Exam

Following purchase, all scheduling instructions are located on the WellSky Learning Center dashboard.

All exams are scheduled through an online proctoring vendor.

No Shows, Tardiness, Disconnection, and Rescheduling

- All scheduled exams will be considered a No Show and therefore expire if you do not arrive within 45 minutes after your scheduled exam time (all scheduled exams expire if you arrive later than 45 minutes after your scheduled exam time).
- No refunds will be issued for any reason after the exam expires.
- Test candidates may cancel and/or reschedule an exam up to 24 Hours before your schedule time.
- A refund may be considered and initiated upon cancellation, given it was 24 hours before your scheduled exam.
- If disconnected during the exam, the candidate may restart the exam at the point of the disconnection, on the same item and with the same amount of time remaining.
- No-show (failure to take the exam within 45 minutes after their scheduled time): will constitute an expiration.

Initial Exam Development Process

BCHH-C Exam

The initial development of the Board-Certified Home Health Coding Exam (BCHH-C) was the Job Practice Analysis. A group of subject matter experts worked together to create a comprehensive list of all the tasks, skills, and knowledge areas required to be a home health coder. This list was refined over several meetings. Then, this list was distributed as a survey to solicit feedback from over 1,000 home care coding professionals. 275 coders responded to contribute valuable insights into the type of content necessary to create a certifying exam for their profession.

Using the Job Practice Analysis and Survey, an Exam Blueprint was developed with help from a psychometric consultant. Then, trained subject matter experts developed test questions, or "items," according to the areas outlined on the Exam Blueprint.

COQS Exam

The initial development of the Certified OASIS Quality Specialist (COQS) exam included a committee of OASIS experts working in the industry who together created a list of all the tasks, skills and knowledge required to be an expert in the OASIS data set. This exam was developed, reviewed, psychometrically analyzed and beta tested by industry leading OASIS experts.

CCS-HH Exam

The initial development of the Clinical Care Specialist- Home Health (CCS-HH) began with a comprehensive Job Task Analysis to identify tasks, skills and knowledge needed to be successful in several advanced home health positions including, but not limited to: field-based case managers, preceptors, educators, clinical managers, quality managers, directors and administrators. Using the Job Task Analysis, an Exam Blueprint was developed with the help of certification experts and a psychometrician. Following the publishing of the blueprint, a committee of industry experts developed, reviewed and approved the examination items.

Exam Descriptions

BCHH-C Exam

The BCHH-C has a time limit of five hours.

The BCHH-C Exam contains approximately 100 randomized multiple choice exam items covering four content domains:

- Health Information Documentation - 5%
- Diagnosis Coding - 85%
- OASIS - 5%
- Regulatory Compliance and Reimbursement - 5%

<u>**COQS Exam**</u>

The COQS Exam has a time limit of 2.5 hours.

The COQS Exam contains 100 randomized multiple choice exam items covering 3 content domains:

- Medicare OASIS regulations 10%
- Application of OASIS data 5%
- OASIS Item and guidance application 85%

<u>**CCS-HH Exam**</u>

The CCS-HH exam has a time limit of 2 hours

The CCS-HH exam contains 90 randomized multiple choice exam items covering the domains below.

- Best Practice Case Management of Patients- 22%
- Federal and Regulatory Compliance- 20%
- Documentation- 13%
- Data-informed practices and analytics use- 12%
- Efficiency in home health operations/ care provision- 12%
- Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement- 8%
- Reimbursement guidelines – 8%
- OASIS foundations- 5%

Taking the Exam

Preparing for Exam Day

Candidates are expected to review provided examination documents prior to testing, to prepare for the exam day. Questions regarding exam details, and information should be sent to the Learning Center team prior to taking the exam.

What to Expect on Exam Day

Candidates are expected to be present at least fifteen minutes prior to their exam start time. Prior to starting the exam, the candidate will provide the required identification, have their exam materials inspected (if applicable), fill out necessary paperwork, and receive additional instructions.

Identification

Candidates will be required to present a valid, acceptable form of identification. Only legal names are acceptable, no pseudonyms, or nicknames will be accepted.

- All IDs must be valid government-issued originals (i.e., not a photocopy)
- IDs must include the test-taker's name and a recent, recognizable photo.
- The first and last name on the ID must match the first and last name used to register for the exam.

Acceptable forms of government-issued photo identification include:

- Driver's license or learner's permit including a valid expiration date.
- State issued identification.
- Military identification for members, spouses, or dependents.
- Passport or passport card.
- Green card or permanent resident visa.

Please note that a Social Security card is *not* considered an appropriate form of identification.

If you have a form of identification not on this list, please contact the WCB prior to your testing date to inquire whether it will be accepted:

Candidates without the required photo identification will not be allowed to test.

Test Security

Candidates will be required to verify their identity, accept all test security policies, and acknowledge potential consequences for violation of security policy.

Violations of security policy include, but are not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized materials or devices.
- Unauthorized communication with other candidates or with the proctor.
- Giving false identification information.
- Attempting to reproduce, remove, report, or distribute examination materials.
- Creating a disturbance (group testing).

Candidates may not communicate with others during the exam. Candidates may not request any information regarding exam content from the proctor. Failure to comply will result in the candidate being disqualified from taking the exam and may result in score cancelation for the candidate's entire test group.

Participants are permitted to receive assistance while setting up for an exam but must be alone for the entirety of the exam.

Allegations of candidate or proctor misconduct will be investigated. Any evidence of unacceptable behavior may result in score cancelation and other disciplinary measures as determined by the WellSky Credentialing Board.

To provide a consistent and fair experience for all test takers, protect the integrity of the examinations, and to ensure the validity of certification examination scores, candidates must adhere to the guidelines established by the WCB in the handling of examination materials. Candidates may not remove,

reproduce, report, or distribute exam materials in any part and by any means, including electronic, manual, or verbal. Failing to comply is a copyright violation and will result in disciplinary measures including score cancelation, revocation of other WCB credentials, and prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

What to Bring and What Not to Bring

Candidates for any WCB credentialing exam may utilize designated materials based on the certification exam:

- Candidates may write notes in materials.
- All loose papers and notes must be contained in a binder or folder prior to the start of the exam.
- Candidates are permitted to eat and drink as needed during the exam.
- Bathroom breaks are permitted.

The following items are *not* permitted to be utilized during an exam:

- Electronic resources are not allowed.
- Cell phones or other handheld electronic devices must be placed out of reach during the test.
- Headphones, and earbuds are not permitted during the exam (hearing aids are permitted).

BCHH-C:

Candidate's International Classification of Disease Coding Manual (ICD-10-CM) with normal tabulations and notations.

Printed CMS OASIS Guidance Manual, CMS OASIS Q&A's and study materials bound or contained in a binder.

COQS:

Printed CMS OASIS Guidance Manual, CMS OASIS Q&A's and study materials bound or contained in a binder.

CCS-HH:

No resources are allowed during the exam.

Exam Conduct

- All candidates are responsible for keeping all certification exam content confidential based on the signed attestation.

- Candidates will treat others with courtesy and respect during the exam process.
- Candidates will ask any questions related to exam administration procedure prior to the start of the exam.
- Candidates will carefully read and listen to instructions prior to the start of the exam.

Unforeseen Circumstances

Candidates may reschedule their exam for unforeseen personal circumstances by following scheduling instructions.

If any unforeseen circumstance (such as extreme weather conditions, or system outages), affects the testing conditions and a decision is made to postpone the scheduled exam by the vendor, all parties will be notified and a new test date re-established.

If candidates experience a test disruption due to power outage or other unforeseen circumstances, the WCB and the vendor will work with the candidate to schedule the completion of their exam. The candidate will be able to begin their exam at the place where it was disrupted and will be given an amount of time to be determined by the WCB to finish the exam.

After the Exam

Results

After taking the online proctored exam, candidates will receive their scores immediately upon completion.

The WCB reserves the right to withhold examination results for the duration of an investigation of candidate misconduct, or internal errors.

Understanding Your Exam Score

All WCB certifications are pass/fail dependent upon a psychometrically determined cut score.

Details surrounding your individual score will be presented following the completion of the exam. The scoring process is based on the weight of questions within each domain. Due to that weighting, individual domain scores do not evenly contribute to your final score. Your score is a representation of the percentage of all items answered correctly.

Domain Scores will inform you of your performance within each domain. This information may help you determine your areas of strength and weakness.

Re-testing

Candidates who do not pass the certification exam may purchase an additional attempt and retake the exam.

However, WellSky recommends each candidate take appropriate measures to evaluate their preparedness before retesting.

There is a fee for each additional attempt, with a maximum of two re-tests. Requests for special circumstances should be submitted to the WCB in writing.

Certified professional Directory

The WellSky Learning Center recognizes the need for current and prospective employers to verify certification status as well as the desire for certified coders and clinicians to identify specialty peers within their communities for networking and professional development opportunities.

The directory includes currently certified individuals by specialty (whether newly certified or by having successfully completed the renewal and/or recertification requirements to maintain their certification).

Click HERE for the WellSky Directory of Credential Holders.

Certificates

Passing candidates will receive a certificate designating successful completion of the certification exam. Each candidate's name will appear on their certificate exactly as written on their initial application.

Candidates wishing to replace a lost certificate, update the name displayed on their certificate, or inquire about the status of their new certificate should contact the WCB in writing.   There may be a fee for replacement or changed certificates.

Exam Complaints and Appeals

Examination Complaints

Candidates must report any complaints regarding the exam or the examination process to WCB in writing within 24 hours of test time.

Candidates may request an exam review; however specific performance recommendations will not be given.

Conduct Violations

Violations

A violation investigation ~~complaint could be brought against~~ may occur due to but not limited to the following:

- Violations of identity verification policy during testing.
- Violations of test security policy.
- Violations of Federal or State law governing the practice of the certified profession.
- Violations of established by WCB policies, rules, and requirements.
- Conviction of a felony or other crime of moral turpitude under federal or state law in a matter related to the professional practice.
- Gross negligence, willful misconduct, or other unethical conduct in the performance of services for which the individual has achieved WCB certification.
- Fraud or misrepresentation in an initial application or renewal application for WCB certification.

Complaints may be submitted regarding the conduct of individuals certified by the WCB programs in writing.

Complaints must include:

- Name of Certified professional
- Name of individual filing complaint
- Reason for complaint
- Date of conduct violation
- Names of any witnesses to conduct violation
- Any relevant supporting documentation

Disciplinary Action

Complaints will be reviewed by the WCB Disciplinary Committee, and all complaints judged to have merit will be investigated by the Committee. Members of the committee found to have a personal or familial relationship to the Certified professional in question will recuse themselves.

Candidates under investigation will be notified regarding the nature of the complaint and will have the opportunity to submit a written statement. Notification will include a copy of the disciplinary and appeals policy.

The Disciplinary Investigation Committee may contact the individual for additional information as needed.

The Disciplinary Committee will submit recommendations to the WCB and the Board will determine what, if any, disciplinary actions will be taken. Disciplinary actions may include:

- Implementation of a probationary period
- Asking Certified professional to re-test
- Revocation of credentials
- Legal action if applicable

Certified professionals will be notified in writing of the decision.

Other Certification Policies

Appeals

If candidates wish to appeal a disciplinary decision, they must submit a written request for appeal to the WCB within 30 days of receiving the disciplinary decision.

Candidates may only appeal on the grounds of material errors of fact or a procedural violation in their original disciplinary investigation.

The Appeals Committee with review the appeal and notify the candidate of their decision within 30 days.

Confidentiality

Candidate information, including scores, will remain confidential. The WCB will never distribute this specific information to a third party. Individual results will only be distributed to authorized parties for the purposes of: scoring, and investigations of misconduct or internal error. Exam performance and candidate demographic information will be used and distributed in aggregate form for purposes including but not limited to: required reporting, exam development and improvement, and research.

Use of the Credential

Passing candidates are authorized to use the related credential (for example: BCHH-C for those candidates passing the Board-Certified Home Health – Coding Exam) following their names as long as certification remains valid and in good standing.

Records Retention

Certified professional information including, but not limited to: applications, test scores, and continuing education documentation will retained throughout the duration of the individual's certification. If the candidate allows their certification to lapse, their records will be retained for a one year grace period after the date of lapse. Disciplinary and appeals records will be retained permanently.

Recertification

Currently, Certified professionals for both the BCHH-C and COQS recertify by re-testing on the current version of the certification exam in the third year of their certification cycle. The exam will incorporate

regulatory and practice updates in all applicable domain areas. The Certified professional will be expected to achieve a passing score required on the Recertification exam to be considered certified.

The WellSky Credentialing Board recognizes the importance of knowledge enhancement and professional development that can be achieved through ongoing continuing education. Although we do not require continuing education hours in the current recertification process, we anticipate updating the requirement in the near future.

Certification Lapse

Certified professionals failing to recertify by the end of their certification cycle will be removed from the Certified professional Registry and may no longer use their credential. Extensions or special considerations due to extenuating circumstances may be requested through the WCB.

Recertification Exam Fees

Recertification fee of $249 to sit for the recertification exam is required and can be purchased through the WellSky Store here:

[BCHH-C Recertification Exam Registration](#)

[COQS Recertification Exam Registration](#)

*Additional attempts are available for $99 each.