NPCB

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board

AGNP-C

Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Candidate Handbook

Table of Contents

Introduction **1**

About NPCB **1**

Accreditation 2

Membership Affiliation 2

Contact Us **2**

Website 2

Email 2

Phone 2

Eligibility Requirements **3**

Education 3

Licensure 3

Transcript Requirements 3

Alignment with National Standards 4

Application Process **4**

How to Apply 4

When to Apply 4

Required Documents 4

Attestation 5

Processing Time 5

Application Status and Missing Items 5

Exam Withdrawal 6

Candidate Responsibilities **6**

Maintaining Profile Information 6

Scheduling and Testing **6**

Eligibility to Schedule 6

Authorization to Test (ATT) 6

Scheduling the Exam 7

Reschedule or Canceling an Exam 7

Eligibility Reset 7

Special Accommodations **7**

Preparing for the Exam **8**

Exam Overview 8

Practice Exam 8

Reference List 8

Testing Policies **8**

Identification Requirements 9

Testing Conditions 9

Missed or Late Appointments 9

Examination Security 9

Exam Development and Content **9**
Examination Development Overview 9
Practice Analysis 9
Test Content 9
Examination Blueprint 10
Exam Scores **10**
Scoring Overview 10
Passing Score 10
Score Release 10
Retaking the Examination **10**
Verification of Certification **11**
Board Certification **11**
Certification Period 11
Maintenance of Certification 11
Expired Certification 11
Use of the NP-C® Credential 12
Certification Documents 12
Professional Conduct 12
NPCB Policies **12**
Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy 12
Non-Discrimination Policy 12
Examination Security Policy 13
Appeals Policy 13
Complaints and Disciplinary Policies 13
Records Retention Policy 14
Aggregate Score Report Policy 14
Policy Changes 14
Appendix A: AGNP Examination Blueprint *(Current)* **14**
Appendix B: AGNP Examination Blueprint *(Effective January 1, 2027)* **18**

Introduction

This Candidate Handbook provides essential information for individuals applying for the **Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGNP)** certification examination offered by the **American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB)**, doing business as **Nurse Practitioner Certification Board (NPCB).**

It outlines eligibility requirements, the application process, examination details, and applicable policies for initial certification.

All applications are submitted online through the NPCB website. Applications are processed in the order received. Processing time depends on receipt of a complete application, including all required documentation and applicable fees.

Information in this handbook is subject to change without notice. The most current information is available on the NPCB website.

About NPCB

The American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB), doing business as Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (NPCB), is a nonprofit organization that provides national certification programs for nurse practitioners.

NPCB develops and administers competency-based examinations that assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for entry into practice and continued professional competence. Certification is awarded to individuals who meet established eligibility requirements and successfully pass the certification examination.

NPCB provides public protection by ensuring that certified nurse practitioners meet nationally recognized standards for safe and effective practice.

Vision

Nurse Practitioners meet the highest standards of excellence and competence to support quality care and optimal health outcomes.

Mission

Provide excellence in testing and certification for nurse practitioners.

Values

NPCB operates as an ethical and professional organization, embodying the organizational values and principles of Quality, Integrity, Respect and Responsiveness.

Accreditation

NPCB certification programs are accredited by the **Accreditation Board of Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC)** and the **National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)**.

Accreditation ensures that NPCB certification programs meet nationally recognized standards for quality, validity, and reliability in certification.

All certification programs, application processes, examinations, and business operations are administered in a fair, consistent, and non-discriminatory manner.

Membership Affiliation

NPCB is an independent certification organization affiliated with professional membership organizations, including the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) and American Academy of Emergency Nurse Practitioners (AAENP).

Membership in these organizations is not required for certification.

Members of AANP may be eligible for a certification application fee discount. Members of AAENP may be eligible for a discount for the Emergency Nurse Practitioner (ENP) specialty certification. A valid membership number must be provided at the time of application to receive the discount.

Contact Us

The preferred method of communication is email. When contacting NPCB, include your full name as it appears on your online profile to ensure timely assistance.

Website	Email	Phone
www.aanpcert.org	certification@aanpcert.org	(512) 637-0500

Submitting Documents

All application materials should be submitted through your online profile unless otherwise specified.

Official Transcripts Only

Official transcripts must be sent directly from the issuing institution or an approved third-party service to: transcripts@aanpcert.org.

Transcripts sent from personal email accounts will not be accepted as official. This email address is for transcripts only.

Mailing Address (Official Transcripts Only)

2600 Via Fortuna, Suite 240

Austin, TX 78746

Eligibility Requirements

Candidates must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGNP) certification examination.

Education

Completion of a graduate, postgraduate, or doctoral Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioners program accredited by a nursing accrediting organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

- Completion of the APRN core coursework in three separate, graduate-level courses:
    - Advanced physical assessment, which includes assessment of human systems, advanced assessment techniques, concepts and approaches
    - Advanced pharmacology, which includes pharmacodynamics, pharmacokinetics and pharmacotherapeutics of all broad categories of agents, and
    - Advanced pathophysiology, including general principles that apply across lifespan
- A minimum of 500 faculty-supervised direct patient care clinical hours.
- Preparation in the nurse practitioner role and adult-gerontology primary care population focus.

Licensure

Current, active, professional nurse licensure in the United States or U.S. territory.

Transcript Requirements

A transcript is required to begin the application process.

- An unofficial transcript may be used to apply.
- A final official transcript showing degree awarded and dated conferred is required for certification release.

Alignment with National Standards

Eligibility requirements are aligned with the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation.

Application Process

Applications are submitted online at **www.aanpcert.org**.

How to Apply

1. Create or sign in to your online profile.
2. Select the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGNP) certification examination.
3. Complete the application and upload all required documents.
4. Submit payment to finalize the application.

Applications cannot be submitted without payment.

When to Apply

Candidates may begin the application process before completing their nurse practitioner program.

- MSN or Postgraduate Certificate applicants may apply up to 6 months prior to the program completion.
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) applicants may apply up to 12 months prior to the program completion.

Candidates may test after all required didactic coursework and clinical hours have been completed.

Program completion refers to the date all coursework and clinical requirements are finished. Degree conferral may occur at a later date.

Required Documents

To Apply

- Current, active professional nursing license with expiration date.
- Unofficial Transcript showing coursework to date.

All documents uploaded by the candidate are considered unofficial. The transcript must include the candidate's full name, the name of the university, and must specify the NP program role/population.

For Certification Release

A final official transcript showing degree awarded and date conferred is required before certification can be issued. Official transcripts must be sent directly from the issuing institution.

Post-Graduate Applicants

Candidates applying with a post-graduate certificate must submit:

- Final official transcript for the post-graduate program.
- Final official MSN transcript.

Additional Transcripts (if applicable)

If coursework, including APRN core courses, was completed at another institution and accepted by the nurse practitioner program, official transcripts from that institution may be required for review.

Attestation

By submitting an application, the candidate attests that all information provided is complete and accurate.

The candidate agrees to comply with NPCB policies and requirements, including maintaining current professional nursing licensure and adhering to all examination and certification policies.

NPCB reserves the right to verify all information submitted and to take appropriate action if information is found to be false or misleading.

Processing Time

Applications are processed in the order received once all required documentation and payment have been submitted.

Application Status and Missing Items

Candidates are responsible for monitoring their online profile for application status updates and notifications of missing items.

Notifications are posted to the candidate's online profile and may be sent by email. Candidates may receive periodic reminders if additional information is required to complete the application.

Additional information is available on the NPCB website.

Exam Withdrawal

All withdrawal requests must be submitted by email.

A partial refund is available only if the candidate has not scheduled an examination appointment and the 120-day testing window has not expired.

Candidates who have scheduled an examination, canceled an examination within 24 hours of the scheduled time, failed to appear for a scheduled examination, or whose testing window has expired are not eligible for a refund.

Candidate Responsibilities

Maintaining Profile Information

Candidates are responsible for maintaining accurate and current information in their NPCB online profile, including name, email address, and contact information.

The name in the online profile must match the identification presented at the testing center. Candidates who have a legal name change after scheduling an examination must contact NPCB prior to testing.

Scheduling and Testing

Eligibility to Schedule

Candidates become eligible to schedule an examination based on the program completion date entered on the application. This date must reflect when all required didactic coursework and clinical hours have been completed.

Entering an incorrect or estimated program completion date to obtain earlier testing eligibility is not permitted. NPCB reserves the right to verify program completion and may delay, revoke, or take appropriate action on an application if the information provided is inaccurate.

Authorization to Test (ATT)

Candidates will receive an Authorization to Test (ATT) notification after the program completion

date has been reached and eligibility has been confirmed.

If the program completion date falls on a non-business day, notification will be issued on the next business day. Candidates are responsible for checking all email folders, including spam or junk.

Scheduling the Exam

Certification examinations are administered through NPCB's testing vendor, Prometric.

Candidates must schedule their exam through their NPCB account using the instructions provided in the Authorization to Test (ATT) notification.

Candidates are granted a 120-day testing window to schedule and complete the examination.

Reschedule or Canceling an Exam

Candidates may reschedule or cancel their exam through their NPCB account. All changes are subject to Prometric policies, including applicable fees and deadlines.

Failure to appear for a scheduled examination or canceling an exam within 24 hours of the scheduled appointment may result in forfeiture of fees. Candidates who do not test as scheduled must follow the eligibility reset process.

Eligibility Reset

Candidates who do not test within the 120-day window or fail to appear for a scheduled examination must request an eligibility reset. A reset fee is required, and a new testing window will be issued upon approval.

Eligibility reset requests may only be submitted after the testing window has ended, unless the candidate fails to appear for a scheduled examination.

Candidates are permitted one eligibility reset per application.

Applications older than one year are no longer eligible for reset and require submission of a new application.

Special Accommodations

NPCB complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and provides reasonable accommodations for candidates with documented needs.

Accommodation requests may only be submitted after the candidate has received an Authorization to Test (ATT). Instructions for submitting an accommodation request will be included in the ATT notification.

Candidates must not schedule an examination until an accommodation request has been reviewed and approved by Prometric's Special Accommodations team. Candidates will be notified of the decision prior to scheduling.

Preparing for the Exam

Exam Overview

The certification examination is computer-based and consists of 150 multiple choice questions. Of the 150 questions, 135 are scored and 15 are pretest questions that are not scored.

Candidates are given 3 hours to take the examination.

The Consensus Model for APRN Regulation does not define specific age parameters for any of the population foci, therefore, growth and development are used as the basis of age-related changes for constructing the certification exams and for NP practice.

Practice Exam

NPCB offers optional practice examinations designed to familiarize candidates with the format and structure of questions on the certification exam.

Practice exams follow the same test blueprint as the certification examination but are not intended to assess readiness or predict performance.

Participation in a practice exam is optional and not required for certification. Additional information is available on the NPCB website.

Reference List

A current reference list used in the development of the certification examination is available on the NPCB website.

Testing Policies

Identification Requirements

Candidates must present valid identification that exactly matches the name on their NPCB account and exam registration. Failure to present matching identification may result in denial of admission to the testing center.

Testing Conditions

Candidates must comply with all testing center requirements. Failure to do so may result in denial of admission or termination of the examination.

Missed or Late Appointments

Candidates who arrive late, fail to appear for a scheduled examination, or do not meet testing requirements may be denied entry and may forfeit applicable fees.

Candidates who do not test as scheduled must follow the eligibility reset process.

Examination Security

All certification examinations are confidential and protected by law. Candidates are prohibited from copying, sharing, or disclosing any exam content before, during, or after the examination.

Any attempt to reproduce, distribute, or discuss exam content may result in invalidation of exam results and disciplinary action.

Exam Development and Content

Examination Development Overview

The certification examination is competency-based and developed using nationally recognized standards. Content is created and reviewed by nurse practitioner content contributors and psychometric professionals to ensure validity, reliability, and relevance to clinical practice.

Practice Analysis

Examination content is based on a practice analysis that identifies the knowledge and skills required for competent nurse practitioner practice. Practice analyses are conducted periodically to ensure the examination reflects current clinical practices.

Test Content

The examination assesses knowledge and clinical judgment across the nurse practitioner role and population focus. Content includes assessment, diagnosis, planning, and evaluation of patient care, as well as application of clinical knowledge across the lifespan.

Examination Blueprint

The examination blueprint outlines the distribution of questions across content areas and domains and is available in the Appendix.

Exam Scores

Scoring Overview

The certification examination is scored using a standardized process designed to assess the knowledge required for competent nurse practitioner practice.

Passing Score

Candidates must meet a passing score established using recognized standard-setting methodology. Scores are not reported as a percentage of correct answers.

Score Release

Candidates receive a preliminary pass/fail result immediately after completing the examination. Preliminary results are not official until all eligibility requirements, examination results, and required documentation have been reviewed by and released by NPCB.

Official exam results are released by NPCB after all requirements have been met. Candidates will receive an official score notification, and results will be available in their online profile.

Exam results will not be provided by phone.

Retaking the Examination

Candidates who do not pass the certification examination may reapply to take the exam after receiving their official score notification by email.

Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (AGNP) candidates may test up to two (2) times per calendar year (January 1 – December 31).

To retake the examination, candidates must submit a re-examination application and payment. Eligibility requirements in effect at the time of reapplication will apply.

Verification of Certification

NPCB provides primary source verification of certification status through its online verification system. Verification requests must be submitted electronically through the NPCB website.

There is no charge for verification of certification sent to State Boards of Nursing. A fee is required for verification requests submitted by employers or other third parties.

Certification status reflects information available in NPCB records at the time of the request.

Additional verification options and fees for employers or third parties are available through the online verification system.

Board Certification

NPCB awards board certification to individuals who meet established education and examination requirements and demonstrate the knowledge required for entry-level nurse practitioner practice within a defined population focus.

Certification Period

Certification is granted for a period of five (5) years. Individuals whose certification has expired are not authorized to use the NP-C credential or represent themselves as certified by NPCB.

Maintenance of Certification

Certificants are responsible for maintaining certification by meeting renewal requirements within the certification period. Detailed renewal requirements are outlined in the Recertification Handbook.

Expired Certification

Individuals who allow their certification to expire may not use the NP-C credential or represent themselves as certified. To regain certification, individuals must meet current eligibility requirements and follow the applicable process.

Use of the NP-C® Credential

The NP-C credential is a registered certification mark owned by NPCB and may be used by individuals with an active certification. Use of the credential must accurately reflect certification status. Misuse may result in disciplinary action.

Certification Documents

Following release of certification, certificants may access official certification documents through their NPCB online account dashboard, including the score letter, wall certificate, and wallet card.

NPCB also provides a printed wall certificate by mail following certification release.

Certification documents reflect the certification effective and expiration date.

Professional Conduct

Applicants, candidates, and certificants are expected to comply with NPCB policies, applicable laws and regulations, and examination security requirements, and to conduct professional activities in a competent and ethical manner.

NPCB Policies

Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy

Candidate information and examination results are considered confidential and are used for certification, verification, and related certification processes. NPCB maintains appropriate measures to protect confidential information and will not disclose information except as authorized by the candidate, required for certification-related operations, or required by law.

NPCB may share pass/fail examination status with an individual's educational program for program evaluation purposes unless the candidate elects to opt out during the application or profile process. Individual examination scores are not released unless authorized by the candidate or required by law.

Non-Discrimination Policy

NPCB does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

NPCB administers certification programs, application processes, examination processes, and business operations in a fair, impartial, and non-discriminatory manner in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Examination Security Policy

NPCB certification examinations and all examination content are confidential and protected by federal copyright law. Examination materials may not be copied, reproduced, disclosed, distributed, recorded, or discussed in any form before, during, or after the examination.

Candidates are responsible for complying with testing center procedures and examination security requirements during examination administration.

Violation of examination security policies may result in invalidation of examination results, disciplinary action, and/or legal action.

Appeals Policy

Eligibility Appeals

Applicants who are determined not to meet eligibility requirements may submit an appeal by email to NPCB. Eligibility appeal decisions are final.

Exam Rescore Requests

Candidates who do not pass the examination may request an examination rescore by submitting a request by email to NPCB. The rescore process verifies the accuracy of the score calculated and does not include review of examination content, testing conditions, or the passing standard. Applicable review fees apply.

Complaints and Disciplinary Policies

Applicants, candidates, and certificants are expected to comply with NPCB policies, examination security requirements, and applicable professional and legal standards.

Violations may result in disciplinary action and may include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating on an examination
- Providing false or misleading information
- Misrepresenting certification status
- Misuse of NPCB intellectual property or certification mark

Complaints regarding certification matters must be submitted in writing to NPCB. NPCB reserves the right to take appropriate action in response to policy violations or professional misconduct.

Records Retention Policy

Certification records and application materials submitted to NPCB become part of the official certification record and are maintained in accordance with NPCB records retention policies and applicable laws.

Applicants, candidates, and certificants are responsible for retaining copies of personal records submitted to NPCB. Submitted materials become the property of NPCB and may not be returned.

Aggregate Score Report Policy

NPCB may provide aggregate examination performance data to educational programs for program evaluation and quality improvement purposes.

Reports may include aggregate pass/fail and examination performance data and are only provided when sufficient candidate volume exists to protect candidate confidentiality.

Candidates may elect to opt out of individual pass/fail status reporting to their educational program during the application or profile process. Individual examination scores are not released to educational programs.

Policy Changes

NPCB reserves the right to revise policies, procedures, requirements, and fees at any time.

Appendix A: AGNP Examination Blueprint

Effective through December 31, 2026 (Current)

Test specifications are based on two domain parameters:

- **Domain I Practice –** Assess, Diagnose, Plan, Evaluate
- **Domain II Patient Age –** Developmental Parameters

A total of 135 scored items are on each examination. These exam items are distributed across Domain I and then further divided across Domain II. Percentage weights and number of test

questions in each domain are shown in the following Examination Blueprint. **Age Parameters are not defined for any population. NPCB uses growth and development for constructing certification exams.*

Domain I -Practice	# of scored items	% items
01 – Assess	37	28%
02 – Diagnose	34	25%
03 – Plan	34	25%
04 – Evaluate	30	22%
TOTAL	**135**	**100%**

Domain II -Practice Age*	# of scored items	% items
Adolescent	3	2%
Young Adult	18	13%
Adult	38	28%
Older Adult	54	40%
Elderly	22	17%
TOTAL	**135**	**100%**

DOMAIN 01 - ASSESS

- Obtain subjective patient information, such as relevant medical history, social history, family history, chief complaint, history of present illness, and review of systems
- Perform physical examination to obtain objective information based on patient age or developmental level, health history, and comorbidities
- Order, perform, and interpret screening and diagnostic tests

DOMAIN 02 - DIAGNOSE

- Synthesize and analyze subjective and objective information to formulate differential diagnoses
- Prioritize potential differential diagnoses, including recognizing urgent and emergent conditions

- Establish primary diagnoses

DOMAIN 03 - PLAN

- Establish an individualized, patient-centered plan of care that is consistent with best evidence
- Initiate referrals and consultations and collaborate with interprofessional teams
- Prescribe, order, and administer pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic therapies
- Provide education, counselling, and health promotion strategies

DOMAIN 04 - EVALUATE

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan of care
- Identify existing barriers
- Modify the plan of care as appropriate based on patient outcomes
- Coordinate and monitor ongoing plan of care

AGNP Knowledge Areas

Health Assessment

- Health history
- Signs and symptoms
- Mental health assessment
- Physical examination
- Functional assessment
- Diagnostic and therapeutic tests
- Cultural competence/sensitivity
- Therapeutic communication

Pathophysiology

- Anatomy
- Physiology
- Pathophysiology
- Comorbidities

Therapeutics

- Pharmacologic therapies
- Non-pharmacologic therapies
- Integrative therapies

Evidence-Informed Practice

- Clinical decision-making
- Crisis management
- Differential diagnosis
- Health promotion, harm reduction, and disease prevention
- Patient and family education and counselling
- Principles of epidemiology, population health, and social determinants of health
- Disaster preparedness / public health emergency response
- Procedures
- Transitions of care (transfer, end-of-life care, etc.)
- Care of diverse populations
- Healthcare finance, economics, and policy
- Interprofessional practice
- Legal and ethical issues

Appendix B: AGNP Examination Blueprint

Effective January 1, 2027 (New)

TASK STATEMENTS

1	Assess	37 (28%)
A	Obtain a comprehensive or focused patient-centered history (e.g., collect subjective information).	
B	Perform a comprehensive or focused physical examination based on patient age or developmental level, health history, and comorbidities (e.g., collect objective information).	
C	Order, perform, or interpret screening and diagnostic tests.	

2	Diagnose	37 (27%)
A	Synthesize and analyze subjective and objective information to formulate differential diagnoses.	
B	Prioritize potential differential diagnoses, including recognizing urgent and emergent conditions.	
C	Establish primary diagnoses.	

3	Plan	37 (27%)
A	Establish an individualized, patient-centered plan of care that is consistent with evidence-based practice.	
B	Prescribe, order, or administer pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic therapies.	
C	Provide education, counseling, and health promotion strategies.	

4	**Evaluate**	**24 (24%)**
A	Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan of care.	
B	Modify and monitor ongoing plan of care.	

Exam items address patients across the adult-gerontology lifespan, including adolescents, young adults, middle adults, and older adults. Age Parameters are not defined for any population. AANPCB uses growth and development for constructing the certification exams.

APPLIED KNOWLEDGE AREAS

1	**Health Assessment**
A	Health history
B	Review of symptoms
C	Mental health assessment
D	Physical examination
E	Functional assessment
F	Screening, diagnostic, and therapeutic tests
G	Cultural competence/sensitivity
H	Therapeutic communication

2	**Pathophysiology**
A	Anatomy
B	Physiology

2	*Pathophysiology (Continued)*
C	Pathophysiology
D	Multi-system disease

3	**Therapeutics**
A	Pharmacologic therapies
B	Non-pharmacologic therapies
C	Integrative therapies

4	**Evidence-informed Practice**
A	Clinical decision-making
B	Crisis management
C	Differential diagnosis
D	Health promotion, harm reduction, and disease prevention
E	Patient and family education and counselling
F	Principles of epidemiology, population health, and social determinants of health
G	Disaster preparedness / public health emergency response
H	Procedures
I	Transitions of care

4	*Evidence-informed Practice (Continued)*
K	Care of diverse populations
K	Healthcare finance, economics, and policy
L	Interprofessional practice
M	Legal and ethical issues

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