



American Academy of Nurse
Practitioners Certification Board



Family Nurse Practitioner **Renewal Handbook**

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Introduction

The Renewal Handbook provides essential information for nurse practitioners renewing Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) certification through the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB), doing business as Nurse Practitioners Certification Board.

It outlines renewal requirements, continuing education and practice hour requirements, renewal by examination, application procedures, and applicable policies.

All renewal 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.

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

www.aanpcert.org

Email

certification@aanpcert.org

Phone

(512) 637-0500

Mailing Address

2600 Via Fortuna, Suite 240
Austin, TX 78746

Submitting Documents

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



Candidate Responsibilities

Profile and Contact Information Update

Applicants and certificants are responsible for maintaining current contact information in their NPCB Online Profile, including name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number.

Changes to name and contact information may be updated at any time through the Online Profile.

NPCB uses contact information on file to communicate important updates regarding applications, certification status, renewal reminders, policy changes, and other certification-related matters.

Failure to maintain current contact information may result in missed notifications or delays in application processing.

Monitoring Application Status

Applicants are responsible for monitoring their Online Profile for application status updates, audit notifications, and requests for additional documentation.

Applications selected for audit or additional review may be contacted and provided instructions for uploading supporting documentation through their Online Profile.

Notification emails may be sent from certification@aanpcert.org. Applicants should monitor all email folders, including junk or spam folders.

Processing times depend on receipt of a complete application, all required information, and applicable fees.

Board Certification and Renewal

Certification Period

FNP certification is granted for a 5-year period. Family Nurse Practitioners must meet current renewal requirements before the certification expiration date to maintain certification and continue using the FNP-C credential.

Purpose of Renewal

Renewal of certification supports continued professional competence and ongoing development of the knowledge and skills required for nurse practitioner practice.

Renewal requirements are established to support public protection and align with current certification and accreditation standards.

Expired Certification

Individuals who allow their certification to expire may not use the NP-C credential or represent themselves as certified.

Nurse Practitioners seeking renewal after certification expiration must contact NPCB by email for additional instructions and eligibility review.

Retirement

NPCB offers a retired certification status for certificants who permanently retire from nurse practitioner practice.

Individuals interested in requesting retired status must contact NPCB by email for additional instructions and applicable fees.

Individuals with retired status may not use the FNP-C credential for practice or represent themselves as actively certified.

Use of FNP-C Credential

The FNP-C credential is awarded to individuals who meet NPCB certification requirements and maintain active certification status.

Use of the FNP-C credential is permitted only during an active certification period.

Scope and Standards of Practice

Certification does not authorize practice beyond the scope permitted by applicable laws, regulations, or licensing authorities.

Family Nurse Practitioners are responsible for practicing within their professional scope, maintaining continued competence, and complying with applicable state board of nursing requirements.

General Principles and Standards of Conduct

Applicants and certificants are expected to:

- Provide accurate and truthful information to NPCB
- Comply with NPCB policies and procedures
- Maintain current professional licensure
- Follow examination security and testing requirements
- Conduct professional practice in an ethical and competent manner

Renewal Requirements

Family Nurse Practitioners may renew certification by:

- Practice Hours and Continuing Education
- Examination

All renewal requirements must be completed within the current 5-year certification period.

Current, active, professional nurse licensure in the United States or U.S. territory is required throughout the renewal process and certification period.

Renewal by Practice Hours and Continuing Education

To renew certification through practice hours and continuing education, applicants must complete the following requirements during the current 5-year certification period:

- Minimum of 1,000 practice hours as a Family Nurse Practitioner
- Minimum of 100 advanced practice continuing education (CE) contact hours
 - Minimum of 25 advanced pharmacology contact hours included within the 100 CE hours
- Current, active, professional nurse licensure in the United States or U.S. territory

Preceptorship hours and academic coursework may be applied toward continuing education requirements as outlined in this handbook.

Renewal by Examination

Applicants may renew certification by taking and passing the Family Nurse Practitioner certification examination before certification expiration:



- Maintain current, active, professional nurse licensure in the United States or U.S. territory
- Apply and receive approval to test
- Schedule and pass the examination before certification expiration

Continuing education and practice hour requirements are not needed for renewal by examination.

Renewal by Practice and Continuing Education

Practice Hour Requirements

A minimum of 1,000 practice hours as a Family Nurse Practitioner is required for renewal through practice hours and continuing education.

Practice hours may be completed in one or more of the following roles:

- Direct patient care
- Administration
- Education
- Research

Accepted Practice Roles

Direct patient care

Direct patient care includes providing patient care services as a Family Nurse Practitioner. Telehealth practice, volunteer practice, and faculty clinical supervision of nurse practitioner students may also qualify.

Student clinical hours completed as part of an academic program do not qualify as nurse practitioner practice hours for renewal.

Administrative

Administrative practice includes leadership, management, or supervisory responsibilities related to advanced practice or healthcare operations.

Education

Education practice includes clinical supervision or didactic teaching in an NP program or providing education to advanced practice providers in other settings.

Research

Research activities must be related to patient outcomes, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, or practice innovation relevant to nurse practitioner practice.

CE Requirements

A minimum of 100 advanced practice continuing education (CE) contact hours completed during the current 5-year certification period is required for renewal.

Continuing education must be relevant to Family Nurse Practitioner practice and support continued professional development and clinical competence.

Pharmacology Requirements

A minimum of 25 advanced pharmacology contact hours must be included within 100 CE contact hours.

Pharmacology content should relate to pharmacotherapeutics, safe prescribing practices, or pharmacological management of acute and chronic conditions across the lifespan.

Advanced Life Coursework

The following Advanced Life Support list of coursework are accepted toward continuing education requirements:

- Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)
- Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)
- Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP)
- Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS)
- Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO)
- Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS)

Academic Coursework

Graduate or post-graduate academic coursework completed during the current certification period may be applied toward continuing education requirements.

- One academic semester credit equals 15 CE contact hours
- One academic quarter credit equals 10 CE contact hours

Activities Not Accepted

- Basic Life Support (BLS)
- Certification or credentials awarded without continuing education credit

Preceptorship Hours

Preceptorship hours completed during direct clinical supervision of advanced practice students may be applied toward non-pharmacology continuing education requirements.

Eligible preceptorship activities include clinical supervision of advanced practice students in accredited nurse practitioner, physician assistant, medical, pharmacy, or dental programs.

The following activities do not qualify as preceptorship hours:

- Employee orientation
- Residency or fellowship supervision
- Onboarding or training credentialed providers
- Supervision completed outside of direct clinical patient care

A maximum of 120 preceptorship hours may be applied toward a maximum of 25 non-pharmacology CE contact hours during the current certification period.

Use the following conversion table to calculate non-pharmacology CE credit for preceptorship hours completed.



Preceptorship Hours Conversion Table

<u>Preceptorship Hours</u>	<u>Non-Pharmacology CE</u>
1 – 5 hours	1 CE
6 – 10 hours	2 CE
11 – 15 hours	3 CE
16 – 20 hours	4 CE
21 –25 hours	5 CE
26 – 30 hours	6 CE
31 – 35 hours	7 CE
36 – 40 hours	8 CE
41 – 45 hours	9 CE
46 –50 hours	10 CE
51 – 55 hours	11 CE
56 – 60 hours	12 CE
61 – 65 hours	13 CE
66 – 70 hours	14 CE
71 – 75 hours	15 CE
76 –80 hours	16 CE
81 – 85 hours	17 CE
86 –90 hours	18 CE
91 – 95 hours	19 CE
96 – 100 hours	20 CE
101 – 105 hours	21 CE
106 – 110 hours	22 CE
111 – 115 hours	23 CE
116 – 119 hours	24 CE
120+ hours	25 CE

CE Accreditation

Continuing education submitted toward renewal must be relevant to Family Nurse Practitioner practice and completed during the current certification period.

When evaluating a continuing education activity, applicants should consider whether:

- The content is relevant to Family Nurse Practitioner practice
- The activity is intended for advanced practice providers or healthcare professionals
- Continuing education credit is awarded by an accredited provider

Applicants selected for audit may be required to provide supporting documentation for continuing education activities claimed toward renewal, including CE certificates, academic coursework documentation, or preceptorship verification letter from an affiliated academic institution or clinical program.

Renewal by Exam

Certificants may renew certification by applying for and passing the Family Nurse Practitioner certification examination before certification expiration.

Practice hours and continuing education are not required for renewal by examination.

A renewal by examination application must be submitted and approved before scheduling the examination.

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

Additional Information regarding:

- Examination eligibility
- Examination content
- Scheduling and testing
- Special accommodations
- Preparing for the exam
- Examination scores

- Retake policies
- Examination security

may be found in the FNP Candidate Handbook and on the NPCB website.

Application Process

Applications are submitted online at www.aanpcert.org.

Online Profile

Certificants must log in to their NPCB Online Profile to begin the renewal application process.

Applicants are responsible for maintaining accurate profile and contact information, including name, email address, and mailing address.

If access to an existing account is unavailable due to an email change or forgotten login information, applicants may create a new account or use the account recovery options available on the NPCB website. NPCB staff will assist with linking accounts to existing certification records when necessary.

All required profile fields must be completed before accessing the renewal application.

Renew by Practice and Continuing Education

Applicants must complete all required sections of the renewal application and submit applicable fees.

As part of the application process, applicants must agree to the Attestation Statement confirming that the information submitted is accurate and that renewal requirements were completed during the current certification period.

Supporting documentation should not be submitted unless requested by NPCB.

Application Review

Renewal applications are reviewed for completeness and compliance with renewal requirements.

If additional information or documentation is required, NPCB will notify the applicant through their Online Profile and provide instructions by email.

Applicants may monitor application status through their NPCB Online Profile.

Renew by Exam

Certificants renewing by examination must submit a Renewal by Examination application and receive approval before scheduling an examination appointment.

Once eligibility is approved, NPCB will transmit eligibility information to Prometric, the testing vendor.

Additional information regarding examination eligibility, examination content, scheduling and testing, special accommodations, preparing for the examination, examination scores, withdrawing from the examination, retake policies, and examination security is available in the Family Nurse Practitioner Initial Candidate Handbook and on the NPCB website.

Renewal Audit

NPCB conducts audits of renewal applications to verify compliance with certification renewal requirements.

Applicants should retain documentation supporting continuing education activities, academic coursework, preceptorship activities, and practice hours for at least two years following the renewal deadline.

Applicants selected for audit will receive instructions for submitting supporting documentation.

Additional Information

Additional renewal information and frequently asked questions are available on the NPCB website.

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 request.

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

verification system.

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

Applicants who do not meet renewal requirements may contact NPCB by email at certification@aanpcert.org for additional information regarding the appeals process.

Supporting documentation and applicable fees, if required, must be submitted before an appeal can be reviewed.

Certificants who are unable to meet renewal requirements through practice hours and continuing education should contact NPCB for additional guidance regarding available renewal options.

Complaints and Disciplinary Policy

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

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

- Providing false or misleading information
- Misrepresenting certification status
- Violating examination security policies
- Misuse of NPCB intellectual property
- Regulatory, criminal, or disciplinary actions related to professional practice

NPCB reserves the right to review complaints and take appropriate action in accordance with established disciplinary procedures.

Complaints must be submitted in writing by email.

Records Retention

Certification records and supporting documentation submitted to NPCB are considered confidential and maintained in accordance with applicable records retention and privacy requirements.

Documents submitted for renewal become the property of NPCB and will not be returned.

Applicants and certificants should retain copies of all submitted materials for their personal records.

NPCB maintains certification records electronically and implements record retention and disposal practices in accordance with applicable business and legal requirements.



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