Hospice Medical Director Certification Board

2027 Continuing Certification Program Candidate Handbook

HMDCB CONTACT INFORMATION

Hospice Medical Director Certification Board
1061 American Ln
Suite 310
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4973
info@hmdcb.org
847-375-6740

Updated August 2026 (Fees, policies, and procedures are subject to change without notice.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HOSPICE MEDICAL DIRECTOR CERTIFICATION BOARD……..…...3

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY……..……..3

ABOUT THE CONTINUING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM 3

CHANGES TO CONTACT INFORMATION 3

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 4

RENEWAL PROCESS & DUES DATES 4

IMPLICATIONS FOR NOT COMPLETING THE CCP 4-5

MEDICAL LICENSE 5

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT 5

CONTINUING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FEES 6

AUDIT 6

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS 6

COPYRIGHTED ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS 6

CONFIDENTIALITY 6

REVOCATION & MISCONDUCT POLICY 6-7

WITHDRAWALS & REFUNDS 7

PARTIAL OR MISSED ASSESSMENT 7

REINSTATEMENT POLICY 7

DESIGNATION & CERTIFICATE 8

ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT 8

CONTENT BLUEPRINT 8

This handbook contains the information you will need to participate in the annual Continuing Certification Program (CCP) as well as policies and procedures governing the program. Candidates are **STRONGLY** encouraged to review this information prior to participating in the CCP.

Information in this handbook may be time-sensitive and subject to change. Please visit www.HMDCB.org/ccp to view the most recent candidate handbook.

HOSPICE MEDICAL DIRECTOR CERTIFICATION BOARD

HMDCB serves as an independent, not-for-profit corporation to administer a certification program for hospice medical directors and other hospice physicians. HMDCB is led by individuals with years of experience in the field of hospice and palliative medicine who are dedicated to improving the quality and consistency of care provided by local hospices. The HMDC® credential promotes the professional competence, established standards and ethical practice of hospice physicians. The role of hospice physicians in the United States requires a special subset of knowledge, with complicated regulatory, administrative and ethical aspects in addition to expertise in clinical care. HMDCB is governed by an eight-member board of directors representing diverse backgrounds, practice settings and training pathways in the field of hospice and palliative medicine and includes one non-physician member representing the public. HMDCB's mission is to relieve suffering and improve quality of life by promoting the excellence and professional competency of hospice physicians. HMDCB receives no public funds and has no licensing function. Its business plan is to be self-funded by the fees paid by candidates. Any income that exceeds expenses will be invested in the continued improvement and advancement of the certification and continuing certification process.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

HMDCB does not discriminate against candidates for examination, certification, or recertification on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, marital status or any other protected classification under state or federal law.

ABOUT THE CONTINUING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Continuing Certification Program (CCP) is intended to encourage and reward HMDCB-certified hospice physicians for ongoing learning and development of knowledge in the practice of hospice medicine amidst ever-changing regulatory and administrative conditions. Providing flexibility and relevance for hospice physicians is key to the CCP.

It is the intent of HMDCB's Board of Directors that the CCP serve the following purposes:

- Assess competency, skill, and judgement.
- Maintain the knowledge of the certificant during the certification period.
- Offer a program that provides opportunities for continuous learning.
- Accurately reflect what occurs in practice.

The CCP longitudinal assessment approach stimulates and promotes ongoing learning, while also assessing that certificants still meet the minimum knowledge base to hold the HMDC credential.

CHANGES TO CONTACT INFORMATION

It is the candidate's responsibility to update their online profile or notify HMDCB's national office of any changes in contact information. HMDCB will correspond with candidates through email. Candidates should ensure that HMDCB has a current email address on file. Email and address information may be updated in the Certification Center. Communication of information regarding the recertification process depend on HMDCB having current information.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates eligible to renew must complete the renewal requirements via the "Certification Center" (the online learning management system), by **November 1, 2027**. No renewal will be considered without complete information and full payment. To access the "Certification Center" and complete the renewal requirements, visit www.hmdcb.org/ccp.

It is the sole responsibility of HMDCB candidates eligible for renewal to be aware of and comply with registration deadlines. In fairness to all candidates, the HMDCB Board of Directors will strictly adhere to its published registration deadlines. Candidates are encouraged to renew early to avoid problems. Issues arising from one's inability to log on to the Certification Center (e.g., forgotten username or password, technical difficulties, operator error) must be resolved, and all components of the longitudinal assessment, including payment, completed prior to published deadlines. The HMDCB staff will make every effort to promptly assist with all issues as they arise; however, candidates are responsible for contacting HMDCB for assistance well in advance of deadlines. If a physician applies for recertification and is deemed ineligible, the recertification fee will be retained by HMDCB. Below are the renewal requirements:

1. Continuously hold a current, active, and unrestricted license to practice medicine in the United States or its territories or any province of Canada.
2. Successfully complete 30 longitudinal assessment items and meet the identified competency level. *This is not a high-stakes examination. This assessment will be open book, untimed, and questions can be re-answered until the identified competency level is achieved.*
3. Complete the Code of Professional Conduct attestation.
4. Pay the annual renewal fee.

All requirements must be met each year to continue active certification status.

RENEWAL PROCESS & DUE DATES

The 2027 Continuing Certification Program application and longitudinal assessment will be available **January 11 – November 1, 2027.** To renew, candidates will need to complete the below steps:

- Log into the Certification Center (or create a new account).
- Register for and pay for the annual longitudinal assessment.
- Complete the code of conduct.
- Complete the longitudinal assessment and receive a score of 80% or higher.
- If a score of 80% is not achieved on the first attempt, reset the questions answered incorrectly and re-answer them until the pass score is achieved. ***Note***: questions are untimed, open book, and can be re-answered an unlimited number of times. Candidates will need to re-answer the questions they answered incorrectly until the pass score is achieved.
- Once the pass score is achieved, a candidate will have successfully recertified and can download an updated certificate directly in the Certification Center.

DUE DATE: The above steps must be completed by **November 1, 2027**. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a loss of the HMDC credential.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NOT COMPLETING THE CONTINUING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

It is the certified hospice physician's responsibility to renew their certification in a timely manner prior to expiration. If the Continuing Certification process is not completed by the time of the certificate expiration, HMDCB will no longer recognize the individual as an HMDC and will advise the individual that it would be unethical and a misrepresentation to publicly display the

certification in any way or to use the certifying initials after his or her name. Candidates found ineligible to renew their certification will need to apply for and meet current eligibility requirements as an Initial Applicant.

MEDICAL LICENSE

It is the responsibility of the candidate to inform HMDCB immediately upon any changes to their license status following submission of their renewal fee or completing the annual renewal requirements.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Certification by the HMDCB carries an obligation for ethical behavior and professionalism in all conduct. The ethical behavior and professionalism expected of all candidates includes:

- I attest that all information contained in my application is true and accurate. I understand that any false, inaccurate or misrepresented facts included herein will constitute grounds for the disqualification and/or revocation of the awarded certification.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to provide any requested documentation in connection with this application. I further understand that my application could be audited to verify my eligibility.
- I have read and understood the information provided in the Continuing Certification Candidate Handbook. I also agree to comply with all policies and procedures as set forth by HMDCB.
- I understand that I can be disqualified from taking or continuing to take the annual longitudinal assessment or from receiving assessment results if HMDCB determines I have inappropriately shared the copyrighted questions by publicly posting them for non-certificants to see/review. If I am recertified, I understand that HMDCB receives and responds to requests for information about the certification status of those holding its credential. I understand and agree that HMDCB may also use anonymous and aggregate application and assessment data for statistical and research purposes.
- I agree to indemnify, release and hold harmless HMDCB, its Board of Directors, committees, and representatives, from any complaint, claim, or damage arising out of any action or omission by any of them in connection with this application, the application process any assessment given by HMDCB, any score relating thereto, the failure to issue me any certificate, or any demand for forfeiture or redelivery of such certificate.
- CODE OF CONDUCT: Certification by the Hospice Medical Director Certification Board (HMDCB) carries an obligation for ethical behavior and professionalism in all conduct. Ethical behavior and professionalism expected of all candidates includes: 1) submitting accurate, valid information; 2) respecting the confidentiality of assessment questions and content, including not allowing any person or organization to have access to, to look at, or to be informed about any materials for the assessment.; 3) maintaining an unrestricted medical license in the United States, its territories, or Canada; 4) accurately representing certification status at all times; and 5) maintaining ethical and professional behavior in all conduct. I acknowledge and accept that I have read and agree to abide by HMDCB's Code of Professional Conduct as written above.

CONTINUING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FEES

Recertification examination fees are set by the HMDCB Board of Directors. The 2027 Continuing Certification Program fee is $199 annually. The fee covers development and administration of the longitudinal assessment, including technology fees, application review, and administrative costs. The fee includes access to the annual longitudinal assessment, HMDCB webinars, Coffee Chats, and an online discussion board. Payment of the fee may be made by credit card at the time of registration. Until full payment has been received, candidates cannot complete the longitudinal assessment. A candidate's credit card receipt serves to document payment.

AUDIT

To maintain the integrity of the program and to verify the accuracy of the information submitted by candidates for continuing certification, HMDCB will audit a percentage of randomly selected applications each year. Other applications may be audited at the discretion of HMDCB. Candidates whose applications are selected for audit will be notified and required to provide the documentation requested. During the audit process, candidates are encouraged to proceed with completing the longitudinal assessment. By submitting your application, candidates duly authorize the HMDCB to conduct such independent verification. Candidates who fail the audit, fail to respond satisfactorily to the receipt of an audit notification, or refuse to submit to an audit will forfeit all fees and assessment results and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the revocation and misconduct policy.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

HMDCB complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act in providing reasonable accommodations to eligible candidates. Reasonable accommodations provide candidates with disabilities a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill in the essential functions being measured by the assessment. Reasonable accommodations are approved or denied based upon the individual's specific request, disability, documentation submitted and appropriateness of the request. Reasonable accommodations do not include steps that fundamentally alter the purpose or nature of the assessment, influence the assessment results, or result in an undue burden. To request an accommodation, contact HMDCB ***prior*** to starting the longitudinal assessment at info@hmdcb.org. All requests must be submitted at least ***90 days*** before the Continuing Certification Program deadline.

COPYRIGHTED ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

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

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information about candidates and their assessment results are considered confidential. Studies and reports concerning candidates will contain no information that identifies any candidate, unless authorized by that individual.

REVOCATION AND MISCONDUCT POLICY

In the interest of protecting the integrity of the Hospice Medical Director Certification Board (HMDCB) and its certification credential, the HMDCB may investigate any allegation of one or more of the following and may take whatever action is appropriate, including but not limited to denial of eligibility to renew certification or revocation of certification:

a. Revocation, suspension, probation, voluntary surrender, or other limitation imposed on the individual's medical license by the jurisdiction's licensing authority.
b. Misrepresentation of HMDCB certification or other unauthorized use of the HMDC® credential. Unauthorized use is defined as the use of the HMDC credential by a non-certified individual in a way that would lead a third party to believe that the individual is certified.
c. Failure to respond satisfactorily to an audit or falsification of an application for the examination or for renewal of certification or any other material information requested by the HMDCB.
d. Failure to fulfill the requirements for renewal of certification before the specified deadline.
e. The giving or receiving of assistance on the longitudinal assessment questions, as evidenced by observation and/or statistical analysis of an applicant's answers, or any irregular behavior during the annual longitudinal assessment process or violation of procedures.
f. The unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of any HMDCB examination-related materials before, during, or after an examination, including longitudinal assessment questions.
g. Any violation of the Code of Professional Conduct by a certificant.

Reconsideration and appeal procedures are available to individuals who wish to contest an adverse decision on the part of the HMDCB as outlined in the Reconsideration and Appeals Policy. To review the full policy, visit www.HMDCB.org.

WITHDRAWALS AND REFUNDS

Since access to HMDCB's longitudinal assessment is granted immediately after an individual pays the Continuing Certification Program (CCP) fee, all CCP fees are nonrefundable.

If an individual would like to no longer hold the credential, they can withdraw by not meeting the annual Continuing Certification Program requirements. Failure to meet the annual requirements will result in loss of the credential at the end of the one-year cycle period.

PARTIAL OR MISSED ASSESSMENT

If an individual does not complete the annual longitudinal assessment questions, does not achieve the identified pass score, or does not answer any of the annual questions, they will lose their credential at the end of the annual cycle and will be required to cease use of the credential immediately. To remain certified, a certificant will be required to meet the requirements outlined in the *Reinstatement* policy.

REINSTATEMENT POLICY

If an individual does not meet the annual Continuing Certification Program (CCP) requirements, they can be reinstated once every 4-years by paying a $200 reinstatement fee. An individual must complete the reinstatement process within 8 months of losing their credential. Once an individual is reinstated, they will be required to participate in the annual longitudinal assessment, including paying the annual fee, to maintain their credential.

Procedure

On an annual basis, staff will run a report of all individuals who did not satisfy the annual Continuing Certification Program requirements. Those who did not will be informed that their HMDC status is no longer active and they need to cease use of the credential immediately. They will be notified about the reinstatement process and provided a reinstatement deadline. If the individual continues use of the credential after being notified, the Executive Director will contact legal counsel to advise on next steps.

DESIGNATION AND CERTIFICATE

Each candidate who successfully completes the annual longitudinal assessment may use "HMDC" after their name and can download a certificate directly in the Certification Center. After meeting the current year's annual requirements, the cerificant's credential will be extended through December 31 of the following year. To maintain their credential, participation in the annual Continuing Certification Program is required.

ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT

A group of HMDCB-certified physicians write all assessment questions and include supporting literature. Each question is reviewed by another certified physician, then further reviewed by a committee of certified physicians and a psychometrician.

HMDCB's CONTENT BLUEPRINT

HMDCB's content blueprint is the form used to develop the longitudinal assessment. The content blueprint can be found at:
https://hmdcb.org/about-the-exam/default/content-blueprint.html