Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM)

Recertification Guide
Maintenance of Certification
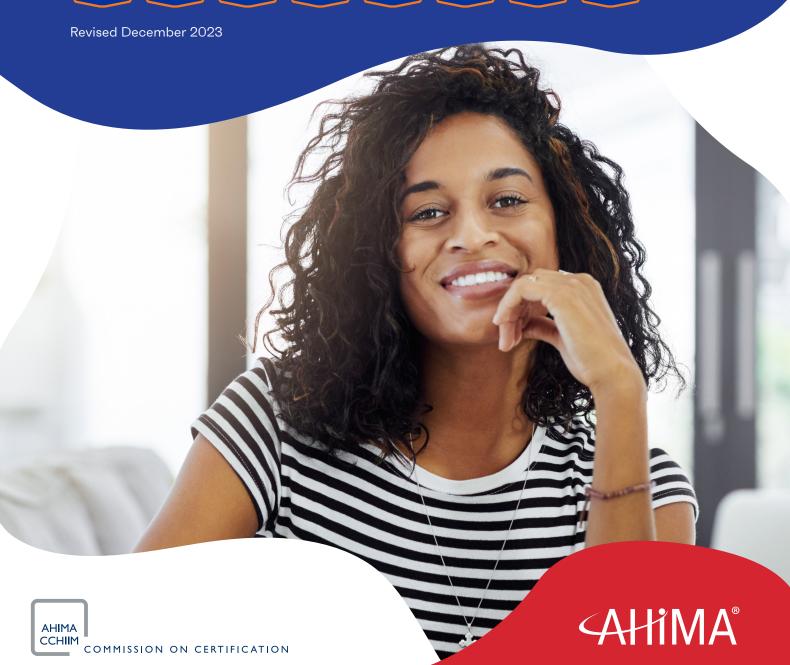
RHIA® RHIT® CCA® CCS® CCS-P® CHDA® CHPS® CDIP®

Revised December 2023

AHIMA®

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Congratulations on earning your AHIMA professional credential! You've marked yourself as a leader and HIIM expert, and shown your support for the healthcare profession. But there's more to certification than that. Through it you've increased your chances for success in your chosen career.

AHIMA Certification—Your Best Professional Value

Receiving an AHIMA Credential Means:

- Demonstrating commitment to your professional area of expertise, a dedication to quality healthcare, and a need to establish high standards in managing confidential health information.

- Offering ongoing value to your profession and employer through continuation of your personal education, allowing you to maintain your expertise and contribute at the highest levels.

- Having an edge over noncertified professionals. AHIMA certification signifies experience and knowledge, and validates professional competence for employers, consumers, and yourself.

What Are the Biggest Benefits of Recertification (Maintenance of an AHIMA Certification)?

- Return on investment from the high value of being AHIMA certified.

- Professional prestige helps you remain competitive in a tough job market.

- Demonstration of your ongoing commitment and competence in HIIM.

- Networking opportunities with similarly credentialed peers who share your level of expertise.

To Recertify You Must:

1. Obtain the required number of CEUs during your two (2) year recertification cycle.

2. Participate in accepted and qualified CEU activities.

3. Report your CEUs in the CEU center by the due date.

4. Pay your recertification fee in your CEU center by the due date.

5. Document, retain and file your CEU activity for auditing and more in the CEU Center of your MyAHIMA account.

Recertification Process

CEU Requirements for Single Credential

If You Have a(n)…	You Must Earn…
Certified Coding Associate (CCA)	20 CEUs
Certified Coding Specialist (CCS)	20 CEUs
Certified Coding Specialist—Physician-based (CCS-P)	20 CEUs
Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)	30 CEUs
Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT)	20 CEUs
Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA)	30 CEUs
Certified in Healthcare Privacy and Security (CHPS)	30 CEUs
Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner (CDIP)	30 CEUs

CEU Requirements for Multiple Credentials

If you have more than one AHIMA credential, you must earn ten (10) additional CEUs per credential during your two-year recertification cycle, up to a total of fifty (50) CEUs. These CEUs may not be duplicated or used for more than one credential. Below are examples.

Credential	Required Number of CEUs
CCS and CCS-P	(20 + 10) 30
CHPS with RHIT	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CHDA	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CDIP	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CCS and CCS-P	(30 + 10 + 10) 50
CHDA with CCS, CHPS, and CDIP	(30 + 10 + 10) 50
RHIA with CCS, CCS-P, CHDA, and CDIP	(30 + 10 + 10) 50

Credential Hierarchy:

- Upon completion of the requirements, a baccalaureate or higher level HIM credential (RHIA) supersedes an associate based HIM credential (RHIT). Once granted, recertification requirements for the RHIT are no longer required.

- The CCS credential supersedes the CCA credential. Upon passing the CCS examination, the CCA is replaced with the CCS. Recertification requirements are no longer required for the CCA credential.

Recertification Cycle

Health informatics and information management (HIIM) is a constantly evolving field, and professionals in this field require the most current knowledge to move the profession forward. Best practices, technology, privacy and security, coding updates, healthcare laws and regulations change frequently. For these reasons, a recertification cycle of two years has been established, during which time certificants will be required to attain a specific number of CEUs to update existing knowledge and skills as well as acquire new knowledge and skills relating to advances in the HIIM field and changing job responsibilities.

Initial Recertification Cycle: The initial recertification cycle for newly credentialed certificants (first credential obtained) begins the day the exam is passed and ends two years later. A credential is awarded when a candidate:

- Passes the certification examination, OR

- Passes the certification examination AND has successfully completed the academic requirements of an HIIM program accredited by CAHIIM (for RHIA and RHIT testing candidates). The academic prerequisite is confirmed when an official transcript is submitted and approved.

- **RHIT or RHIA Early Testing Candidates:** The initial recertification cycle for RHIT or RHIA early testers will begin once official transcripts have been approved. Early test takers will have up to one (1) year after the exam is passed to submit their official transcript. If transcripts are not submitted within that period, the exam will have to be re-taken and passed.

Example

Exam taken:	Exam pass date:	Transcript approval date:	Recertification cycle is:
RHIA	11/18/2021	10/5/2021	11/18/2021–11/17/2023

Ongoing: The recertification cycle for subsequently obtained credential(s) begins with the start of the next cycle date for the first or initial credential. For the remainder of the current cycle the second credential will be placed into a sync cycle which waives it from recertification requirements.

Sync Cycle: Waives the recertification requirements for that credential for the first recertification cycle.

Example

If existing credential is:	Current recertification cycle is:	After obtaining:	The recertification cycle for both credentials is:
RHIA	11/18/2021 – 11/17/2023	*CCS on 12/8/2022	11/18/2021–11/17/2023

In this example, CEUs earned between December 9, 2020, and November 17, 2022, can be reported for the first credential (RHIA) only.

Qualifying Continuing Education Activities and Calculation of CEUs

Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

CEUs must be earned within your recertification cycle and must be relevant to the HIIM field as presented in the HIIM domains to be eligible for CEU credit.

Eighty (80) percent of required recertification CEUs must be earned within the HIIM domains (see Appendix A). The remaining twenty (20) percent can include participation in CEU activities on topics not included in the domains but relevant to the credential holder's professional position.

Calculation of CEUs

Calculation of CEUs is based upon clock hours. 0 .5 CEUs are given for every thirty (30) minutes of attendance or participation that is fixed in length.

A session lasting 30 to 44 minutes will be accepted for 0 .5 CEU credits; a session lasting less than 30 minutes will not be accepted for CEU credit. CEU credit should be calculated according to the following method:

Session Length	CEU Credits
0–29 minutes (0–0.49 hrs)	0 CEUs
30–44 minutes (0.50–0.74 hrs)	0.5 CEUs
45–89 minutes (0.75–1.49 hrs)	1 CEU
90–104 minutes (1.50–1.74 hrs)	1.5 CEUs
105–149 minutes (1.75–2.49 hrs)	2 CEUs
150–164 minutes (2.50–2.74 hrs)	2.5 CEUs
165–209 minutes (2.75–3.49 hrs)	3 CEUs

Qualifying CEU Activities

* Activities in blue (bold) font denote enhancement recognition. AHIMA certified professionals who submit three (3) or more enhancement activities during their recertification cycle will receive special recognition upon recertifying for their next cycle.

1. Participation in educational programs (in person and virtual) on topics relevant to HIIM.

    a. Educational portions of AHIMA meetings (national convention, state, local, or regional meetings)— *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*

    b. Educational portions of programs from component organizations (CAs) - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*

    c. Educational portions of programs sponsored by AHIMA Approved Continuing Education Provider Program (ACEP) partners or other third-party providers on topics that maintain, update, or enlarge knowledge and skills relevant to the HIIM profession - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation*

2. Participation in educational programs of study that address HIIM-relevant subject areas.

    a. Accredited post-secondary courses attended for credit, including traditional on-campus, online, or distance education administered through a college or university. This includes courses taken in pursuit of HIIM profession-relevant associate, baccalaureate, master, or doctorate degrees. All coursework and final exams must be completed by the recertification cycle end date - *fifteen (15) CEUs for each semester/ trimester credit; ten (10) CEUs for each quarter credit.* ***CEUs earned in this manner cannot be reported for a future credential.***
    Example: **If the credential holder has an active RHIT credential and is seeking to take the RHIA exam, CEUs earned from completed courses can only be applied to the RHIT credential.**

b. Audit of academic course or relevant non-credit adult education course, including attendance at a college or university course with permission and following regulations, without completing necessary requirements for full credit. Course must be completed by the recertification cycle end date - *six (6) CEUs for each semester/trimester credit; four (4) CEUs for each quarter credit.* **CEUs earned in this manner cannot be reported for a future credential.**
Example: If the credential holder has an active RHIT credential and is seeking to take the RHIA exam, CEUs earned from completed courses can only be applied to the RHIT credential.

c. In-person, online or distance education programs relevant to HIIM core content, which are not a college or university credit course, or a prior-approved AHIMA program, will be subject to review through a validation process. All program coursework and exams must be completed by the recertification cycle end date *(CEUs to be determined on an individual basis by CCHIIM)*.

d. Obtaining an advanced degree (in a relevant field)-(15) CEUs per semester. Generally, "attaining a degree above your current status." The evidence required would be a copy of your diploma to qualify as an enhancement activity. Otherwise, individuals can report up to 15 CEUs per semester to meet the maintenance requirements.

When an advanced degree meets the following criteria, it will count as an enhancement activity (in addition to receiving the aforementioned amount of CEUs):

- For those with a high school diploma or certificate, this means obtaining an associate degree [from a CAHIIM-accredited program] or higher.

- For those with an associate degree, this means a baccalaureate [from a CAHIIM-accredited program] or higher;

- For those with a baccalaureate, this means a master's or higher;

- For those with a master's who obtain a 2nd master's degree or higher in a relevant field.

3. Obtaining additional AHIMA certifications and/or microcredentials.

Activity	CEU Credits
Obtaining an additional AHIMA certification (upon passing the certification exam)	6 CEUs
Obtaining an AHIMA Microcredential (upon passing the microcredential assessment)	3 CEUs

4. Publication and presentation of material relevant to HIIM.

a. Publication is the development of an original work, relevant to the HIIM profession, reproduced by written or electronic means for general dissemination to the public (unless required as part of work responsibilities - see section VI .6. a. and VI.6.b).

- **Author of a textbook, workbook, or manual - thirty (30) CEUs**
- **Editor of a textbook, workbook, or manual - twenty (20) CEUs**
- **Author of an article in a research, professional, or trade journal - fifteen (15) CEUs**
- **Author of a chapter in a textbook, workbook, or manual** - *ten (10) CEUs*
- Editor of a professional or trade journal - *five (5) CEUs*
- **AHIMA course writing (for example, Virtual Lab, Courseshare, EHR Hybrid Environment six- lesson course)** - *five (5) CEUs*
- Author of an educational article in a local or state newsletter - *two (2) CEUs*
- Reviewer of book manuscripts prior to publications - *one (1) CEU per chapter*

b. Presentation is the development of an original work delivered to an audience.

- Speaker at an educational program - *one (1) CEU for each 15 minutes of podium time*
- Panel participant at an educational program - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of podium time*

5. Independent study activities relevant to the HIIM profession.

   a. Study groups devoted to topics relevant to HIIM. CEUs will not be granted if the study groups are used to prepare for the exam or certification held - *one (1) CEU for each 60 minutes of participation.*

   b. Enrollment in one or more AHIMA independent study program modules *(CEUs pre- determined by CCHIIM).*

   c. Enrollment in independent study programs relevant to AHIMA core education content areas from organizations other than AHIMA *(AHIMA prior approval required).*

   d. AHIMA post-test offerings accompanying a *Journal of AHIMA article or book published by AHIMA (CEUs pre-determined by CCHIIM).*

   e. **Advanced research (for example, reading and analyzing material beyond one's knowledge of the subject matter) in a HIIM topic area to support activities associated with an expert panel, workgroup, or task force of AHIMA or its affiliate - one (1) CEU per each year.**

6. Qualifying volunteer activities.

   a. **Exam Development activities - Subject Matter Experts that volunteer to participate in AHIMA's certification exam development activities (i.e. Item Writers/Reviewers, Exam Specifications Panelists, Standard Setting Panelists, or CCHIIM Exam Development Committee) - one (1) CEU for every hour of participation.**

      To volunteer in AHIMA's exam development activities please send an email to SME@AHIMA.org

   b. **Serving one of the following AHIMA volunteer roles** -ten (10) CEUs per 2-year CEU cycle:
      President/Chair, President/Chair-elect, Secretary, or Treasurer
      Director, AHIMA Board of Directors
      CCHIIM Commissioner (both elected and appointed)
      CEE Council Member
      Speaker, Speaker-elect, AHIMA House of Delegates
      Serving as a Component Association board member (elected or appointed)

   c. Serving as an AHIMA volunteer or component association committee volunteer other than those roles specified above, or, in an industry-relevant, non-AHIMA professional or trade association- five (5) CEUs per 2-year CEU cycle.

   d. NOTE: Volunteer hours are not eligible for rollover CEUs (see below). Volunteer recognition applies only for current or past roles that took place during the reporting period. New or additional volunteering activities would be reported in either the first or second year of an individual's two-year recertification cycle, if the volunteering activity occurred during the two-year recertification cycle.

7. Other activities

   a. Substantive oversight and involvement of Professional Practice Experience (PPE) on behalf of a Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) accredited program - *five (5) CEUs per student supervised with a maximum of ten (10) CEUs for student supervision allowed in each recertification cycle.*

      Substantive oversight and involvement include, but is not limited to:

      - Creating a training plan and schedule of activities
      - Developing and assigning project(s)

- Providing direction and guidance

- Conducting review of progress and providing feedback

- Conducting student evaluation at the conclusion of the project(s)

- Other considerations: CEUs for other individuals assigned as mentors - o*ne (1) CEU for every 60 minutes of direct contact with a maximum of five (5) CEUs (five hours of contact) per student, and a maximum of ten (10) CEUs allowed in each recertification cycle.*

b. Participation in an AHIMA volunteer leader conference, breakout session or work group where learning and skill development occurs (CEUs pre-determined by AHIMA).

c. Visiting AHIMA exhibits at a national or state meeting – up to two (2) CEUs per meeting.

d. Facilitator for an AHIMA Access Community - five (5) CEUs for one year service, per community, each year of the two-year cycle.

Non-Qualifying Continuing Education Activities

Examples of activities that do not qualify for CEUs are as follows. The list is illustrative and not intended to be all-inclusive.

- Responsibilities that fall within the normal parameters of an individual's job description, including, but not limited to, the following: (1) staff meetings; (2) grand rounds; (3) preparation for and/or participation in accreditation and licensure surveys; (4) preparation of procedure, policy, or administrative manuals; (5) conducting tours; (6) participation in career day activities; (7) development of employee and staff training materials.

- Exam preparation activities. CEUs can only be reported for certification maintenance or enhancement on dates obtained after the individual's initial certification date. Exam preparation for additional certifications cannot be applied to currently held certifications for the purpose of maintenance or enhancement requirements.

- Published materials and/or presentations developed as a direct part of an individual's employment.

- Serving in a volunteer leadership role for any other professional organization.

- Instructing or teaching a class.

- Summarizing articles, audiotapes, or video.

CEU Rollover

Certificants are allowed to carry over up to 20% of additional CEUs earned (beyond the minimum amount required) within the last three months of a certified professional's current recertification period. For CEUs to qualify for this rollover opportunity, they must come from AHIMA, a Component Association (CA), or an AHIMA Approved Continuing Education Provider Program (ACEP) provider, and be aligned with an HIIM domain. The certified professional must have met ALL CEU requirements and paid ALL corresponding fees before their current recertification period concludes.

CEUs REQUIRED	MAX ROLLOVER CEUs ALLOWED
20	4
30	6
40	8
50	10

Example #1: If I am required to report 30 CEUs and only report 30 CEUs, then there are none available to rollover.

Example #2: If I am required to report 30 CEUs and I report 40 CEUs, then I can rollover 20% of the excess 10 CEUs (2), as long as they come from AHIMA, a CA, or an ACEP provider (and are aligned with an HIIM domain.)

Example #3: If I am required to report 30 CEUs and I report 50 CEUs, then I can rollover 20% of the excess 20 CEUs (4), as long as they come from AHIMA, a CA, or an ACEP provider (and are aligned with an HIIM domain.)

Entering your CEUs

To recertify, you must enter the required number of CEUs, submit documentation (such as certificates of completion), and pay the recertification fee online in your MyAHIMA account. On the last day of your recertification cycle, your account will automatically be reviewed by the system to determine if you have met all applicable recertification requirements. If you have met the recertification requirements, your cycle will roll over to the subsequent two-year recertification cycle.

If you do not meet your recertification requirements by the due date, your cycle will roll into the Inactive Period. To avoid penalty (including extension fees and a permanently revoked credential), recertification requirements must be met no later than the last day of your recertification cycle end date.

Please log into your MyAHIMA account - CEU Center to track your recertification progress.

Previously submitted learning experiences for accumulating additional CEUs is not allowed under any circumstances. All AHIMA certified professionals are subject to recertification audit (see audit information on page 17)– individuals who submit previous learning experiences for accumulating additional CEUs will have

these experiences removed from their CEU center."

Recertification Fees

The cost of your recertification fees will be based on your membership status. All recertification fees are due on a biennial basis and are non-refundable. Recertification fees will be invoiced in the AHIMA CEU Center and payments must be made by or before your recertification cycle end date. All CEUs must be entered into your CEU center before paying the recertification fee.

Single Credential (Non-Members)

$218.00

Each Additional Credential (Non-Members

$50.00

Extension Fee (Per Credential Non-Members)

$50.00

Single credential (all members excluding emeritus members)

$100.00

Each Additional Credential

$20.00

Extension Fee (Per Credential)

$50.00

Single Credential (Emeritus Members ONLY)

$50.00

Each Additional Credential

$10.00

Extension Fee (Per Credential)

$50.00

Reinstatement Fee (Per Credential) (Members & Non-Members)

$368.00

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*If you paid fee(s) that are owed to AHIMA (e.g., recertification, exam registration, recertification extension) and the funds are revoked, disputed, or insufficient funds occurs, your credential will be placed in a Revoked status until the fee(s) and any additional fees are paid in full.

Certification Status

Status Types

a. Active: Active status is based on meeting the recertification requirements within the two (2) year recertification cycle.

b. Inactive: Inactive status is based on failure to complete the recertification requirements within the two (2) year recertification cycle. Inactive status lasts for a six (6) month. Inactive Period, after which the status moves to temporarily revoked if recertification requirements are not met (see details of temporarily revoked status below). The credential(s) may not be used during the period of inactive status.

   To re-activate an Inactive credential to Active status, credential holders must meet the original recertification requirements and pay the recertification extension fee for each credential.

c. Temporarily Revoked: (Reinstatement period): Temporarily revoked status is based on failure to complete the recertification requirements within the six (6) inactive period. Temporarily revoked status lasts for six (6) months following the last day of the inactive period. The credential(s) may not be used during the period.

d. During the Reinstatement Period:

   • The credential(s) is considered revoked.
   • A reinstatement fee will be added to the credential holder's account once the CEU requirement has been met.

- CEUs earned during the first twelve (12) months of the recertification cycle will become non-applicable to reinstate the credential.
- CEUs earned during the second twelve (12) months of the two-year recertification cycle until the reinstatement end date can be reported.
- If recertification requirements are not met by the Reinstatement period end date, the credential will be permanently revoked.

e. **Permanently Revoked:**

  i. Based on failure to complete recertification requirements within the two (2) year recertification cycle, the six (6) month inactive period, and the six (6) month reinstatement period. There are six months between each status period. Individuals may not use the applicable credential(s) once they have been permanently revoked.

  ii. Based on CCHIIM appeals committee or AHIMA Professional Ethics Committee decision regarding misconduct.

f. **Retired:** Based on the voluntary request of a fully retired individual who is no longer working in the field of HIIM. The individual may retire and begin work in the field unrelated to HIIM *so long as he or she no longer holds any HIIM responsibilities.* The individual's credential(s) must be active and in good standing at the time of the request. Retired requests must be done in writing. Requests can be submitted to Certification@ahima.org. To re-activate a retired credential, the credential must be retired for a period of at least 24 months and must take the current exam for each credential being un-retired. Re-activation requests can be submitted to Certification@ahima.org. An individual falling under the retired status must use the term "retired" following his or her credential to differentiate from the Active Status credential, e.g., John Smith, RHIA (Retired).

a. **Voluntarily Relinquished:** Based on a voluntary request of an individual who no longer wishes to maintain his or her credential and voluntarily withdraws from the recertification process. The individual's credential(s) must be active and in good standing at the time of the request. Voluntarily relinquished requests must be submitted in writing. Requests can be submitted to Certification@ahima.org . Once a credential has been voluntarily relinquished it cannot be placed back into an active status. The candidate must take and pass the certification again to re-activate the credential.

Individuals must remove the applicable credential(s) from all signatures, business cards, and may not use any certificates or badging to indicate that they are certified once the credential(s) have been voluntarily relinquished.

Reinstating A Credential

Reinstatement of Credentials

Individuals whose credential(s) has been temporarily revoked can complete the reinstatement process by following the instructions below.

Option A: Reactivate by CE

a. Obtain and submit the required number of CEUs into your CEU center. During the Reinstatement Period the credential(s) is considered revoked. *CEUs earned from the half-way point of the two-year recertification cycle until the reinstatement end date can be reported. CEUs earned and reported during the first twelve (12) of the recertification cycle will become non-applicable to reinstate the credential.* If recertification requirements are not met by the Reinstatement period end date, the credential will be permanently revoked.

b. Pay the appropriate reinstatement fee of $368.00 (per credential) by logging into your CEU Center.

Option B: Reactivate by Exam

a. Retake the applicable certification exam and pass

Note: CEUs accumulated after the end of the previous recertification cycle can be reported for reactivated. However, these CEUs cannot be used or reported for the next recertification cycle. Certificants who report or use CEUs accumulated after the recertification cycle end date to reactivate their credential(s) will automatically be placed on the audit list for next cycle.

The individual will be placed in the subsequent two-year recertification cycle following reinstatement within 72 business hours.

*Based on your credential hierarchy order, your primary credential must be reinstated first or in an active status before any other credential(s) will be reinstated. *

Recertification Appeal Process

Individuals may appeal the permanent revocation of their credential due to failure to meet CCHIIM recertification requirements. Appeals to CCHIIM by a credentialed professional are strictly limited to disputes regarding permanent revocation.

- Appeal applications can only be submitted once every ten (10) years per credential.
- Appeal applications can only be submitted within ninety (90) days once your credential is permanently placed in a revoked status.
- The appeal application is $100.00 and is non-refundable.
- The fee must be paid in full before your appeal application will be filed and reviewed by the CCHIIM Review Panel (CRP)

The appeal application and additional information can be found on the AHIMA website https://ahima.org/certification-careers/apply/policies-appeals/

Additional Recertification Processes

Audits

In quarter 1 of each year an audit is conducted. A stratified random sample of certificants from each certification is selected, and individuals selected for audits are notified in writing. Certificants will be required to submit verifiable documentation (for example, certificates of attendance or similar materials) for each activity listed in the CEU Center by the due date specified on the audit notification material. Individuals who fail to respond to the audit request by the specified due date or are found to have submitted false information on their recertification form may be denied recertification.

Verifiable documentation can include certificates of attendance, program materials, or other information provided by the program sponsor that verify program date, length, and subject matter (that is, agenda, program outline, handout, meeting summary, or meeting transcript).

It is therefore strongly recommended that CEU participants retain a hard or electronic copy of all records in their files for at least two (2) years following the recertification cycle end date.

Audit Timeline

1. Late January: The audit list is randomly generated.

2. Early February: Emails are sent out to all individuals selected for audit.

3. Late March: All submissions due.

Waiver of Recertification Requirements

The Commission may for a good cause waive or reduce the CEU requirement. Certificants may request a temporary waiver by submitting a written request to the Commission for consideration.

   a. For those on a two-year CALENDAR cycle, requests for temporary waivers must be received on or after July 1st and on or before December 1st of your recertification cycle end date. For example, if your recertification cycle is January 1st, 2023- December 31st, 2024, then your temporary waiver request must be received on or after July 1st, 2024, and on or before December 1st, 2024

   b. For those on a two-year ANNIVERSARY cycle, requests for temporary waivers must be received during the last 6 months of your recertification cycle end date. For example, if your recertification cycle is April 1st, 2023- March 31st, 2024, then your temporary waiver request must be received on or after October 1st, 2024, and on or before March 1st, 2024

All requests can take up to 30 days to be reviewed. You will be notified via email with a decision.

Sunset Credentials

Sunset Credentials

Recertification (maintenance of an AHIMA certification) is a process that ensures CCHIIM-certified AHIMA no longer offers examination of these sunset credentials; therefore, the recertification maintenance is no longer required.

Credential	Year Sunset
Physician Coding Specialist (PCS)	2001
Certified in Healthcare Security (CHS)	2007
Certified in Healthcare Privacy (CHP)	2008
Certified in Healthcare Technology Specialist (CHTS)	2018
Certified Professional in Health Informatics (CPHI)	2018

Frequently Asked Questions

What is recertification?

Recertification (maintenance of an AHIMA certification) is a process that ensures CCHIIM-certified professionals demonstrate ongoing competence in the domain areas in which they are certified, through either maintenance or enhancement activities.

What is certification maintenance?

Certification maintenance is the completion of educational programs that provide updated training and skills to allow continued competence in HIIM by earning the required number of CEUs in any of the HIIM domains.

What is certification enhancement?

Certification enhancement is the completion of educational programs that result in expanded knowledge and skills to enhance professional growth in HIIM by earning additional CEUs in a specific HIIM domain. This is beyond the requirement to maintain certification. (**Activities in blue (bold) font denote enhancement recognition.**)

What is the initial recertification cycle?

For individuals certified on December 12, 2021, and after, the initial recertification cycle for newly credentialed certificants (first credential obtained) is two years beginning on the day the credential is awarded, which is also the date the certification exam was passed.

Example: If you passed the CCS examination on January 8, 2022, your recertification cycle begins on January 8, 2022, and ends on January 7, 2024, for a period of (2) years. CEUs earned during this period can be reported when you recertify.

What if I am a RHIA or RHIT early tester—when does my initial recertification cycle begin?

Once your transcript is reviewed and eligibility is confirmed, your recertification cycle begins the day your transcript is approved. You will have up to a year from the time the exam is passed to submit your official transcript. If transcripts are not received within the allotted time period, the exam will have to be re-taken and passed.

What do I need to do to recertify or maintain my certification status?

To recertify or maintain your certification, you will need to earn and report the required amount of CEUs and pay your recertification fee(s) within your recertification cycle. This can be done by logging into your CEU center at https://my.ahima.org/account .

I currently have only one (1) AHIMA credential. How many CEUs must I accumulate during the reporting period?

CEU Requirements for Single Credential

If You Have a(n)…	You Must Earn…
Certified Coding Associate (CCA)	20 CEUs
Certified Coding Specialist (CCS)	20 CEUs
Certified Coding Specialist—Physician-based (CCS-P)	20 CEUs
Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)	30 CEUs
Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT)	20 CEUs
Certified Health Data Analyst (CHDA)	30 CEUs
Certified in Healthcare Privacy and Security (CHPS)	30 CEUs
Certified Documentation Integrity Practitioner (CDIP)	30 CEUs

I currently have multiple (two or more) AHIMA credentials. How many CEUs must I accumulate during the reporting period?

CEU Requirements for Multiple Credentials

If you have more than one AHIMA credential, you must earn ten (10) additional CEUs per credential during your two-year recertification cycle, up to a maximum of fifty (50) CEUs. These CEUs may not be duplicated or used for more than one credential. Below are examples.

Credential	Required Number of CEUs
CCS and CCS-P	(20 + 10) 30
CHPS with RHIT	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CHDA	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CDIP	(30 + 10) 40
RHIA with CCS and CCS-P	(30 + 10 + 10) 50
CHDA with CCS, CHPS, and CDIP	(30 + 10 + 10+ 10) 50
RHIA with CCS, CCS-P, CHDA, and CDIP	(30 + 10 + 10+ 10 + 10) 50

How can I earn AHIMA CEUs?

AHIMA offers many opportunities to earn CEUs through meetings, audio and webinars, distance learning courses, and other activities that qualify for CEUs. For additional information on these products, please visit https://my.ahima.org/store/

Can I use CEUs earned through organizations other than AHIMA?

Yes. CCHIIM accepts CEUs earned through other organizations, provided they qualify as valid CEU activities and are relevant to HIIM. See the CEU Activities section for additional details on accepted CEUs and calculation methods.

Can I get CEUs for college courses?

Yes. CCHIIM accepts CEUs earned through participation in formal educational programs of study that address subject areas related to HIIM. Please note you cannot use courses taken prior to your certification. See the CEU Activities section for additional details on accepted CEUs and calculation methods.

Can I earn AHIMA CEUs by earning another AHIMA certification?

Yes. You can earn six (6) CEUs for obtaining an additional AHIMA certification, and three (3) CEUs for obtaining an AHIMA microcredential.

How can I find out how many AHIMA CEUs I have earned so far?

CEUs earned directly through an AHIMA activity where badges are used such as at the AHIMA annual convention and the Assembly on Education Symposium will be automatically recorded in your AHIMA CEU Center. We strongly encourage certificants to double check automatically added CEUs to ensure accuracy.

Other AHIMA activities and non-AHIMA earned CEUs must be manually recorded in your AHIMA CEU Center. The CEU Center tracks how many CEUs you have earned within your current recertification cycle.

What fees are required for renewing my certification?

For AHIMA-Certified Nonmembers:

Single Credential

- Primary credential fee of $218 per cycle

Multiple Credentials

Primary credential (based on credential hierarchy) fee, plus $50 for each additional credential per cycle.

Examples:

1. RHIA supersedes RHIT

   - Year 1 = no fee
   - Year 2 = $218 recertification fee for RHIA

Based on credential hierarchy, the RHIA credential replaces the RHIT.

2. CCS supersedes CCA

   - Year 1 = no fee
   - Year 2 = $218 recertification fee for CCS Two-year total fees = $218

Based on credential hierarchy, the CCS credential replaces the CCA.

3. RHIA and CHDA

   - Year 1 = no fee
   - Year 2 = $218 recertification fee for RHIA, plus $50 recertification fee
   - Total fees = $268

4. RHIT, CCS, and CCSP

   - Year 1 = no fee
   - Year 2 = $218 recertification fee for RHIT plus $50 recertification fee per credential

Two-year total fees = $318

For AHIMA Members:

The cost of your recertification will be based on your membership status.

What should I do with my CEU documentation?

You are required to upload CEU documentation when adding your CEUs. For your own convenience, in case you are selected for a random audit of your reported CEUs, you should upload all CEU documentation into your CEU Center at the time you report your CEUs. In addition, you should retain all documentation for two (2) full years past your certification renewal date, in the event you are audited.

Do CEUs carry over from one reporting period to another?

Up to 20% of additional CEUs earned (beyond the minimum amount required) within the last three months of a certified professional's current recertification period will rollover into the next reporting period. For CEUs to qualify for this rollover opportunity, they must come from AHIMA, a Component Association (CA), or an AHIMA Approved Continuing Education Provider Program (ACEP) provider.

What if I do not have enough CEUs to recertify or maintain my certification?

If you do not report the required number of CEUs and pay the appropriate recertification fee(s) by the end of your recertification cycle, your credential(s) will be placed in an inactive status. Your account will be charged a recertification extension fee for each credential. CCHIIM provides a six (6) month window (the inactive period) for credential holders to meet the recertification requirements before the revocation process begins.

What is the yearly audit?

To ensure high standards of competency and continuing education, AHIMA/CCHIIM will conduct an annual audit. A randomly selected percentage sample of recertification forms submitted from the prior reporting period will be sampled to participate in the audit. The audit will be conducted at each credential level. If audited, you will be required to provide documented proof of all CEU activity reported during the reporting period to AHIMA within 30 days.

If you are unable to provide documented proof within 30 days, your certification will be considered permanently revoked. All audit paperwork is reviewed for completeness and accuracy by AHIMA certification staff. If all CEU activity documentation is successfully submitted by the due date, you will be notified via email that you have successfully met the audit requirements.

Appendix A—HIIM Domains

HIIM Professional Domain Definition: HIIM improves the quality of healthcare by ensuring the most timely and accurate information is available to make any healthcare decision. HIIM professionals manage healthcare data and information resources. The profession encompasses services in planning, collecting, aggregating, analyzing, and disseminating individual patient and aggregate clinical data. It serves the following healthcare stakeholders: patients, providers, patient care organizations, research and policy agencies, payers, and other healthcare-related entities.

Eighty (80) percent of required recertification CEUs must be earned within the HIIM domains (see Appendix A). The remaining twenty (20) percent can include participation in CEU activities on topics not included in the domains but relevant to the credential holder's professional position.

The CCHIIM provides the following list of examples of educational experiences. These educational experiences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Domain I. Data Structure, Content, and Information Governance:

Data content, structure and standards helps create the framework for an optimal health record and effective information exchange between healthcare providers. This is achieved by establishing clear guidelines for the acceptable values, data sources, and how information is technically captured, processed, accessed, archived/ stored, and retrieved for specified data fields. It focuses on information systems, informatics principles, and information technology as it is applied to the continuum of healthcare delivery.

Examples:

a. Principles and applications of classification, taxonomies, nomenclatures, terminologies, clinical vocabularies, content related to diagnostic and procedural classification and terminologies, such as: ICD-10-CM/PCS, ICD-10-O, ICD-11, CPT, HCPCS, SNOMED, DMS-V, ICF

b. HIIM Software applications: Encoders, Groupers, Computer Assisted Coding tools, speech recognition, CDI and ROI applications, EHRs

c. Technology design, architecture, and infrastructure: Cloud technologies, interfaces, encryption, firewalls, operating systems, patient and physician portals

d. Standards: HL-7, UHDDS, HIPAA

Domain II. Information Protection: Access, Disclosure, Archival, Privacy and Security

Establish, evaluate, and maintain policies and protocols for protecting healthcare information to govern systems and processes that generate, collect, store, transmit, use, archive, and disposition of data and information.

Examples:

a. Healthcare law and regulations and terminology related to access, disclosure, archival, privacy and security

b. Policy and procedure development, evaluation and maintenance for the following:

- Privacy, security, and confidentiality
- Record and data access and disclosure management
- Data security
- Data archiving
- Patient portals
- Release of information

c. Security and privacy risk assessment, analysis, mitigation and management

d. E-Discovery

e. Business continuity planning such as off-site storage, servers and backup systems

f. Personal health information

Domain III. Informatics, Analytics, and Data Use:

Defines how health information is manipulated and utilized by the organization and shared to external entities, including but not limited to budgeting projections, long-term service line planning, forecasting healthcare needs of an organization's patient population, resources used, etc. Data analysis is the process of transforming data into information for decision making.

Examples:

a. Manipulation of available data

b. Record tracking

c. Data quality assessment (validity, reliability, completeness, timeliness and accuracy)

d. Data (internal and external) importing and exporting

e. Data exploration and mining

f. Statistical analysis of healthcare data

g. Data display and reports

h. Data extraction and transmission to internal and external entities (billing, registry reporting, quality measure reporting, vital statistics, statewide administrative databases, etc.)

Domain IV. Revenue Cycle Management

Management and oversight of all business, administrative and clinical functions that contribute to patient revenue from point of entry through payment and adjudication. This may include insurance processing, registration, eligibility, claims management, billing, collections, and denials.

Examples:

    a.   Payment methodologies and systems

    b.   Billing processes and procedures

    c.   Bill scrubbers, MCE and NCCI

    d.   Local and national coverage determinations

    e.   Insurance models and trends

    f.   Interaction with payers (insurance plans)

    g.   Appeals and denials management

    h.   Revenue collection from patients

    i.   Cost reporting, budget variances, budget speculation

    j.   Cost benefit analysis

    k.   Payer contracting

    l.   Case mix management

    m.   Value based purchasing programs

    n.   Hospital-acquired conditions and POA

    o.   Clinical documentation improvement—reimbursement focus

Domain V. Health Law and Compliance

The process of establishing an organizational structure that promotes the prevention, detection, and resolution of instances of conduct that do not conform to federal, state, or private payer healthcare program requirements or the healthcare organization's ethical and business policies.

Examples:

    a.   Healthcare law and regulations related to coding, clinical documentation, billing and data reporting

    b.   Industry endorsed ethics, guidelines and directives related to coding, clinical documentation, billing and data reporting

    c.   Policy and procedure development, evaluation and maintenance related to billing, coding, clinical documentation, and data reporting

    d.   Accreditation standards, policies and procedures

    e.   Patient safety

    f.   Risk management

Domain VI. Organizational Management and Leadership:

Utilizing skills and tools to manage, guide, improve operations, provide innovative solutions based on health

data, proactively offer knowledge and decision support expertise, and support patient safety and quality initiatives which ultimately lead to greater trust and transparency within organizations and healthcare in general.

Examples:

g. Professional and practice-related ethical issues

h. Managed care operations

i. Negotiation techniques

j. Workflow reengineering, workflow design techniques

k. Leadership development

l. Performance improvement models

m. Training and development

n. Work design

o. Employee hiring and retention

p. Effective communication

q. Managing remote staff and functions

r. Lean management systems

s. Project management

Domain VII. Clinical Foundations:

Understand human anatomy and physiology; the nature of disease processes; and the protocols of diagnosis and treatment of major diseases, to include common drugs and laboratory and other tests used for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. Practice the ability to apply this knowledge to the reading, coding, and abstracting of medical information to support quality patient care and associated databases.

Examples:

a. Medical terminology

b. Anatomy and physiology

c. Pathophysiology

d. Pharmacology

e. Diagnostic and laboratory testing

f. Ancillary services

g. Telemedicine

h. Medical and surgical procedures

Domain VIII: Evolving Topics/Other HIIM Relevant Topics

Emerging topics that arise as part of the healthcare ecosystem as it transitions to keep pace with new regulations, technologies, and other changes in the industry.

Examples:

a. Coding and Revenue Cycle

b. Risk Adjustment Factor (RAF)

c. Hierarchical Condition Category (HCC)

d. Pay for Performance

e. Informatics (Computer Assisted Technology (CAT)

f. Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR)

g. Unified Medical Language System (UMLS)

h. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

i. Regulations with new technology