

Candidate Handbook

Certification Guide to the BCPA Examination

Revised January 2026

New Framework - Revised 2024



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2026 Testing Period (1)	2026 Testing Period (2)	2027 Testing Period (1)
Application Deadline: March 27, 2026	Application Deadline: October 23, 2026	Application Deadline: March 26, 2027
Testing Begins: March 7, 2026	Testing Begins: October 3, 2026	Testing Begins: March 6, 2027
Testing Ends: April 4, 2026	Testing Ends: October 31, 2026	Testing Ends: April 3, 2027

With Examination Administration by:  Prolydian

Secure Remote Proctoring by: 

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Overview

Mission and Purpose of the Board Certified Patient Advocate Credential (BCPA)

The Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) credential, administered by the Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB), is the first professional certification specifically designed for patient and health care advocates. It serves as an independent, evidence-based assessment of the core knowledge and competencies required to excel in this vital profession.

Understanding Certification, Readiness, and Exam Outcomes

The BCPA examination is a rigorous assessment of professional competence. Candidates are responsible for determining their readiness to test and engaging in adequate preparation. PACB provides study materials and resources to support exam preparation.

PACB is dedicated to:

- Maintaining a universally recognized certification for patient and health care advocates.
- Defining and upholding knowledge domains, ethical standards, and best practices essential to effective advocacy.
- Collaborating with healthcare consumers to support patient- and family-centered care.
- Fostering professional growth and ongoing development for certified advocates.
- Elevating the role of patient advocacy as a recognized and respected profession.

Purpose of the Certification

The BCPA certification exists to protect and serve the public interest by establishing a recognized standard of excellence for patient and health care advocates—one of the nation's fastest-growing professions.

PACB fulfills this purpose by setting and enforcing clear standards for:

- Education
- Examination
- Professional experience
- Ethical conduct

These standards ensure that certified advocates are well-prepared, highly skilled, and committed to enhancing patient outcomes and promoting transparency, trust, and accountability in health care advocacy.

Objectives of the BCPA Certification

PACB achieves its mission through the following key objectives:

1. **Establishing and Measuring Knowledge:** Clearly defining the essential knowledge areas required for effective advocacy and assessing candidates' mastery through rigorous examination.
2. **Setting Foundational Standards:** Providing a consistent benchmark for knowledge and professionalism, enabling health care professionals, employers, and the public to recognize the value of certified advocates.
3. **Formal Recognition:** Granting certification to individuals who successfully meet PACB's eligibility criteria and pass the BCPA examination.
4. **Promoting Lifelong Learning:** Encouraging ongoing personal and professional development to ensure advocates remain current in best practices, ethical standards, and healthcare trends.

By upholding these principles, PACB ensures certified patient and health care advocates are equipped to deliver exceptional, client-centered services while advancing the broader mission of professionalizing the field of patient and health care advocacy.

Benefits of BCPA Certification

The Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) credential delivers measurable value to multiple stakeholders in the health care advocacy ecosystem. Professional certification validates competence, reduces risk, and enhances public trust while providing clear career advancement pathways.

For Certification Holders

BCPA certification positions advocates as leaders in the rapidly growing field of patient advocacy. Research consistently demonstrates that professional certifications provide:

- **Enhanced Earning Potential:** Certified advocates often have access to higher salaries and enhanced compensation packages
- **Career Advancement:** The BCPA credential opens doors to leadership roles, supervisory positions, and specialized advocacy practices
- **Professional Recognition:** Peer acknowledgment and increased credibility with healthcare providers, insurance companies, and legal professionals
- **Job Market Advantage:** Preferred candidate status with employers seeking qualified advocates
- **Knowledge Validation:** Demonstrated competency across all domains of patient advocacy practice
- **Professional Network Access:** Connection to a community of certified advocates and continuing education opportunities
- **Long-term Career Security:** Established pathway for professional development and specialization

For Healthcare Consumers and Patients

The BCPA credential provides patients and families with confidence in their advocate's capabilities:

- **Quality Assurance:** Independent, third-party validation of advocate competence
- **Standardized Knowledge Base:** Assurance that certified advocates understand healthcare systems, patient rights, and advocacy best practices
- **Ethical Accountability:** Adherence to professional conduct standards with enforcement mechanisms
- **Competency Maintenance:** Ongoing education requirements ensure advocates stay current with healthcare changes
- **Public Safety:** Reduced risk of inadequate or harmful advocacy practices

For Healthcare Organizations and Employers

Organizations benefit significantly from employing PACB-certified advocates:

- **Risk Mitigation:** Reduced liability exposure through standardized competency verification
- **Quality Improvement:** Enhanced patient satisfaction and outcomes through professional advocacy
- **Operational Efficiency:** Advocates with standardized knowledge require less training and supervision
- **Competitive Advantage:** Differentiation in the marketplace through certified staff
- **Professional Development:** Clear advancement pathways for advocacy staff
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Alignment with quality standards and accreditation requirements
- **Cost Savings:** Reduced errors, improved care coordination, and faster issue resolution

By recognizing and leveraging these benefits, individuals and organizations can make informed decisions about pursuing and supporting BCPA certification. This commitment strengthens professional standards and enhances the quality and effectiveness of patient and health care advocacy services¹.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB) is committed to upholding principles of equity, fairness, and inclusion. Eligibility criteria for the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) examination and certification are applied equally to all candidates, without discrimination based on:

Race	Sex or gender identity	Physical or mental disability
Nationality	Pregnancy, maternity, or paternity status	Veteran status
Religion or creed	Sexual orientation	Genetic information
Age	National origin or ancestry	Citizenship or immigration status

PACB ensures an equitable and inclusive certification process that respects and values diversity in patient advocacy.

¹ Content for these statement is inspired by the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (I.C.E.) 2012, A Look at the Value of Professional Certification

Statement of Impartiality

The PACB certification program is overseen by the Certification Commission, a semi-independent body empowered by the PACB Board of Directors.

To ensure impartiality and fairness:

- Certification Commission volunteers and certification staff do not participate in the development, promotion, or endorsement of any preparatory programs.
- Completion of any preparatory program is not required to earn BCPA certification.
- The Certification Commission and staff maintain sole responsibility for certification policies, application procedures, and qualification requirements.

This structure ensures unbiased governance, maintains the integrity of the credential, and supports transparent decision-making throughout the certification process.

Contact Information

Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB)

- **Website:** <https://pacboard.org/>
- **Email:** help@pacboard.org
- **Phone:** (929) 430-7222

Prolydian

Prolydian supports the BCPA certification process through its Candidate Management System, Item Banking Framework, and CE Manager.

- Support Email: support+pacb@prolydian.com

MonitorEDU

MonitorEDU provides secure remote proctoring services for the BCPA examination and is responsible for live exam monitoring, identity verification, testing environment checks, and enforcement of exam rules during the testing session.

- <https://monitoredu.com/support>.

Important Role Clarification:

- **PACB** establishes certification standards, eligibility criteria, review, examination policies, and final certification decisions.
- **Prolydian** administers the application platform, exam scheduling, score reporting, and candidate account management.
- **MonitorEDU** delivers the remote proctoring service and oversees exam-day procedures and rule enforcement.
- **Candidates** are responsible for technical readiness, compliance with all exam instructions, and maintaining a professional testing environment.

Technical Support During the Exam:

If you experience technical issues during your exam session, you must contact MonitorEDU support immediately using the instructions provided at the time of testing.

Foundation for Eligibility Requirements

The PACB Certification Commission established the current eligibility criteria based on a comprehensive analysis of patient advocacy practice requirements and industry validation studies.

Development Process

Job Analysis Validation (2020-2021) The eligibility requirements were developed through a systematic job analysis process involving:

- **Practice Analysis Survey:** Over 300 patient advocates from diverse settings participated in validating knowledge and skill requirements
- **Expert Panel Review:** 25 subject matter experts with varying levels of experience evaluated minimum competency thresholds
- **Role Delineation Study:** Comprehensive analysis of tasks performed by entry-level versus experienced advocates
- **Industry Benchmarking:** Comparison with other healthcare advocacy-related credentials and professional certifications

Rationale for Experience Requirements

Education Pathway (Bachelor's Degree) - A bachelor's degree demonstrates:

- Critical thinking and analytical skills that are essential for complex healthcare navigation
- Written and verbal communication competencies required for effective advocacy
- Research and information literacy skills needed for evidence-based advocacy
- Foundational knowledge in areas such as ethics, psychology, or healthcare that support advocacy practice

Equivalent Experience Pathway - The alternative pathway recognizes that substantial hands-on advocacy experience can develop the same competencies as formal education.

The requirement for documented experience with KSA alignment ensures:

- Demonstrated application of advocacy principles in real-world settings
- Evidence of competency development across multiple advocacy domains
- Verification of practical knowledge equivalent to academic preparation

Validation Through Practice Analysis

The job analysis confirmed that effective patient advocacy requires:

- **Complex Problem-Solving:** Managing multi-faceted healthcare challenges requiring analytical thinking
- **Systems Knowledge:** Understanding of healthcare delivery, insurance, and regulatory frameworks
- **Communication Excellence:** Ability to interact effectively with patients, families, and healthcare professionals
- **Ethical Reasoning:** Application of professional ethics in challenging situations
- **Cultural Competency:** Sensitivity to diverse patient populations and healthcare disparities

These competencies typically develop through either formal education combined with practical experience, or through extensive hands-on advocacy practice with demonstrated learning outcomes.

Continuous Validation

PACB regularly reviews eligibility requirements through:

- **Annual Practice Surveys:** Monitoring changes in advocacy practice requirements
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Input from certificants, employers, and healthcare organizations
- **Performance Analysis:** Correlation between eligibility pathways and examination performance
- **Industry Evolution:** Adaptation to changes in healthcare delivery and advocacy roles

Part 1: The Application Process

Participation in the BCPA certification program is voluntary and open to anyone meeting the eligibility requirements. It is essential to carefully read and follow the instructions provided online, within the application platform, and in this Handbook.

All applications are completed **online via Prolydian**, our secure **registration system**:
<https://app.prolydian.com/organizations/PACB>

Application Requirements

Candidates must complete the examination application in full, using their name exactly as it appears on a valid, government-issued photo ID. Approved identification includes:

1. State-issued driver's license
2. State-issued non-driver's license photo identification
3. U.S. military ID
4. Passport

Application Submission and Payment

- The completed application and all required documentation and fees must be submitted through Prolydian's online platform.
- If you prefer to pay by check, refer to the "Fees" section of this Handbook for instructions.

Once your application and payment are submitted and processed:

- You will receive a payment receipt via email from Prolydian. If you do not receive a receipt within two (2) business days of submission, contact Prolydian by **Phone:** (850) 739-8992 or **Email:** support+pacb@prolydian.com.

Important: Failure to follow all application procedures may result in disqualification from the examination, and registration fees will be forfeited.

Application Review and Approval

The PACB Certification Commission will review and verify all submitted information to ensure each candidate meets the published eligibility criteria. Meeting eligibility requirements confirms that minimum qualifications have been met; it does not indicate preparedness to take the examination or the likelihood of passing it.

- Applications must include:
 - **Two (2) letters of recommendation**
 - **Payment of examination fees**
- Applicants will receive approval or denial notification via email.

If your application is **denied**, you will receive:

- An explanation of the decision
- Instructions for submitting an appeal

Deadlines: All applications must be submitted on or before the published application deadline listed in this Handbook (See page 2).

Applicant Responsibilities

As an applicant for the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) credential, you are responsible for thoroughly understanding and adhering to the certification requirements and processes.

- Review the Candidate Handbook: Carefully read the entire Candidate Handbook. By submitting your application, you attest that you have read, understood, and agree to comply with the policies outlined in this document.
- Complete the Online Application: Submit a fully completed online application, including:
 - o Two (2) letters of recommendation
 - o Candidates applying via the Equivalent Experience pathway: Provide a written narrative detailing your advocacy experience (paid or volunteer). This narrative must reference at least five (5) specific Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) statements, clearly identifying how your experience aligns with them. Each reference should directly cite a KSA statement from the official list. <https://www.pacboard.org/eligibility/>
- Monitor Your Email: PACB will notify you within five (5) business days whether your application has been:
 - o Accepted
 - o Denied
 - o Requires Additional Information
- Approved Applications: If approved, you will receive an examination scheduling authorization notice via email.
- Incomplete Applications: If additional information is required, follow the instructions provided and resubmit it promptly.
- Denied Applications: If your application is denied, you have the right to appeal the decision. (Refer to the appeal section for details.)

Part 2: Eligibility Pathways

Eligibility for the BCPA examination is based on a combination of education and experience. However, candidates with significant hands-on experience in advocacy may qualify through the Equivalent Experience Pathway.

1. Education Pathway:

- o Requires a **bachelor's degree or higher** (or the international equivalent).

2. Equivalent Experience Pathway:

- o Candidates must submit **written documentation of relevant advocacy experience** (paid or volunteer).
- o Documentation must include **a narrative aligning your experience with at least five (5) Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) statements**.
- o Examples of acceptable documentation are available here:
<https://www.pacboard.org/eligibility/>

3. Self-Assessment Quiz²

All candidates must complete the self-assessment quiz as part of the application process. <https://www.pacboard.org/self-assessment-quiz/>

Important Clarification:

Completion of the self-assessment quiz is required for data collection purposes only and is not reviewed by the Certification Commission. The quiz is not a predictor of examination success, does not assess exam-level readiness, and does not factor into eligibility or scoring decisions. Candidates should use the quiz results solely to identify potential knowledge gaps and guide further study.

Note: Certificates, certifications, or licensure previously earned do not qualify on their own as documentation of equivalent experience. Ensure your supporting evidence aligns with PACB requirements. For additional details and examples of acceptable documentation, see below or refer to the PACB [eligibility webpage](#).

² The self-assessment quiz is not a predictor of success in passing the exam. Your score is required only as data collection for PACB and does not factor into your eligibility.

Supporting Documentation for Equivalent Experience - (Supplemental Only)

Candidates applying through the Equivalent Experience Pathway must submit a written narrative demonstrating how their professional and/or volunteer experience aligns with at least five (5) of PACB's Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs). The narrative must include specific examples and citations to relevant experience.

Important:

The materials listed below do not satisfy the equivalent experience requirement on their own and will not be reviewed in lieu of the required narrative. Applications submitted without the required KSA narrative will be returned as incomplete.

The following items may be submitted as supplemental evidence to support the claims made in your narrative:

- Publishing Original Materials - Authored articles, books, research papers, or other original works directly related to patient or health care advocacy.
- Teaching and Instruction - Leading courses, seminars, workshops, or training programs focused on patient or health care advocacy topics.
- Volunteer Experience - Significant volunteer work with organizations such as:
 - o Hospice care programs
 - o Disease-specific foundations
 - o Hospitals or healthcare support organizations
- Health-Related Employment - Roles in healthcare or related industries where patient or health care advocacy was a primary responsibility.
- First Responder Experience - Work as an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) or Paramedic.
- Military Recovery Care - Direct involvement in military patient recovery and advocacy programs, or work with veterans within or outside the VA system.
- Job Descriptions or Role Summaries - Official job descriptions or employer-provided role summaries clearly outlining patient or health care advocacy responsibilities.

In practical terms:

Résumés, job descriptions, certificates, letters, or similar documents cannot replace the required narrative mapping your experience to the KSAs. These materials are intended to provide context and verification only. For further guidance on the Equivalent Experience Pathway, visit: <https://www.pacboard.org/eligibility/>

Moral Character

Candidates must complete a Disclosure Questionnaire as part of the BCPA certification application to ensure the highest ethical and professional standards are maintained. If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you must upload a detailed written explanation and provide any supporting documentation. Additional information may be requested during the application review process.

1. Have you ever been convicted of a felony?
2. Within the last ten years, have you been a defendant or respondent in any criminal action related to your professional or business conduct, or are you currently named as a party in such an action?
3. Within the last ten years, have you been a defendant or respondent in a civil action (e.g., lawsuit, arbitration, mediation) related to your professional or business conduct, or are you currently named as a party in such an action?
4. Within the last ten years, have you had a license, permit, certificate, registration, or membership denied, suspended, revoked, or restricted by any governmental, regulatory, or administrative body, or have you been censured, fined, restricted, or reprimanded by such a body?
5. Within the last ten years, have you been named as the subject of an investigation or complaint by any governmental, regulatory, or administrative body?
6. Within the last ten years, have you been censured, fined, reprimanded, or otherwise disciplined by any professional credentialing organization to which you did or do belong, or have you been named as a subject of an investigation or complaint by such an organization?
7. Have you ever been convicted of violating any law or ordinance related to the use, possession, or sale of drugs or alcohol?
8. Have you ever been convicted of violating any statute or ordinance related to sexual assault, abuse, molestation, indecent solicitation, obscenity, or similar immoral acts?

Instructions for Disclosure Responses:

- Ensure your written explanation is clear, detailed, and truthful.
- Include supporting documentation when available.
- Be prepared to provide additional clarification or evidence if requested during the review process.

Your responses will be handled confidentially and evaluated in alignment with PACB's commitment to nondiscrimination, ethical standards, and public safety.

For any questions regarding the **Disclosure Questionnaire**, please contact PACB directly at: help@pacboard.org or (929) 430-7222.

Part 3: Submitting the Application

Apply Online

By submitting an application for the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) examination, you attest that you have read and understood the entire Candidate Handbook and agree to abide by all stated policies.

In alignment with PACB's privacy policy, candidate data and information are handled with strict confidentiality.

To begin or continue your application, log in to your account via Prolydian:
<https://app.prolydian.com/organizations/PACB>

New Applicants:

- Create a Profile: If you are a first-time applicant, you must create a profile in the BCPA online portal hosted by Prolydian.
- Avoid Duplicate Accounts: **If you already have an account, do not create a new one.**

Returning Applicants:

- Log in to Your Account: Use your existing username and password.
- If you cannot remember your login credentials:
 - Click 'Forgot My Password' on the login page.
 - Or contact Prolydian Support at: support+pacb@prolydian.com

Application Preparation Checklist:

Before starting your application, ensure you have the following:

- o Two (2) Letters of Recommendation ready for upload in one of the accepted file formats: .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpeg, .jpg, .png
- Equivalent Experience Pathway Applicants:
 - o Prepare your written documentation outlining your advocacy experience, aligned with five (5) Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) statements.
 - o Ensure the document is in one of the accepted file formats: .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpeg, .jpg, .png

Login Instructions:

1. Log into the Portal: Visit <https://app.prolydian.com/organizations/PACB> and sign in.
2. Navigate to Your Dashboard: Once logged in, you will land on your Dashboard.
 - Continue an Existing Application: Click on 'My Applications' to see any 'In Progress' applications.

OR

- Start a New Application: If you wish to begin a new application, click on 'Apply Now'.

Support and Assistance:

If you encounter any technical issues during the application process, contact **Prolydian Support**: support+pacb@prolydian.com or (850) 739-8992.

Accessing and Updating Your Application Information

- Candidates have 24/7 access to review and update their application contact information after creating a profile and agreeing to the terms of service.
- Once the application is approved, candidates will receive an Authorization to Test email, which will include:
 - o Eligibility Confirmation
 - o Instructions for Exam Scheduling

Note: Once your application is approved, application fees become non-refundable.

Notification of Eligibility

- Application approval decisions will be emailed within five (5) business days following submission.
- If you do not receive a response within this timeframe, contact PACB:
help@pacboard.org or (929) 430-7222.

Eligibility Validity and Deferral Policy:

The Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) examination is administered twice a year in four-week testing windows:

- Spring Exam Cycle – typically begins the first Saturday in March
- Fall Exam Cycle – typically begins the first Saturday in October

Automatic Assignment:

When your application is approved, you are automatically assigned to the next available exam cycle. For example:

- Applications approved between November and the Spring cycle application deadline are assigned to the Spring cycle
- Applications approved between April and the Fall cycle application deadline are assigned to the Fall cycle

Deferral Requests:

If you are unable or do not wish to test during your assigned cycle, you may request to defer to the following cycle. Deferral requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and require:

- Written request submitted to PACB before your assigned testing window begins
- Payment of the deferral fee: \$75 (see Fee Schedule)

Approved deferrals allow you to test in the next exam cycle without submitting a new application.

Multiple Deferral Requests:

After the first deferral request, candidates requesting additional deferrals must pay a \$125 rescheduling fee for each additional deferral request. Exceptions may be granted in cases of documented medical emergencies, military deployment, or other extraordinary circumstances at PACB's sole discretion. After two deferrals, candidates must submit a new application and pay the current published fees.

Important: Eligibility does not automatically extend beyond your assigned cycle. If you do not test and have not received an approved deferral, you must reapply.

Rescheduling vs. Deferral:

- Deferral = Moving to a different exam cycle (e.g., Spring to Fall) - requires a written request and fee.
- Rescheduling = Changing your appointment date/time within the same exam cycle - free if done 48+ hours in advance; \$125 fee if less than 48 hours.

For deferral requests or questions about eligibility, contact: help@pacboard.org or (929) 430-7222.

Eligibility Denial and Appeals Policy

If an application is not approved, the applicant will be notified in writing and provided with an opportunity to appeal the decision.

Appeal Process:

1. Written Appeal Submission:
 - o The applicant must submit a written appeal to the PACB Executive Director within 30 days of the original notification date.
2. Appeals Committee Review:
 - o The Executive Director will forward all relevant documentation to the Appeals Committee.
 - o The Appeals Committee will review the appeal and make recommendations to the Certification Commission Chair.

3. Final Decision:
 - o The Certification Commission Chair will make the final decision in writing and communicate it to the applicant.
4. No Further Appeals:
 - o The Chair's decision is final, and no further appeal will be permitted.
5. Timeline:
 - o The entire appeal process must be completed within 120 days of the original denial notice.

For questions or clarifications about the **appeals process**, contact: help@pacboard.org or (929) 430-7222.

Part 4: Scheduling an Exam

Step-by-Step Exam Scheduling Instructions:

Scheduling Notice – 48-Hour Minimum Requirement:

To preserve exam integrity and ensure sufficient time for proctoring arrangements, same-day or next-day testing is not permitted. All BCPA examinations must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance of the desired testing time. Please plan accordingly to ensure you can test during your assigned exam cycle.

1. **Log in to Your BCPA Account:**
 - o Access your **BCPA (Prolydian) account** here:
<https://app.prolydian.com/organizations/PACB>
2. **Schedule Your Exam:**
 - o Go to the **'My Exams'** page.
 - o Click the **'Schedule'** button.
 - o Choose a date and time **within the next available testing window**.
 - o Refer to **page 2** of this Handbook for the current exam schedule.

3. **Confirmation Email:**

- o Once your exam is scheduled, **Prolydian will send a confirmation email** containing:
 - Your test date
 - Your testing time
 - Instructions on how to prepare for your MonitorEDU-proctored exam

4. **Name Matching on Photo ID:**

- o If your **Prolydian or MonitorEDU profile name does not match** your **government-issued photo ID**, you must resolve this issue before scheduling.
- o Contact **Prolydian Support** for assistance: support+pacb@prolydian.com

Cancellation and Rescheduling

Policy Overview:

- **Cancel or Reschedule Free of Charge:** You may cancel or reschedule your exam up to 48 hours before your appointment at no cost.
- **Less than 48 Hours' Notice:**
 - o If you cancel within 48 hours, miss your appointment, arrive late, or fail to provide valid identification, you will need to pay an additional testing fee to reschedule.
 - o Refer to the Fee Schedule for details.

Confirmation Emails:

- Every time you reschedule or cancel your appointment, Prolydian will send you a confirmation email.
- Review these emails carefully to ensure your exam details are accurate.

Need Help?

If you experience difficulties canceling, rescheduling, or updating your profile information, contact: support+pacb@prolydian.com or (850) 739-8992.

Part 5: Taking the Exam

Before Your Exam

To ensure a smooth and successful testing experience, you must complete the MonitorEDU system requirements check and prepare your identity verification documents in advance.

1. Verify System Compatibility

Before your exam, check that your computer meets the MonitorEDU system requirements:

Ensure you have:

- A compatible operating system (Windows or macOS)
- A stable internet connection
- A functioning webcam and microphone
- Google Chrome as your primary browser

Important Information for macOS Users - macOS computers may default to **Safari** even when Google Chrome is installed. The BCPA examination **must be taken using Google Chrome**. Testing in Safari or launching the exam from Safari may prevent screen sharing or exam launch.

macOS users are responsible for ensuring that:

- Google Chrome is installed and up to date
- Google Chrome is opened and used to log into Prolydian
- The exam is launched from within Google Chrome, not Safari

PACB strongly recommends that macOS users complete all system checks and practice activities using Google Chrome in advance to confirm compatibility.

2. Prepare Identity Verification Documents

You will need **one (1) valid, government-issued photo ID** for verification. Acceptable forms of identification include:

- **Government-issued driver's License**
- **College/University-Issued Staff Photo ID**
- **Passport**
- **Non-U.S. Military-Issued Identification Card**
- **Any Physical Government-Issued Identification Card** (*must include a photo*)

Important: Ensure that the **name on your identification matches your Prolydian and MonitorEDU account profiles** exactly.

3. Additional Preparation Tips

- Complete all system checks well in advance of your scheduled exam time.
- Keep your identity verification document readily accessible.
- Ensure your testing environment is quiet, well-lit, and free from distractions.

For technical assistance or if you encounter issues during the system check, contact: support+pacb@prolydian.com or (850) 739-8992.

On the Day of Your Exam

To ensure a smooth testing experience, follow these steps carefully on your exam day:

On the day of your exam

Log in 10 minutes prior to the exam. You may want to refresh the screen at the time of the exam. To access your exam:

1. Ensure that your testing space aligns with the "**Testing Room Requirements**" section below.
2. Log into your Prolydian account.

3. Go to the "My exams" dashboard and click the "**Launch Exam**" button (This button will be enabled one minute before your exam time.)
4. You will be directed to the MonitorEDU chat interface. Verify your name and email address are correctly input, enter your phone number, and select your organization from the listing.
5. Click "Start Chat"
6. Your proctor will start the security check after you have joined the video meeting. They will guide you through a review of your testing environment using your device's camera, as required.
7. Your proctor will check your ID to verify that it matches your account information
8. Once the above steps are complete, your proctor will guide you in unlocking your exam.

System Requirements

To ensure a seamless testing experience, carefully review the following system requirements and prepare your equipment accordingly.

1. Device Recommendations

Personal Devices Strongly Recommended: Testing on a personal computer is strongly encouraged to avoid technical restrictions commonly found on employer-issued devices.

Why Work Devices Are Problematic: Work computers often have security settings and restrictions that can prevent the exam from launching or functioning properly, including:

- Administrative restrictions that prevent installation of required software or browser extensions
- Firewall and network security settings that block screen sharing, webcam access, or connections to the proctoring service
- Antivirus or endpoint protection software that flags the secure browser as suspicious and blocks it
- Group policy restrictions that prevent changes to browser settings or camera/microphone permissions

- VPN requirements that interfere with the proctoring connection
- Auto-update or restart policies that could interrupt your exam session
- Screen recording or monitoring software installed by your employer that conflicts with exam security protocols

If You Must Use a Work Device:

If you have no alternative to using a work-provided device, you must coordinate with your IT department at least one week before your scheduled exam to ensure:

1. The secure browser can be installed and launched
2. Camera and microphone permissions can be enabled
3. Screen sharing is permitted
4. Firewall settings allow connection to MonitorEDU servers
5. No automatic updates or restarts are scheduled during your exam window

Provide your IT department with MonitorEDU's technical requirements. PACB cannot provide technical support for employer-imposed restrictions. Exam sessions cannot be rescheduled due to work device incompatibility without incurring rescheduling fees.

2. System Requirements

Minimum Technical Requirements

- Supported browser: Google Chrome (required)
- Operating system: macOS 10.13 or higher; Windows 10 or higher
- Webcam: Minimum 640×480 resolution
- Internet: Minimum 2 Mbps upload/download (10 Mbps recommended)
- RAM: Minimum 2 GB (4 GB recommended)
- Microphone: Required
- Power: Device must remain connected to a power source throughout the exam

Not Supported:

- Tablets or mobile devices
- ARM CPU architecture
- Dual monitors

3. Additional Requirements:

- **Dual Monitors:** Dual monitors are **NOT supported** during the exam.
- **Stable Internet Connection:** Ensure a **reliable and uninterrupted Internet connection** throughout the exam.
- **Close Unnecessary Applications:** Shut down any **background applications** or software updates that could interrupt your connection or performance.

Technical Troubleshooting During Exam

If you are disconnected from your proctor, your proctor will lock your exam. Please try to refresh and rejoin the Google Meet meeting. If you experience connection issues lasting longer than 5 minutes use MonitorEDU's chat support:

<https://tawk.to/chat/5b2a5c47eba8cd3125e3057c/default>

Important: Delaying your support request may result in **forfeiture of your exam session**. For any unresolved issues or follow-up assistance, contact: support+pacb@prolydian.com or (850) 739-8992.

Part 6: Fees and Payment Information

Certification Fees and Payment Information

All certification fees support the development, administration, and maintenance of the BCPA examination and certification program. Fees are reviewed annually and may be subject to change.

Fee Schedule

Fee Type	Amount	Description	When Due
Initial Certification	\$425	Application review + examination administration	At application submission
Deferral Fee	\$75	One-time deferral to next exam cycle	When requesting deferral
Reschedule Fee	\$125	Exam rescheduling within 48 hours	When rescheduling
Retest Fee	\$295	Re-examination (up to 2 retakes)	When reapplying after failed attempt
Recertification by Examination	\$295	Re-taking exam for recertification	During recertification period
Recertification with CE	\$195	Continuing education pathway	During recertification period

Note on Retest Fee vs. Recertification by Examination:

- Both fees are \$295 but serve different purposes:
- Retest Fee: Applies to candidates who previously attempted the BCPA exam but did not pass. This fee allows you to retake the exam within three (3) years of your most recent attempt without submitting a new full application.
- Recertification by Examination: Applies to current BCPA certificants who are maintaining their certification. Instead of completing 30 hours of continuing education, certificants may choose to retake and pass the current exam to renew their credential for another **three-year cycle**.
- If you are unsure which fee applies to your situation, contact help@pacboard.org before submitting payment.

Fee Policies

Rescheduling Policy:

- o You may reschedule or cancel your exam at no charge up to 48 hours before your scheduled exam time. See the full cancellation policy for details.
- o Rescheduling requests made within 48 hours of your scheduled exam will incur a \$125 rescheduling fee.

Retest Fee:

- o Applicable only to candidates who previously attempted the BCPA exam but did not pass.

Non-Transferable Fees:

- o Fees are non-transferable between candidates.

Refund Policy:

- Application fees become non-refundable once eligibility is approved
- Examination fees are refundable only in cases of denial of eligibility
- No refunds for missed examinations or late cancellations

Financial Assistance

PACB is committed to making certification accessible. Limited financial assistance may be available through:

- **JEDI Scholarship Fund:** Supports candidates from underrepresented communities. Scholarships are competitive and limited. See the [website](#) for more information.

Important: All fees are **non-refundable** once an application has been approved.

Payment Methods

Payments may be made using one of the following methods:

- **Credit/Debit Card:** Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover
 - Complete and authorize the credit card payment section of the online application as directed.
- **Check or Money Order:**
 - Make checks or money orders payable to:
Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB)
- Mail the payment to the address below:
 - PACB Examination
2300 Wildwood Ave, #6771
Sherwood, AR 72120
- Once PACB receives and processes your payment, you will be notified that you may proceed with submitting your online application.

Important:

- Payments must be received and applied to your account before you can submit your application.
- **DO NOT SEND CASH.**

Payments must be received **before the application deadline** to ensure eligibility for the selected exam cycle.

For any payment-related questions, contact: help@pacboard.org or (929) 430-7222.

Recertification

Maintaining Your BCPA Certification

To maintain the BCPA credential, certificants must demonstrate ongoing competence through continuing education or re-examination every three (3) years.

Recertification Pathways

Pathway 1: Continuing Education (Recommended)

- **Total Requirement:** 30 hours of approved continuing education
- **Ethics Requirement:** 6 hours must focus on professional ethics
- **JEDI Requirement:** 3 hours must address Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion topics
- **Recertification Fee:** \$195

Pathway 2: Re-examination

- Retake and pass the current BCPA examination
- **Recertification Fee:** \$295

Qualifying Continuing Education Activities

Formal Education (1 hour = 1 CE credit)

- Accredited courses or workshops in patient advocacy, healthcare, or related fields
- Webinars from recognized healthcare or advocacy organizations
- University courses relevant to advocacy practice
- Professional conference sessions

Teaching and Instruction (Maximum 10 credits per cycle)

- Teaching advocacy-related courses or workshops (2 credits per contact hour)
- Developing original educational content (1 credit per hour of development)
- Mentoring new advocates (1 credit per 2 hours of documented mentoring)

Professional Contribution (Maximum 10 credits per cycle)

- Publishing articles in peer-reviewed journals (5 credits per article)
- Writing advocacy-related books or chapters (10 credits per book, 3 per chapter)
- Conducting advocacy research (credits determined by scope and publication)

Self-Directed Learning (1 hour = 1 CE credit)

- Online courses or modules (1 credit per contact hour)
- Professional podcasts or video content (1 credit per 2 hours)

Volunteer Service on select PACB Committees

- Item Writer - 1 CE per hour as determined by Certification Commission
- Completion of JTA Study (when conducted) – 1 CE
- Service on JTA Task Force or as Subject Matter Expert – up to 15 CE per 3-year cycle
- Committee work – Up to 10 CE per 3-year cycle for work on select committees

Documentation Requirements

All continuing education activities must be documented with:

- **Activity Description:** Clear explanation of content and learning objectives
- **Date and Duration:** Specific dates and total hours of participation
- **Provider Information:** Name and credentials of education provider
- **Verification:** Certificate, transcript, or other proof of completion

Audit Process

PACB conducts random audits of 10% of recertification submissions. Selected certificants must provide documentation within 30 days. Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in:

- Requirement to complete additional continuing education
- Extension of recertification deadline
- Suspension of certification status

Recertification Timeline

- 18 months before expiration: First reminder notice sent
- 12 months before expiration: Second reminder with recertification instructions
- 6 months before expiration: Final reminder notice
- 3 months before expiration: Last chance to submit recertification
- Expiration date: Certification becomes inactive if the requirements are not met

Grace Period: A 90-day grace period is allowed with a late fee of \$50. After grace period, see [reinstatement requirements](#).

For **detailed recertification policies and procedures**, refer to the [Stay Certified](#) section of the website or the [Certification Renewal Handbook](#).

The Examination

Remote Proctored Exam

The BCPA certification exam is administered as a computer-based test (CBT) via MonitorEDU, offering candidates the flexibility and security to complete the exam remotely from anywhere in the world.

MonitorEDU Features:

- Secure Testing Environment: Advanced security protocols ensure the integrity of the credential.
- Flexible Access: Candidates can test remotely from a secure and private location.
- Real-Time Support: Live proctors assist with technical and exam-related concerns.

Exam Format

- **Number of Questions:** 150 multiple-choice questions.
- **Domains Covered:** The questions align with the [2024 Domains of Practice](#).
- **Answer Options:** Each question has three answer options, with only one correct answer.
- **Scoring:**
 - **No penalty for incorrect answers;** points are awarded **only for correct answers**.
 - The **25 additional pre-test questions** are for future exam validation and are not scored.

Exam Duration:

- Candidates have **3 hours** to complete the exam.
- A **digital clock** displays the **remaining time** (this can be turned off if preferred).

Language

- The BCPA examination is offered exclusively in English.

For any questions regarding exam language options, contact: help@pacboard.org.

Testing Accommodations for Candidates with Disabilities

The Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended, and is committed to providing reasonable testing accommodations to qualified individuals with documented disabilities in accordance with applicable law. Accommodations may also be considered for individuals with documented medical conditions that are temporary or otherwise not covered by the ADA, such as pregnancy or a temporary impairment following surgery, including those that necessitate the use of medical devices or medications during the examination.

PACB will also make reasonable efforts to comply with applicable testing accommodation requirements in jurisdictions outside the United States, to the extent such laws apply to our examination program.

Under the ADA, a disability is defined as a condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Requests that do not meet this standard may not qualify for accommodation. Conditions such as learning differences, individual learning styles, generalized test anxiety, or academic performance issues alone do not qualify as disabilities under ADA standards.

Requests for accommodations related to medical conditions not covered by the ADA will be evaluated at the sole discretion of PACB. All accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis and depend on the nature of the impairment, the documentation provided, and the essential requirements of the examination.

PACB will make reasonable efforts to provide approved accommodations as long as:

- The documented functional limitations are clearly established,
- the requested accommodations do not fundamentally alter the nature or intended measurement objectives of the exam,
- they do not compromise exam security or integrity,
- and they do not impose an undue burden on PACB.

Accommodations will not be made to the actual content of the examination. A range of accommodation options may be considered to support candidates with qualifying disabilities or medical conditions.

Examination Accommodations

Examination candidates seeking accommodations must complete a Request for Accommodation form either at the time of application or no later than 30 days prior to the **start of the exam cycle** for which they intend to test. The request must include appropriate supporting documentation that verifies the need for the accommodation. Submission of the request authorizes PACB and its contracted testing providers to review and verify the documentation solely for the purpose of evaluating the accommodation request.

The complete [accommodations policy](#) and request form are available on the PACB website at <https://www.pacboard.org/accommodations-request-form/>.

All requests and supporting materials will be handled with strict confidentiality. The submitted documentation is used exclusively to assess the need for accommodations and will not be disclosed outside that process. Candidates must submit adequate and timely documentation for each requested accommodation. Incomplete or late submissions may delay the review process and prevent the candidate from scheduling or taking the examination within their intended testing window.

Candidates may request more than one accommodation, but each request must be clearly supported by relevant documentation. No examination will be scheduled or administered until the accommodation request process has been fully completed and a final determination has been made.

Common Accommodations

PACB reviews accommodation requests on a case-by-case basis and will make reasonable efforts to grant appropriate accommodations based on the documented needs submitted.

Common accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Extended testing time (e.g., 1.5x standard time)
- Additional breaks
- Access to approved auxiliary items (e.g., food, medication, or medical devices)
- Use of a screen reader³

Approved accommodations are provided at no additional cost to the candidate.

Required Supporting Documentation

Requests for accommodations must include:

1. A completed [Reasonable Accommodations Request Form](#) (available on the PACB website); and

³ MonitorEDU supports the use of the following screen reader technologies:

- **JAWS (Job Access With Speech):** A widely used commercial screen reader developed by Freedom Scientific, offering extensive features and support for complex workflows.
- **NVDA (NonVisual Desktop Access):** A free, open-source screen reader for Windows, known for its robust performance and compatibility with various applications.
- **VoiceOver:** The built-in screen reader for macOS, providing seamless integration with Apple devices.

2. Current documentation from a qualified healthcare professional that: a. Describes the **functional limitations** and their impact on exam performance in a remotely proctored testing environment; b. Specifies recommended accommodations and the rationale for each in the context of remotely proctored examinations.

Documentation must be current and sufficient to support the requested accommodation and describe the candidate's present functional limitations in a remotely proctored testing environment.

PACB does not require disclosure of a medical diagnosis. Documentation should focus on functional impact rather than the underlying condition.

Documentation Currency: For conditions that may change over time, documentation must generally be recent (within the past 3 years) and reflective of the candidate's current functional status. For permanent, stable conditions (e.g., vision loss, limb amputation, permanent mobility impairment), older documentation may be accepted if accompanied by a brief letter from a current treating professional confirming that the condition remains stable and the functional limitations remain unchanged.

PACB may request additional documentation if the information provided is incomplete or unclear.

Review of Requested Accommodations

PACB will begin reviewing requests for examination accommodations only after receiving a completed exam application and all required supporting documentation. While documentation of prior accommodations granted by educational institutions or other testing organizations will be taken into consideration, such prior accommodations do not guarantee approval of the current request. Each request is evaluated individually based on the specific documentation and circumstances presented and the technical feasibility of implementation within the remote proctoring environment.

Once the review is complete, the candidate will receive written notification of PACB's decision regarding the requested accommodations. If accommodations are approved, the candidate will receive a **Testing Accommodations Agreement** outlining the specific accommodations granted. The candidate must sign and return the agreement by the deadline indicated in the notification.

A request for accommodations is not considered fully approved, and the candidate's application will not be deemed complete until the signed agreement is received. An examination appointment will not be authorized until PACB has received the signed Testing Accommodations Agreement.

Important Notice Regarding Timing of Accommodation Requests

Candidates seeking examination accommodations must submit their completed application, including the Request for Accommodation form and all supporting documentation, no later than 30 days prior to the start of the exam cycle for which they intend to test.

Requests submitted after the exam cycle has begun will be considered on a case-by-case basis but may result in deferral to the next available cycle due to technical implementation constraints.

PACB cannot expedite accommodation processing for last-minute applications. Accommodations require coordination between PACB, its administrative partner Prolydian, and the remote proctoring vendor MonitorEDU. This process involves multiple steps, including technical feasibility review and operational adjustments, and sufficient lead time is essential.

Candidates are strongly advised to apply well in advance of their desired exam cycle if they are requesting accommodations. Failure to do so may result in a delay in scheduling or the inability to test during the current exam cycle.

Submission Process

1. **Gather Documentation:** Obtain required professional evaluations and reports
2. **Complete Request Form:** Available at <https://www.pacboard.org/accommodations-request-form/>
3. **Approval Notification:** Candidates receive written notification of the decision

Review Criteria

PACB evaluates accommodation requests based on:

- **Adequacy of Documentation:** Completeness, clarity, and professional quality of supporting materials submitted.
- **Currency Requirement:** Documentation must reflect the candidate's current functional limitations. For conditions that may change over time, documentation should generally be no more than three years old. For permanent, stable conditions, older documentation may be accepted if accompanied by a current professional statement confirming the condition remains stable.
- **Nexus Requirement:** A clearly established connection between the documented functional limitations and the specific accommodations requested.
- **Test Validity:** Accommodations must not alter the fundamental nature, purpose, or measurement objectives of the examination.
- **Feasibility:** PACB and its testing partners must be able to implement the accommodation without compromising exam security, functionality, or integrity.

Appeals Process

Denial Appeals

Candidates may appeal accommodation denials by:

1. **Submitting a Written Appeal:** Within 30 days of the denial notification
2. **Providing Additional Documentation:** New or supplementary evidence
3. **Final Decision:** Written notification within 15 business days

Accommodation Modifications

If the requested accommodations cannot be provided as specified, PACB will:

- Engage in interactive dialogue with the candidate
- Explore alternative accommodation options
- Provide rationale for any modifications
- Ensure effective accommodation is achieved

Quality Assurance

- Accommodation Verification: Confirmation that approved accommodations are properly implemented
- Candidate Check-in: Review of accommodation arrangements before testing begins
- Ongoing Support: Available assistance throughout the testing session

Policies and Procedures

The Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB) is committed to maintaining excellence in the administration and integrity of the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) certification program. Please review the following policies and procedures carefully to ensure a smooth and transparent certification experience.

Application Eligibility, Retest, and Cancellations

Personal Information Changes

- The BCPA (Prolydian) online portal is the primary communication platform for:
 - Eligibility notifications
 - Exam confirmations and results
 - Recertification reminders
- Candidates and certificants have 24/7 access to their exam profiles and are responsible for keeping their contact information current.

Applicant Ineligibility

An applicant may be deemed ineligible for the following reasons:

- Insufficient documentation to assess eligibility
- Lack of required experience
- Non-payment of application fees

If eligibility cannot be assessed due to inadequate information or missing documentation:

- The applicant will be notified and given a two-week deadline to submit the required documentation.
- Failure to respond by the deadline will result in application denial.
- Subsequent applications will not be processed under the original fee.

Appeals Policy

If an application is denied, the applicant has the right to appeal.

Appeal Process:

1. Submit a written appeal to the PACB Executive Director within 30 days of the original notification.
2. The Executive Director will forward all relevant documentation to the Appeals Committee.
3. The Appeals Committee will review the case and make recommendations to the Certification Commission Chair.
4. The Chair's final decision will be communicated in writing, and no further appeals will be permitted.
5. The entire appeal process must be completed within 120 days of the original denial notice.

For questions about the appeals process, contact: help@pacboard.org.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

- **Application and Exam Fees:** Non-refundable.
- **Rescheduling within the Same Cycle:**
 - Exams can be rescheduled without penalty up to 48 hours before the scheduled exam time.
- **Failure to Appear:**
 - Candidates who fail to appear for their scheduled exam forfeit all fees.
 - Rescheduling will require full payment of applicable fees.

Exceptions for Extreme Circumstances:

- In cases of medical emergencies or the death of an immediate family member, late cancellations may be considered.
- Documentation must be submitted in writing within seven (7) days of the scheduled exam date.
- Each case will be evaluated individually for approval.

NOTE: Applications that are denied during the eligibility review process will receive a full refund.

Retesting Policy for Repeat Candidates

Candidates who did not achieve a passing score may apply to retest during any future exam cycle. However, to maintain exam integrity and alignment with current standards of practice, repeat candidate status (and the associated discounted fee) expires three (3) years from the date of the most recent exam attempt.

Repeat candidate status applies ONLY to candidates who have never passed the BCPA examination.

Candidates Who Did Not Pass - Within 3 Years:

- May retest using the repeat candidate application and discounted fee (\$295)
- No new eligibility documentation required (unless eligibility requirements have changed)

Candidates Who Did Not Pass - After 3 Years:

- Must apply as new candidates
- Must submit a complete new application
- Must pay the full initial certification fee (\$425)
- Must meet all current eligibility requirements in effect at the time of reapplication

Example: A candidate who tested and did not pass in Fall 2023 maintains repeat candidate status through Fall 2026. If they apply for Spring 2027 or later, they must reapply as a new candidate.

Lapsed Certificants:

Individuals who previously passed and earned the BCPA credential but whose certification has lapsed should contact PACB to determine the appropriate pathway for regaining certification. Options depend on how long certification has been lapsed and may include reinstatement procedures or retaking the examination. Contact help@pacboard.org for guidance.

This policy ensures that all candidates are assessed according to the most current exam framework, professional standards, and eligibility criteria.

Extensions may only be granted under documented extenuating circumstances (such as serious illness, military deployment, or family emergency) and must be approved by the Certification Commission.

Audit Policy

- PACB may audit a portion of submitted applications to ensure compliance with certification program requirements.
- It is the candidate's or certificant's responsibility to retain and provide any necessary supporting documentation upon request.

For questions regarding audits, contact: help@pacboard.org.

Authority

The **Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB)** reserves the right to:

- Request additional documentation or information from applicants.
- Conduct inquiries as necessary to verify an applicant's education, experience, competency, or moral character.

Failure to provide requested information may result in application denial or eligibility revocation.

For further clarification, contact: help@pacboard.org

How the BCPA Examination Was Developed

The BCPA examination is based on a foundation of rigorous psychometric research and industry validation, ensuring it accurately measures the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for competent patient advocacy practice.

Job Task Analysis (JTA) Foundation

The current examination content outline resulted from a comprehensive job task analysis conducted in 2020-2021, involving:

- **Subject Matter Expert Panel:** 16 experienced patient advocates representing diverse practice settings, geographic regions, and advocacy specializations
- **Validation Survey:** Over 200 practicing advocates participated in validating the identified knowledge domains and task importance ratings
- **Content Domain Weighting:** Statistical analysis determined the relative importance of each practice domain based on frequency and criticality ratings

Examination Content Validation

The JTA process identified five core domains essential for patient advocacy competence:

1. **Scope of Practice and Transparency** (12% of exam)
2. **Empowerment, Autonomy, Rights, and Equity** (18% of exam)
3. **Communication and Interpersonal Relationships** (19% of exam)
4. **Health, Medicine & the Healthcare System** (24% of exam)
5. **Professionalism & Ethics** (27% of exam)

Standard Setting Process

The passing score for the BCPA examination was established through a Modified-Angoff standard setting study, recognized as best practice for professional certification examinations. This process involved:

- **Expert Panel Review:** Qualified patient advocates evaluated each question to determine the knowledge level expected of minimally competent practitioners
- **Statistical Validation:** Psychometric analysis confirmed the appropriateness of the passing standard
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** Regular statistical review ensures the examination continues to meet professional testing standards

Continuous Improvement

PACB maintains examination quality through:

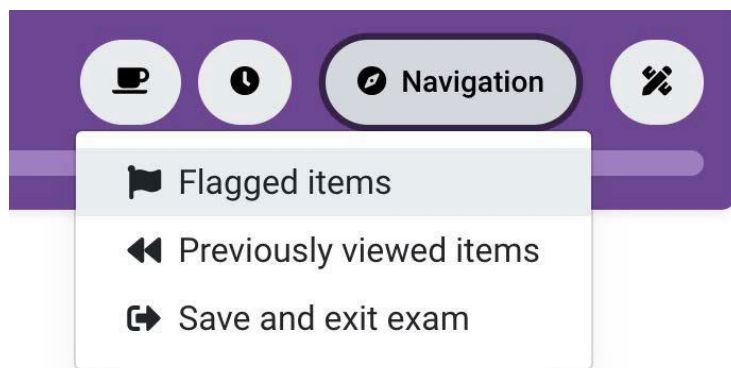
- **Annual Content Review:** Subject matter experts review examination statistics and industry developments
- **Item Analysis:** Statistical performance data identifies questions for revision or retirement
- **Practice Evolution Monitoring:** Regular assessment ensures examination content reflects current advocacy practice

The BCPA certification examination is a computer-based test (CBT) consisting of 150 multiple-choice questions. The exam is delivered in a single session. One optional 10-minute break is available within the 3-hour testing window. Additional breaks may be approved only as a disability-related accommodation. The exam clock does not stop for any breaks.

Key Exam Details

- **Total Questions:** 150
 - 125 Scored Items
 - 25 Pre-Test (Unscored) Items (*randomly distributed*)
- **Answer Options:** Three options per question (only one correct answer)
- **Exam Duration:** 3 hours
- **Navigation Tools:**
 - Candidates can move back and forth between questions.
 - Questions can be flagged for review before final submission.

Questions can be flagged for review by clicking the “Flag for review” checkbox above each question. A list of flagged questions can be accessed from the “Navigation” button on the top right of the screen.



- **Scoring:** Only scored items contribute to the final exam score.

Navigating the Exam:

- **One Question at a Time:** Questions are displayed individually on the screen.
- **Answer Selection:** Click the radio button (circle) next to your chosen answer.
- **Navigation Tools:**
 - Move back and forth between questions.
 - Flag questions for review before final submission

Best Practices for Exam Success:

- Ensure your testing environment is quiet, well-lit, and free of distractions.
- Keep your identity verification document readily available.
- Complete all technical and equipment checks well before the exam.

For scheduling or other exam-related inquiries, contact: support+pacb@prolydian.com or (850) 739-8992.

Preparing for the Examination

Foundational Documents

The exam content is based on six key documents, each reviewed and approved by the Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB) following rigorous public consultation and Subject Matter Expert (SME) review.

These documents are available at:

 <https://www.pacboard.org/exam-study-materials/>

1. [Study Guide](#)
2. [Your BCPA Exam Toolkit: Review and Practice supplement](#)
3. [Key Terms to Study](#)
4. [Ethical Standards for a Board Certified Patient Advocate](#)
5. [Domains of Practice for Patient and Health Care Advocates](#)
6. [Code of Professional Responsibility](#)

U.S. Based Standards and Best Practices

The BCPA exam is built on U.S. patient and health care advocacy best practices and standards. This includes knowledge of:

- U.S. healthcare systems and structures
- Payor sources and regulatory agencies

Note: International candidates are encouraged to take the exam, but they should be aware that the content reflects U.S.-centric practices and standards.

Exam Content

The BCPA exam is constructed to align with minimal competency requirements for professional patient advocates.

Key Principles of Exam Development:

- Based on a job task analysis (JTA), which identifies critical tasks, knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) essential for competent advocacy.
- Developed and regularly reviewed by a committee of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).
- Ensures alignment with industry-recognized testing standards.

Exam Content Domains and Weighting

The exam covers five core topic areas that represent critical aspects of patient and health care advocacy. Each domain is weighted according to its importance and frequency in professional practice:

Domain	Percentage of Exam
I. Scope of Practice and Transparency	12%
II. Empowerment, Autonomy, Rights, and Equity	18%
III. Communication and Interpersonal Relationships	19%
IV. Health, Medicine & the Healthcare System	24%
V. Professionalism & Ethics	27%
TOTAL	100%

Key Insight: A higher percentage indicates a greater representation of that domain in the exam questions.

See 2024 Domains of Practice for Patient and Health Care Advocates for detailed descriptions of each domain and additional resources. <https://www.pacboard.org/wp-content/uploads/Domains-of-Practice-2024-01-31-2025-com.pdf>

Remote Proctored Exam Rules

Professional Conduct Expectations

The BCPA examination is a high-stakes professional certification exam. Candidates are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with professional standards throughout the entire testing session. This includes compliance with proctor instructions, maintaining appropriate testing posture and demeanor, and ensuring the testing environment reflects the seriousness of the examination process.

To ensure exam integrity, fairness, and security, all candidates must adhere to the following rules during the remote-proctored BCPA exam:

Testing Environment Requirements:

- **Private Space:** You must test in a private, secure room, alone, for the entire exam duration.
- **No Public Venues:** Testing in public spaces or libraries is strictly prohibited.
- **Seating:** You must sit at a desk or table with a hard surface and use a chair. Testing from a sofa, bed, or couch is not allowed.
- **Room Check:** The proctor will conduct a full environment check, including:
 - Showing all four corners of the room
 - Displaying the top and bottom of your testing surface

Desk and Equipment Requirements:

- The desk must be completely clear of all materials, including:
 - Paper
 - Pens/Pencils
 - Sticky Notes
- **Dual Monitors:** Second monitors are not allowed and must be disconnected and removed.
- **Audio Equipment:** Headsets and earbuds are prohibited.
- **Cell Phones:** Phones must be silenced and placed beyond immediate reach during the exam. Unauthorized use of a phone at any time may result in exam termination.
- **Water:** Only clear water bottles are allowed on the desk. No other food or beverages are permitted.
- **Smartwatches:** Smartwatches must not be worn or placed within reach.

Exam Behavior Rules:

- **Silence is Required:** Candidates must remain silent throughout the exam. Reading questions out loud is not permitted.
- **No Background Noise:** Ensure your environment is free of noise and distractions.
- **No Questions on Exam Content:** Candidates are not allowed to ask questions about exam content during the testing period.
- **Identification:** You must present a valid, government-issued photo ID during check-in.
- **Punctuality:**
 - Arrive at your scheduled time.
 - Candidates arriving more than 15 minutes late will be marked as no-shows and must reschedule.

Proctor Authority:

- Proctors can stop the exam at any time if rules are violated.
- Failure to maintain professional conduct or to comply promptly with proctor instructions may result in exam termination.
- Candidates may be asked to re-scan their environment if a rule infraction is suspected.
- If inappropriate behavior continues, the proctor may terminate the exam session and submit a report for review.
- Exam Recordings: The entire exam is recorded with time-stamped markers for any rule violations.

Consequences for Violations:

- Immediate termination of the exam
- Disqualification from the certification process

For questions or concerns about exam rules, contact: support+pacb@prolydian.com or (850) 739-8992.

Optional Break Policy

To ensure fairness and security during remote-proctored BCPA exams, PACB has implemented the following optional break policy:

Break Details:

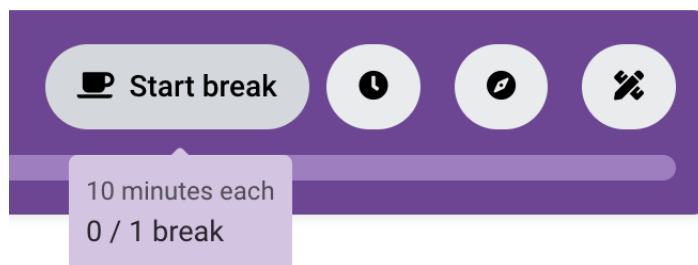
- Candidates have 3 hours to complete 150 multiple-choice questions.
- The exam is delivered in a single session. One optional 10-minute break is available within the 3-hour testing window. Additional breaks may be approved only as a disability-related accommodation. The exam clock does not stop for any breaks.

Break Guidelines:

- Before initiating the break, you must review, check, and finalize answers to all questions in the first exam block.
- **Example:**
 - Sam reaches question 50 but leaves questions 11 and 21 unanswered.
 - Before starting the break, Sam must complete questions 11 and 21.
 - After the break, the exam will resume at question 51.
 - Unanswered questions before the break remain unanswered.

⚠ **IMPORTANT: Before Taking Your Break**

You will not be able to view any pre-break questions after your break, including the question you're on when starting your break. Be sure to review and finalize all answers before initiating the break.



- Candidates who choose not to take the optional break can review all questions before final submission.

Security Screening After Break:

- After the break, candidates must undergo another security check before resuming the exam.
- Environment checks and identity verification will be repeated.

Key Reminders:

- The 10-minute break is optional.
- Candidates must follow the proctor's instructions during the break.
- Failure to return within the allotted 10 minutes may result in termination of the exam session.

For further clarification about the break policy, contact: support+pacb@prolydian.com or (850) 739-8992.

Handling of Tests

PACB, in collaboration with Prolydian and MonitorEDU, ensures the secure handling of all exam data.

In Case of Data Loss:

- In the rare event of lost or unreadable data, candidates will be:
 - Required to retake the examination
 - Exempt from paying re-examination fees

Exam Results Notification, Retesting, and Appeals

Online Credential Management

PACB Portal Features The secure online portal (<https://app.prolydian.com/organizations/PACB>) provides 24/7 access to:

Account Management

- Personal information updates
- Contact information maintenance
- Professional development tracking
- Certification status monitoring

Continuing Education Tracking

- CE activity submission and approval
- Progress monitoring toward recertification requirements
- Documentation upload and storage
- Automatic reminder notifications

Notification of Test Results:

- Candidates will receive their exam results via email within four (4) weeks after the exam cycle concludes.
- For security reasons, results will not be provided over the phone or by fax.

Examination Score Determination:

- Passing Standard: Determined using the Modified-Angoff Method and Hofstee Range Estimation, recognized best practices in certification testing.
- Scaled Scoring: Exam results are presented using a scaled scoring system to ensure fairness and consistency across multiple exam forms.

Example of Scaled Scoring:

Raw Score	Form 'A' Scaled Score	Form 'B' Scaled Score
100	105	105
97	102	100
95	100	98

Note: This example is for illustrative purposes only and does not reflect actual passing scores.

Domain Feedback:

- Candidates will receive general feedback on performance across domains.
- Domain feedback is intended only for study guidance and does not impact the final score.

Retesting Policy:

- Candidates may attempt the BCPA exam up to three times within a three-year period. After three unsuccessful attempts, additional testing requires appeal approval.
- A retesting fee applies (see fee schedule).

Appeals Process:

- Appeals must be submitted in writing within 30 days of receiving results.
- Appeals will be reviewed by the Certification Commission.

For questions regarding test results, retesting, or appeals, contact: help@pacboard.org.

Results and Next Steps

Passing the Examination

Certification is granted only after successful completion of all eligibility, examination, and review requirements established by PACB.

- Candidates who successfully pass the BCPA examination and meet all credentialing and application requirements will:
 - Receive official notification via email.
 - Be granted the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) credential.

Credential Ownership:

- The BCPA credential remains the property of PACB.
- PACB reserves the right to withdraw, cancel, revoke, or annul the certification for cause.

For any questions regarding certification status, contact: help@pacboard.org.

Failing the Examination

- Candidates who do not pass the examination will receive a performance report indicating areas of weakness.
- Detailed item-specific results will not be provided.

The BCPA examination is designed to differentiate professional competence across all domains of practice. As a result, not all qualified candidates pass on their first attempt. A non-pass outcome does not reflect professional worth; rather, it identifies areas where additional preparation is recommended prior to retesting.

Clarification Regarding Appeals and Certification Concerns

A request for review of an adverse certification outcome must meet the criteria and timelines established by PACB see Reexamination Policy below. General dissatisfaction with examination outcomes, testing conditions, or certification requirements does not constitute an appeal and does not result in score review or modification.

Next Steps: Candidates may retest as outlined in the Reexamination Policy below.

Reexamination Policy

- The BCPA exam may be attempted up to three (3) times within a three-year period.
- After three unsuccessful attempts, candidates must:
 - Submit an appeal to PACB for consideration to retest.
 - Wait for approval from the Certification Commission before proceeding.

Reexamination Requirements:

- Each exam attempt requires:
 - A new application submission
 - Payment of the required retest fee

Retesting After Certification:

- Certificants may retake the BCPA exam as part of their recertification process instead of completing continuing education requirements.

For reexamination inquiries, contact: help@pacboard.org.

Purpose of Recertification

Recertification ensures that Board Certified Patient Advocates (BCPAs) remain current with best practices, ethical standards, and emerging trends in patient and health care advocacy.

For comprehensive details, refer to the: **Continuing Education and Recertification Guide:** <https://www.pacboard.org/renewal-guidelines/>

Contact Information Responsibility

It is the certificant's responsibility to ensure that their contact information remains accurate and up-to-date within the BCPA (Prolydian) portal.

- PACB, MonitorEDU, and Prolydian are not responsible for missed communications due to:
 - Incorrect email or mailing addresses
 - Emails delivered to a spam folder
 - Opting out or unsubscribing from PACB, MonitorEDU, or Prolydian communications

Privacy Policy:

- PACB adheres to its Privacy Policy, available at www.pacboard.org.
- Candidate and certificant data will not be shared without written permission unless required by court order or other legal processes.

For assistance with contact information updates: help@pacboard.org.

Certification Mark Usage Policies and Procedures

Appropriate Use of the Certification Mark:

Individuals awarded the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) credential may represent their certification using:

- First Name, Last Name, BCPA
- Board Certified Patient Advocate

Improper Use - If certification is suspended, revoked, or withdrawn:

- The individual must immediately stop using the BCPA title or acronym on:
 - Stationery
 - Websites
 - Business cards
 - Promotional materials

Certificates

- A digital certificate will be available for download after the official exam score report is issued.
- Certificants can access their certificates anytime via the BCPA (Prolydian) portal:
<https://app.prolydian.com>

Lapel Pin

- BCPA lapel pins are available for purchase exclusively by Board Certified Patient Advocates in good standing.
- Revenue from pin sales supports the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Scholarship Fund.

Learn more about the scholarship initiative: www.pacboard.org.

PACB Certification Terms and Conditions

The Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB) supports and promotes professional standards for patient advocacy certification.

Commitment to Professionalism:

BCPA certificants are expected to:

- Uphold the highest standards of professionalism
- Conduct business honestly, transparently, and with integrity
- Comply with the PACB Certification [Code of Professional Responsibility](#)

Certification Requirements:

Applicants for BCPA certification must:

- Not engage in misconduct (negligent, harmful, or intentional)
- Report professional convictions or suspensions within 10 calendar days
- Comply with all local, state, and federal laws
- Avoid unethical gifts or compensation intended to influence professional judgment
- Not engage in fraudulent conduct related to certification or advocacy
- Avoid misrepresenting PACB or the BCPA credential
- Maintain professional competence and ethics

Grounds for Certification Revocation:

Certification may be revoked if a certificant:

- Provides false information during the certification process
- Engages in unethical behavior
- Violates the PACB [Code of Professional Responsibility](#)

For details about certification standards: <https://www.pacboard.org>.

Candidate User Agreement

All candidates must sign the Candidate User Agreement to be eligible for the BCPA credential.

Agreement Statement:

- I certify that all information provided in this application is true, complete, and accurate.
- I authorize PACB to verify the accuracy of all submitted information.
- I understand that violations of the PACB Certification Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary actions, denial, or revocation of certification.
- I recognize that certification admission may be revoked if false information is provided or misconduct is identified.
- I agree to uphold the PACB Certification [Code of Professional Responsibility](#).

Attestation Statement

By electronically signing the BCPA application, candidates affirm:

- All disclosure answers are true and accurate.
- They will comply with recertification requirements.
- They will adhere to PACB policies, procedures, and the [Code of Professional Responsibility](#).
- They understand that certification can be revoked for violations of PACB policies.

Certification Validity:

- Certification is valid for three years, provided the certificant remains in good standing and adheres to PACB policies.

Certification Listing:

- Certified individuals will be listed on the PACB website unless a removal request is submitted. Note that the website listing provides the certificant's name, city/state, and the cycle in which the certification was earned. PACB does not offer a public directory of practicing advocates.