



Patient Advocate Certification Board

Candidate Handbook

Certification Guide to the BCPA Examination

Updated May, 2023



2023 Testing Period (2)	2024 Testing Period (1)	2024 Testing Period (2)
Application Deadline: October 13, 2023	Application Deadline: March 22, 2024	Application Deadline: October 11, 2024
Testing Begins: September 23, 2023	Testing Begins: March 2, 2024	Testing Begins: September 21, 2024
Testing Ends: October 21, 2023	Testing Ends: March 30, 2024	Testing Ends: October 19, 2024

With Examination Administration by:



And Secure Remote Proctoring by:



Overview

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

The Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) credential is administered by the Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB). It is the first professional certification for patient/health care advocates offering an independent, data-driven assessment of core knowledge requirements. PACB seeks to manage and maintain a universally recognized certification for patient/health care advocates; establish and maintain relevant knowledge domains, skills, ethical standards, and best practices for advocates; collaborate with healthcare consumers to achieve patient and family-centered care; establish professional development for certified advocates; and promote and professionalize patient and health care advocacy.

The purpose of the certification is to benefit the public by granting the BCPA certification and upholding it as the recognized standard of excellence for patient and health care advocates – one of the fastest-growing professions in the country. PACB acts in the public interest by fostering professional standards in patient and health care advocacy through setting standards and enforcing education, examination, experience, and professional and ethical conduct requirements.

These objectives are achieved by:

1. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required to improve patient outcomes.
2. Providing a basic standard of knowledge requisite for certification, thereby assisting employers, state agencies, the public, and members of the health professions in the retention and inclusion of a patient or health care advocate as an extension of the patient.
3. Recognizing formally those individuals who meet all the eligibility requirements of the Patient Advocate Certification Board (PACB) and pass the examination for Board Certified Patient Advocate.
4. Encouraging continued personal and professional growth in the practice of patient and health care advocacy.

Benefits of BCPA Certification

Consumers benefit from:

- Objective, independent, third-party evaluation and assessment of professional competence.
- Commitment to public safety and/or consumer protection.
- Accountability through ethical conduct standards and/or a disciplinary process.
- Recertification requirements for continued or enhanced competence¹.

Individual benefits:

Earning the BCPA credential puts you in a special league, positioning you as a leader and role model in patient and health care advocacy. Investing in BCPA certification is an investment in yourself and your long-term career. BCPA certification can help you:

- Improve your earning potential.
- Open the door to more opportunities for career advancement.
- Increase your job mobility and choices even in the face of a tough job market.
- Reach not only your short-term job goals but also position yourself for success in your long-term career.
- Provide a foundation of broad and deep understanding.

Employer benefits:

PACB certification represents a high level of achievement and demonstrates proficiency and a broad base of knowledge in patient and health care advocacy. BCPA-certified professionals pass a rigorous exam and commit to ongoing professional development and recertification. Hiring PACB-certified individuals or investing in BCPA certification for your current employees can help:

- Increase the competence level of your staff.
- Build a strong, dedicated team that is committed to high standards of care and quality.
- Promote the ongoing enhancement of knowledge and skills.
- Improve the quality of information and care.
- Minimize errors and reduce exposure to fraud and abuse charges.
- Increase efficiency and reduce costs.

¹ Content for this statement inspired by the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) 2012, A Look at the Value of Professional Certification.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Patient Advocate Certification Board endorses the principles of equal opportunity. Eligibility criteria for examination and certification as a Board Certified Patient Advocate are applied equally to all individuals regardless of race, nationality, religion or creed, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity/paternity, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, Veteran status, genetic information, citizenship, or immigration status.

Statement of Impartiality

PACB's certification program is governed by the Certification Commission, a semi-independent body operating under the authority of the organization's Board of Directors. In adherence to best practices for certifying bodies, Certification Commission volunteers and certification staff are not involved in the development of any preparatory program; also, no preparatory program is endorsed by the Certification Commission, nor is it a prerequisite to earning the certification. The Certification Commission and its staff are solely responsible for the policies and administration of the certification program, including application procedures and qualification requirements.

Contact Information

Patient Advocate Certification Board - (PACB)

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

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

support+pacb@prolydian.com

Examity is a secure and reliable online proctoring solution that gives candidates the flexibility and safety to take the exam remotely. It provides certification boards like PACB with robust security features to prevent cheating and preserve the integrity of the credential.

Technical support for examination only:

855-EXAMITY (select option 1), email support@examity.com , or chat directly through the Live Chat feature on the Examity dashboard.

Part 1 – The Application Process

Participation in the BCPA certification program is voluntary and open to anyone meeting the eligibility requirements. Read and follow the directions found online, within the Application, and in this Handbook. All Applications are completed online via our registration system hosted by Prolydian. <https://app.prolydian.com/organizations/PACB>

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

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

The completed Application, plus all required documentation and fees, must be submitted to and will be processed online by Prolydian. (If you prefer to mail a check, please see Fees on page 11 of this Handbook for instructions.)

Once your application and fees have been submitted and processed, you should receive a receipt of payment from Prolydian via email. If you have not received a receipt within two (2) business days following online application submission, you should contact Prolydian at 850-739-8992 or by email at support+pacb@prolydian.com to confirm the status of the application. Failure to comply with all the procedures will result in being prohibited from sitting for the exam, and your registration fees will be forfeited.

The PACB Certification Commission reviews and verifies the information provided in each application. Once your application is submitted, including two (2) letters of recommendation and exam fees, members of the Commission will review the submission to ensure each candidate meets the currently published eligibility criteria. All applicants will receive approval or denial notification by email. Applications that are denied receive an explanation and information to submit an appeal. All applications must be received on or before the published application deadline listed in this Handbook. (See page 1)

Applicant Responsibilities:

- Read the entire Candidate Handbook. Completion of the application includes an attestation indicating you have read and understood the policies outlined in this Handbook.
- Complete the online application, including two (2) letters of recommendation. Candidates applying via the 'Equivalent Experience' pathway also must submit a written narrative outlining their advocacy experience (paid or volunteer) with at least five (5) citations from the list of Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities statements.
<https://www.pacboard.org/eligibility/>
- PACB will notify you by email within five (5) business days, indicating your application was accepted, denied, or needs additional information.
- If your application is approved, you will receive an examination scheduling authorization notice via email.
- If your application lacks the required information, follow the instructions, and re-submit.
- If your application is denied, you may appeal the decision. (See 10 for more information)

Part 2 – Are you Eligible to Apply

Eligibility requires a combination of education and experience; however, candidates who are seasoned practitioners may request eligibility based on experience only.

- All candidates must complete the self-assessment [quiz](#)².

Eligibility Pathways:

1. Education Pathway: bachelor's degree or higher (or the international equivalent).
2. Equivalent Experience Pathway: (paid or volunteer) submitted as written documentation. See <https://www.pacboard.org/eligibility/> for an example of acceptable documentation.

Note: Certificates or certifications earned do not constitute documentation of equivalent experience. See the following list for examples of supporting evidence AND the [website](#) for additional information regarding documentation of experience.

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.

Acceptable Documentation for Equivalent Experience:

- Publishing original materials related to patient advocacy.
- Teaching coursework and/or seminars related to patient advocacy.
- Volunteer work: i.e., Hospice, Disease-specific foundations, Hospital.
- Work in health-related industries.
- EMT/Paramedics.
- Military Recovery Care.
- A job description that supports roles in patient/health care advocacy.

Part 3 – Moral Character

As part of your application for BCPA certification, you must complete the following Disclosure Questionnaire. Candidates must upload a detailed written explanation for any “yes” answers. Additional information may be required upon review of your application.

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 relating to your professional or business conduct, or are you currently named as a party in any such action?
3. Within the last ten years, have you been a defendant or respondent in a civil action, which includes, but is not limited to, a lawsuit, arbitration, or mediation relating to your professional or business conduct, or are you currently named as a party in any such 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 has any such body censured, fined, restricted, or reprimanded you?
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 has such organization named you as a subject of an investigation or complaint?
7. Have you ever been convicted of violating any law or ordinance dealing with the use, possession, or sale of drugs or alcohol?
8. Have you ever been convicted of violating any statute or ordinance dealing with sexual assault, abuse, molestation, indecent solicitation, obscenity, or similar immoral acts?

Part 4 – Submit the Application

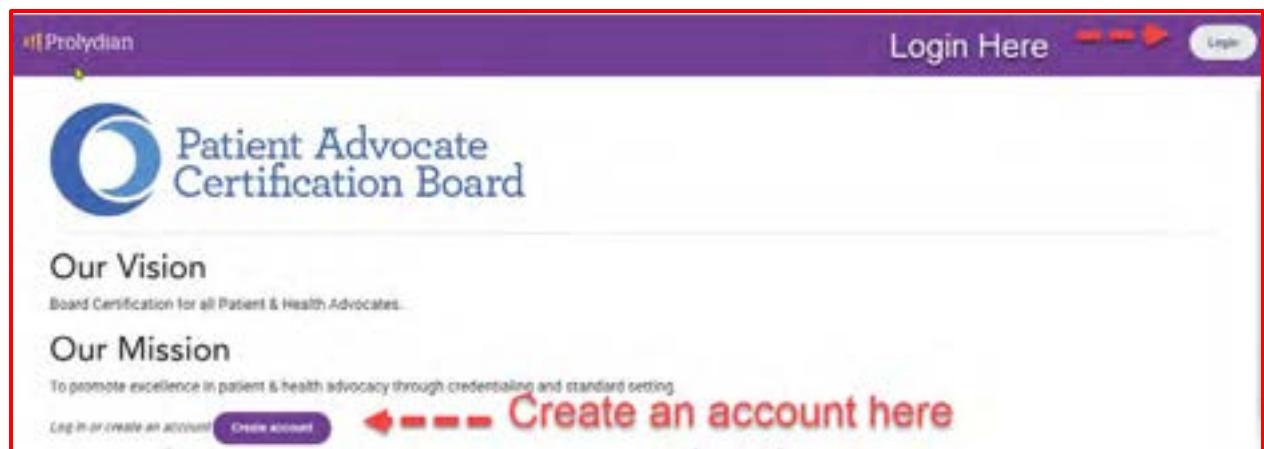
Apply Online

By submitting a registration application for the exam, you attest that you have read the entire Candidate Handbook and agree to abide by all stated policies. In compliance with our privacy policy, PACB maintains the confidentiality of candidate data and information.

To register online, you will be prompted to log into your account (hosted by Prolydian) with your username and password.

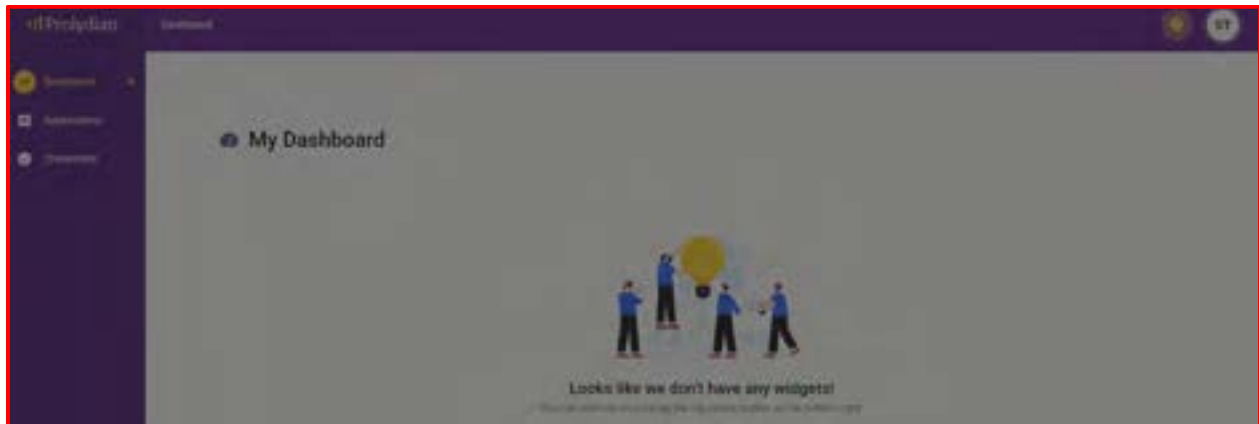
- Login page URL: <https://app.prolydian.com/organizations/PACB>
- New applicants must create a profile in the [BCPA online portal](#) (hosted by Prolydian).
- If you already have an account, please **do not create a new one**.

Login to your account:



- If you do not know your login information, use the 'forgot my password' feature; or contact support+pacb@prolydian.com.
- Make sure you have the required two (2) letters of recommendation available to
- upload as part of your application. Accepted file types include .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpeg, .jpg, and .png.
- If you are applying for eligibility via the Equivalent Experience pathway, have your written documentation available to upload as part of your application. Accepted file types include .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpeg, .jpg, and .png.

Once logged in, you should arrive at your Dashboard. Click on My Applications. If you have previously started an application, you should see it listed as 'in progress.' If you wish to start a new application, click on Apply now.



- Complete the candidate information profile.
- Complete the disclosure questionnaire.
- Complete and submit the signed PACB Application for Certification, which includes agreeing to the PACB Terms of awarding and maintaining certification.
- Agree to abide by and uphold the PACB Code of Professional Responsibility.
- Pay the application and test fee (\$395).
- PACB does not accept mailed or faxed application forms unless otherwise specified. Application/exam fees are not transferable to other individuals and are not refundable. See detailed Cancellation policies outlined in this Guide.
- Look for a confirmation email to arrive within two (2) business days of submitting your BCPA application.
- Make sure support+pacb@prolydian.com is an allowed sender for your email provider!



Candidates have 24/7 access to review and update application contact information, AFTER creating a profile and signing terms of agreement. Once the application is approved the candidate will receive an *authorization to test* email confirming eligibility status and further instructions about scheduling the exam. **Once approved, application fees are non-refundable.**

Part 5 – After Application Submission

Notification of Eligibility

Approval decisions will be emailed within five (5) business days after submission.

First Time Applicants

The BCPA examination is administered two times a year, once in the spring and once in the fall. Eligibility, once approved, is valid for the first available testing window. If you are unable or do not wish to take the exam in the first available testing window after your application is approved, you may request a move to the next exam window. If you wish to defer to a later cycle, you must pay a non-refundable fee (see fee schedule on page 12). You may only defer one time, after which, if you have not tested, you must submit a new application and pay the published fees at that time.

Eligibility Denial and Appeals Policy

In the event an application is not approved, the applicant will be notified in writing. The applicant shall have the right to appeal the decision. Such notice must be in writing and received by the PACB Executive Director within thirty (30) days from the date of the original notification. The Executive Director shall forward all relevant data to the Appeals Committee, which will make recommendations to the Certification Commission Chair. The Chair will make the final decision in writing to the applicant, and further appeal will not be permitted. The entire appeal process must be completed within 120 days of the original denial notice.

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING REPEAT CANDIDATES

Candidates who previously sat for the exam but did not achieve a passing score may register using the 'Repeat Candidate' application form at a discounted rate.

To Schedule an Exam

- Log into your [BCPA \(Prolydian\)](#) account.
- Choose the “Schedule” button on your Exams dashboard to select an exam date and time.
- Wait for an appointment confirmation email listing your test date, testing time and instructions for setting up your Examity profile (You must set up a profile with Examity before taking the BCPA exam!).
- Contact support+pacb@prolydian.com if you encounter problems scheduling your exam or if you need to modify your Prolydian or Examity account profile name to match your Photo ID.

Cancellation and Rescheduling

You may cancel or reschedule up to 48 hours before your appointment at no cost. If, however, you cancel your appointment with less than 48 hours’ notice, or if you miss your appointment, show up late or provide inadequate identification, you will not be able to make a new appointment without paying an additional testing fee. Prolydian will send you a confirmation email each time you reschedule or cancel an appointment. (See fee schedule page 12).

Carefully Review Instructions to Ensure a Smooth Exam Experience!

Taking the exam via Remote Proctoring

Before your exam

Prior to beginning your exam, you must complete your Examity profile setup, including the upload of a copy of a government-issued Photo ID. You **MUST** complete the profile setup and computer requirements check prior to beginning your exam. Follow the steps below to complete your profile setup:

- Log into your Prolydian account at <https://app.prolydian.com>.
- Click the “Access my examity account” button from your Prolydian exams dashboard.
- Click the “My profile” button.
- Click the “Edit” button in the Account Information section, add your phone number, and then click Save.
- Upload a photo of your government issued ID in the examiSHOW section and then click the Upload button.

- Click the “Edit” button in the examiKNOW section. Select your security questions, provide your responses, and then click Save.
- Click the “Edit” button in the examiKEY section. Provide the required typed input and then click Save.

On the day of your exam

You may access your exam up to 15 minutes before the scheduled start time. To access your exam:

- Log into your Prolydian account at <https://app.prolydian.com>
- Click the “Access my examity account” button from your Prolydian exams dashboard.
- Click the “Start exam” button.
- Install the Examity extension by following the instructions on the exam start page.
- Click the “Connect to proctor” button.

Exam Results

Candidates will be notified of exam results via email within four weeks after the close of the exam cycle.

Technical Support During the Exam

Examity proctors are available 24/7, 365 days a year. They also have support available 24 hours per day. If you experience connection issues with a proctor, you should first call Examity support at 1-855-EXAMITY or use the in-app chat option from the Examity profile. Examity proctors will do everything they can to assist you with technical issues, but if they are unable to resolve the issue after 45 minutes, the session will be marked as incomplete. In some instances, the exam may be rescheduled (fees may apply), or a new registration may be required.

In addition, if you experience any issues that require technical assistance, please contact Prolydian support at support+pacb@prolydian.com. All other inquiries (not related to technical assistance) should be directed to help@pacboard.org.

Exam Fees

Non Refundable Application and Exam sitting fee \$395

Deferral fee \$75

*Reschedule fee \$125

**Retest fee \$275 (up to 2 re-takes for failure to pass)

Recertification fee by examination \$275 (see CE Handbook for complete details regarding recertification)

Recertification with continuing education \$195

*You may cancel or reschedule at no charge up to 48 hours prior to your scheduled exam. Any request to reschedule within 48 hours of the scheduled time of the exam incurs a \$125 reschedule fee.

**Retest fee is only applicable to candidates who have previously taken the BCPA exam but did not receive a passing score.

Fees are non-transferable from one candidate to another.

Making Payment

Payments may be made by: Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. Complete and authorize the credit card payment section of the online application as directed. To pay by check or money order, make payable to Patient Advocate Certification Board, follow the instructions on the Application, Pay by Check Tab, and mail payment and form to PACB.

To make payment by check or money order, the online Application must be completed first, followed by submission of the mailed payment to:

PACB Examination
2300 Wildwood Ave
#6771
Sherwood, AR 72120

DO NOT SEND CASH. If paying by check, print out the Payment by Check application receipt and include that document with your check.

Recertification

Once certified, BCPAs are required to recertify every three (3) years via the [BCPA \(Prolydian\) online portal](#) by:

- Agreeing to the Code of Professional Responsibility.
- Earning and documenting 30 hours of approved continuing education and paying the \$275 recertification fee OR by passing the BCPA exam.

See Recertification under Policies and Procedures for complete details.



All BCPA application and recertification materials are available and maintained online via the [BCPA Access Portal](#) (Prolydian). PACB will not accept mailed or faxed application forms unless otherwise specified.

Examination

Remote Proctored Exam

The BCPA certification exam is administered as a computer-based test (CBT) administered via Examity throughout the United States and across the globe. **Examity** is a secure and reliable online proctoring solution that gives candidates the flexibility and safety to take the exam remotely. It provides certification boards like PACB with robust security features to prevent cheating and preserve the integrity of the credential.

Exam Format

The BCPA exam consists of 125 multiple-choice questions covering the 7 domains as described in the Competencies and Best Practices for Patient Advocates and the Ethical Standards for a Board Certified Patient Advocate. Candidates are presented with a question and are asked to choose the correct answer from the three options provided. Only one answer is correct. There is no penalty assessed for an incorrect answer; points are scored only for correct answers. An exam form may contain an additional twenty-five pre-test items (unscored test questions), which are allotted for in the exam duration time.

Candidates have three hours to complete the examination. A digital clock will indicate the time remaining to complete the examination. The “Time” feature may be turned off during the examination. Only one examination question is presented at a time, and each question has three possible answer options. To choose a particular answer option, click on the radio button (circle) next to the answer. Candidates may move back and forth through the questions. Questions may be flagged for follow-up.

Language

- The examination is offered in English only.

Special Accommodations/Test Administration Modifications

Special accommodations to test administration shall be provided to candidates with a disability (as defined by Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Canadian Federal Disabilities Act, and the Canadian Charter of Human Rights) who submit with their certification application, a written explanation of their needs, along with appropriate medical documentation. Requests must be submitted at least six weeks prior to the test date. This is required to allow sufficient time for adequate arrangements to be made on behalf of the test candidate. The application form for accommodations is available [here](#). Contact help@pacboard for additional accommodation information.

Candidate Comments and Evaluation

During the examination, candidates may make comments for any question by clicking on the button displaying an exclamation point (!) to the left of the “Time” button. This opens a dialogue box where comments may be entered. Comments will be reviewed, but no individual identifying information is provided.

Preparing for the Examination: Examination Content Outline

The examination for the Board Certified Patient Advocate credential is a computer-based examination composed of 150 multiple-choice questions administered in one session, with no predefined breaks. Candidates have 3 hours to complete the exam. The exam consists of 125 scored items and 25 pre-test/unscored items with three-option multiple-choice responses. The pre-test items are randomly distributed throughout the test and do not count toward the score.

The content measured by the examination is based on four key documents, each of which has been approved for usage by the PACB following rigorous public comment solicitation and Subject Matter Expert review.

Each of these documents is available at <https://pacboard.org>.

- Ethical Standards
- Competencies and Best Practices
- Key Terms; and
- Code of Professional Responsibility

The current examination is based on United States (U.S.) patient and health care advocacy best practices and standards that have emerged over time. Residents outside of the United States are encouraged to take the examination acknowledging the exam is based on the US healthcare system, including payor sources and regulatory agencies.

The exam is constructed to be consistent with minimal competency requirements for a Board Certified Patient Advocate according to criteria referenced testing concepts. A committee of subject matter experts is charged with reviewing and updating the pool of questions (known as the ‘item bank’). The examination measures knowledge across seven topic areas that reflect the critical aspects of patient/health care advocacy. Topic areas are weighted in terms of their importance for effective performance on the job. The weights convey the percentage of the exam that is allocated to each area. Larger percentages mean more items on the exam are related to that topic area.

The examination for Board Certified Patient Advocate credential is weighted as follows, based on task, importance, and frequency:

I.	Scope of Practice and Transparency	12%
II.	Empowerment, Autonomy, Rights, and Equity	18%
III.	Communication and Interpersonal Relationships	19%
IV.	Healthcare Access, Finance, and Management	14%
V.	Medical Knowledge and the Healthcare System	10%
VI.	Professionalism, Professional Development, and Practice	5%
VII.	Ethical, Legal, and Practice Standards	22%
	TOTAL	100%

Further description and more information about each of these domains of practice can be found on the PACBoard website at: <https://pacboard.org>.

BCPA Exams Are Developed Using Nationally Recognized Industry Standards.

The BCPA examination conforms to a content outline based on a job task analysis of patient and health care advocates. A job task analysis is an industry-wide survey that identifies the areas of work-related functions required for competent performance as a professional patient/health care advocate. It must detail and rank tasks, knowledge, skills, and abilities that are of relative importance to the profession. Exam questions are based on this analysis, and it is an essential process in identifying required expertise and performance standards.

Policies and Procedures

PACB is committed to excellence in the administration and maintenance of its BCPA certification. Please review policies and procedures and use as a guide to ensure an optimum certification experience.

Application Eligibility, Retest, and Cancellations

Personal Information Changes

The BCPA (Prolydian) online portal is the primary method used for communication regarding eligibility, exam confirmations, exam results, and recertification. Candidates and certificants have 24/7 access to exam-profile details and are responsible for ensuring their contact information is current.

Applicant Ineligibility

An applicant may be determined to be ineligible for the following reasons:

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

If it is determined that the information provided is inadequate to assess eligibility, the applicant will be notified and provided a two-week deadline by which to respond with the necessary documentation. If documents are not received by the given deadline and/or there is no follow-up action taken by the applicant, the application will be denied. Subsequent applications will NOT be processed under the original fee.

Appeals Policy

In the event an application is not approved, the applicant will be notified in writing. The applicant shall have the right to appeal the decision. Such notice must be in writing and received by the PACB Executive Director within thirty (30) days from the date of the original notification. The Executive Director shall forward all relevant data to the Appeals Committee, which will make recommendations to the Certification Commission Chair. The Chair will make the final decision in writing to the applicant, and further appeal will not be permitted. The entire appeal process must be completed within 120 days of the original denial notice.

Test Eligibility Period

The BCPA examination is offered two times per year during a four-week window. The spring cycle typically begins the first Saturday in March and concludes four weeks later. The fall cycle typically begins on the last Saturday in September and concludes four weeks later in October. Candidates who are approved to test must sit for the exam during the cycle for which they have registered. Should a registered candidate wish to test at a later cycle, the current examination appointment must be canceled (see cancellation policy/fee, page 11) and rescheduled for a future cycle. Eligibility extends for a period of 12 months from the original date of approval.

Extension

Candidates who are unable to test within their eligibility period due to adverse or unforeseen circumstances may submit a request to be moved to the next testing period. Rescheduling fees may apply.

Cancellation and Refund

Application/Exam fees are non-refundable. Exams can be rescheduled within the same test cycle through the test provider without penalty up to 48 hours before the scheduled exam time. Candidates who fail to appear for an examination forfeit all fees and must pay appropriate fees for subsequent examinations.

Under extreme circumstances (medical emergency or death of an immediate family member), late cancellations may be accepted. Extreme circumstances must immediately precede or coincide with the exam, and documentation must be provided in writing within seven days of the original examination date. Approvals will be made on a case-by-case basis.

*NOTE: Applications that are denied will receive a full refund.

Audit

PACB may audit a portion of the applications that are submitted for compliance with the certification program requirements. It is the candidate/certificant's responsibility to keep all documentation necessary to support program compliance.

Authority

PACB reserves the right to ask applicants to furnish additional information and to make inquiries as may be deemed appropriate to identify the nature and extent of the applicant's education, experience, competency, or moral character.

Remote Proctored Exam Rules

The following are the rules enforced during all test administrations:

- All candidates must have a proper government-issued photo ID to be admitted to the test.
- Candidates are admitted only to their assigned time.
- Candidates arriving more than 15 minutes late will be required to reschedule the examination.
- Only one monitor is allowed. Dual monitors must be disconnected prior to the exam.
- No guests are permitted in the candidate's examination room.
- No reference material, books, papers, or personal items (purses, briefcases, coats, cell phones, etc.) are allowed on the candidate's examination desk.
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the testing period.
- Candidates must remain seated in a chair for the duration of the exam.
- Proctors have the right to stop the examination at any time should the candidate fail to abide by exam rules.
- The exam is also recorded with time stamps marking any possible infraction of exam rules. PACB reserves the right to disqualify any candidate for failure to abide by exam rules.
- **No food or beverages are permitted during the exam.**
- **No breaks are scheduled during the exam, including restroom breaks. **NEW!** See the complete Break policy in the next section.**
- Candidates may not engage in any conduct or inappropriate behavior that is injurious to the integrity of the examination.

Optional Break Policy – effective Fall exam cycle, 2023.

PACB announces an update to the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) examination effective with the fall exam cycle beginning September 23, 2023.

To ensure fairness and security for the live remote-proctored examinations, the BCPA exams will be administered using a set of standardized security protocols in alignment with standards recommended by the Institute of Credentialing Excellence.

This security policy will affect the examination format and the break policy. Candidates will have a total of three (3) hours to complete 150 questions in the BCPA examination, which will include an optional 10-minute break during the 3-hour window.

Candidates who wish to take advantage of the break must make sure they have reviewed, checked, and/or changed any answers up to the point of the break. Once the break is initiated, a candidate will not be able to access the first block of exam questions.

For example, Sam gets through the first 50 questions on the exam. He left questions 11 and 21 unanswered. Before initiating the break, he must complete questions 11 and 21. Once the break is over, his exam will resume at question 51. Any unanswered questions prior to the break will remain unanswered.

Candidates who do not take the optional break will be able to review the exam in its entirety before completion.

Note that the 10-minute break is optional. If a break is taken, an additional security screening will be required before proceeding to complete the second block of the exam. During the 10-minute break, the exam clock will continue to run such that break time is deducted from the total allowable test time.

Candidate Responsibilities

Before the exam

Prior to beginning the exam, candidates must complete their Examity profile setup, including the upload of a government-issued Photo ID. Candidates **MUST** complete the profile setup and computer requirements check prior to beginning their exam.

The steps are listed below and will also be included in the authorization to schedule email notifications:

1. Log into your Prolydian account at <https://app.prolydian.com>
2. Click the "Access my examity account" button from your Prolydian exams dashboard.
3. Click the "My profile" button.
4. Click the "Edit" button in the Account Information section, add your phone number, and then click Save.
5. Upload a photo of your government-issued ID in the examiSHOW section and then click the Upload button.
6. Click the "Edit" button in the examiKNOW section. Select your security questions, provide your responses, and then click Save.
7. Click the "Edit" button in the examiKEY section. Provide the required typed input and then click Save.
8. Examity V5 System Check: <https://on.v5.examity.com/systemcheck>

Online Testing Resources:

We STRONGLY encourage you to review these helpful resources to ensure a successful testing experience:

1. A link to Examity's Test Taker Guide is available here: https://www.examity.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/examity_live_proctoring_test_taker_guide_04.12.2023.pdf
2. A video of the candidate experience is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLMdb58HV5M>

On the day of your exam

Log in at least 10 to 15 minutes prior to the exam to do the secure verification process.

To access the exam:

1. Log into your Prolydian account at <https://app.prolydian.com>
2. Click the "Access my examity account" button from your Prolydian exams dashboard.
3. Click the "Start exam" button.
4. Install the Examity extension by following the instructions on the exam start page.
5. Click the "Connect to proctor" button.

Technical Requirements

- Internet Browser: Google Chrome is required with popup blocker disabled*. Other browsers are not supported. Google Chrome (Current Stable and First Preceding Version)
- Operating System: OS X El Capitan 10.11 or later, Windows 10 (Windows machines in 10 S mode are not supported).
- A working built-in or external webcam and microphone. Web Camera: Minimum- 640×480 resolution, Recommended- 1280×720 resolution.
- A Functioning Microphone: Webcams with built in microphones and stand alone microphones are supported.
- Desktop computer or laptop. None of the following are supported: Not Supported: Tablets (iPad, Galaxy Tab, Galaxy Note, etc.), Mobile (Android, iOS), ARM CPU Architecture, Chromebooks.
- RAM: Minimum – 2GB, Recommended- 4GB
- Operating System: OS X El Capitan 10.11 or later, Windows 10 (Windows machines in 10 S mode are not supported),
- Internet Download Speed: A required upload and download speed of 2Mbps, with 10Mbps preferred. Hot spots are not supported.

How to Disable Pop-Up Blockers

How to Disable Pop-Up Blocker on **Chrome (Desktop)**

1. Open your Chrome browser
2. In the upper right-hand corner, click the three vertical dots, then select **Settings**
3. At the bottom of the menu, click **Advanced**
4. Scroll down to “Privacy and security,” and select **SiteSettings**
5. Select **Pop-ups and redirects**
6. At the top of the menu, toggle the setting to **Allowed** to disable the pop-up blocker

Power Failure or Loss of Internet

Computer-based tests are delivered via secure Internet connections. Internet connections are subject to local Internet providers. While it is not the norm, Internet connections can on occasion be lost momentarily, requiring the proctor to log you back into your exam. If you lose your Internet connection, inform the proctor, who will assist you in logging back into your exam. Upon logging back into your exam, you will resume at the first unanswered question. Your exam time remaining will be the same as it was when the Internet connection was lost.

Confidentiality

Information about candidates for testing and their examination results are considered confidential. Studies and reports concerning candidates will contain no information identifiable with any candidate unless authorized by the candidate.

Violating Rules

If a candidate is discovered violating testing rules, which are explained to all exam candidates, the candidate's scores may be invalidated, and the candidate may be barred or permanently prohibited from participating in the certification program. Proctors are authorized to take immediate, appropriate measures against candidates who are caught violating testing rules.

Misconduct During the Examination

It is improper for examination candidates to engage in any of the following activities:

- Fail to observe any rules of conduct as outlined by the proctor.
- Copy in writing or otherwise record or transmit to others any examination questions and/or answers or other aspects of the nature or content of the examination.
- Bring any unauthorized items of any nature (e.g., books, notes) to their exam room.
- Engage in any other conduct or inappropriate behavior that is injurious to the integrity of the examination.

Note: Any attempt to print out any materials within or related to the exam will result in immediate disqualification.

Dismissal

Any candidate who is observed engaging in any misconduct will be subject to dismissal from the examination, may be barred from future examinations for a period ranging from one year to permanent dismissal, and may be required to forfeit his or her current examination fee and/or period of eligibility. Proctors are authorized to take immediate, appropriate measures against candidates who are caught violating testing rules. The candidate is entitled to appeal the dismissal determination.

Violation of Code of Professional Responsibility

If it is determined that a candidate has violated the Code of Professional Responsibility, the candidate may be barred from taking the exam for a timeframe that is determined by the Certification Commission, if determined necessary or appropriate based upon the seriousness of the incident or violation.

Unforeseen Circumstances Preventing Testing

If, for any reason, the exam is unable to be administered or if any candidate is unable to test due to inclement weather, terrorist acts, natural disasters, or other unforeseen emergencies beyond the control of the candidate as determined by PACB, the candidate may receive an extended testing window (to be determined on an individual basis) and will be allowed to reschedule the examination without being charged a re-examination fee.

Examination Irregularities

Any problems, suspected instances of cheating, alleged inappropriate examination administration, environmental testing conditions severe enough to cause disruption of the process or other irregularities related to test administration will be addressed with the proctor. All such matters will be reported, investigated, and subject to further action based on policies and procedures adopted by the Certification Committee. Cheating or other violations of the Certification Code of Conduct or matters that may constitute grounds for disciplinary action will be handled under the disciplinary procedures adopted by the Compliance and Certification Committees, but other issues in the nature of examination irregularities are not subject to appeal.

Handling of Tests

PACB and our exam partners (Prolydian and Examity) will take all available precautions to ensure the appropriate and secure handling of completed test data. In the rare and extreme case in which the test data become lost or unreadable, candidates will be required to undergo retesting without being charged a re-examination fee.

Exam Results Notification, Retesting, and Appeals

Notification of Test Results

Candidates taking the computer-based test will be notified by email within four weeks after the conclusion of the exam cycle. For security reasons, results will not be given over the phone or sent by fax.

Examination Score

To earn the BCPA credential, a candidate must pass the certification examination. PACB's exam team constantly reviews the exam, adding new questions and removing outdated ones to address changes in the profession. As such, several versions of the exam may exist at any given time. In addition, we review the overall performance of the exam after each cycle and even track the results of each individual test question. Statistically, we know that some versions of the exam may be slightly easier or more difficult than other versions. A panel of subject matter experts (SME) uses two industry-wide accepted and recommended approaches to ensure proper standardization and establish a recommended passing score: the modified-Angoff method and the Hofstee Range Estimation. In this approach, all SMEs review each item individually to determine the probability that a minimally qualified candidate would answer each question correctly. Collective results from each SME are then compiled to compute the average predicted probability for each item and generate a recommended passing score to PACB. These scores represent the minimum level of knowledge that a patient/health care advocate must demonstrate to pass the exam. To ensure fairness, we use a system called scaled scoring.

A scaled score is a representation of the total number of correct questions answered (aka the raw score) that has been mathematically converted into a standardized scale. Scaled scoring is considered best practice in the certification industry and is used to account for any potential differences in difficulty across various forms of the exam.

Test developers follow strict guidelines when developing multiple exam forms to ensure each version is similar in difficulty. However, variability in individual questions rarely results in forms of the exam that are exactly equal. As a result, percent correct scores do not always represent a fair comparison. For example, a candidate scoring 70% on a difficult form of the exam may have more knowledge than another candidate scoring 80% on an easier version. Similarly, raw scores result in the same discrepancy between the two forms of the exam. For those reasons, a scaled score is used to provide a standard range and allows for direct comparisons of results.

For example, if the scaled passing score for the BCPA exam is 100 on a scale of 70-125 in the table below, you can see Form A is more difficult because it requires fewer correct answers (a raw score of only 95) to achieve a passing score of 100, while on Form B, a raw score of 97 correct items is required to achieve a passing score of 100.

SAMPLE DATA ONLY*

Raw Score	Scaled Score	
	Form A	Form B
100	105	105
99	104	103
98	103	101
97	102	100
96	101	99
95	100	98

**Sample data provided to illustrate the concept of Scaled Scoring.
It is not provided to interpret actual BCPA exam results.*

Candidates pass or fail the test as a whole. While there are no numeric scores calculated by domain, the report will include an indication of the candidate's relative strengths and weaknesses within the domains. Feedback about domain performance is solely for the purposes of identifying areas requiring further study.

Results Passing

Candidates who successfully complete the examination and whose credentials and application entitle them to certification will be notified by email and granted the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) credential. The certification remains the property of PACB, which may withdraw, cancel, revoke, or otherwise annul the certification for cause.

Results Failing

Candidates who do not successfully complete the examination will receive a report indicating areas of weakness. Detailed information regarding individual items or score results is not provided.

Reexamination

The examination for the Board Certified Patient Advocate credential may be taken **up to three times within a three-year period**. If a candidate fails a third time, they must submit an appeal to the PACB for consideration to re-test. Each test attempt requires completion of an application and payment of the required fee. A candidate who passes the BCPA certification test is prohibited from retaking the same exam unless the candidate chooses to do so upon recertification (in lieu of continuing education).

Recertification and Lapsed Designation

Purpose of Recertification

Active BCPAs demonstrate their commitment to staying abreast of industry best practices by ensuring their knowledge and expertise remain current via recertification. View complete details in the Continuing Education/Recertification Guide.

Recertification Process

Certificants must recertify every three years to maintain active BCPA status. Recertification requires:

- Continued agreement and compliance with the Code of Professional Responsibility.
- Submission of 30 hours of approved continuing education, including six hours of ethics and three hours of JEDI³.
- Payment of \$275 recertification fees.

Complete details regarding renewal fees are available in the Continuing Education Handbook for Certificants. Candidates may also retest and pass the BCPA exam in lieu of submitting 30 hours of continuing education.

Continuing Education Hours

PACB uses contact hours to define a unit of continuing education where 1 contact hour equals 60 minutes of educational content. Certificants must ensure that at least 6 of the 30 required contact hours are in the domain of ethics and 3 of the 30 are in the area of JEDI³. CEs are entered online via the BCPA (Prolydian) online portal.

³ The requirement for three (3) hours of CE in the area of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion begins with individuals who earned the certification in 2022. Thereafter, all new certifications and recertifications will be required to submit JEDI CEs. See the [Continuing Education Handbook](#) for additional information.

Filing a Recertification Extension Request

Keeping your credential active requires renewal every 3 years. A BCPA may apply to PACB for a filing extension due to the following conditions:

- Unemployment
- Appointment or election to full-time public office on the local, state, or national level
- Service in the military
- Medical

The request for the filing extension must be submitted in writing to PACB within three months of their recertification date. Extensions are not granted for more than one year and are subject to the review of the Certification Commission. There may be an extension fee of \$125 applied to each request.

Notice of Recertification and Reminders

Approximately six months prior to the expiration of the certificant's certification, PACB will send certificants a notice and information about their current recertification application. This notice will be sent to the certificant's last email address on file with PACBs online BCPA (Prolydian) portal.

It is the professional responsibility of each certificant to notify PACB of a change of address, to be aware of their certification expiration date, and to complete the application by the specified deadlines. Failure to receive notice from PACB does not excuse the certificant from complying with all recertification deadlines.

It is the certificant's responsibility to keep current contact information on file and in their record. PACB, Examity and Prolydian are not responsible for missed communications due to incorrect email or mailing addresses, or for email messages landing in a spam folder. PACB is not responsible for any missed communications regarding any PACB or BCPA matters for individuals who chose to opt out or unsubscribe from messages sent by PACB, Examity or Prolydian.

According to our privacy policy, posted on www.pacboard.org, PACB maintains confidentiality of candidate and certificant data and information. No information will be released without written permission from the applicant, candidate, or certificant unless required by court order or other legal processes.

Loss and Reinstatement of Certification

Individuals who do not meet recertification requirements will lose certified status. To reinstate certified status, individuals must re-establish eligibility and pass the certification examination.

Certification Mark Usage Policies and Procedures

Appropriate Use of the Certification

An individual who has been granted the BCPA may list the certification on stationery, websites, business cards, and other promotional materials as:

First name, Last name, BCPA
Board Certified Patient Advocate

Should the certification be suspended or withdrawn for any reason, the individual must immediately cease the use of the title “Board Certified Patient Advocate” and acronym designation on stationery, websites, business cards, and any and all promotional materials.

Certificates

A digital certificate will be available for download after official exam score reports have been issued. Certificants can access the certificate at any time via their BCPA Portal hosted by Prolydian.

Lapel Pin

Beginning in 2023, lapel pins will be available for purchase by Board Certified Patient Advocates in good standing. All revenue from the sale of the pins supports a scholarship fund for serving PACB’s Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) initiatives. [Learn more.](#)

PACB Certification Terms and Conditions

The Patient Advocate Certification Board is a professional organization that supports and promotes patient/health care advocate certification. The Certification Code of Professional Responsibility enables PACB to define and clarify the professional responsibilities of present and future certificants.

It is vital that BCPA certificants conduct their work in an appropriate and professional manner to earn and maintain the confidence and respect of clients, colleagues, employers, and the public and that they also work to promote the highest standards of the profession, conducting business honestly, openly, and with integrity. To be qualified for BCPA certification, individuals shall act in a professional manner and in accordance with the **Terms and Conditions** of the examination as follows.

Applicants for BCPA certification must:

- Not participate in negligent, harmful, and/or intentional misconduct in their professional work.
- Report to PACB in writing any conviction of a crime, except misdemeanor traffic offenses or traffic ordinance violations, unless such offense involves the use of alcohol or drugs or of any professional suspension within ten calendar days after the date on which the certificant is notified of the conviction or suspension.
- Comply with all applicable local, state/provincial, and federal laws, regulations, and statutes.
- Neither accept nor offer nor make any substantial compensation or gifts with the intent of influencing the judgment of any individual or business entity in connection with the work of the certificant or the certificant's employer, nor accept any substantial compensation from a supplier of materials or services in exchange for recommending or promoting the supplier.
- Not engage in conduct involving fraud or the wanton disregard of the rights of others and shall not have been convicted of a crime, the circumstances of which substantially relate to the practice of patient/health care advocacy or indicate an inability to engage in the practice of patient/health care advocacy safely and/or competently, including but not limited to crimes against children, sexual abuse, civil rights violations, embezzlement, theft, etc.
- Not obtain or attempt to obtain certification by misrepresentation, bribery, fraud, or deception.
- Not make misrepresentations regarding PACB, BCPA certification, or renewal of certification. Not engage in cheating or other dishonest behavior that violates exam security, including memorization, reproduction, or distribution of secure test content and tampering with the contents of the exam.
- In addition, no person shall be permitted to maintain BCPA certification if, in the judgment of the Certification and/or Compliance Committee, the person's professional competence is substantially impaired by physical or mental disabilities such as substance use disorder, accidents affecting the brain, or mental health issues.

Candidate User Agreement

All candidates must sign the Candidate User Agreement and agree to all policies, procedures, terms, and conditions of certification in order to be eligible for the respective credential. The statement follows.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information on this certification application is true, complete, and accurate. I authorize PACB to verify the accuracy of any information contained in or supplied in support of the application from any person(s) having knowledge of such information.

I understand that violation of the PACB Certification Code of Conduct may be grounds for disciplinary action and possible denial or revocation of certification. I recognize that admission to take the certification examination, once granted, may be revoked at any time if it is established that information provided for certification or for recertification is not accurate and/or complete; if I engage in illegal or inappropriate conduct during the exam or once certification is conferred; or if I violate the PACB Certification Code of Conduct.

By my signature, I attest that I will maintain my certification as required and uphold the PACB Certification Code of Professional Responsibility.

Disclosure Questionnaire

As part of your application for BCPA certification, you must complete the following Disclosure Questionnaire. Candidates must upload a detailed written explanation for any “yes” answers. Additional information may be required upon review of your application.

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 relating to your professional or business conduct, or are you currently named as a party in any such action?
3. Within the last ten years, have you been a defendant or respondent in a civil action, which includes, but is not limited to, a lawsuit, arbitration, or mediation relating to your professional or business conduct, or are you currently named as a party in any such 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 has any such body censured, fined, restricted or reprimanded you?

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 has such organization named you as a subject of an investigation or complaint?
7. Have you ever been convicted of violating any law or ordinance dealing with the use, possession, or sale of drugs or alcohol?
8. Have you ever been convicted of violating any statute or ordinance dealing with sexual assault, abuse, molestation, indecent solicitation, obscenity, or similar immoral acts?

Note: If you answered yes to any of the above, you must upload a written explanation

Attestation Statement – required of all applicants

By electronically signing the application, I affirm that:

- My answers to the disclosure questions above are true
- All the information I have provided in the application is true

I understand and agree to the following PACB Terms of Awarding and Maintaining Certification:

- Permission to use the mark Board Certified Patient Advocate and related marks is valid for a period of three years as long as I remain in good standing with the PACB and use the certification and marks in an authorized manner. The Patient Advocate Certification Board may publish on its website the names of certain individuals who have used the certification in an unauthorized manner.
- The Patient Advocate Certification Board, following the recommendation of the PACB Compliance Committee and Executive Board, has the absolute and unrestricted right to revoke my BCPA certification, including any rights I may have to use BCPA marks if it finds that I have failed to comply with the BCPA Code of Professional Conduct or PACB Policies. The Patient Advocate Certification Board has the authority to publish on its website the names of certain individuals for whom the right to carry the BCPA certification has been revoked.

- In consideration of the certification granted, the Patient Advocate Certification Board, Compliance Committee, employees of PACB, and others acting on its behalf shall not be liable to me for any actions taken or omitted to be taken in any official capacity or in the scope of employment, except to the extent that such actions or omissions constitute willful misconduct or gross negligence; I hereby release PACB, the Compliance Committee, and all PACB from any liability for such actions or omissions.
- I will fulfill recertification requirements to maintain PACB certification.
- I will comply with all policies and requirements of the BCPA Compliance Committee. If certified as a BCPA, I will comply with all standards and requirements that the Patient Advocate Certification Board may issue from time to time, including usage standards for the Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) certification and all other proprietary marks. I acknowledge that PACB is not responsible for any usage standards put in place by outside entities.
- I understand that the Patient Advocate Certification Board has the authority to perform background checks. I agree to cooperate with any actions and further understand that providing false information or having others do so is a violation of the BCPA Code of Professional Conduct and may result in sanctions.
- I agree to immediately inform the Certification staff of all changes to the information included in this application while I am an applicant, and for as long as I am certified by the Patient Advocate Certification Board, and to immediately inform the Certification staff of any matters that may affect my capability to continue to fulfill certification requirements.
- I understand that if successful, I will be listed in the online certification directory; however, if in the future, should I not want to continue to be listed in the online directory, I will contact the Certification staff to request removal from the list. I understand that even if my credentials are not listed in the online directory, the Certification staff will continue to verify credentials upon request.
- I agree to give the Patient Advocate Certification Board, staff, and its agent's permission to contact me by U.S. mail, electronic mail, facsimile, or through other media on matters that PACB believes may be of importance to me. Should I wish to be taken off the mailing list, I will send an e-mail request stating such to help@pacboard.org.
- I understand and acknowledge that the PACB Candidate Handbook contains the policies applicable to applicants and certificants.
- I agree to abide by and adhere to the Ethical Standards for Board Certified Patient Advocates and Code of Professional Conduct outlined in the PACB Code of Professional Responsibility for Board Certified Patient Advocates. [Click here](#) to review and print a copy of the PACB Code of Professional Responsibility.
- I have read, understand, and agree to the terms listed above.

The applicant will be required to submit an e-signature.

- I have read and understand the PACB Code of Professional Conduct and Principles. To qualify for certification, you must be able to answer yes truthfully.

Applicant required to attest:

I hereby declare that all information contained in this application is true. I understand and agree that any misrepresentation of facts will result in disqualification from sitting for the exam or revocation of the certification once obtained.

**I have read the Handbook for Candidates and understand I am responsible for knowing its contents. I certify that the information given in this Application is in accordance with the Handbook for Candidates instructions and is accurate, correct, and complete. I understand that my application for this examination may be reviewed by the certifying organization.*