



**ACTION CERTIFICATION  
GOVERNING BOARD**

**2018  
CANDIDATE  
HANDBOOK**

**ACTION-CPT Program**

**Updated October 2018**

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# Introduction

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## About the ACTION Certification Governing Board

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### Mission Statement

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The ACTION Certification Governing Board is committed to increasing consumer fitness and safety by providing innovative and affordable certification for aspiring and experienced personal trainers working in individual and group settings.

The ACTION Certification Governing Board was created to:

- Establish and implement the standards and procedures for the development and administration of certification programs;
- Establish and implement requirements for continuing education and recertification for credential holders;
- Bestow public recognition to those members who successfully complete the ACTION-CPT Certification examination and who fulfill continuing education and recertification requirements established by the Governing Board;
- Establish and implement a Code of Professional Conduct (including the Standards of Professional Practice) including but not limited to credentialing, review of credentials, and discipline for ACTION-CPT certified individuals;

The ACTION Certification Governing Board is responsible for developing and maintaining all certification and recertification activities related to the ACTION-CPT certification program, including eligibility, exam criteria and administration, overseeing program policy and implementation, and maintaining national standards for certification programs.

ACTION Certification, LLC, a separate entity, develops education and training for personal trainers and offers additional credentials.

## Scope of ACTION-CPT Certification

ACTION Certified Personal Trainers have the skills necessary to train, educate, and motivate fitness clients and deliver safe and effective personal training. Certification as an ACTION-CPT demonstrates an understanding of the foundational knowledge necessary for entry-level personal trainers working in individual and group settings with healthy clients.

ACTION Certified Personal Trainers have the skills and abilities to:

- Perform subjective and objective fitness assessments.
- Develop safe and effective exercise programs based on principles of exercise science, anatomy, and biomechanics.
- Design comprehensive, progressive, and customized exercise programs for a variety of fitness populations (i.e. pregnant women, seniors, youths, injured, etc.).
- Assist clients in the identification and selection of fitness related goals.

- Educate clients on the importance of a balanced diet and the general dietary recommendations for weight loss and performance/strength gains.

## Impartiality Regarding Training

As the governing body of a certification program, it is within the ACTION Certification Governing Board's (Governing Board) role to develop and administer certification examinations to determine the qualifications of candidates for certification. The Governing Board does not require, provide, approve, accredit, or endorse any specific study guides, review courses, or other examination preparation products.

The Governing Board does not accredit, approve, endorse, or recommend any education or training programs and/or products designed or intended to prepare candidates for certification. The Governing Board has no involvement in the development or delivery of such programs or products.

# Section 1:

## How to Apply for ACTION-CPT Certification

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### ACTION-CPT Certification Eligibility

All candidates for certification must meet all of the eligibility requirements established by the ACTION Certification Governing Board in effect at the time of application for certification. Candidates cannot earn certification without passing the certification exam.

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#### Eligibility Requirements

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1. **Register for exam:** Candidates who wish to take the ACTION Personal Trainer Certification Exam must first register for the exam at <http://athleticcertification.org>.
2. **Receive CPR/AED:** Applicants are required to have current Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) certifications. CPR or AED certifications obtained through an online course, with no in person component, will not be accepted.
3. **Pass the exam:** Candidates do not have to possess any prior experience within the fitness industry nor have any prior educational credits to sit for the exam.

It is not necessary to participate in or pay for any educational services or subscriptions prior to taking the exam.

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#### Meeting the Requirements

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Applicants are eligible to take the ACTION-CPT exam after the requirements have been met. Applicants who fail to demonstrate that they have met the eligibility requirement(s) will not be permitted to take the exam. Candidates cannot earn ACTION-CPT certification or use the ACTION-CPT credential without passing the certification exam.

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#### Eligibility Rationale

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To sit for the ACTION-CPT exam, applicants must have current Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) certifications. The requirement demonstrates a commitment to safety and to ensure ACTION-CPT certificants have an acceptable level of knowledge and have demonstrated the skills needed to provide basic life-saving care in an emergency.

### How to Apply

Applicants can apply online at <http://athleticcertification.org> and the application can be submitted online. Applications must include uploaded proof of current CPR and AED certification.

Applications will be reviewed to ensure that proof of current CPR and AED certification is submitted. The ACTION Certification Governing Board reserves the right to verify any information submitted by an applicant as needed.

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## Incomplete Applications

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An application will be considered incomplete if any of the requested information is missing, illegible, or the appropriate fee is not included.

Applications must be complete, with all requirements met, before they are processed and approved. Incomplete applications will not be returned. Applicants will be notified of outstanding information. It will be the applicant's responsibility to provide missing information before their application is processed.

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## Fees

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\$75 Test Center Fee

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## Membership

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Membership in a related association or organization is not required for certification.

## Scheduling an Exam

Once approved to take the ACTION-CPT exam, candidates will receive information on how to schedule their exam appointment at a Prometric test center. Candidates may schedule their exam online or by phone. There are no exam deadlines, however, the exam must be taken within one year of application approval.

Exam appointments are available Monday–Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm in most locations with weekend hours available in many areas. The ACTION-CPT exam is offered at Prometric test centers worldwide. A list of test centers is available at the on the Prometric website.

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## Cancellations, Rescheduling & Refunds

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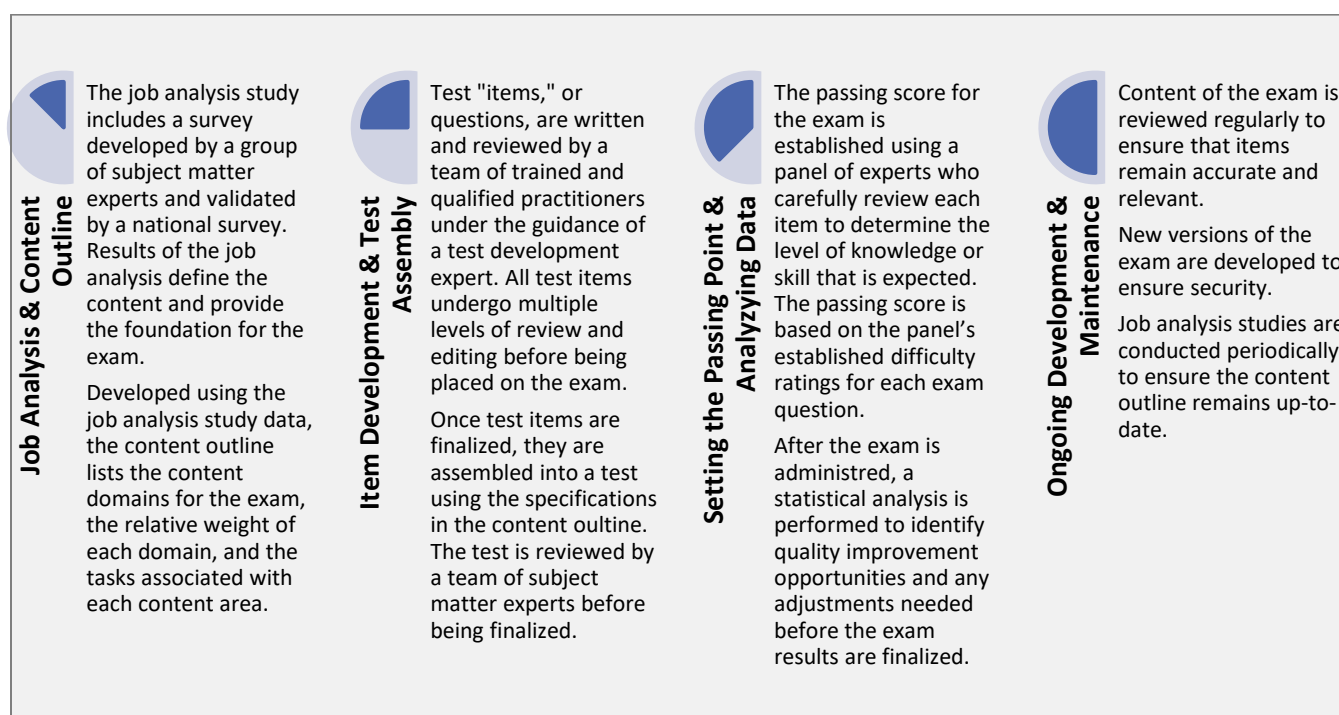
Candidates may cancel and reschedule an examination appointment without forfeiting their fee if cancellation notice is received 30 days before the scheduled examination date. Within 5-29 days prior to the appointment date, there is a \$50 reschedule/cancel fee. There are no reschedules within 5 days of the appointment date.

All exam schedule changes must be made directly with Prometric.

# Section 2: Preparing for the Examination

## How the Exam Was Developed

The ACTION-CPT examination was developed by a diverse group of practitioners in partnership with test development experts in a manner consistent with generally accepted psychometric principles and best practices for certification examination development using the process described below:



## Examination Outline

### 1. Basic knowledge (36)

#### a. Anatomy (10)

- i. Understand skeletal system
- ii. Understand joint types (e.g. pivot, hinge, etc.)
- iii. Understand planes of movement
- iv. Understand nervous system
- v. Understand digestive system
- vi. Understand energy physiology (aerobic/anaerobic, metabolism)
- vii. Understand muscular system
- viii. Understand contraction types (eccentric, concentric, etc.)
- ix. Understand cardiovascular/cardiopulmonary systems

- x. Identify kinesiology terms for body position, planes, body parts (lateral, medial, anterior, etc.)
- b. Correct exercise form (6)
  - i. Understand correct form of exercises
  - ii. Identify 'neutral' spine position
  - iii. Understand correct breathing technique
  - iv. Understand differences in speed of motion
  - v. Understand optimal posture for exercises
  - vi. Identify modification techniques (suggesting modifications to the squat for range of motion issues, etc.)
- c. Exercise analysis and biomechanics (13)
  - i. Assess line of pull
  - ii. Identify major muscle movements
  - iii. Determine muscles used in exercises
  - iv. Identify agonist, antagonist, synergist(s) and stabilizers
  - v. Differentiate between mover and stabilizer muscles
  - vi. Understand differences between strength, endurance, and hypertrophy training
  - vii. Understand 1 Rep Max (RM) calculation formula
  - viii. Understand difference between compound and isolation exercises
  - ix. Understand role of recovery
  - x. Understand center of gravity, base of support, line of gravity
  - xi. Understand lever system
  - xii. Understand difference between 'abdominal' exercise and 'core' exercise
  - xiii. Understand difference between 'balance' and 'stability' training
- d. PT scope of practice and role (7)
  - i. Understand PT scope of practice
  - ii. Understand role of PT
  - iii. Determine roles of other health professionals
  - iv. Know spotting techniques/guidelines
  - v. Know basic strategies for first aid (RICE)
  - vi. Understand proper ethics and professional responsibility
  - vii. Understand trainer knowledge for special populations (e.g., elderly, pregnant women, health conditions)

## **2. Health, lifestyle, goal screening and assessment (17)**

- a. Client goals (4)
  - i. Discuss client's success criteria (fitness, health, and wellness goals)
  - ii. Educate client on behavior in and out of gym to support their goals
  - iii. Understand psychology of PT
  - iv. Determine SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely)
- b. Lifestyle (6)
  - i. Identify healthy and unhealthy lifestyle habits (at home, work, school, etc.)



- ii. Identify client schedule and availability for exercise
- iii. Identify client's stage of behavior
- iv. Educate client regarding stress management
- v. Educate client regarding sleep and recovery
- vi. Educate client on assessing/creating a support system (e.g., family habits)
- c. Medical history/clearance (risk factors) (6)
  - i. Complete physical activity readiness form
  - ii. Assess risk factors
  - iii. Complete and assess medical history
  - iv. Identify if client needs medical clearance
  - v. Identify injuries and musculoskeletal imbalances that would affect training
  - vi. Determine parameters for when a client should be referred
- d. Special Populations (1)
  - i. Understand requirements of special populations (e.g., elderly, pregnant women, health conditions)

### **3. Fitness assessment (17)**

- a. Body composition (2)
  - i. Identify best method of determining body composition for client
  - ii. Assess body composition/calculate BMI
- b. Cardio assessment (5)
  - i. Assess resting heart rate
  - ii. Determine blood pressure
  - iii. Estimate VO2 max
  - iv. Know all protocols in order to administer cardio fitness assessments
  - v. Identify target heart rate/training threshold (RPE scale)
- c. Flexibility assessment (2)
  - i. Assess key joint range of motion
  - ii. Know all protocols in order to administer flexibility tests
- d. Functional assessment (4)
  - i. Assess functional movements
  - ii. Assess mobility and posture
  - iii. Assess stability and balance
  - iv. Assess static postural assessment
- e. Strength/endurance assessment (2)
  - i. Assess muscle 1 RM strength (using formula) or muscular endurance
  - ii. Know all components in order to administer muscular fitness assessments
- f. Risk factors and safe limits (2)
  - i. Know termination protocols for assessments (client and environmental factors)
  - ii. Identify weak areas and areas needing improvement

#### 4. Program design and implementation (18)

- a. Program design (8)
  - i. Utilize info from assessment
  - ii. Re-evaluate weak areas and areas needing improvement
  - iii. Understand intensity, progression, and consistency
  - iv. Determine program type - endurance, hypertrophy, strength, power
  - v. Determine program format - whole body, split, circuit, etc.
  - vi. Apply F.I.T.T. Principle
  - vii. Know the correct order of exercises (larger muscles 1st, etc.)
  - viii. Determine areas of muscle strength imbalance
- b. Exercise selection and performance (7)
  - i. Create routine (warmup, workout, cool down)
  - ii. Select appropriate stretching (ballistic, static, etc.)
  - iii. Demonstrate and teach correct exercise technique
  - iv. Have client perform exercise
  - v. Use appropriate cues (verbal, visual, imagery, tactile, etc.)
  - vi. Correct poor form in client exercise
  - vii. Discuss progression pattern and expectations
- c. Safety and warning signs (3)
  - i. Discuss pain vs. soreness and expectation for soreness
  - ii. Understand symptoms of overtraining
  - iii. Identify symptoms and warning signs of dehydration, low blood sugar, cardiac arrest, heat stroke/exhaustion, etc.

#### 5. Nutrition awareness (8)

- a. Nutrition awareness (8)
  - i. Understand latest nutritional guidelines
  - ii. Understand importance of nutrition for results
  - iii. Understand food groups and servings/amounts
  - iv. Understand role of protein, fats, and carbohydrates
  - v. Understand basics of micronutrient and essential amino acid roles
  - vi. Perform basic nutrient analysis (calculate daily protein, fat and carbs needs of client)
  - vii. Understand importance of water/fluids; know standard fluid replacement formulas
  - viii. Understand the role of supplementation

#### 6. Progress tracking (10)

- a. Benchmark assessment (3)
  - i. Determine consistent methods for assessing and re-assessing progress
  - ii. Determine expected progress based on assessments
  - iii. Establish timeline for progress

- b. Continuous communication and follow up (3)
  - i. Follow up phone call / email
  - ii. Follow up on goals achieved
  - iii. Conduct 24 hour follow up
- c. Re-design and suggesting new goals (4)
  - i. Provide positive feedback
  - ii. Determine guidelines for future program direction
  - iii. Review short term and long-term goals
  - iv. Adjust plan based on long-term scheduling or new goals (e.g., half marathon)

## **7. Business and legal (15)**

- a. Building client base (4)
  - i. Determine how to market yourself (testimonials, online reviews, etc.)
  - ii. Understand educating clients vs. selling to clients
  - iii. Build rapport with clients (e.g., celebrate every milestone in the client's fitness journey)
  - iv. Be a role model
- b. Business structure (2)
  - i. Determine pros and cons of business entities (corporation, LLC, etc.)
  - ii. Determine pros and cons of being an employee vs contractor
- c. Contracts, liability, budget (5)
  - i. Develop contract with client
  - ii. Develop budget with client
  - iii. Explain and sign liability waiver/informed consent
  - iv. Determine liability insurance needs
  - v. Determine business insurance needs
- d. Ethics and privacy (4)
  - i. Identify systems to keep client data private
  - ii. Determine how HIPAA and privacy laws apply to business model
  - iii. Understand limitations regarding suggesting supplementation
  - iv. Understand all areas of risk management (standard of care, negligence, scope of practice, condition of equipment, etc.)

# Section 3: Taking the Exam

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## What to Expect on Exam Day

Candidates are eligible to take the ACTION-CPT exam after their application has been approved.

To provide a fair and consistent environment for all candidates, the exam is delivered using standardized procedures that follow strict security protocols. Candidates are required to follow all exam site rules at all times. Failure to follow these rules may result in termination of a candidate's testing session, invalidation of the candidate's exam score, and/or disciplinary action.

## Taking the Exam

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### Identification

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Candidates must provide one (1) form of identification (see list below). Candidates must register for the exam with their LEGAL first and last name as it appears on their government issued identification. All required identification below must match the first and last name under which the candidate is registered.

Acceptable forms of primary identification if testing within the US:

- State issued driver's license
- State issued identification card
- US Government Issued Passport
- US Government Issued Military Identification Card
- US Government Issued Alien Registration Card

If you cannot provide the required identification, you must call Prometric at least 3 weeks prior to your scheduled appointment to arrange a way to meet this security requirement. Failure to provide ALL of the required identification at the time of the examination without notifying Prometric is considered a missed appointment and you will not be able to take the examination at that time.

If testing outside of the US, contact your local Prometric office or consult the website for rules and requirements.

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### Exam Locations

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The ACTION-CPT exam is delivered via computer-based testing at Prometric test centers worldwide. A list of test centers is available at the on the Prometric website at <https://www.prometric.com>.

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## Rescheduling and Cancellations

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You may cancel and reschedule an examination appointment without forfeiting your fee if your cancellation notice is received 2 days before the scheduled examination date. For example, for a Monday appointment, the cancellation notice would need to be received on the previous Saturday. To cancel or reschedule, call Prometric. Note: A voice mail message is not an acceptable form of cancellation.

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## Exam Site Rules

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The following rules will be enforced on exam day:

- If you leave the testing room while the examination is in progress, you must sign out/in on the sign-in sheet and you will lose the examination time.
- You are not allowed to use any electronic devices or telephones during the examination.
- No conversing or any other form of communication among candidates is permitted once you enter the examination area.
- Please be advised that children, cell phones, pagers, cameras, programmable electronic devices and recording devices of any kind are NOT allowed to enter Prometric testing centers. Additionally, no personal items are to enter the testing centers. Prometric will not be responsible for any personal items, and suggests that you leave such items in another safe place, of your choosing.
- No smoking, eating, or drinking will be allowed at the examination site.
- You may not exit the building during the examination.
- Copying or communicating examination content is a violation of ACTION policy, Prometric security policy, and State Law. Either one may result in the disqualification of examination results and may lead to legal action.
- Calculators are not allowed. Scratch paper and a pencil are allowed.
- Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the exam. Late arrivals may not be accommodated. Fees are not refunded for missed exam appointments.

## Cheating

Individuals suspected of cheating will be subject to the disciplinary policies and procedures in Section 5 of this Candidate Handbook.

Any incidents of suspected cheating, violation of any ACTION Certification Governing Board and/or test site policies, disturbances, attempts to remove test materials or notes from the testing room, or other exam-related irregularities will be reported immediately. All serious incidents will be investigated. Testing irregularities may result in termination of a candidate's participation in the examination administration, invalidation of exam scores, or other disciplinary action.

The ACTION Certification Governing Board reserves the right to investigate any incident of suspected misconduct or irregularity.

## Copyright Information

All proprietary rights to the ACTION-CPT exam, including copyright, are held by the ACTION Certification Governing Board. In order to protect the validity of the scores reported, candidates must adhere to strict guidelines regarding proper conduct in handling these copyrighted proprietary exam materials. The law strictly prohibits any attempt to reproduce all or part of the ACTION-CPT exam. Such attempts may include, but are not limited to: removing materials from the testing room; aiding others by any means in reconstructing any portion of the exam; posting content on any discussion forum or website; and selling, distributing, receiving, or having unauthorized possession of any portion of the exam. Alleged copyright violations will be investigated and, if warranted, prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. It should be noted that examination scores might become invalid in the event of this type of suspected breach. Permanent revocation of certification may occur if allegations are substantiated. See the disciplinary policy in Section 5 for further information.

## Cheating

Individuals suspected of cheating will be subject to the disciplinary policies and procedures in Section 5 of this Candidate Handbook.

Any incidents of suspected cheating, violation of any ACTION Certification Governing Board and/or test site policies, disturbances, attempts to remove test materials or notes from the testing room, or other exam-related irregularities will be reported immediately. All serious incidents will be investigated. Testing irregularities may result in termination of a candidate's participation in the examination administration, invalidation of exam scores, or other disciplinary action.

The ACTION Certification Governing Board reserves the right to investigate any incident of suspected misconduct or irregularity.

## Section 4: After the Exam

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### Exam Results Reports

Immediately after completing the exam at a Prometric testing center, candidates will be able to access their score report. Score reports will include the candidate's name, address, date of birth, member ID and a photo for identify verification. The report also includes the exam score with a pass/fail indication.

Failing candidates also receive feedback on each area of the examination. The feedback provided is designed to help identify the areas where candidates need to improve before retaking the examination. The feedback provided matches the major content areas identified in the exam content outline.

Candidate exam results are confidential and will be released only to the candidate, unless authorization signed release is provided in writing by the individual or release is required by law.

### Understanding your Scores

A criterion-referenced standard setting process is used to establish the passing point for the exam. This means that each candidate's performance on the exam is measured against a predetermined standard. Candidates are not graded on a curve and do not compete against each other or against a quota.

This passing score for the exam is established using a panel of subject matter experts who carefully review each exam question to determine the basic level of knowledge or skill that is expected. The passing score is based on the panel's established difficulty ratings for each exam question. Under the guidance of our psychometrician, the panel develops and recommends the passing point which is reviewed and approved by the ACTION Certification Governing Board. The passing point for the exam is established to identify individuals with an acceptable level of knowledge and skill. Receiving a score higher than the passing score is not an indication of more advanced knowledge or a predictor of better job performance. All individuals who pass the exam, regardless of their score, have demonstrated an acceptable level of knowledge.

### Re-Examination

Candidates who fail the exam may re-test after a 90 day waiting period following the date the previous exam was taken.

This waiting period was created to help protect the security of the exam. Given the computer based nature of the exam, the limited number of exam forms and the number of individuals taking the exam, a waiting period was created with the goal of creating time between administrations so that exam takers will have less memory of the previous version of the exam.

# Section 5: Ethics, Conduct, Complaints & Disciplinary Actions

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ACTION Certification Governing Board's Certification Personal Trainer Code of Conduct applies to all individuals credentialed by ACTION Certification Governing Board.

All applicants will agree to adhere to the Certification Personal Trainer Code of Conduct and Certification Code of Ethics (Codes) as a condition of certification. Violation of any portion of the Code of Ethics may result in disciplinary action as outlined in the Disciplinary Policy.

The Code of Ethics is available on the ACTION website.

## Certification Personal Trainer Code of Conduct

ACTION Certified Personal Trainers are expected to adhere to the following standards of practice:

- Stay abreast of the latest educational and regulatory issues within the health and fitness industry.
- Obtain 2.0 CECs (20 Hours) every two years.
- Maintain current CPR and AED Certification.
- Maintain confidentiality of all client information.
- Refer clients to qualified health or medical professionals when appropriate.
- Keep up-to-date records of exercise programs and weight selection.
- Provide personal training services in an honest, caring, and professional manner.

## Certification Code of Ethics

Each ACTION-CPT must:

1. Abide fully by the ACTION Certification Code of Conduct
2. Treat each colleague and client with the utmost respect and dignity
3. Use appropriate professional communication in all verbal, non-verbal, and written transactions
4. Provide and maintain an environment that ensures client safety that, at minimum, requires that the certified and non-certified member must:
  - Not diagnose or treat illness or injury unless for basic first aid or if the certified member is legally licensed to do so and is working in that capacity at that time



- Not train clients with a diagnosed health condition unless the certified member has been specifically trained to do so, is following procedures prescribed and supervised by a valid licensed medical professional, or if the certified or non-certified member is legally licensed to do so and is working in that capacity at that time
  - Not begin to train a client prior to receiving and reviewing a current health-history questionnaire signed by the client
  - Hold a current cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator (AED) certification at all times
5. Refer the client to the appropriate medical practitioner when, at minimum, the certified member:
- Becomes aware of any change in the client's health status or medication
  - Becomes aware of an undiagnosed illness, injury, or risk factor
  - Becomes aware of any unusual client pain and/or discomfort during the course of the training session that warrants professional care after the session has been discontinued and assessed
6. Refer the client to other healthcare professionals when nutritional and supplemental advice is requested unless the certified member has been specifically trained to do so or holds a credential to do so and is acting in that capacity at the time.
7. Remain in good standing and maintain current certification status by acquiring all necessary continuing education requirements.

## Complaints and Disciplinary Actions

ACTION Certification developed its disciplinary procedures to ensure that the enforcement process remains expedient, consistent and fair for all participants and credible to the public.

In order to maintain and enhance the credibility of the ACTION-CPT certification program, the Governing Board has adopted the following procedures to allow individuals to bring complaints concerning the conduct of ACTION-CPT certificants to the Governing Board.

In the event a certificant violates the Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct, Governing Board certification rules, requirements, and/or policies the Governing Board may reprimand or suspend the individual or may revoke certification.

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### Grounds for Sanctions

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The grounds for sanctions under these procedures may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Violation of the established Code of Ethics, Governing Board rules, requirements, and/or policies.
- Conviction of a felony or other crime of moral turpitude under federal or state law in a matter related to the practice of, or qualifications for, services provided by an ACTION-CPT.
- Gross negligence, willful misconduct, or other unethical conduct in the performance of services for which the individual has achieved ACTION-CPT certification.

- Fraud, falsification, or misrepresentation in an initial application or renewal application for certification.
- Falsification of any material information requested by the Governing Board.
- Misrepresentation of ACTION-CPT status, including abuse of logo.
- Cheating on any certification examination.

Actions taken under this policy do not constitute enforcement of the law, although referral to appropriate federal, state, or local government agencies may be made about the conduct of the certificant in appropriate situations. Individuals initially bringing complaints are not entitled to any relief or damages by virtue of this process, although they will receive notice of the actions taken.

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## Complaints

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### *Complaint Submission*

Complaints may be submitted by any individual or entity. Complaints should be reported to the Governing Board in writing and should include the name of the person submitting the complaint, the name of the person the complaint is regarding along with other relevant identifying information, a detailed description of factual allegations supporting the charges, and any relevant supporting documentation. Information submitted during the complaint and investigation process is considered confidential and will be handled in accordance with Governing Board's Confidentiality policy. Inquiries or submissions other than complaints may be reviewed and handled by the Governing Board's or its staff members at its discretion.

Information regarding the complaint process, including a complete copy of this policy and forms, will be available to the public via the ACTION web site or other published documents.

### *Preliminary Review*

Upon receipt and preliminary review of a complaint involving the certification program the Certification Manager in consultation with the Governing Board Chair may conclude, in their sole discretion, that the submission:

- contains unreliable or insufficient information, or
- is patently frivolous or inconsequential.

In such cases, the Certification Manager and Governing Board Chair may determine that the submission does not constitute a valid and actionable complaint that would justify bringing it before the Governing Board for investigation and a determination of whether there has been a violation of substantive requirements of the certification process. If so, the submission is disposed of by notice from the certification program staff member and Governing Board Chair to its submitter, if the submitter is identified. All such preliminary dispositions by the Governing Board Chair are reported to the Governing Board at its next meeting.

Preliminary review will be conducted within 15 business days of receipt of the complaint.

If a submission is deemed by the certification program staff member and Governing Board Chair to be a valid and actionable complaint, the Governing Board Chair will see that written notice is provided to the certificant whose conduct has been called into question. The certificant whose conduct is at issue

also will be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint. The Chair also will ensure that the individual submitting the complaint receives notice that the complaint is being reviewed by the Governing Board.

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## Complaint Review

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For each complaint that the Chair concludes is a valid and actionable complaint, the Governing Board authorizes an investigation into its specific facts or circumstances to whatever extent is necessary in order to clarify, expand, or corroborate the information provided by the submitter.

### *Professional Practice and Discipline Committee*

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The Professional Practice and Discipline Committee will investigate and make an appropriate determination with respect to each such valid and actionable complaint; the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee may review one or more such complaints as determined by the Chair. The Professional Practice and Discipline Committee initially determines whether it is appropriate to review the complaint under these Procedures or whether the matter should be referred to another entity engaged in the administration of law. The timeline for responses and for providing any additional information shall be established by the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee. The Professional Practice and Discipline Committee may be assisted in the conduct of its investigation by other members of the Governing Board and/or ACTION staff or legal counsel. The Chair exercises general supervision over all investigations.

Both the individual submitting the complaint and the certificant who is the subject of the investigation (or his or her employer) may be contacted for additional information with respect to the complaint. The Professional Practice and Discipline, or the Governing Board on its behalf, may at its discretion contact such other individuals who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances surrounding the complaint.

All investigations and deliberations of the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee and the Governing Board are conducted in confidence, with all written communications sealed and marked "Personal and Confidential," and they are conducted objectively, without any indication of prejudice. An investigation may be directed toward any aspect of a complaint which is relevant or potentially relevant. Formal hearings are not held and the parties are not expected to be represented by counsel, although the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee and Governing Board may consult their own counsel.

Certificants who are found to bring frivolous complaints against other certificants or ACTION may be subject to disciplinary action by the Governing Board, up to and including revocation of certification.

Members of the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Committee.

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## Determination of Violation

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### *Professional Practice and Discipline Committee Recommendation*

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Upon completion of an investigation, the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee recommends whether the Governing Board should make a determination that there has been a violation of

Governing Board policies and rules. When the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee recommends that the Governing Board find a violation, the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee also recommends imposition of an appropriate sanction. If the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee so recommends, a proposed determination with a proposed sanction is prepared under the supervision of the Chair and is presented by a representative of the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee to the Governing Board along with the record of the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee's investigation.

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## Governing Board Determination

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### *Complaint Dismissal*

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If the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee recommends against a determination that a violation has occurred, the complaint is dismissed with notice to the certificant, the certificant's employer (if involved in the investigation), and the individual or entity who submitted the complaint; a summary report is also made to the Governing Board.

### *Determination of Violation*

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The Governing Board reviews the recommendation of the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee based upon the record of the investigation. The Governing Board may accept, reject, or modify the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee's recommendation, either with respect to the determination of a violation or the recommended sanction to be imposed. If the Governing Board makes a determination that a violation has occurred, this determination and the imposition of a sanction are promulgated by written notice to the certificant, and to the individual submitting the complaint, if the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain in confidence whatever portion of the information is not made public by the Governing Board.

In certain circumstances, the Governing Board may consider a recommendation from the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee that the certificant who has violated the certification program policies or rules should be offered an opportunity to submit a written assurance that the conduct in question has been terminated and will not recur. The decision of the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee to make such a recommendation and of the Governing Board to accept it are within their respective discretionary powers. If such an offer is extended, the certificant at issue must submit the required written assurance within thirty days of receipt of the offer, and the assurance must be submitted in terms that are acceptable to the Governing Board. If the Governing Board accepts the assurance, notice is given to the certificant's employer and to the submitter of the complaint, so long as the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain the information in confidence.

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## Sanctions

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Any of the following sanctions may be imposed by the Governing Board upon a certificant whom the Governing Board has determined to have violated the policies and rules of its certification program(s), although the sanction applied must reasonably relate to the nature and severity of the violation, focusing on reformation of the conduct of the member and deterrence of similar conduct by others:

- written reprimand to the certificant;

- suspension of the certificant for a designated period; or
- termination of the certificant's certification.

For sanctions that include suspension or termination, a summary of the final determination and the sanction with the certificant's name and date is published by the Governing Board. This information will be published only after any appeal has either been considered or the appeal period has passed.

Reprimand in the form of a written notice from the Chair normally is sent to a certificant who has received his or her first substantiated complaint. Suspension normally is imposed on a certificant who has received two substantiated complaints. Termination normally is imposed on a certificant who has received two substantiated complaints within a two year period, or three or more substantiated complaints. The Governing Board may at its discretion, however, impose any of the sanctions, if warranted, in specific cases.

Certificants who have been terminated will have their certification revoked and may not be considered for Governing Board certification in the future. If certification is revoked, any and all certificates or other materials requested by the Governing Board must be returned promptly to the Governing Board.

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## Appeal

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### *Request for Appeal*

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Within thirty (30) days from receipt of notice of a determination by the Governing Board that a certificant violated the certification program policies and/or rules, the affected certificant may submit to the Governing Board in writing a request for an appeal.

### *Disciplinary Appeal Committee*

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Upon receipt of a request for appeal, the Chair of the Governing Board establishes an appellate body consisting of at least three, but not more than five, individuals. This Disciplinary Appeal Committee may review one or more appeals, upon request by the Chair. No current members of the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee or the Governing Board may serve on the Disciplinary Appeal Committee; further, no one with any personal involvement or conflict of interest may serve on the Disciplinary Appeal Committee. Members of the Disciplinary Appeal Committee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Committee.

### *Basis for Appeal*

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The Disciplinary Appeal Committee may only review whether the determination by the Governing Board of a violation of the certification program policies and/or rules was inappropriate because of:

- material errors of fact, or
- failure of the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee or the Governing Board to conform to published criteria, policies, or procedures.

### *Appeal Procedure*

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Only facts and conditions up to and including the time of the Governing Board's determination as represented by facts known to the Governing Board are considered during an appeal. The appeal will not include a hearing or any similar trial-type proceeding. Legal counsel is not expected to participate

in the appeal process, unless requested by the appellant and approved by the Governing Board and the Disciplinary Appeal Committee. The Governing Board and Appeal Committee may consult legal counsel.

The Disciplinary Appeal Committee conducts and completes the appeal within ninety days after receipt of the request for an appeal. Written appellate submissions and any reply submissions may be made by authorized representatives of the member and of the Governing Board. Submissions are made according to whatever schedule is reasonably established by the Appeal Committee. The decision of the Appeal Committee either affirms or overrules the determination of the Governing Board, but does not address a sanction imposed by the Governing Board. The decision of the Appeal Committee, including a statement of the reasons for the decision, is reported to the Governing Board.

The Disciplinary Appeal Committee decision is binding upon the Governing Board, the certificant who is subject to the action, and all other persons.

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## **Resignation**

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If a certificant who is the subject of a complaint voluntarily surrenders his or her certification(s) at any time during the pendency of a complaint under these Procedures, the complaint is dismissed without any further action by the Professional Practice and Discipline Committee, the Governing Board, or a Disciplinary Appeal Committee established after an appeal. The entire record is sealed and the individual may not reapply for certification. However, the Governing Board may authorize the Chair to communicate the fact and date of resignation, and the fact and general nature of the complaint which was pending at the time of the resignation, to or at the request of a government entity engaged in the administration of law. Similarly, in the event of such resignation, the person or entity who submitted the complaint are notified of the fact and date of resignation and that Governing Board has dismissed the complaint as a result.

# Section 6: Maintaining Your Certification

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## Recertification

Recertification is a mandatory process designed to ensure that ACTION-CPTs continually enhance their competency level. For this purpose, ACTION recertification guidelines require applicants to obtain continuing education throughout the renewal cycle. This consistent focus on continuing education will allow CPTs to stay abreast of the latest scientific research, professional standards, and personal training strategies.

ACTION Certification Trainers are required to renew their certification every two years. This time interval was chosen by the ACTION Governing board due to the rapid change in scientific knowledge and evolving practices of personal trainers. Continuing education is required as it allows trainers to receive an ongoing and expanded understanding of developments in the exercise sciences. Further, continuing education benefits consumers as it helps trainers provide better designed exercise programs.

## Recertification Requirements

All ACTION-CPT certificants must complete the following requirements during each two-year recertification cycle:

- 1) Complete 2.0 CECs
- 2) Submit proof of current CPR/AED certification
- 3) Pay the recertification fee

For additional information on the Recertification Process and Recertification Requirements, please refer to the ACTION Certification Governing Board's Recertification Guide.

# Section 7: ACTION Certification Governing Board Policies

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## Accommodations for those with Disabilities

The ACTION Certification Governing Board complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable accommodations provide candidates with disabilities a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill in the essential knowledge being measured by the examination.

Reasonable accommodations are decided upon based on:

- the individual's specific request
- the individual's specific disability
- documentation submitted
- the appropriateness of the request

Reasonable accommodations do not include steps that fundamentally alter the purpose or nature of the examination.

Reasonable accommodations generally are provided for candidates who:

- have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits that person in one or more major life activities (e.g. walking, talking, hearing, performing manual tasks)
- have a record of such physical or mental impairment
- are regarded as having a physical or mental impairment

To apply for accommodation(s), the candidate must

- Submit the Request for Testing Accommodation form on the ACTION web site
- Submit documentation provided by an appropriate licensed professional on the professional's letterhead to the Governing Board which includes a diagnosis of the disability and specific recommendations for accommodations.
- Submit documentation at least 30 days prior to the testing date. All documentation is subject to verification.

## Changes in Contact Information

Applicants and certificants are responsible for notifying the ACTION Certification Governing Board, in writing, of any changes in contact information, including email address. Certification renewal is the responsibility of each certified individual. The ACTION Certification Governing Board is not responsible for notices that fail to reach certificants.



## Confidentiality

The Governing Board is committed to protecting confidential and/or proprietary information related to applicants; candidates; certificants; and the examination development, maintenance, and administration process.

To ensure the security of the examination, all test materials are confidential and will not be released to any person or agency.

Information about an applicant/candidate/certificant will only be released to that applicant/candidate/certificant unless release of the information is authorized in writing by the individual or is required by law. Personal information submitted by an applicant/candidate/certificant with an application or recertification application is considered confidential. Personal information retained within the database will be kept confidential.

All application information is confidential and will not be shared with any party other than ACTION'S examination development or administration vendors for certification processing purposes.

Examination scores are released only to the examination candidate unless a signed release is provided in writing by the individual or release is required by law.

## Verification & Aggregate Data

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### Certification Status Verification

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An individual's certification status is not considered confidential. The names of certified individuals are not considered confidential and may be published by the Governing Board.

ACTION will provide confirmation of certification status to anyone who requests the information, and verification will be accessible via the certification program's web site. Verification of certification status will include the individual's name and current certification status.

Application status, information about whether or not an individual has taken the exam, and score information will not be released.

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### Aggregate Data

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Aggregate exam statistics (including the number of exam candidates, pass/fail rates, and total number of certificants) will be publicly available and updated annually. Aggregate exam statistics, studies and reports concerning applicants/certificants will contain no information identifiable with any applicant/certificant.

## Confidentiality Agreements

Applicants for certification will be required to read and acknowledge a confidentiality statement as part of the application process.

Each certified professional must respect the confidentiality of all client information. In his/her professional role, the certified professional must:

- Protect the client's confidentiality in conversations, advertisement and any other arena unless otherwise agreed upon by the client in writing or due to medical and/or legal necessity
- Protect the interest of clients who are minors by law or unable to give voluntary consent by securing the legal permission of the appropriate third party or guardian
- Store and dispose of client records in secure manner

## Reconsideration Requests

Candidates whose eligibility for initial certification or recertification has been denied and who believe the denial is a result of an error in the application review process, a failure to follow application review policies, or a breach of policy during exam administration, may request reconsideration of the decision.

Reconsideration requests regarding the examination content outline (e.g., specific questions and the domain weights/specifications/blueprint that results from the Job Task Analysis) are not accepted.

The following items may be considered reasons for appealing exam results to the ACTION Governing Board:

- Improper behavior by test center staff
- Violations of exam administration procedures

In the case of adverse eligibility/recertification determinations, the appeal should clearly state the reasons why the candidate feels his/her application for certification/recertification was incorrectly denied and how s/he complies with the published requirements.

In the case of an exam administration policy breach, the appeal should clearly describe in detail the situation that occurred during testing and the policy violation(s). Supporting documentation should be provided when applicable.

In order to be eligible to appeal, the candidate must inform the test center manager of any exam-related incident that had a negative impact on their performance. Following the exam, the candidate must submit written notification of the incident to the ACTION Governing Board. This written statement must indicate why the incident negatively affected the candidate's performance. All appeals can be submitted by emailing [support@actioncertification.org](mailto:support@actioncertification.org).

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### Submitting a Request for Reconsideration

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The request for reconsideration must be submitted in writing to the ACTION Certification Governing Board within 45 days of the adverse decision.

In the case of adverse eligibility/recertification determinations, the request should clearly state the reasons why the candidate feels his/her application for certification/recertification was incorrectly denied and how they comply with the published requirements.

In the case of an exam administration policy breach, the request should clearly describe in detail the situation that occurred during testing and the policy breach. Supporting documentation should be provided when applicable.

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## Review Process

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The Appeals Committee will review the applicant's request and supporting documentation and materials when reconsidering the adverse eligibility, recertification, or exam decision, and the Board Chair will notify the applicant in writing of the Appeals Committee's decision within 45 days of receiving the request.

All decisions by the committee are final.

## Statement of Nondiscrimination

ACTION Certification shall admit candidates without regard to age, sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or marital status to all rights, privileges, programs, and examinations. ACTION Certification will not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or marital status in the administration of its certification and recertification policies.

## Use of the Certification Mark

The ACTION-CPT credential may be used by individuals who have earned the ACTION-CPT designation as long as certification remains valid and in good standing. Individuals may not use the ACTION-CPT credential until they have received specific written notification that they have successfully completed all requirements, including passing the exam. Certificants must comply with all recertification requirements to maintain use of the credential.

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## Proper Use of Credentials

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After meeting all requirements and passing the examination, individuals may use their credential in all correspondence and professional relations. The credential is typically used after the certificant's name following any academic degrees and licensure (e.g. Mary Smith, ACTION-CPT).

The credential may be used as:

ACTION-CPT

-ACTION Certified Personal Trainer

The certification mark(s) may be used only as long as certification is valid.

# Section 8: Forms

## Special Accommodations Request Form

If you have a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please complete this form and the Documentation of Disability-Related Needs Form. The information you provide, and any documentation regarding your disability and special accommodation, will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be shared with any source, without your express written permission, except for the ACTION Certification Governing Board.

Please submit forms to: [support@actioncertification.org](mailto:support@actioncertification.org)

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Please provide (check all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Accessible Testing Site            | <input type="radio"/> Screen Magnifier (Large Font)           |
| <input type="radio"/> Separate Testing Room              | <input type="radio"/> Reader Required for Learning Disability |
| <input type="radio"/> Extended Testing Time              | <input type="radio"/> Reader Required for Visual Disability   |
| <input type="radio"/> Other special accommodation: _____ |   |

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Documentation of Disability-Related Needs Form

Candidates for the ACTION-CPT certification examination who have a learning, psychological, or other disability that requires accommodation during testing must provide a written disability report prepared by an appropriately qualified, licensed health care professional (e.g. physician, nurse practitioner, psychologist, psychiatrist). The information you provide, and any documentation regarding your disability and special accommodation request, will be treated with strict confidentiality.

### LICENSED HEALTHCARE PROVIDER DOCUMENTATION

I have known \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
*Test applicant*

in my capacity as a \_\_\_\_\_  
*Professional Title*

### SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Given the nature of the test to be taken by the above-named candidate, it is my opinion that he/she should be accommodated by providing the following special arrangements:

**Check all that apply:**

- Accessible testing site
- Screen Magnifier (Large Font)
- Separate testing room
- Reader Required for Learning Disability
- Extended testing time
- Reader Required for Visual Disability
- Other special accommodation: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ License \_\_\_\_\_  
*(if applicable)*