



**Certified Occupational Health Nurse - Specialist | COHN-S**

**Certified Occupational Health Nurse | COHN**

**Case Management | CM**

# **Certification Handbook**

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# Introduction

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This **CANDIDATE HANDBOOK** is written for occupational health nurses who desire to take the following certification examinations offered by the American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc.

- **Certified Occupational Health Nurse Specialist (COHN-S)**
- **Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN)**
- **Case Management (CM)**

It outlines important information on the eligibility requirements, application process, testing information, and ABOHN policies. Material contained in this handbook supersedes information in previous handbooks and is subject to change without notice. Information in the ABOHN Handbook(s) and on the certification website is updated on a regular basis.

Applications are preferred to be submitted online and typically can take up to two weeks to process depending on receipt of a completed application, required documentation, and applicable fee.

**Email is the fastest and preferred method of general communication/correspondence.**

This Candidate Handbook 2024 Edition reflects the findings from the 2023 ABOHN Practice Analysis (PA). A practice analysis survey is developed every 5-7 years under the direction of the Practice Analysis Advisory Committee (PAAC). This survey is distributed to certified and non-certified OHNs and other professionals in the occupational health field (i.e. educators, employers). The results of the Practice Analysis form the Examination Content Outline (ECO) also known as the Test Blueprints.

For more information on the Practice Analysis, please visit the ABOHN website's [Latest Practice Analysis](#) page.

## *Contact Information*

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ABOHN

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**This handbook will be in effect September 1, 2024  
Please retain this handbook after applying for the examination.  
It is useful when studying for the exam.**

## Background

The American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc., (ABOHN) was established as an independent nursing specialty certification board in 1972. ABOHN was formed to develop and conduct a program of certification for qualified occupational health nurses. ABOHN is the sole certifying body for occupational health nurses in the United States and awards three credentials: Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN), Certified Occupational Health Nurse – Specialist (COHN-S), and Case Management (CM). For more information about ABOHN and its history, please visit [www.abohn.org](http://www.abohn.org).

### ABOHN Vision, Mission, Principles and Values

**ABOHN Vision Statement:** ABOHN Certification is recognized and valued as the standard to maximize the health, safety and well-being of workers worldwide.

**ABOHN'S Mission** is to promote a standard of excellence in occupational health nursing through credentialing.

**Principles and Values:** To accomplish its mission and vision, and elevate the quality of occupational health nursing practice, ABOHN commits its resources to achieving the following principles and values:

- Develop and promote credentialing standards for professional occupational health nurses.
- Establish a standard for occupational health nursing programs
- Empower occupational health nurses to continue professional education.
- Create value for employers, workers and occupational health professionals through certification.
- Publicly recognize individuals who have met credentialing standards
- Optimize partnerships with organizations that share the ABOHN mission and values.
- Perform the above unrestricted by consideration of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, or other legally protected category.

### Accreditation

ABOHN's certification programs are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The NCCA is the private not-for-profit accrediting branch of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) which is the national standard-setting organization for credentialing groups including certification boards, licensing boards, and associations. The NCCA uses peer review processes to establish accreditation standards, evaluate compliance with the standards, recognize programs that demonstrate compliance, monitor, and enforce continued compliance and serve as a resource on quality certification.

Changes to ABOHN's certification programs will align with the certification accreditation standards of NCCA.

## ABOHN's Testing Agency

Assessment Systems Corporation (ASC) is the professional testing agency contracted by ABOHN to assist in the development, administration, scoring, and analysis of ABOHN's examinations. ASC has been a trusted provider in computerized testing since its inception in the 1970s.

ASC's mission "To positively impact educational and career opportunities by driving smarter assessment with AI and easy-to-use software" closely aligns with ABOHN's mission "To promote a standard of excellence in occupational health nursing through credentialing". We are confident in ASC's ability to help ABOHN continue to meet its principles and values and provide the best possible candidate journey.

# Examination Eligibility Requirements

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## Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN)

1. A current RN License or an international equivalent.
  - a. **Rationale:** Proof that the candidate is a registered nurse
2. 3000 hours of occupational health nursing work experience earned during the five years prior to the application. (See below for the alternative to work hours.)
  - a. **Rationale:** ABOHN certifications reflect a nurse practicing at or above proficient level. OHN work experience is required for the nurse to maintain proficiency or above status.

## Certified Occupational Health Nurse (COHN-S)

1. A current RN License or an international equivalent.
  - a. **Rationale:** Proof that the candidate is a registered nurse
2. 3000 hours of occupational health nursing work experience earned during the five years prior to the application. (See below for the alternative to work hours.)
  - a. **Rationale:** ABOHN certifications reflect a nurse practicing at or above proficient level. OHN work experience is required for the nurse to maintain proficiency or above status.
3. Bachelor's degree or higher (does not need to be in nursing)
  - a. **Rationale:** The COHN-S is for nurses with a broader role in management and requires additional education, not necessarily nursing related.

## Case Management (CM)

1. A current RN License or an international equivalent.
  - a. **Rationale:** Proof that the candidate is a registered nurse
2. Currently Active COHN or COHN-S certification.
  - a. **Rationale:** CM is a subset of occupational health and the mastery of occupational health nursing, as evidenced by the core credential, complements and enhances the effectiveness of OHN case management.
3. 10 Contact Hours directly related to Case Management earned within the previous 5 years from date of application.
  - a. **Rationale:** These additional contact hours assures ABOHN that the applicant is up-to-date with the latest information in Case Management.

## Work Experience

Work experience means actively engaged in occupational health nursing for compensation.

### Alternatives to work hours

Time spent in a graduate/baccalaureate/certificate program dedicated to the field of Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) may be considered for a portion of the occupational health nursing work experience requirement for the COHN and COHN-S. The degree must be completed within the five-year period prior to application to be considered. In using education in lieu of work hours, a transcript must be submitted with the

application. Time spent in degree-granting programs prior to becoming a registered nurse cannot be used for work experience credit.

The maximum number of hours that can be applied are as followed:

- 3,000 hours work credit for attaining a Master's, PhD, or DNP, dedicated to the field of Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS). These programs MUST include a semester/quarter of practical experience and an occupational health related project.
- 2,000 hours work credit for attaining a Bachelor's or Certificate program dedicated to the field of Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS). These programs have basic industry content with limited or no practical experience and are considered equivalent to one year of graduate study.

For a list of currently accepted programs, please visit the Alternative Work Hours link found on the ABOHN website [at https://www.abohn.org/certification/cohn-cohn-s-eligibility/alternative-work-hours](https://www.abohn.org/certification/cohn-cohn-s-eligibility/alternative-work-hours). If your program is not listed, please contact the ABOHN office for approval BEFORE you submit your application. The Committee will review your program for acceptance to our guidelines.

## Applying for the Examination

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Applicants for ABOHN's examinations are required to complete and submit the official application, meet established deadlines, pay all fees, and provide information required to demonstrate eligibility for certification.

### Submitting an Application

#### Apply Online

##### COHN and/or COHN-S

Applicants must apply online at <https://www.abohn.org/certification/cohn-cohn-s-eligibility/cohn-andor-cohn-s-certification-application>, Documentation required at the time of application include:

- a copy of the applicant's RN License - COHN, COHN-S, and CM
- a copy of the applicant's Job Description(s) - COHN and COHN-S
- a copy of the applicant's degree or transcripts - COHN-S only
- [The current application fee](#)

##### Case Management - CM

Applicants must apply <https://www.abohn.org/certification/case-management-eligibility/case-management-cm-application>, Documentation required at the time of application include:

- MUST hold the COHN or COHN-S and be in Active status.
- copy of the applicant's Job Description(s) - COHN and COHN-S
- Copies of 10 CEs directly related to Case management earned during the five years prior to date of application.
- [The current application fee](#)

#### Apply by Paper Application

Paper application processing takes longer than the online method and the preferred and most secure method is to use the online portal. To request a paper application, please contact the ABOHN office at [info@abohn.org](mailto:info@abohn.org).

## Signature and Attestation

The applicant's signature (electronic or written) is required for processing. This signature confirms that the information provided by the applicant on their application is accurate and true to the best of their ability. Applicants who apply to take an ABOHN certification examination attest that they:

- ✓ Have accessed the Candidate Handbook online at [www.abohn.org](http://www.abohn.org)
- ✓ Shall maintain current, active professional nursing licensure
- ✓ Are obligated to notify ABOHN of nursing licensure suspension or revocation by a board of nursing or regulatory body.
- ✓ Understand that ABOHN may amend requirements, policies, and procedures.

The signature also confirms that the applicant has read, agrees to adhere to, and understands the following ABOHN Policies:

1. Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy
2. Examination Security Policy
3. Non-Discrimination Policy
4. Appeals Policy
5. Records Retention Policy
6. Misuse Of ABOHN Credentials Policy
7. Contact Information Change Policy
8. Verifying Certification Status Policy
9. Ethics Policy

ABOHN staff will review all applications (this can take up to two weeks) and will directly contact applicants to provide any information identified as missing in the application. All applications are subject to audit and verification. Failure to respond by the deadline to a request for more information will result in the applicant's eligibility being denied.

**ALL ABOHN FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.**

## Examination Accommodations

ABOHN and Assessment Systems Corporation (ASC) comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA/ADAAA) and are interested in ensuring that individuals with disabilities are not deprived of the opportunity to take the examination solely by reason of a disability, as required and defined by the relevant provisions of the law. Special testing arrangements may be made for these individuals, provided that an appropriate request for accommodation is received by ABOHN at the time of application and the request is approved. To make a request for a special examination accommodation, please complete the two-page Request for Special Examination Accommodations form (found as Appendix E), obtain an appropriate health professional's signature, and submit the completed form with the examination application.

## International Testing

ASC has a secure web-based network of international sites. With more than 83 sites across 35 countries, the international network offers the ability to take our examination around the globe. **Please contact the ABOHN office for pricing**

## Paying the Examination Fee

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Once an application has been reviewed and approved, ABOHN will email notification of application which will include the following:

- Application Approval Letter
- [Exam Fee Invoice](#)



Examination fees must be paid within 90 days of the date of the exam invoice received from ABOHN. Payment is made on the ABOHN website. If the examination fee is not paid during the 90-day period, the application file for certification is closed. To regain application status, one must re-submit a completed application with required back-up information and a non-refundable application fee.

Weekly, ABOHN transfers the candidates that are approved and have paid their examination fees to the test vendor. ASC will notify candidates by email with information on how to schedule an exam. Exam candidates will have 120 days from the date your file was transferred to ASC to schedule and take their examination.

## Scheduling an Examination Appointment

You may schedule an examination appointment with the ASC after receipt of the confirmation email. ASC will reach out to you once they receive the approval list from ABOHN. **DO NOT** reach out to ASC unless you have been approved by ABOHN but not heard from them in 7 days.

Currently, all ABOHN examinations are delivered by computer at the ASC Test Centers nationwide. The examinations are scheduled by appointment only, Monday through Saturday. Appointment starting times may vary by location. Individuals are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

After an appointment is made, you will be given a time to report to the Test Center. Please make note of it since an admission letter will not be sent. You will only be allowed to take the examination for which the appointment has been made. No changes in examination type will be made at the Test Center. **UNSCHEDULED CANDIDATES (WALK-INS) WILL NOT BE ADMITTED** to the Test Center.

## Examination Authorized Changes (Rescheduling or Extension)

There are two options for changing your examination date.

1. **Rescheduling:** ASC allows for a one-time cancellation and rescheduling for sitting for the examination during your specified exam authorization period. A candidate who wishes to reschedule his/her examination appointment, must contact ASC at least **TWO business days** prior to the scheduled testing session or will forfeit the examination fee and be required to reapply and submit required fees to reschedule the examination.

If the Examination is scheduled on...	ASC must be contacted by 3:00 p.m. Central Time to reschedule the Examination by the previous...
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Tuesday

2. **Extension:** If you need to EXTEND your 120-day examination period, you may purchase a one-time, 60-day examination extension to the original 120-day authorization period. ASC requires at least **THREE business days** notification prior to the scheduled examination date. You must contact ASC to cancel your scheduled exam date and then email ABOHN at [info@abohn.org](mailto:info@abohn.org) for the extension request and payment.

If the Examination is scheduled on...	ABOHN must be contacted by 3:00 p.m. Central Time to purchase an Extension by the previous...
Monday	Tuesday
Tuesday	Wednesday
Wednesday	Thursday
Thursday	Friday
Friday	Monday

**PLEASE NOTE: ASC/ABOHN only allows ONE CHANGE (either exam rescheduling or an exam extension). You may not use both options.**

## Missed Appointments/Failure to Report or to Schedule an Examination

Candidates will forfeit their application and examination fees paid under the following circumstances:

- Candidates who wish to reschedule an examination appointment but fail to contact ASC at least 2 business days prior to the scheduled examination session.
- Candidates arriving more than 15 minutes late for a scheduled examination appointment.
- Candidates failing to report on the date and time they are scheduled for an examination appointment.
- Candidates that fail to schedule an examination appointment within the 120-day period.

Examination fees may NOT be transferred to another appointment. Once fees are forfeited a Candidate must reapply, paying all fees again to continue. **ALL ABOHN FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.**

# Preparing for the Examination

## Examination Construction

ABOHN periodically conducts a practice analysis study that describes the job activities of occupational health nurses in sufficient detail to provide a basis for the continued development of a professional, job-related, evidence-based certification examination. The study surveys both certified and non-certified OHNs to determine the current significance of specified tasks to OHN practice. The practice analysis results are then used to identify OHN roles, develop the ECO/ Test Blueprint, and determine the examination specifications percentage distribution of exam questions for each role. Therefore, the subject matter and the relative importance of each topic on the examination reflect the data validated by this periodic study. Thus, ABOHN examinations are firmly grounded in the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for the delivery of effective, proficient occupational health and safety practice. For additional information on the latest practice analysis, please visit <https://www.abohn.org/resources/latest-practice-analysis>.

ABOHN selects Certified Occupational Health Nurses who represent the diversity of occupational health nursing practice and employment to serve on its Exam Development Advisory Committee (EDAC). This committee drafts the examination's multiple-choice questions, which are then edited and validated by ASC and approved by the ABOHN Board for inclusion on the examination.

Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and ASC review all examination items or questions for subject matter, validity, difficulty level, relevance, and importance for current practice. All questions are evaluated, classified, and revised by the COHN-S EDAC and ASC for conformance to psychometric principles. Examples of the question format "Sample Examination Questions" are found in this handbook. The sample questions do not reflect the full range of content or scope of difficulty levels of the questions on the examination.

## Exam Information

- **Examinations are computer-based:** COHN & COHN-S Candidates have 3 hours to take the exam. CM Candidates have 2 hours to take the exam.
- **For COHN and COHN-S, there are 160 multiple choice questions on each exam:** Of the 160 questions, 25 are pretest questions that cannot be distinguished from those that are scored.  
**For the CM, there are 110 multiple choice questions:** Of the 110 questions, 10 are pretest questions that cannot be distinguished from those that are scored.  
Pretest questions are included to determine how they perform statistically to vet them for use on future exams. A candidate's score is based solely on 135 questions (COHN/COHN-S), on 100 questions (CM).
- **Candidates receive a 120-day window to test:** This window allows applicants the flexibility of scheduling the exam around one's personal schedule, employment schedule, or religious needs without requiring the need for additional accommodations or forms.
- **New Examinations:** Exams are developed annually and released every September/October. All items are reviewed to ensure consistency with previous test forms and the current references published at the time exams are developed.

## Practice Exam - Certified Self-Assessment Test (CSAT)

ABOHN offers a CSAT for each exam which contains thorough descriptions of the ABOHN examination and helpful suggestions for preparation. The CSAT provides 100 questions that use the same format as actual examination questions and are representative of the knowledge areas and activities that form the Test Blueprint.

### Disclaimer:

- Purchase of these products is **NOT REQUIRED** to apply for or take any ABOHN examinations.
- The ABOHN CSATS are **NOT DESIGNED** to be an assessment tool of one's strengths and weaknesses nor to be used as a study guide or as an only source of study.
- The ABOHN CSATS are **NOT INTENDED** as a predictor success on ABOHN examinations and no such guarantees are made.
- CSATs can be purchased via secure portal on the ABOHN website [www.ABOHN.org](http://www.ABOHN.org).

## COHN/COHN-S/CM Reference List

A current reference list is available as Appendix D of this handbook.

## Sample Questions

Each item has four responses, only one of which is correct. The sample questions that follow are examples of typical questions and the format used.

1. An employee informs the OHN that she is five months pregnant. Because of the workers' limited financial resources, the employee has NOT had prenatal care. Which of these actions should the nurse take first?

- A. Make an appointment for the employee at a public prenatal clinic.
- B. Collect additional data related to the employee's situation.
- C. Refer the employee to a local self-help group.
- D. Identify the employees' social support networks.

2. A nurse is responsible for periodically evaluating the performance of departmental employees. The purpose of the performance appraisal is to:

- A. determine progress toward meeting objectives.
- B. ensure continuous productivity.
- C. review benefit status in relation to peers in comparable positions.
- D. establish job codes.

3. A nurse is evaluating the results of a cholesterol awareness program for a company. Which of these findings about those who participated in the program would most clearly indicate that the program was a success?

- A. Higher low-density lipoprotein levels in several employees.
- B. Several requests from employees for low-fat foods in the cafeteria.
- C. A decrease in absenteeism among employees.
- D. Fewer visits made by employees to the occupational health unit.

4. When planning the budget for an employee health service, which of these items should the nurse list as a capital expenditure?

- A. office supplies
- B. exercise tapes
- C. examining tables
- D. intravenous fluid

Answers to sample questions

- 1. B
- 2. A
- 3. B
- 4. C

## ABOHN Examination Security Policy

Federal copyright law protects ABOHN examinations, and the items contained therein. The certification examinations and all items on the examinations are the exclusive property of the American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc. Candidates who apply for the certification examination acknowledge that they understand and agree to the following prior to taking the examination:

- Retention, possession, copying, distribution, disclosure, discussion, or receipt of any ABOHN certification examination question, in whole or in part, by written, electronic, oral, or other form of communication, including but not limited to emailing, copying or printing of electronic files, and reconstruction through memorization and/or dictation, before, during or after the certification examination is strictly prohibited.
- Disclosure, discussion, or receipt of any ABOHN certification examination questions and/or the examination, in whole or in part, on social media networking, in study groups, or by other methods is strictly prohibited.
- Theft or attempted theft of examination content is punishable by law.
- Candidate participation in any irregularity occurring during or after the examination, such as giving or obtaining unauthorized information or aid, as evidenced by observation or subsequent statistical analysis, may be sufficient cause to terminate participation, invalidate results of the examination, or necessitate other appropriate action. Incidents regarding examination administration security will be reported to the ABOHN Board of Directors. Grounds for sanction may be warranted.

## Test Blueprints (Exam Content Outlines - ECO's)

See Appendices for the examination blueprints.

- Appendix A: COHN Test Blueprint
- Appendix B: COHN-S Test Blueprint
- Appendix C: CM Test Blueprint

# Taking the Examination

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## What to Expect on Examination Day

- Read the Test Day Instructions
- Locate, print and bring the email confirmation notice ASC sent you, that specifies your testing location, the time you need to arrive at the testing venue, and the list of items you need to bring (or cannot bring into the testing room with you.)
- Plan to arrive at the testing venue at least 15 minutes before the start of the testing session. If you arrive late for the testing session, you will not be permitted to test.

## Identification Requirements

Candidates are required to present a valid, government issued, photo identification to the proctor to gain access to the examination. Acceptable forms of identification (photograph and signature required) include:

- Government-issued driver's license
- Passport
- Non-US Military issued identification card
- Any physical Government-Issued Identification Card (must include photo)

The name and photo on the identification presented must match the examinee as identified at the time of registration. Candidates will not be permitted to test without proper identification and all fees will be forfeited.

## Examination Security

To provide a fair and consistent environment for all candidates, examinations are delivered using standardized procedures following strict security protocols. Candidates are required to follow all testing rules at all times. Failure to follow these rules may result in termination of a candidate's testing session, invalidation of the candidate's examination score and/or disciplinary action. The following rules will be enforced on examination day:

- Report or log in prior to the scheduled testing appointment.
- Candidates are permitted a beverage in a clear, spill-proof container
- No breaks will be provided during the examination. Should a candidate require a break for a medical or other reason, they should complete an accommodation request and submit it with the examination application for review and approval.
- No watches, cell phones, headphones, or other electronic devices are permitted during testing. **Please leave these items at home or in your car if feasible.**
- No resources, notes, books, or references of any type are allowed
- Reading out loud or any attempts to capture examination content (e.g., taking photos, copying questions, etc.) are prohibited

# After the Examination

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After you finish the examination, you are asked to complete a short evaluation of your testing experience.

**The Official Notification of pass/fail status** will be emailed to candidates from ABOHN within 2 weeks of taking the examination followed by an official pass/fail packet which will be mailed to candidates during the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week *of the month following the examination date*. Scores are reported in written form only.

Your score report will indicate a “pass” or “fail.” Additional detail is provided in the form of raw scores by major content category. A raw score is the number of correctly answered questions; a scaled score is statistically derived from the raw score. Your pass/fail status is determined by your scaled score. Your total score determines whether you pass or fail.

The methodology used to set the minimum passing score for the examination is the Angoff method, applied during the performance of a Passing Point Study by a panel of content experts. The experts evaluated each question on the respective examination to determine how many correct answers are necessary to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required for the certification designation. The score is based on the candidate’s ability to pass the examination, not on the performance of other candidates.

## If You Pass the Examination

ABOHN will send official notices to candidates who have achieved passing scores on the ABOHN examinations. A wall certificate and digital badge will be sent to show that they have earned the right to use an ABOHN designation after their names. Additionally, their names and credentials are published in the ABOHN online Directory of Certified Occupational Health Nurses if they agreed to be published.

## If You Do Not Pass the Examination

Although ABOHN imposes no limit upon the number of times that an individual may apply or take an examination, ABOHN does require unsuccessful candidates to wait 30 days from receiving their official results from ABOHN to reapply.

## Duplicate Score Report

Candidates may purchase additional copies of score reports at a cost of \$25 per copy. Written requests must be submitted to ABOHN within 12 months of the examination. The request must include the candidate’s name, unique identifier assigned by ABOHN, mailing address, telephone number, examination date, the name of the examination taken and the required fee.

## Revocation of Certification/Cancellation of Scores

ABOHN may revoke a certification for substantial misrepresentation on the application, fraud on the examination, or failure to meet the criteria for certification or recertification. ABOHN and ASC are responsible for the integrity of the scores they report. Misconduct by a candidate may cause a score to be suspected. ABOHN is committed to rectifying such discrepancies as expeditiously as possible. If, after investigation, ABOHN discovers that its regulations have been violated, ABOHN may void the violator’s examination results. Actions which constitute a violation of ABOHN’s Policy include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating on an examination.
- Providing false information.
- Misrepresenting certification status.
- Misuse of ABOHN property.
- Being subject to any regulatory, criminal, or civil action related to the practice as a certified OHN.

# ABOHN POLICIES

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## Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy

Candidate information and scores are considered confidential information. Sensitive and confidential information received by ABOHN is used solely for the purposes of certification and verification and cannot be shared without written permission or as required by law. Disclosure will not take place that violates an applicant, candidate, or a certificant's right of privacy.

## Examination Security Policy

Federal copyright law protects ABOHN examinations, and the items contained therein. The certification examinations and all items on the examinations are the exclusive property of the American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc. Candidates who apply for the certification examination must acknowledge that they understand and agree to the policy prior to taking the examination.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

It is a strict policy of ABOHN to treat all applicants, candidates and currently certified fairly and without regard to actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, or other legally protected categories.

## Appeals Policy

The American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc., ABOHN provides an opportunity for candidates to question any aspect of the certification program. ABOHN will respond to any question as quickly as possible. Candidates are invited to send an email message to [info@abohn.org](mailto:info@abohn.org) for any questions. In addition, ABOHN has an appeals policy to provide a review mechanism for challenging an adverse decision, such as denial of eligibility for the examination or revocation of certification. An application for an appeal is available online at <https://www.abohn.org/certification/questions-and-appeals>.

It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate the appeal processes by written request or completing the form and sending it to ABOHN at <mailto:info@abohn.org> **within 30 calendar days** of the circumstance leading to the appeal. Depending on the type of appeal, fees may apply.

## Records Retention Policy

Certification records are considered confidential information, and includes but is not limited to, nursing licenses, transcripts/degrees, continuing education documents, financial data, and individual identifiable information/unique identifiers as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Effective 2016, the repository for all certification and recertification applications, files, and pertinent and associated information is the 2 tiered, secured, VPN - ABOHN Database. Information from paper records received is entered in the database and becomes a permanent electronic record. Individuals should retain copies of their records for personal use. ABOHN is under no obligation to return or issue copies of these documents for future use by an applicant, candidate, or certificant. ABOHN implements a Records Management and Retention Policy and institutes best business practices with regards to retention, security, and disposal of paper and electronic records received from applicants and certificants. These processes are reviewed by the BOD and may be modified at any time for compliance with local,

state, and federal laws affecting record retention. All documents submitted for application consideration become the property of ABOHN. At such a time that a paper record is no longer required for processing of an application or valued for its information, the paper record is destroyed per policy. In the event of a circumstance involving litigation, disposal of any documents pertaining to the litigation will be suspended.

## Misuse of ABOHN Credentials

The awarded credential(s) may only be used by the certified individual during the time period designated on the individual's wallet card or digital badge. Failure to successfully recertify or renew requires the individual to stop using the credentials immediately after the credential has expired or the credential holder applied for Inactive Status. It is the policy of the American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc., ABOHN, to thoroughly investigate all reports of an individual or corporation using the "COHN", "COHN-S", or the "CM" credential of the ABOHN trademark.

### **Current credential holders have an obligation to notify ABOHN if they are aware of credential misuse.**

If proof of fraudulent use is obtained, the ABOHN organization will notify the parties involved. Fraudulent use may be reported to employers, state boards of nursing and/or published for professional or consumer notification at the discretion of the ABOHN Board of Directors.

## Contact Information Change

It is a candidate's or certificant's responsibility to ensure that their contact information is kept up to date in their ABOHN profile. This information is used to send important information and reminders. ABOHN recommends using a personal email address and phone number in the event of changes in employment. To update account information, please email [info@abohn.org](mailto:info@abohn.org).

## Verifying Certification Status

Under no circumstances will individual examination scores be reported to anyone but the individual who took the examination. Aggregate scores without personally identifiable markers will be used by the respective examination committees in collaboration with the testing consultants to set the passing points for the examination and to analyze performance of individual questions.

All information provided to ABOHN, including job descriptions, may be used for a variety of analyses to study certified occupational health nurses and their practice. However, information sharing will be limited to data reports that are in aggregate form, or documents that lack personally identifiable information.

Upon written request for verification of certification, an authorized ABOHN representative will provide the following information:

- "This shall serve as verification of the \_\_\_\_\_ credential status of the above-named individual."

OR

- "Our records do not indicate that anyone with the name spelled in the manner that you have provided is currently certified through the American Board for Occupational Health Nurses."

Unless authorized in writing by the individual whose certification status is being questioned, at no time shall any demographic information, pass/fail information, member data, or other identifying information be given.



## Ethics

ABOHN considers the American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN) Code of Ethics for Occupational Health Nurses foundational for nursing practice, providing a framework for making ethical decisions and fulfilling responsibilities to the public, colleagues and the profession. For additional information on the Code of Ethics, please visit the AAOHN website at <http://www.aohn.org/>

# Maintaining Certification

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## Retaining Certification

To maintain “Active” status requires:

1. **Annual Renewal Application and Fee** along with any updated work/home information in order to maintain the credential in Active status.
2. **Recertification Application and Fee:** Recertification is required every five (5) years. Recertification eligibility criteria includes:
  - a. Current, unrestricted registered nursing licensure, or its international equivalent.
  - b. 50 Continuing Nursing Education (CNE) continuing education hours related to occupational health earned within the previous five (5) years. An additional 10 contact hours in case management is required if you hold the CM certification. These ten contact hours cannot be duplicates of any of the 50 contact hours submitted for your core credential recertification.
  - c. 3,000 hours of occupational health nursing experience for paid compensation during the previous five (5) years. (You do not have to be currently employed at the time you apply for recertification.)

Note: Alternative credit for some occupational health nursing employment hours may include Baccalaureate or Graduate courses related to occupational health. Course work associated with attaining a degree can be used to meet either the continuing education requirement or the work experience requirement, but not for both.

For additional information on acceptable continuing education, please see the [Recertification Handbook](#) which can be found at [www.abohn.org](http://www.abohn.org).

Although ABOHN sends reminder notices to the preferred email address on file, **it is ultimately the credential holder's responsibility to understand and know when their annual renewal/5-year recertification is due.** Late applications require a late fee and the excuse of not receiving any "notices" is not sufficient.

# Appendix A

## COHN Examination Content Outline (Test Blueprint)

<b>1</b>	<b>Clinical Practice and Case Management</b>	<b>72</b>
A	Clinical Practice	42
1	Work-related injuries and illnesses	
2	Non-work-related injuries and illnesses	
3	Nursing Standards of Care	
4	Nurse Practice Laws and Regulations	
5	Clinical Care Counselling and Education	
6	Infection Control Standards of Care Protocols	
7	Cultural Competence and Considerations	
8	Medical Documentation	
B	Case Management	30
1	Fit for Duty	
2	Case management Counselling and Education	
3	Disability Case Management (e.g., STD, LTD, FMLA)	
4	Workers Compensation	
5	Return to Work	
6	Restricted/Modified Duties and Accommodations	
7	Referrals and Resources	
<b>2</b>	<b>Risk and Compliance</b>	<b>40</b>
A	Risk Management and Prevention	20
1	Worker, Worker Population, and Workplace Settings Assessments	
2	Worker Job Requirements (e.g. physical)	
3	Ergonomics and Work Design	
4	Environmental Health and Industrial Hygiene	
5	Disaster Panning and Emerging health Issues	
B	Compliance	20
1	Ethical, Legal, and Regulatory Compliance	
2	Occupational Health Surveillance Programs	
3	Drug and Alcohol Programs	
<b>3</b>	<b>Program Management and Quality Assurance</b>	<b>23</b>
A	Program Management	23
1	Health, Safety, and Workplace Education and Training Programs	
2	Worker/Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)	
3	Wellness and Health Promotion Programs	
4	Surveillance/Regulatory Compliance Testing Programs	
5	Stakeholder education and Collaboration	

# Appendix B

## COHN-S Examination Content Outline (Test Blueprint)

<b>1</b>	<b>Clinical Practice and Case Management</b>	<b>45</b>
A	Clinical Practice	20
1	Work-related Injuries and Illnesses	
2	Non-work-related Injuries and Illnesses	
3	Nursing Standards of Care	
4	Nurse Practice Laws and Regulations	
5	Clinical Care Counselling and Education	
6	Infection Control Standards of Care Protocols	
7	Cultural Competence and Considerations	
8	Medical Documentation	
B	Case Management	25
1	Fit for Duty	
2	Case Management Counselling and Education	
3	Disability Case Management (e.g., STD, LTD, FMLA)	
4	Workers Compensation	
5	Return to Work	
6	Restricted/Modified Duties and Accommodations	
7	Referrals and Resources	
8	Third-Party Providers and Services Evaluation and Management	
<b>2</b>	<b>Risk and Compliance</b>	<b>32</b>
A	Risk Management and Prevention	20
1	Worker, Worker Population, and Workplace Settings Assessments	
2	Worker Job Requirements (e.g., physical)	
3	Ergonomics and Work Design	
4	Hierarchy of Controls	
5	Environmental Health and Industrial Hygiene	
6	Disaster Planning and Emerging Health Issues	
7	Job Analysis and Descriptions	
B	Compliance	12
1	Ethical, Legal, and Regulatory Compliance	
2	Occupational Health Surveillance Programs	
3	Drug and Alcohol Programs	
<b>3</b>	<b>Program Management and Quality Assurance</b>	<b>30</b>
A	Program Management	15
1	Health, Safety, and Workplace Education and Training Programs	
2	Worker/Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)	
3	Wellness and Health Promotion Programs	
4	Infection Control Program Development	

## COHN-S Examination Content Outline (page 2)

<b>B</b>	<b>Quality Assurance</b>	<b>15</b>
1	Quality Management/Improvement Programs	
2	Surveillance/Regulatory Compliance Testing Programs	
3	Programs Evaluation and Quality Care Metrics	
4	Audits	
<b>4</b>	<b>Operations and Business Management</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Operations Management</b>	<b>15</b>
1	Scope of Services for Occupational Health Staff	
2	Occupational Health and Safety Program Development and Implementation	
3	Staff Competencies, Requirements, and Protocols	
4	Hiring, Training, Supervising, and Retention of Staff	
5	Strategic Planning	
<b>B</b>	<b>Business Acumen</b>	<b>13</b>
1	Stakeholder Engagement and Education	
2	Budgets, Cost Containment, Cost-Avoidance, and Return on Investment (ROI)	
3	Analysis of Outcomes and Metrics	
4	Communication of Reports to Stakeholders	

# Appendix C

## CM Examination Content Outline (Test Blueprint)

<b>1</b>	<b>Core Principles</b>	<b>40</b>
A	Plan of Care	25
1	Disability and Absence Management Programs	
2	Care Coordination and Plans	
3	Counselling and Education	
4	Care Communication	
5	Cultural Competence and Considerations	
6	Cost and Resource Considerations	
7	Disability Outcomes Benchmarking	
8	Federal, State, and Local Regulations and Laws	
B	Evaluation and Reporting	11
1	Medical Documentation and Reporting	
2	Regulatory Compliance	
3	Program Outcomes/Quality	
C	Business Considerations	4
1	Health, Safety, and Wellness Programs	
2	Business Cases and Return on Investment (ROI)	
<b>2</b>	<b>Disability Management</b>	<b>32</b>
A	Occupational	22
1	Workers Compensation	
2	Accommodations and Modifications	
3	Treatment Modalities and Referrals	
4	Return to Work	
5	Legal and Regulatory Compliance	
6	Non-Occupational	
B	Accommodations and Modifications	10
1	Return to Work	
2	Legal and Regulatory Compliance	
3	Fitness for Work	
<b>3</b>	<b>Worker Profile</b>	<b>28</b>
A	Occupational and Environmental Health and Medical History	14
1	Work Restrictions	
2	Worker Accommodations and Modifications	
3	Job Placements	
4	Fitness for Duty Evaluation	
5	Job Role and Requirements	
B	Job Analysis	14
1	Essential Job Functions	
2	Tests and Screening Requirements	
3	Safety and Control Measures	
4	Hazard and Risk Assessments	
5	Core Principles	

# Appendix D:

## References for the COHN and COHN-S Examinations

### **ABOHN Reference List Effective 9-1-2024**

The American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc. has prepared the following list of references that are examples of resources that may be used to prepare for the certification examination. This is not an all-inclusive list, but one that represents the types of materials that may have been used as references for the examination items. Applicants are advised to identify the areas of content in which they feel less knowledgeable and to focus their study on those areas, as well as a general overview of the content described in the Test Blueprint/Exam Content Outline (ECO). Useful references may be obtained from professional organizations and public and university libraries. ABOHN neither sells, nor lends references. **ABOHN cannot recommend any specific course(s) or other resources that may prepare you for the examination.**

### **Books/References**

1. American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN), 2022. Fundamentals of Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing: AAOHN Core Curriculum 5th Edition. ISBN 0578366045
2. Friend, M.A. & Kohn, J.P., 2018. Fundamentals of Occupational Safety and Health Seventh Edition. ISBN 1598889826
3. Gatien, B., Kelloway, K., & Francis, L., 2021. Management of Occupational Health & Safety Eighth Edition. ISBN 0176893016
4. Kelloway, K., Nielsen, K., & Dimoff, J., 2016. Leading to Occupational Health & Safety: How Leadership Behaviours Impact Organizational Safety and Well-Being – 1st Edition. ISBN 1118973704
5. Thornbory, G. & Everton, S., 2018. Contemporary Occupational Health Nursing: A Guide for Practitioners 2nd Edition. ISBN 9781138703032

### **Websites**

6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
  - a. Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry: [www.atsdr.cdc.gov](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov)
  - b. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR): [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/index.html)
  - c. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH): [www.cdc.gov/niosh/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/index.htm)
7. American Public Health Association: [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org)
8. U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division
  - a. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)
9. Council for Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation: [www.caohc.org](http://www.caohc.org)
10. The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA): [www.aiha.org](http://www.aiha.org)
11. U.S. Department of Labor
  - a. Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standards: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)
  - b. Office of Disability Employment Policy: [www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/topics](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/topics)
12. Job Accommodation Network (JAN): [www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org)

## References for the CM Examinations

### **ABOHN Reference List Effective 9-1-2024**

The American Board for Occupational Health Nurses, Inc. has prepared the following list of references that are examples of resources that may be used to prepare for the certification examination. This is not an all-inclusive list, but one that represents the types of materials that may have been used as references for the examination items. Applicants are advised to identify the areas of content in which they feel less knowledgeable and to focus their study on those areas, as well as a general overview of the content described in the Test Blueprint/Exam Content Outline (ECO). Useful references may be obtained from professional organizations and public and university libraries. ABOHN neither sells, nor lends references.

**ABOHN cannot recommend any specific course(s) or other resources that may prepare you for the examination.**

### **Books/References**

1. American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN), 2022. Fundamentals of Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing: AAOHN Core Curriculum 5th Edition. ISBN 0578366045
2. Tahan, H.M. & Trieger, T.M. Friend, M.A. & Kohn, J.P., 2018. CMSA Core Curriculum for Case Management Third Edition. ISBN 1451194307
3. Powell, S.K. & Tahan, H.M., 2018. Case Management: A Practical Guide for Education and Practice 4th Edition. ISBN 1496384253
4. Cesta, T.G. & Tahan, H.M., 2017. The Case Managres Survival Guide: Winning Strategies in the New Healthcare Environment 3rd Edition. ISBN 160595885
5. Cooper Gillingham, Deanna, 2021. Foundations of Case Management: A Practical Guide for RNs Transitioning from Nurse to Case Manager. ISBN 1943889155

### **Websites**

6. U.S. Department of Labor
  - a. Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standards: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

# Appendix E

## Request for Special Accommodations

If you Have a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, please complete this form and provide the Documentation of Disability Related Needs on the next page so your accommodations for testing can be processed efficiently. The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and your need for accommodation in testing will be treated with strict confidentiality.

### **Candidate Information**

ABOHN Assigned Unique Identification Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Last, First, Middle Initial) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Daytime Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Special Accommodations**

I request special accommodations for the \_\_\_\_\_ examination.

Please provide (check all that apply):

- Reader
- Extended testing time (time and a half)
- Reduced distraction environment
- Please specify below if other special accommodations are needed

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **PLEASE READ AND SIGN:**

I give my permission for my diagnosing professional to discuss with ABOHN and ASC staff, my records and history as they relate to the requested accommodation.

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

Complete and return this form with your examination application  
along with the Documentation of Disability – Related Needs form to:  
ABOHN, PO BOX 39, Palos Heights, IL 60463  
If you have any question, please contact the ABOHN office at [info@abohn.org](mailto:info@abohn.org)



## Documentation of Disability- Related Needs

Please have this section completed by an appropriate professional (education professional, physician, psychologist, psychiatrist) to ensure that PSI is able to provide the required accommodations.

### Professional Documentation

I have known \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
(Candidate name) (Date)

in my capacity as a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(My Professional Title)

The candidate discussed with me the nature of the test to be administered. It is my opinion that, because of this candidate's disability described below, he/she should be accommodated by providing the special arrangements listed on the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form.

### Description of Disability:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete and return this form with your examination application  
and the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form to:

ABOHN, PO Box 39, Palos Heights, IL 60463

If you have questions, contact the ABOHN office at [info@abohn.org](mailto:info@abohn.org)