



**American Academy  
of Health Care Providers**  

---

**I N T H E**  

---

**Addictive Disorders**

December 2009

---

---

---

# **Policy & Procedure Manual**

*American Academy Certification Board*



## Table of Contents

Mission Statement.....	3
Statement of Non-Discrimination .....	4
Eligibility .....	5
Minimum Eligibility Requirements .....	5
Checklist for Submitting Application for CAS Certification .....	6
Application Review Process .....	9
Certification Examination Policy .....	10
Examination Development Procedures .....	11
Job Analysis Study.....	11
Examination Administration Procedures.....	12
Re-Tests .....	12
Disability Policy.....	13
Disability Examination Procedure .....	13
Database Information Policy .....	14
Confidentiality & Conflicts of Interest .....	15
Conflicts of Interest .....	16
Records Retention.....	18
Security.....	19
Storage Procedures.....	19
Examination Security Procedures.....	19
Proctor Procedures .....	19
Building Security .....	20
Staff Security.....	20
Quality Improvement.....	21
Maintaining CAS Certification .....	22
Annual CAS Renewal.....	22
Renewal Requirements.....	22
Continuing Education .....	23
Renewal Notification .....	23
Recertification After Expiration.....	24
Discipline & Appeals Policies .....	25
Disciplinary Procedure.....	25
Complaints.....	26

Complaint Review..... 26  
Determination of Violation ..... 27  
Sanctions..... 28  
Appeal ..... 28  
Resignation ..... 29  
Appeals of Non-Disciplinary Matters ..... 30  
    Registration ..... 30  
    Application..... 30  
    Certification ..... 30  
    Examination Appeals ..... 30  
    Appeals Procedure..... 30

## Mission Statement

---

Policy Number: 100  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The American Academy of Health Care Providers in the Addictive Disorders:

- Establishes and fosters the highest standard of professional ethics and professional credentialing to ensure the competency of health care providers in the addictive disorders;
- Develops and administers examinations that assess the knowledge and skills underlying the performance of the tasks required by professional practice;
- Advances education, training and scientific research in the field of addictive disorders.

In addition to initial recognition, the American Academy provides a mechanism to recognize individuals who continue to demonstrate qualifications through adherence to standards of professional behavior and compliance with continuing education requirements.

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

---

Policy Number: 101  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The American Academy is committed to adherence and compliance to all applicable laws as set forth and in regard to equal opportunities for all individuals in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1991 (42 USC §1981, 2000e et seq), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 USC §794), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 USC §6101 et seq), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC §12101 et seq), and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Neither the American Academy of Health Care Providers in the Addictive Disorders (AAHCPAD), nor the AAHCPAD officers or employees shall discriminate against applicants, registrants, members, employees or other professionals or individuals on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, economic condition, disability or age in the certification, membership, or registration process, or in its programs and activities.

In the event an individual submits, in writing, a report of a discriminatory act by the AAHCPAD or any of its officers or employees, receipt of the complaint will be addressed immediately by the AAHCPAD and every avenue will be considered and investigated to ensure a fair and lawful determination. If, after thorough investigation, it is determined that such unlawful act has occurred, swift and remedial action will be taken in accordance with the severity of the offense without retaliation on the part of the AAHCPAD Board of Directors or its employees.

## Eligibility

---

Policy Number: 102  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The American Academy of Health Care Providers in the Addictive Disorders offers the Certified Addiction Specialist (CAS) certification to health care professionals in the field of addictive disorders with specializations in five areas: alcohol addiction, drug addiction, eating disorders, sex addiction and gambling addiction.

### Minimum Eligibility Requirements

#### Professionals with Masters or Doctorate degrees must have:

1. A master's or doctorate degree from an accredited health care education program;
2. Three years (6,000 hrs) of post-graduate, full-time supervised experience providing direct health care services to those identified with an addictive disorder. Pre-doctoral or pre-masters internships at an approved site may be considered by the Academy towards one year of clinical supervision;
3. A portfolio of clinical education with documentation of a minimum of 120 hours of clinical education in basic counseling skills including assessment, interviewing and diagnosis, **and** documentation of a minimum of 60 hours of addiction training/education specific to each area of specialization for which the applicant is seeking certification;
4. Three professional recommendations from those who are personally familiar with the applicant; at least one referent must be a clinical supervisor who can document applicant's health care experience; and
5. A completed application with the \$95 non-refundable application fee.
6. **PLEASE NOTE:** Incomplete applications requiring additional review(s) are subject to a \$25 fee per review.

#### Professionals with other degrees or without a degree must have:

1. A high school diploma, Associates or Bachelors degree;
2. Five years (10,000 hrs) of full-time supervised experience providing direct health care services to those identified with an addictive disorder;
3. A portfolio of clinical education with documentation of a minimum of 120 hours of education in basic counseling skills including assessment, interviewing and diagnosis, **and** a minimum of 60 hours of addiction training/education specific to each area of specialization for which the applicant is seeking certification;
4. Three professional recommendations from those who are personally familiar with the applicant; at least one referent must be a clinical supervisor who can document applicant's health care experience; and
5. A completed application with a \$95 non-refundable application fee.
6. **PLEASE NOTE:** Incomplete applications requiring additional review(s) are subject to a \$25 fee per review.

## Instructions for Completing the Certified Addiction Specialist Application

### PORTFOLIO:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Application forms must be typewritten. Illegible submissions will be returned. Original forms contained in this packet may be copied.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant's current resume/curriculum vitae.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of all diplomas, licenses, and certifications.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Documentation of a minimum of 120 hours of education in basic counseling skills. Education must include assessment, interviewing, and diagnosis. Form is attached.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Documentation of a minimum of 60 hours of \*current clinical education in each specialization, as selected on the application form. A documentation form is provided to list transcript courses and/or continuing education courses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Code of Ethics – signed.

### REFERENCES:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit letters of recommendation from three professionals, of which at least one letter of recommendation must include a clinical supervisor, who is familiar with the applicant's clinical work. It is requested that letters be written on professional letterhead. List below:
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_

## **CLINICAL SUPERVISION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

(Clinical supervisors must be licensed or certified in their respective fields. The experience, credentials, and work activities of the supervisor must be appropriate to the supervision provided.)

### Clinical Supervision Recommendation Forms (**CONFIDENTIAL**):

\_\_\_\_\_ A self-addressed stamped envelope for returning the completed form must be provided by the applicant to the clinical supervisor(s) attesting to applicant's supervision.

\_\_\_\_\_ Clinical supervisor(s) must complete the form, sign, and have their signature notarized. It is then to be placed in the envelope provided by the applicant, together with the supervisor(s) resume or curriculum vitae, or letter outlining his/her education, licenses, and experience specifically in the treatment of addictive disorders.

\_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor(s) must seal the envelope, sign his/her name across the seal, and return it to the applicant.

\_\_\_\_\_ Applicant will submit the sealed envelopes with their application and portfolio.

## **SUBMIT:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Signed & notarized application

\_\_\_\_\_ Applicant's resume or curriculum vitae

\_\_\_\_\_ Copies of diplomas, licenses & certifications

\_\_\_\_\_ Documented education and reference letters

\_\_\_\_\_ Signed Code of Ethics

\_\_\_\_\_ Sealed envelopes containing Clinical Supervision Recommendation forms and resumes.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check or money order made payable to the American Academy for \$95.00. The application fee is non-refundable.

## OTHER:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Incomplete applications/portfolios requiring additional review will be subject to a \$25 fee per review.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Incomplete applications that do not meet the requirements will be returned. The application/review fee is non-refundable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Academy will notify the applicant of acceptance status within six weeks of receiving the application.

---

## DEFINITIONS:

**Accredited health care education program:** Programs accepted for certification requirements are those degree-granting educational institutions that are accredited by the appropriate regional accreditation board and those that receive such accreditation within six years of the date of the applicant's awarded degree.

**Direct health care services:** The applicant must have provided supervised direct health care services to those identified with addictive disorders in a licensed clinical setting. Health care services include, but are not limited to, assessment, diagnosis, and approved therapeutic (medical or psychological) interventions.

**Certifiable internship program:** An internship program is comprised of a minimum of 1,500 working hours and must be completed within 24 consecutive months. Internship experience considered certifiable are those whose training programs and supervision are approved by the American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychoanalytical Association, the National League of Nursing, the National Association of Social Workers, and those licensed or certified by local state agencies. These programs generally require the applicant's status to be considered as an intern, trainee, or fellow.

**Clinical Supervisors:** Clinical supervisors must be licensed or certified in their respective fields. The experience, credentials, and activities of the supervisor must be appropriate to the supervision provided.

**Clinical Education in Specialization** – education must be specific to alcohol addiction, other drugs (methamphetamine, tobacco, HIV, etc.), eating disorders, and/or sexual addiction. Co-occurring and dual diagnosis trainings do not apply towards specializations for the application process.

Gambling specialization requires passing an additional exam and can only be added after obtaining the CAS certification (for further information, please contact the American Academy).

**\*Current Clinical Education** – education must be current and not to exceed five years.

## Application Review Process

Upon receipt of the application, the Academy will review all documentation submitted by the applicant. If the application is complete in content and meets the requirements of the Academy, the applicant will be notified by mail and invited to sit for the Academy's online, proctored examination at a time which is convenient for the applicant and the applicant's proctor. The applicant must indicate in writing the date and time they have selected for the exam, sign a confidentiality statement, and return the form provided to the Academy. The Academy then provides by email a listing of the internet requirements for taking the exam, proctor requirements, and provides the proctor with login information. .

If an application is not complete, the Academy may choose to request in writing that the applicant provide missing information resulting in an additional review. Additional fees may apply.

In the event the application and portfolio do not meet the criteria, they will be returned to the applicant by mail with a detailed explanation of deficiencies. The application fee is non-refundable. Re-application is encouraged and will be considered a new submission requiring a non-refundable application fee.

Applicants may appeal a denied or revoked application in situations where the applicant believes the denial/revocation to be in error. Applicants wishing to appeal should immediately submit a written request for review stating the reason for his/her appeal of the decision (See policy #301, Non-Disciplinary Appeals).

The American Academy will only grant certification to individuals who have successfully met all of the eligibility criteria, have passed the examination, and who have paid all required fees in full.

## Certification Examination Policy

---

Policy Number: 103  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The American Academy certification examination is designed to test the applicant's knowledge in the essential core domains of addiction treatment. In addition to fulfilling all of the American Academy's applicant requirements, as outlined in the Minimum Eligibility Requirements, applicants are required to pass the certification examination to receive the CAS credential.

The exam fee is \$275. The certification examination is web-based, proctored and administered by the Academy via the internet. Candidates may schedule a time to take the exam once their application has been reviewed and approved. Candidates are allowed two and one half hours to complete the examination, consisting of 150 multiple-choice questions. Results of the exam are available within two weeks of the testing date. It is pass/fail based on the raw score.

The examination must be proctored. The Proctor Nondiscrimination/Confidentiality form and proctor verifications must be completed and submitted to the Academy before administration of the examination. The Post-exam Proctor Form with the signature of the certificant and the proctor must be faxed to the Academy immediately upon completion of the testing and then mailed to the Academy office.

Upon successful completion of the exam, the applicant will be awarded the Certified Addiction Specialist (CAS) certification. A letter will be mailed confirming certification and assigning a certificant number, a personalized CAS wall certificate, and a certificant card.

## Examination Development Procedures

---

Policy Number: 104  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The Certified Addiction Specialist (CAS) examination is based on a job analysis and scientifically validated through psychometrically acceptable methods with content categories. The job analysis includes contributions from qualified subject matter experts and incorporates the knowledge, skills and attributes of the addiction counseling competencies, as set forth in TAP 21 (Technical Assistance Publication). The job analysis identifies critical tasks and knowledge areas required for a CAS and the results applied in creating the test specifications. Taking into account content coverage, item relevancy, and estimated item difficulty, each examination form shall be constructed to meet the specifications of the exam blueprint. The process will support the validity of the examination through linkage to the results of the job analysis.

Examination questions are selected from a bank of test items, reviewed and approved by CAS appointed subject matter experts and approved by the Academy's Certification Board.

Examination development procedures shall continue to utilize quality assurance and security procedures to ensure all examination questions are developed based on the CAS exam blueprint with linkages to the job analysis study.

### Job Analysis Study

The Certified Addiction Specialists work in five specialty areas, which are alcohol addiction, drug addiction, eating disorders, sexual addiction, and gambling addiction. The job analysis study began with a logical analysis of the literature, which led to a delineation of tasks performed by CAS'. A panel of subject matter experts refined the tasks, which became the basis for an electronic survey of incumbents. The electronic survey of Certified Addiction Specialists provided frequency and importance ratings for the tasks. The tasks were organized under five content domains, and the domains and tasks were validated through the survey results. The data served as the information for the certification examination program. A job analysis study is ongoing and scheduled at intervals of 3 to 5 years.

## Examination Administration Procedures

---

Policy Number: 105  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The Certified Addiction Specialist Examination is a proctored, web-based examination, with secured username/password protection and administered by the American Academy. Candidates may schedule a time to sit for the exam once they have been notified their application has been reviewed and approved. The examination is pass/fail based on raw score. The results are confidential, and the candidate is notified by mail by the Academy within two weeks.

The Academy requires that all examinations are proctored by a designated individual who must meet and verify the Academy's proctor criteria then complete a Non-Discrimination/Confidentiality Agreement prior to the examination. On the day of the scheduled examination, the proctor must complete the Proctor Form, verifying the government issue photo identity of the candidate and that the applicant's work was unassisted and without reference materials, including electronic devices and cell phone. Immediately following completion of the examination, the applicant and proctor sign the Post-exam Proctor Form, fax and then mail the form to the American Academy.

### Re-Tests

Candidates who fail the exam may schedule a re-test for a \$100 fee.

## Disability Policy

---

Policy Number: 106  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

It is the commitment of the American Academy to adhere to and be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 36.309, which requires certification and testing organizations to comply with the Act. Section 36.309 states, “Any private entity that offers examinations or courses related to applications, licensing, certification, or credentialing for secondary or post-secondary education, professional, or trade purposes shall offer such examinations or courses in a place and manner accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative accessible arrangements for such individuals.”

### Disability Examination Procedure

It is the commitment of the American Academy to adhere to and be in compliance with the ADA in providing reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities if the accommodation is reasonable and does not compromise the integrity, validity and reliability of the examination. A request for reasonable accommodation must be submitted in writing to the American Academy, indicating the disability and suggested accommodation. Supporting evidence documenting the disability and request for reasonable accommodation shall be submitted with the application.

Upon receipt of such request, the American Academy will:

- Determine if the accommodation is reasonable, does not compromise the integrity, validity and reliability of the examination, and make appropriate arrangements for the accommodation; or
- Contact the disability access consultant and determine that the accommodation is reasonable, does not compromise the integrity, validity and reliability of the examination, and make appropriate arrangements for the accommodation; or
- Contact the disability access consultant and determine that the accommodation is not reasonable, or that it will compromise the integrity, validity and reliability of the examination, and notify the applicant in writing with justification for the denial.

Applicants denied accommodation due to a determination that the request is not reasonable or will in some way compromise the integrity, validity and reliability of the examination may appeal the decision in accordance with the American Academy’s appeals procedures.

## Database Information Policy

---

Policy Number: 107  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The record for each registrant, applicant, or certificant certified by the American Academy shall be maintained by an electronic database, and made username/password accessible only for authorized American Academy personnel and contracted agents of the American Academy.

The database of certificants is accessible to the public at [www.americanacademy.org/resources](http://www.americanacademy.org/resources) and is updated daily. The information available includes name, city, state, telephone number and area of specialization(s).

## Confidentiality & Conflicts of Interest

---

Policy Number: 108  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The content and results of examinations administered by the American Academy are considered confidential and privileged information.

### Employees, Board Members & Volunteers

The Minnesota Council on Addictions and the American Academy, American Academy Certification Board, American Academy employees, volunteers, and consultants are required to protect confidential information and documents related to the American Academy certification programs.

All confidential information, including electronic files, distributed to Certification Board members, exam committee members, item writers, or other volunteers, will remain the property of the American Academy certification programs and will be kept in a secure manner until returned or destroyed as appropriate in compliance with the American Academy's records retention and security policies.

Certification Board members, exam committee members, and other volunteers will sign a confidentiality statement prior to their first term of service.

### Candidate/Certificant Information

American Academy certification programs protect the confidential information of registrants/candidates/applicants and/or certifiants. In addition to personal information submitted in the application, exam results are also considered confidential (see Exam Results below). Confidential information will only be released to the individual candidate/certificant unless a signed release is provided or unless otherwise required by law.

The name, city and state of residence, telephone number, specialty area and current certification status of American Academy certifiants are not considered confidential and may be published by American Academy as noted above in the Database Information Policy.

### Exam Results

In order to protect the confidentiality of candidate/certificant records, confidential information about candidates and their examination results is not released to any third party without written consent of the candidate/certificant. Even with consent, exam scores are not released by telephone.

The content and results of examinations administered by the American Academy and all application materials are considered confidential information and will be treated as such in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the Certification Board, unless appropriate permission is obtained or where otherwise required by law.

In order to protect the confidentiality of candidate/certificant records, information about candidates/certificants and their examination results is released to third parties only under the following circumstances:

- Upon the written request of a third party, American Academy will verify current certification status, specialty area, the date of initial or recertification and certification expiration date of a certificant.
- American Academy will release certification examination score(s) to a state licensing agency, if requested, with certificant's written authorization.
- American Academy will disclose information that is required to be in compliance with state and federal laws, court orders and military deployment information requirements without certificant authorization.

Further, the American Academy stores, processes, and uses data collected from application forms and test score reports. Data is stored only to the extent necessary for processing and validating applications/examination scores and in compliance with related record retention regulations. Under no circumstances will individual data or test scores be shared with any entity outside of the certifying agency, unless permission is obtained from the candidate or certificant or unless otherwise required by law. Candidate test scores are not released by telephone or electronically, but only in written form as an official American Academy document.

### **Aggregate Exam Data**

American Academy will develop and publish statistical data regarding the exams provided that the identities of the candidates are not divulged. Published data will include the number of exam candidates, pass/fail ratio, and the number of individuals certified.

### **Other Confidential Information**

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: examination materials; examination development materials (including job analysis reports, cut score studies, item writing records, technical reports, etc.); personnel records; registrant/applicant/certificant records; disciplinary matters; appeals; contracts and agreements; information discussed or disclosed during Certification Board and exam committee meetings; and any other information that American Academy is required to keep confidential.

If the confidentiality of information is in question the American Academy executive director and/or the Certification Board chairperson will make a final determination.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Certification Board members, committee members and other volunteers are required to avoid conflicts of interest by recognizing and disclosing all actual, potential, or apparent conflicts of interest while acting in their role as board members/committee members/ volunteers.

A conflict of interest may exist when a board member/committee member/volunteer:

- Has a social, professional, or economic relationship with a third party that may affect his/her ability to act in the best interest of the American Academy and its certification programs;
- Could experience a material economic gain or loss from a decision made by the American Academy;
- Is in a position to experience material or economic gain by using confidential or proprietary information gained by his/her association with the American Academy certification program.

Violations of this policy include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Failing to properly disclose an actual, potential, or apparent conflict of interest.
- Influencing board and/or committee decisions in such a way as to provide economic gain for his/her personal benefit, or the for the benefit of others with whom the board member/committee member/volunteer has a social, professional, or economic relationship.
- Using confidential information gained in the course of the board member's/committee member's/volunteer's relationship with the American Academy certification program for his/her personal benefit or the for the benefit of others with whom the individual has a social, professional, or economic relationship.
- Benefitting financially as a result of his/her role with the certification program in a way which would be to the detriment of the American Academy.
- Providing goods or services to the American Academy as a vendor.

All American Academy Certification Board Members, committee members, and other volunteers are required to acknowledge and agree to all terms and conditions of this policy. Board members/committee members/volunteers must disclose any actual, potential, or apparent conflict of interest to the Certification Board.

Board members/committee members/volunteers must refrain from acting or debating on any action or other decision in which the personal or financial interests of the board member/committee member/volunteer conflict with the objects and purposes of the American Academy.

## Records Retention

---

Policy Number: 109  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

Personal information will be deemed confidential and retained as noted below. All confidential information, including personal information, will be stored securely, and can be released only as per legal regulations require, to include: registration, application/portfolio information, examination results, and details, if applicable, of suspension, revocation or denial of certification.

All documents created or received by the American Academy will be retained according to the following schedule. The use of the term “documents” in this policy includes all hard copy and electronic materials. All confidential materials will be retained in compliance with the security policy.

The following documents will be permanently retained: Examinations; examination development documentation including, but not limited to, job analysis studies, test specifications, records of item writing activities, cut score studies, and technical reports; examination results; examination items (item bank); active applicant/candidate records; files of active certificants; active contracts; audit reports and financial statements; meeting minutes; legal correspondence and documents.

The following documents will be retained for at least 7 years: inactive registrant/certificant files (retained for 7 years after file becomes inactive; current files are retained permanently); expense reports; accounting/bookkeeping records (except as noted above); expired/terminated contracts.

The following documents will be retained for at least 3 years: inactive personnel files; inactive candidate files; general correspondence.

## Security

---

Policy Number: 110  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

### Storage Procedures

Personal information will be retained as required by the record retention policy and deemed confidential. This information includes all registration files, application/portfolio information, examination results, and details of suspensions, revocations or denials of certification. All information on file and all files placed in storage are secured in the office of the American Academy in locked files, within a secure and locked building.

The examination, item banks, and other secure materials are stored in an electronic file which is encrypted and username/password protected, accessible only by authorized Academy personnel. Duplicate storage of electronic files is off-site in a secured location.

### Examination Security Procedures

Upon approval by the Academy of an application for certification, the applicant shall be notified and invited to sit for the online, proctored examination. The integrity of the examination is secured by the signing of the Rules & Procedures/Confidentiality Statement by the examinee and by the Proctor's Non-Discrimination/Confidentiality Statement by the designated proctor.

To ensure standardized and secure administration of the assessment instruments, the online examination is accessible by login information (username/password) known only to Academy personnel and the proctor. All authorized Academy personnel involved in the examination process have a signed Confidentiality Agreement on file in the Academy office.

### Proctor Procedures

Proctors must submit the following documentation to the Academy:

- Prior to the scheduled examination, a signed and dated Proctor's Non-Discrimination/Confidentiality Statement and proctor verification documents.
- Immediately following the examination, the Proctor Form must be signed by the examinee and the proctor, faxed and then mailed to the Academy.

Such form will affirm the work submitted was the applicant's own and that no one assisted him/her with the completion of the examination; the proctor verifies the applicant's identity by government issue photo identification (i.e. drivers license, military ID or passport), and that to the best of the proctor's knowledge, the work submitted is the work of the applicant and that he/she had no reference materials, electronic devices, including cell phone, or assistance in completion of the examination.

## Building Security

Access by staff and authorized visitors to the building in which the Academy office is located is restricted to business hours only. After hours building security is monitored by authorized building staff and security system.

## Staff Security

Access to the Academy office is restricted to staff, contractors, authorized personnel, and guests. Vendors and guests are restricted to authorized areas only. It is the policy of the Academy that staff and contractors are responsible for maintaining the confidential integrity of information obtained through an employment or business relationship with the Academy and are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement which is placed on file with the Academy. Breach of conduct or policy will not be tolerated and may be subject to further action by the Academy.

## Quality Improvement

---

Policy Number: 111  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The Certification Board will review all key policies and procedures at least every three years to ensure that the policies continue to reflect the ongoing needs of the certification program.

The executive director will periodically review all published candidate information to ensure this information remains accurate, up-to-date, and consistent with the policies of the Certification Board.

The executive director will provide the Certification Board with an annual summary of all complaints, disciplinary actions, and appeals. The Board will review the summary for any patterns and opportunities for process improvement.

At least annually the executive director will present a report of exam statistics to the Certification Board for review and analysis. The report will include any concerns identified and any recommendations for exam improvements.

Any significant irregularities in the administration of the exams will be reported to the Certification Board for review.

## Maintaining CAS Certification

---

Policy Number: 200  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

### Annual CAS Renewal

The American Academy requires an annual renewal of the CAS certification. Changes in the field of addictions require Academy members to be committed to lifelong learning by maintaining an awareness of research findings, advancements in treatment techniques and therapeutic approaches. The Academy's minimum 20-hour continuing education annual requirement is designed to foster professional development and to ensure the Academy certificants are well-informed about contemporary addictions research and treatment information. A Code of Ethics must be signed annually. Recertification is not automatic.

### Renewal Requirements

1. All continuing education hours must be addiction-related coursework.
2. The Academy will not accept coursework that has been completed more than one year prior to the annual renewal date.
3. The coursework generally must be approved by a state or national accrediting body. The Academy provides a partial list of accepted accrediting organizations on the Continuing Education Documentation form. If the coursework has not been approved by a state or national accrediting body, the Academy may be contacted and approval requested.
4. Coursework must be documented by a certificate of attendance on the agency's letterhead listing the attendee, the approved CEU hours, the dates of attendance, the approval body and signature of the presenter.
5. The Academy will accept teaching hours provided that the instruction took place at the college level. Teaching hours apply to one presentation only and they are calculated at 50% of their credit hour value.
6. Clinical supervision hours and/or hours associated with employment responsibilities are not approved.
7. Continuing education hours may only carry forward for one year.
8. The Academy reserves the right to disallow CEU's if they do not meet requirements as set forth.
9. Extensions must be requested prior to the renewal date.
10. The Academy Code of Ethics form must be signed and submitted with each annual renewal.
11. Late fees apply to all of the above if not completed by the renewal date.

## Continuing Education

Continuing education hours submitted for annual renewal must be documented with approved certificates of attendance, to include the name of the certificant, the name of the program/class, date, sponsor, approval agency, location of the training, number of approved CEU hours. Continuing education hours submitted are subject to the review and approval of the American Academy.

The American Academy requires a minimum of 20 CEU hours annually; however, if additional hours are submitted, they will be carried forward for one year only and credited towards the next renewal.

The American Academy approved online distance learning addiction-related courses may be accepted towards renewal CEU hours. ([www.americanacademy.org/resources](http://www.americanacademy.org/resources))

## Renewal Notification

A certificant's renewal submission that meets the requirements will be renewed for one year and the certificant will receive written confirmation of renewal and an updated certificant card.

If the renewal is incomplete, the member will be notified and incomplete areas noted.

Late fees apply to renewals that are not completed by the renewal date.

## Recertification After Expiration

---

Policy Number: 201  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

Expiration of certification is effective 90 days from the renewal due date. A certificant who has allowed their CAS to lapse may contact the Academy and request recertification. The Academy will allow recertification up to two years from the last renewal, based on the certificant providing approved continuing education hours for the times of lapse, including the current renewal period. Fees include all renewal fees and late fees. The American Academy reserves the right to accept or reject recertification after expiration requests.

All others who do not meet the recertification requirements are encouraged to reapply to the American Academy for certification.

## Discipline & Appeals Policies

---

Policy Number: 300  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The American Academy will not consider applications from applicant(s) whose certification history includes a suspended or revoked status. In the event pending disposition has been rendered as resolved, restored to current, active, and in good-standing status, application to the American Academy is permissible.

### Disciplinary Procedure

The American Academy Certification Board is an independent and autonomous body within the American Academy that has been established to oversee and manage the CAS certification program. In order to maintain and enhance the credibility of the CAS certification program and enforce compliance with the American Academy's Code of Ethics, the American Academy Certification Board has adopted the following administrative procedures to allow individuals to bring complaints concerning CAS certificants' conduct to the American Academy.

In the event an individual violates American Academy's Code of Ethics, certification rules, or policies the American Academy may reprimand or suspend the certificant or may revoke certification.

The grounds for sanctions under these procedures are as follows:

1. Violation of the Code of Ethics.
2. 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, addictions counseling.
3. Gross negligence, willful misconduct, or other unethical conduct in the performance of addiction counseling services.
4. Fraud or misrepresentation in an initial application or renewal application for CAS certification.

Information regarding the complaint policy process will be available to the public via the American Academy web site or other published documents. A complete copy of this policy will be made available to any individual upon request.

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.

## Complaints

Complaints may be submitted in writing by any individual or entity. Inquiries or submissions other than complaints may be reviewed and handled by the American Academy Certification Board or its staff members at its discretion.

Upon receipt and preliminary review of a complaint involving the CAS certification program the Certification Board Chair may conclude, in the Chair's sole discretion, that the submission:

1. Contains unreliable or insufficient information, or
2. Is patently frivolous or inconsequential. In such cases, the Chair may determine that the submission does not constitute a valid and actionable complaint that would justify bringing it before the American Academy Certification 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 Chair to its submitter, if the submitter is identified. All such preliminary dispositions by the Chair are reported to the American Academy at its next meeting.

If a submission is deemed by the Chair to be a valid and actionable complaint, the Chair shall see that written notice is provided to the certificant whose conduct has been called into question and to that individual's employer, if applicable. The certificant whose conduct is at issue shall also be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint. The Chair also shall ensure that the individual submitting the complaint receives notice that the complaint is being reviewed by the American Academy Certification Board.

## Complaint Review

For each complaint that the Chair concludes is a valid and actionable complaint, the American Academy Certification 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.

The Chair will appoint a Review Committee of three or more individuals, who may or may not be members of the American Academy Certification Board to investigate and make an appropriate determination with respect to each such valid and actionable complaint; the Review Committee may review one or more such complaints as determined by the Chair. The Review 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 Review Committee. The Review Committee may be assisted in the conduct of its investigation by other members of the American Academy Certification Board or by the American Academy 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 Review Committee, or the American Academy Certification 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 Review Committee and the American Academy Certification 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 Review Committee and American Academy Certification Board may consult their own counsel.

Members of the Review Committee shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Committee.

### Determination of Violation

Upon completion of an investigation, the Review Committee recommends whether the American Academy Certification Board should make a determination that there has been a violation of American Academy policies and rules. When the Review Committee recommends that the American Academy Certification Board find a violation, the Review Committee also recommends imposition of an appropriate sanction. If the Review 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 Review Committee to the American Academy Certification Board along with the record of the Review Committee's investigation. If the Review Committee recommends against a determination that a violation has occurred, the complaint is dismissed with notice to the certificant, the certificant's employer, and the individual or entity who submitted the complaint; a summary report is also made to the American Academy Certification Board.

The American Academy Certification Board reviews the recommendation of the Review Committee based upon the record of the investigation. The American Academy Certification Board may accept, reject, or modify the Review Committee's recommendation, either with respect to the determination of a violation or the recommended sanction to be imposed. If the American Academy Certification 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, the certificant's employer, 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 American Academy Certification Board. All determinations by the American Academy Certification Board that violations have occurred shall be reported to the American Academy by the Chair of the Certification Board.

In certain circumstances, the American Academy Certification Board may consider a recommendation from the Review 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 Review Committee to make such a recommendation and of the American Academy Certification Board to accept it is 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 American Academy Certification Board. If the American Academy Certification Board accepts the assurance, notice is given to the certificant's employer and to the submitter of the complaint, if the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain the information in confidence.

## Sanctions

Any of the following sanctions may be imposed by the American Academy Certification Board upon a certificant whom the American Academy Certification Board has determined to have violated the policies and rules of the CAS certification program, 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:

1. Written reprimand to the certificant;
2. Suspension of the certificant for a designated period; or
3. Termination of the certificant's certification from the American Academy Certification Board.

For each of these three sanctions, a summary of the determination and the sanction with the certificant's name is published by the American Academy Certification Board.

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 American Academy Certification Board may at its discretion, however, impose any of the sanctions, if warranted, in specific cases.

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

## Appeal

Within thirty days from receipt of notice of a determination by the American Academy Certification Board that a member violated the certification program policies and/or rules, the affected certificant may submit to the American Academy Certification Board in writing a request for an appeal. Upon receipt of a request for appeal, the Chair of the American Academy Certification Board establishes an appellate body consisting of at least three, but not more than five, individuals. This Appeal Board may review one or more appeals, upon request of the Chair. No current members of the Review Committee or the American Academy Certification Board may serve on the Appeal Board; further, no one with any personal involvement or conflict of interest may serve on the Appeal Board. Members of the Appeal Board may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Board.

The Appeal Board may only review whether the determination by the American Academy Certification Board of a violation of the Code of Ethics, certification program policies and/or rules was inappropriate because of:

1. Material errors of fact, or
2. Failure of the Review Committee or the American Academy Certification Board to conform to published criteria, policies, or procedures.

Only facts and conditions up to and including the time of the American Academy Certification Board's determination as represented by facts known to the American Academy are considered

during an appeal. The appeal shall 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 American Academy and the Appeal Board. The American Academy Certification Board and Appeal Board may consult American Academy legal counsel.

The Appeal Board conducts and completes the appeal within ninety (90) 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 American Academy Certification Board. Submissions are made according to whatever schedule is reasonably established by the Appeal Board. The decision of the Appeal Board either affirms or overrules the determination of the American Academy Certification Board, but does not address a sanction imposed by the American Academy Certification Board. The decision of the Appeal Board, including a statement of the reasons for the decision, is reported to the American Academy Certification Board. The Appeal Board decision is binding upon the American Academy Certification Board, the certificant who is subject to the termination, and all other persons.

### Resignation

If a certificant who is the subject of a complaint voluntarily surrenders his or her CAS certification at any time during the pendency of a complaint under these Procedures, the complaint is dismissed without any further action by the Review Committee, the American Academy Certification Board, or an Appeal Board established after an appeal. The entire record is sealed and the individual may not reapply for certification by the American Academy. However, the American Academy Certification 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 certificant's employer and the person or entity who submitted the complaint are notified of the fact and date of resignation and that American Academy Certification Board has dismissed the complaint as a result.

## Appeals of Non-Disciplinary Matters

---

Policy Number: 301  
Date Approved: Dec. 3, 2009  
Date(s) Revised:

The American Academy's commitment to the highest of standards for the provision of treatment in the addictive disorders requires a like commitment to the same high standards for professional conduct by and for its certificants. The appeals process is to ensure that registrants, applicants, and certificants whose registration, application, or certification has been denied have the right to appeal to the American Academy.

### Registration

A denied or revoked registration which is believed by the registrant to be in error should immediately submit a written request for review stating the reason for his/her appeal of the decision.

### Application

A denied or revoked application which is believed by the applicant to be in error should immediately submit a written request for review stating the reason for his/her appeal of the decision.

### Certification

For situations involving the appeal of a revoked certification, as a result of a disciplinary matter please see policy #300, Discipline & Appeals policy.

### Examination Appeals

A failed examination which is believed by the applicant to be in error should immediately submit a written request to the American Academy for review stating the reason for his/her appeal of the decision.

Upon receipt of the written request for review, the American Academy will examine the supporting documentation offered by the applicant and will respond within 90 days of receipt of the request. If the applicant's request is determined to be substantiated, the applicant will be notified in writing.

### Appeals Procedure

All appeals related to non-disciplinary matters, including denial of registration or eligibility and failure of the exam, should be submitted in writing to the American Academy within thirty (30) days of the notification of the decision being appealed. All such appeals will be sent by the executive director to the American Academy Certification Board for review and resolution. The Certification Board may choose to establish an Appeals Committee to review these appeals. The decision of the Certification Board will be final.