

# Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians



Multiple Disciplines. A Single Standard of Excellence

## Candidate Handbook 2024

Application Deadline	Late Application Deadline*	Testing Window
March 13, 2024	March 27, 2024	April 27 – May 11, 2024
July 31, 2024	August 14, 2024	September 14 – September 28, 2024

**\*Applications will not be accepted after this deadline, no exceptions.**

Administered by:



1350 Broadway, Suite 800 | New York, NY 10018  
[www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact)

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*This Handbook contains necessary information about the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians. Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions and policies carefully. This Handbook is subject to change.*

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

<p><b>Professional Testing Corporation (PTC)</b>  <a href="http://www.ptcny.com">www.ptcny.com</a>            (212) 356-0660</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply for examination</li> <li>• Obtain general application information</li> <li>• Obtain information about testing policies</li> <li>• Transfer to a new testing period</li> <li>• Request Test Accommodations</li> <li>• Request Hand Score</li> <li>• Question about score reports</li> <li>• Miscellaneous inquiries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prometric</b>  <a href="http://www.prometric.com/NBNSC">www.prometric.com/NBNSC</a>            (800) 741-0934</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule test appointment</li> <li>• Reschedule test appointment (within the same testing period)</li> <li>• Cancel test appointment</li> <li>• Find directions to test site</li> <li>• Questions regarding testing sites and appointments</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Board of Nutrition Support Clinicians (NBNSC)</b>  <a href="http://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC">http://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC</a>            (301) 587-6315</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recertification information</li> <li>• Exam preparation information</li> <li>• Distributes certificates to passing candidates</li> </ul>

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## ATTENTION CANDIDATES

This handbook contains necessary information about the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians (CNSC®). It is required reading for those applying for and taking the Examination. All individuals applying for the examination must comply with the policies, procedures, and deadlines in this Handbook and attest to this by signing the Candidate Attestation found on the application. Please retain this handbook for future reference. This handbook is subject to change. See [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) for handbook updates.

**ACCESSING CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT ANY TIME WHILE YOU ARE TAKING THE EXAM IS PROHIBITED. YOU CAN ONLY REMOVE SNACKS, DRINKS, MEDICINE, OR PERSONAL HEALTHCARE ITEMS FROM YOUR LOCKER. NO BACKPACKS, BAGS, POCKETBOOKS OR CLOTHING CAN BE REMOVED WHILE YOUR EXAM IS IN SESSION.**

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## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

NBNSC values diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of our outreach. It includes the diversity of traditional concepts of diversity (age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, personality type), as well as, cultural identity, geographic differences, generational influences, disability, and societal self-expression.

We welcome and respect the unique perspectives, opinions, and experiences of each examinee as this reflects our commitment to serve our stakeholders. We are vested in working towards removing barriers, internally and externally, to achieve true diversity, equity, and inclusion for the professional community we serve.

NBNSC does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.

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## **OBJECTIVES OF CERTIFICATION**

The National Board of Nutrition Support Certification, Inc. (NBNSC) endorses the concept of voluntary, periodic certification by examination for all nutrition support clinicians. Board certification for nutrition support clinicians is highly valued and provides formal recognition of nutrition support knowledge.

Certification is intended to promote enhanced delivery of safe and effective care of qualified clinicians in nutrition support by:

1. Recognizing formally those individuals who meet eligibility requirements of the National Board of Nutrition Support Certification, Inc. and pass the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians.
2. Encouraging continued professional growth in the practice of nutrition support.
3. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification by a nutrition support clinician.
4. Providing a standard of minimum knowledge deemed appropriate for clinicians practicing nutrition support, thereby assisting the employer, public, and health care professionals in the assessment of nutrition support clinicians.

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## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS – U.S.

Candidates are recommended to have at least two years of experience in nutrition support practice after obtaining professional certification and/or licensure.

1. Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:
  - **Dietitians**  
Currently is a Registered Dietitian (RD/RDN) with the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR).
  - **Registered Nurses**  
Currently is licensed as a Registered Nurse (RN) in the United States. A copy of current license must accompany application.
  - **Pharmacists**  
Currently is registered/licensed as a Pharmacist in the United States. A copy of current license must accompany application.
  - **Physicians**  
Currently is licensed as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) in the United States. A copy of current license must accompany application.
  - **Advanced Practice Providers**  
Currently is registered/licensed as a Physician Assistant, Advanced Practice Nurse, or Nurse Practitioner in the United States. A copy of current license must accompany application.
  - **Doctors of Dental Surgery/Doctors of Medicine in Dentistry**  
Currently licensed as a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry (DMD) in the United States. A copy of current license must accompany application.
2. Completion and filing of an Application for the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians.
3. Payment of required fee.

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## THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS – U.S.



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## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS – INTERNATIONAL

Candidates in all countries outside of the U.S. can apply and sit for the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians. International candidates from all countries must meet the following requirements. **Please note: all documentation MUST be in English.**

Candidates are recommended to have at least two years of experience in nutrition support practice after obtaining professional certification and/or licensure.

1. Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

### **Dietitians**

Currently registered/licensed or the equivalent in their country\*. A copy of current license or dietetic registration must accompany your application.

### **Registered Nurses**

Currently is licensed or the equivalent in their country as a nurse. A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

### **Pharmacists**

Currently is registered/licensed or the equivalent in their country as a Pharmacist. A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

### **Physicians**

Currently is licensed or the equivalent in their country as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO). A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

### **Advanced Practice Providers**

Currently is registered/licensed or the equivalent in their country as a Physician Assistant, Advanced Practice Nurse, or Nurse Practitioner. A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

### **Doctors of Dental Surgery/Doctors of Medicine in Dentistry**

Currently licensed in their country as a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry (DMD). A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

\*If your country does not issue licenses, etc. a letter, in English and on letterhead, from your employer confirming your work history and current job description can be submitted.

2. All international candidates must have their credential(s) evaluated by an outside agency. This evaluation must be in English and submitted with the application materials. Failure to submit the credential evaluation can result in not being eligible to sit for the exam<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Credentials must be evaluated by an outside agency. The evaluation must be submitted with the application and must be an original document, not a photocopy. The cost of the evaluation is the responsibility of the individual and is separate from any other fee listed in the Fees section of this handbook. International applications will be reviewed by NBNSC for approval of eligibility. Please see [https://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC/New\\_NBNSC/Landing\\_Pages/Get\\_Certified-Recertify/Policies/#InternationalCandidatePolicy](https://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC/New_NBNSC/Landing_Pages/Get_Certified-Recertify/Policies/#InternationalCandidatePolicy) for more information.

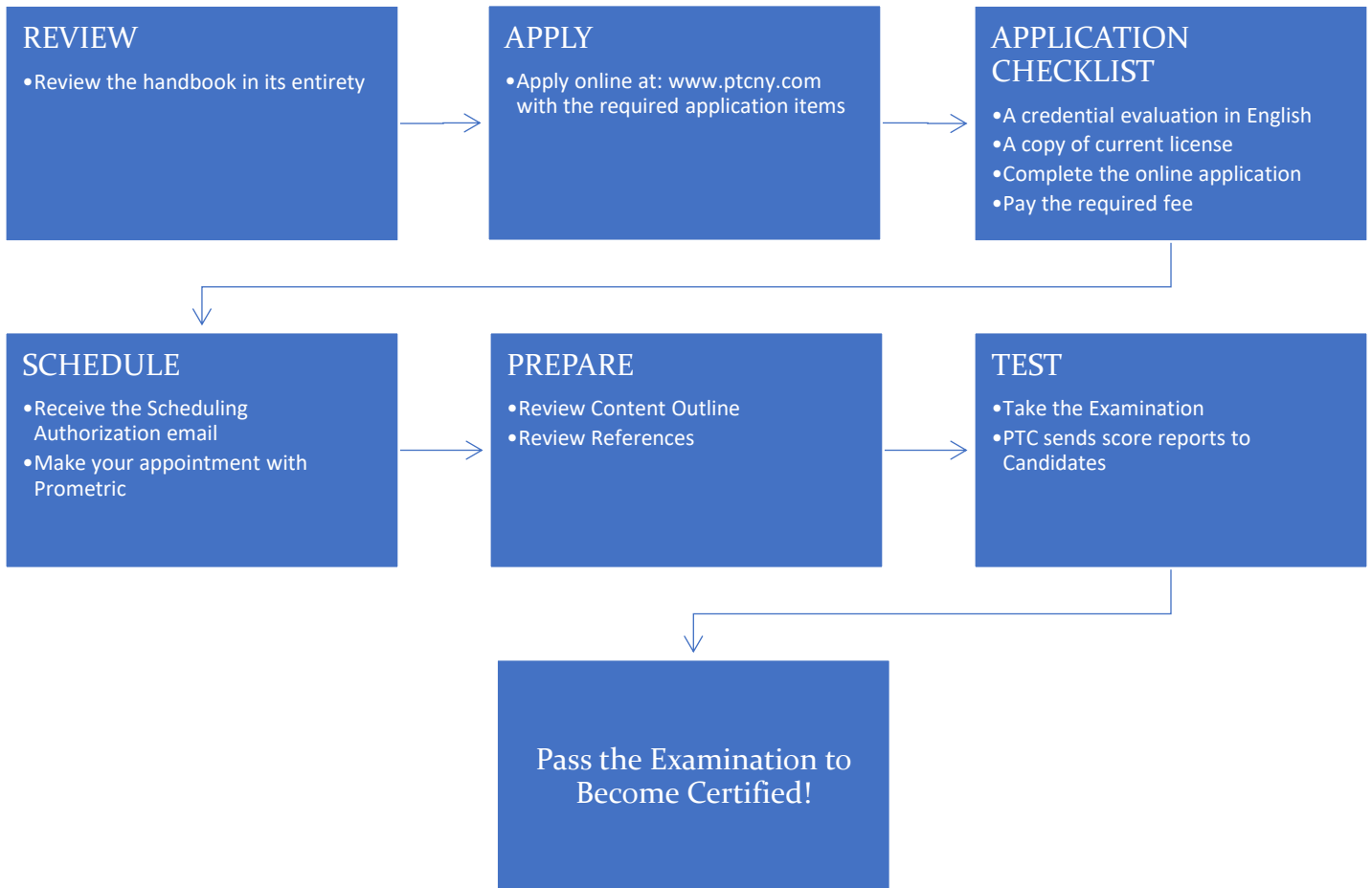
3. Completion and filing of an Application for the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians.
4. Payment of required fee.

Please note: International individuals who have previously sat for and successfully passed the Nutrition Support Certification Examination will be eligible to retake the examination without providing the above-mentioned documentation in number 2 as long as there is no lapse in certification. Should a lapse in certification occur for any reason, then that individual must adhere to the above requirements.

For more information regarding NBNSC’s International Candidate Policies please go to:  
[https://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC/New\\_NBNSC/Landing\\_Pages/Get\\_Certified-Recertify/Policies/#InternationalCandidatePolicy](https://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC/New_NBNSC/Landing_Pages/Get_Certified-Recertify/Policies/#InternationalCandidatePolicy)

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## THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS – INTERNATIONAL



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## COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

### **Step 1 – Fill Out the Application**

- Go to <http://www.ptcny.com/test-sponsors/NBNSC>
  - View testing periods and application deadlines
  - Fill out online application completely and upload supporting documentation.
    - Use your first and last name exactly as it appears on your current driver's license, passport, state issued non-driver ID or military ID.
    - Applications are not complete until all information, documentation, and payment has been provided.
    - When you start a new application, you will be asked to create a PIN number. This PIN will be used if you need to come back to the application to finish it later. Keep the link to the application and your PIN number for later use.

### **Step 2 – Submit Exam Fee and Application for Review**

PTC will send you an email that says that your payment and application have been received and are being reviewed. Please allow up to 10 business days for review.

### **Step 3 – Receive Application Status Update**

- After your application is reviewed PTC will update you with another email.
  - **REOPENED FOR MORE DOCUMENTS**
    - This means we are missing the required documentation. Follow the directions in the email.
    - Applications that are incomplete as of 14 days before the start of the testing window will be refunded minus the administration fee (see fees page 12).
  - **REJECTED**
    - This means you are not eligible to take the exam. The reason will be explained in the email.
    - Rejected applications will be refunded minus the administration fee (see fees page 12).
  - **APPROVED**
    - This means your application is approved. You will move on to Step 4.

### **Step 4 – Receive Scheduling Authorization and Schedule Testing Appointment**

- Approved candidates will receive an email with their Scheduling Authorization, within 11 weeks before the start of the testing window. Scheduling Authorization emails come from [notices@ptcny.com](mailto:notices@ptcny.com). Do not lose this email.
- If you don't receive your Scheduling Authorization email 3 weeks before the start of your testing window, contact PTC.

The Scheduling Authorization includes important information including:

- Your PTC Candidate ID number
- Instructions on how to make your Exam appointment with Prometric.



**Applicants who are not approved to sit for the examination or whose applications are incomplete 21 days prior to the first day of the testing window will receive a refund of their application fee minus the \$75 administrative fee. Refunds will be processed approximately 30 days after the end of the testing period.**

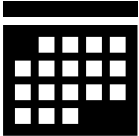
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## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION AND SCHEDULING

The Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians is administered during an established two-week testing window on a daily basis, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities or via live remote proctoring managed by Prometric.

### Scheduling Examination Appointments

Follow the steps on your Scheduling Authorization to schedule your examination appointment with Prometric.



- Appointment times are first-come, first-served, so schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization.
- **Candidates who wait until the last minute run the risk of missing out on their preferred date, time, and/or testing center. Candidates unable to schedule an appointment will forfeit their fees.**

After you make your test appointment, Prometric will send you a confirmation email with the date, time, and location of your exam. Check this confirmation carefully and contact Prometric at (800) 741-0934 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

**Note: International candidates may also schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment online at [www.prometric.com/NBNSC](http://www.prometric.com/NBNSC).**

### Scheduling a Remotely Proctored Examination Appointment

If you prefer to test via live remote proctoring in your home or another quiet distraction-free location you must provide:

- a computer
- a camera
- a microphone
- a stable internet connection

**Please see our Live Remote Proctoring FAQs for more info: <https://ptcny.com/remote-proctor-faqs/>**

- It is the candidate's responsibility to be sure their equipment and workspace meet all of the requirements for Live Remote Proctoring.

If a candidate makes an appointment for remote proctoring and is unable to test due to not meeting technical requirements or physical requirements of the workspace, the candidate will forfeit their examination fees and will need to follow the transfer policies in place for their exam. Please see your exam's transfer policies on page 9.

## Test Center or Live Remote Proctored: What's the Difference?

	Test Center Exam	Live Remote Proctored Exam
<b>Additional cost</b>	No	No
<b>ADA Accommodations offered</b>	Yes	Yes – Extra time and private room accommodations only
<b>Breaks allowed</b>	One 15-minute scheduled break. Unscheduled breaks are permitted, however the exam timer will continue counting down.	One 15-minute scheduled break. Candidates must alert the proctor when they are ready to take their break.
<b>Equipment needed</b>	None – Computer provided at test center	Candidate provides their own laptop or desktop computer to take the exam. The computer must have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webcam</li> <li>• Microphone</li> <li>• Secure, reliable internet</li> </ul> For complete requirements: <a href="http://www.prometric.com/proproctorcandidate">www.prometric.com/proproctorcandidate</a>
<b>Testing space needed</b>	None – testing space provided by the test center	Candidates must test alone at a desk or table in a room with a door and no distractions or interruptions. Other people or pets are not permitted in your testing area.
<b>Check-in procedure</b>	Candidates must show their current Government-issued photo ID; walk through a metal detector or be wanded by staff; and roll up sleeves and turn out pockets for a visual inspection.	Prior to check-in, the candidate's equipment needs to pass a compatibility check.  During check-in, candidates must show their current Government-issued photo ID; perform a 360° scan of the room using their camera; and roll up sleeves and turn out pockets for a visual inspection.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Proctors monitor candidates through video and physical walkthroughs in the testing room.	Remote proctors monitor candidates through video and audio, as well as ProProctor security software.

*This information is provided as a courtesy summary and may not represent full requirements or specifications for in-person testing or live remote proctored testing. For Live Remote Proctored FAQs, visit <https://ptcny.com/remote-proctor-faqs/>*

### IMPORTANT!

You **MUST** present your current driver's license, passport, or U.S. military ID at the test center. Expired, temporary, or paper driver's licenses will **NOT** be accepted.

Your first and last name on your Scheduling Authorization **MUST** exactly match your first and last name on your photo ID.

**Fees will not be refunded for exams missed because of invalid ID.**

## Rescheduling Examination Appointments within a Testing Period

Candidates can reschedule their examination appointments within the same testing period as long as the request is submitted within the timeframe described below. Reschedule within the permitted time frame by calling or going to the Prometric website: [www.prometric.com/NBNSC](http://www.prometric.com/NBNSC).

Time Frame	Reschedule Permitted?	Stipulations
Requests submitted 30 days or more before the original appointment	Yes	None
Requests submitted 29 to 5 days before the original appointment	Yes	Candidate must pay Prometric a rescheduling fee of \$50.
Requests submitted less than 5 days before the original appointment	No	Candidates who do not arrive to test for their appointment will be considered a no-show and all their examinations fees will be forfeited. Candidates will need to reapply and pay fees for a future testing period.

## Transferring to a New Testing Period

Candidates unable to take the examination during their scheduled testing period may request a **ONE-TIME** transfer to a future testing period. **There is a transfer fee of \$233.00.** After you have transferred once by paying the \$233.00 fee, you will need to pay the full examination fee in order to transfer a second time; so, ***please plan carefully.***

**Please note:** requests to transfer to a new testing period must be received within 30 days of your originally scheduled testing period.

Candidates wishing to transfer to a new testing period need to follow the steps below.

1. Go to <http://secure.ptcny.com/apply>.
2. Click "Start New Application."
3. Choose NBNSC-CNSC® in the first drop-down menu; then choose the new examination period in the second drop down menu and fill out the rest of the information on the page.
4. Fill out the application making sure you answer yes to the question asking if you are transferring.

5. When you have finished the application, click “Submit Transfer Request.”
6. PTC Support will send you an email letting you know your transfer application was approved and that you can log back into your application and pay the one-time \$233.00 transfer fee.

Call 212-356-0660 if you have any questions regarding the transfer process.

If candidates are unable to attend the examination on the date for which they registered and elect not to transfer to another testing period, the application will be closed and all fees will be forfeited. There will be no refund of fees.

The transfer fee is based on costs and is not punitive in nature. The transfer fee must be paid at the time the request is approved.

Note: Transferring your Examination only refers to instances when a candidate is unable to take their exam during a testing period for which they have already applied. Candidates who did not pass their examination and are retaking the examination need to pay the full Examination Fee.



### Failing to Report for an Examination

If you fail to report for an examination, you will forfeit all fees paid to take the examination. A completed application form and examination fee are required to reapply for the examination.

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## EXAMINATION FEES

Fee Type	Amount	Details
Application Fee – ASPEN Members	US \$330.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-refundable</li> <li>Non-transferable</li> <li>Includes testing center fees</li> <li>Includes non-refundable \$75 administrative fee</li> </ul>
Application Fee – Non-members	US \$430.00	
Late Fee	US \$50.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applies to applications submitted after the application deadline listed on the cover of this handbook</li> </ul>
Rescheduling Fee (29-5 days prior to scheduled appointment; see page 10)	US \$50.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Applies to candidates who need to move their appointment within their current testing period</b></li> <li>Payable directly to Prometric</li> <li>Reschedule with Prometric online or over the phone</li> </ul>
Transfer Fee (For candidates moving to a new testing period; see page 10)	US \$233.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Applies to candidates who need to move to a new testing period</b></li> <li>Must submit new application &amp; fee to PTC</li> </ul>



- **There will be no refund of fees unless applicants are ineligible for the examination.**
- **Ineligible candidates will be refunded their fees minus the administrative fee.**
- **No refunds will be issued for applying for the incorrect examination or testing period, for failing to make an examination appointment, or for failing to appear at your scheduled appointment.**

**Be advised: Prometric does not have the authority to grant transfers to another testing period or refunds.**

## **NOVA Members**

Active members of the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA) may sit for the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians at a rate that is \$50 less than the non-ASPEN member rate.

Active NOVA members, at the time of application submission should submit documentation of active NOVA membership with their application. Active NOVA members who are also ASPEN members may not combine the discounts, only one discounted application fee may be used, either the ASPEN member fee or the discount for NOVA members.

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## **TEST ACCOMMODATIONS**

NBNSC and PTC support the intent of and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will take steps reasonably necessary to make certification accessible to persons with disabilities covered under the ADA. According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (such as seeing, hearing, learning, reading, concentrating, walking) or a major bodily function (such as neurological, endocrine, or digestive system).

The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and test accommodations is confidential and is not included in scoring or reporting.

All approved testing accommodations must maintain the psychometric nature and security of the examination. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature or security of the exam will not be granted.

To request test accommodations, follow these 4 steps:

1. Download the Request for Test Accommodations Form, available from [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660.
2. Complete Test Accommodations Form with your doctor/healthcare professional.
3. Upload the completed and signed Test Accommodations Form with the online exam application.
4. Submit fully both the Test Accommodations Form and the application at least 8 weeks prior to the start of your chosen testing period.

## NOTES:

- Only those requests made and received on the official Request for Test Accommodations Form will be reviewed.
- All requests must be made at the time of application. Accommodations cannot be added to an existing exam appointment.
- If you miss the 8-week deadline, you may not be able to test during your chosen testing period and you will be subject to rescheduling or transfer fees.
- Do not go to [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com) or contact Prometric to request test accommodations as they are not authorized to approve accommodations. All requests for test accommodations must be submitted on the PTC Request Form.
- If you need to use your cell phone or another electronic device to monitor a medical condition, such as diabetes, please be sure to include this on Part 1 of the Request for Test Accommodations Form so that we can notify Prometric in advance.
- Only pre-approved test accommodations will be permitted on the day of the examination. Test center personnel are not authorized to make any changes to the test accommodations on the day of the testing session and any such change may result in your examination score being canceled.

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## PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

- Check your driver's license, passport, non-driver state issued ID or U.S. Military ID.
  - Is it expired?
  - Does the first and last name on your ID match the first and last name on your Scheduling Authorization email?
  - Proctors at the Prometric testing center will refuse admission to candidates with expired IDs, IDs with names that do not match their records, and temporary paper IDs. Candidates will be marked as no-shows and will forfeit their exam fees.
- Check your PTC Scheduling Authorization email and Prometric Appointment Confirmation email to make sure everything is accurate (i.e., your first and last name, exam name, appointment date, time and location).
- Make yourself familiar with the location of your test center and parking options and check the weather and traffic conditions before you leave for the test center. Allow plenty of time as late arrival may prevent you from testing.
- In the event of inclement weather, check the Prometric website for site closures: <https://www.prometric.com/closures>
- Prometric's website provides information on what you can expect on your test day, including a walkthrough of check in and security procedures: <https://www.prometric.com/test-center-security>.

- This Handbook provides the Content Outline for the Examination (see appendix). Use this to help you start studying for the examination.
- Review What to Expect at the Test Center and Rules for the Examination on the next pages before your appointment.

### **Testing via Live Remote Proctoring**

- Be sure to check your system compatibility BEFORE you schedule and again before your appointment.
- The check in process is about 30 minutes long and is not factored into your appointment. Be sure to log into ProProctor to start your exam at least 30 minutes prior to your appointment time.
- Candidates are not permitted to take a break during the examination except during the scheduled 15-minute break between sections of the exam. Candidates MUST notify the proctor before leaving camera view for this break and at the end of the examination.
- **CANDIDATES MUST VERBALLY NOTIFY THE PROCTOR BEFORE LEAVING CAMERA VIEW.** Failure to do so may result in termination of your examination and nullifying scores.
- **No scratch paper is allowed.** Be sure your workspace is clear of any extra items and electronic devices except for your government issued photo ID.
- Read the Live Remote Proctoring FAQs here: <https://ptcny.com/remote-proctor-faqs/>

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## WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE TESTING CENTER

- Candidate Check-In
  - Candidates will be asked to:
    - present their IDs.
    - empty and turn out their pockets.
    - walk through a metal detector or get “wanded”.
  - Eyeglasses, jewelry, and other accessories will be inspected.
    - Jewelry other than wedding and engagement rings is prohibited.
    - Leave these at home or place them in your locker.
  - Religious headwear may be worn into the testing room; however, it is subject to inspection by test center staff.
  - Prometric provides lockers to store purses, backpacks, mobile phones, jackets, food, drinks and medical supplies.
  - Water in a clear plastic containers (no labels) may be brought into the testing room.
- During the Exam
  - There is one 15-minute break during the exam. Candidates who must leave the testing room outside of the break will not be given extra time on the exam.
  - Candidates are only permitted to leave the testing room to use the restroom or access food, drink, or medicine from their assigned locker. The exam timer will NOT be paused.
  - Smoking is prohibited at the testing center.
  - All examinations are monitored and may be recorded in both audio and video format.
- Keep in mind:
  - Other exams will be administered at the same time as your examination.
  - You may hear ambient noises such as typing, coughing, or people entering and exiting the testing room that cannot be avoided.
  - Prometric is unable to provide a completely noise-free environment.
  - Headphones may be requested to minimize the impact of ambient noise.
  - Proctors will periodically walk through the testing room as part of their monitoring process.
  - See [Prometric’s website](#) for more information about what to expect on testing day.



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## RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

Read the information below carefully. You are responsible for adhering to the examination rules while at the testing center.

⇒ DO NOT BRING

These items are strictly prohibited at the testing center. Leave these items in your car or your assigned locker.

- Cell phones and all other electronic devices
- Watches
- Jackets/coats/bulky clothing such as sweatshirts
- Hats (except hats worn for religious reasons)
- Jewelry, including watches and wearable technology.



⇒ You may NOT access the following at any time during your exam or breaks: papers, books, any reference materials; electronic devices including your cell phone. Candidates may access the following items from their locker: snacks, drinks, medicine, or other personal healthcare items.

⇒ No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the examination session. Carefully read the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.

⇒ You are prohibited from leaving the testing room while your examination is in session, except for going to the restroom. Candidates who do go to their lockers or the restroom will need to repeat the security screening before being permitted to reenter the testing room. **Candidates who leave the center will have their examinations terminated.**

⇒ See [Prometric's statement on Test Center Security](#) for more information.

Contact PTC at (212) 356-0660 or [www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact) with any questions about the Examination Rules.

**Irregular or improper behavior that is observed, made apparent by statistical analysis, or uncovered by other means before, during or after the examination will be considered a violation of these rules and may constitute grounds for invalidation of a candidate's examination. NBNSC will initiate an investigation and request suitable analyses and appropriate documentation.**

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## TESTING CONDITIONS OR EXAMINATION FEEDBACK

Any candidate who feels that the examination effort was negatively impacted by the test center conditions should notify the proctor immediately. The situation should also be reported to PTC at [www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact) within 15 business days of the test appointment. Any comments about the test itself should also be reported to PTC at [www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact) within 15 business days of the test appointment.

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## REPORT OF RESULTS

Candidates will be notified by PTC via email when their score reports are available online. Score reports will be available approximately four weeks after the close of the testing period. Scores on the major areas of the examination and on the total examination will be reported. Examination scores cannot be provided verbally over the phone. Score Reports will be available online only for 30 days. Be sure to save a copy of your score report in your permanent files. Successful candidates will also receive certificates from the NBNSC.

### Scoring Process

The passing score for the CNSC® Examination is determined using the modified Angoff technique. This technique is a criterion referenced methodology where a panel of subject matter experts carefully evaluate each item on the examination and estimate the probability that each individual question will be answered correctly by a minimally competent/just qualified candidate. The recommended passing score is then reviewed and approved by NBNSC. Once the passing score is set, this standard is upheld for all future forms of the examination. To ensure fairness and consistency across examination forms, a statistical process called equating is used to account for any slight variations in difficulty level across forms. Scores on the CNSC® Examination are reported using scaled scoring, which converts the candidates' raw score (i.e., total number of correct questions) onto a consistent and standardized scale. Scaled scores allow candidate scores to be comparable from one exam form to the next. The scale range for the examination is 200 to 800 with a passing point of 500.

### Examination Comments

Any candidate who feels that the examination effort was negatively impacted by the test center conditions should notify the proctor immediately. The situation should also be reported to PTC at [www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact) within 15 days of the test appointment. Any comments about the test itself should also be reported to PTC at [www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact) within 15 days of the test appointment.

### Requesting a Handscore

Candidates who fail the examination may request a hand scoring of their data file. Hand scoring is a manual check of the data file by the testing service to determine if there have been any errors in scoring. Although the probability of such an error is extremely remote, this service is available. Requests for hand scoring must be received by PTC no later than 90 days after the date of the examination by completing and returning the [Request of Handscore](#) form with payment of \$25. Candidates who fail the examination will not be permitted to see the examination questions. For reasons of test security, no candidate is allowed to review the examination or any of its items.

To ensure correct reporting of results, PTC automatically performs handscores of examinations of candidates who score within 3 points of passing as a quality control measure. Thus, it is extremely doubtful that any examination results will change from "fail" to "pass" through handscoring.

### Confidentiality of Examination Scores

NBNSC will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to NBNSC or PTC.

## **Reexamination**

The Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians may be taken as often as desired, upon filing of a new Application and fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

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## **EXAMINATION SECURITY**

Candidates seeking admission to take the examination do so for the purpose of pursuing registration, and for no other purpose. Because of the confidential nature of the examination, candidates may not make or keep copies, excerpts, or notes of examination materials, and to not use or divulge information learned from the examination. The examination is the exclusive property of NBNSC and candidates may not use examination information in any way without the express prior written consent of NBNSC.

The CNSC examination is confidential. Candidates are required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to the start of the examination.

Candidates agree to abide by the testing rules in effect at the time of their test appointment. NBNSC, PTC, and/or Prometric staff may refuse a candidate admission to the examination if they do not have the proper identification as detailed in the Candidate Handbook. Candidates who do not abide by the testing rules may have their exam terminated during the exam administration in order to maintain a secure and proper exam administration and/or exam scores invalidated.

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## **ATTAINMENT OF REGISTRATION & RECERTIFICATION**

Eligible candidates who pass the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians are entitled to use the registered designation CNSC® after their names and will receive certificates from the NBNSC. A registry of Certified Nutrition Support Clinicians will be maintained by the NBNSC and may be reported in publications.

Nutrition support clinician certification is recognized for a period of five years at which time the candidate must retake and pass the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians in order to retain certification.

The purpose of requiring recertification renewal is to measure continued competent and knowledgeable nutrition support practice. Certification demonstrates to your patients, colleagues, and employers that you have the skills necessary to provide the best care possible.

Should an individual with a current CNSC® credential opt to take the certification examination early, all maintenance of the CNSC® credential will be based upon when the individual most recently took the certification examination.

- Scenario 1: Certificant A is currently certified as a CNSC® from October 2011 – October 2016. Certificant A wants to become recertified and opts to take the certification examination in April 2016 instead of October 2016. Certificant A successfully passes the certification examination, then the certification period is April 2016 – April 2021.

- Scenario 2: Certificant A is currently credentialed as a CNSC® from October 2011 – October 2016. Certificant A wants to become recertified and opts to take the certification examination in April 2016 instead of October 2016. Certificant A is unsuccessful in passing the certification examination. Upon receiving the exam results Certificant A is no longer a CNSC® and cannot use the credential until the certification examination is again taken and successfully passed. In summary, anytime the certification examination is taken and not passed, certification lapses.

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## REVOCAION OF CERTIFICATION

Registration will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of Application.
2. Revocation of current healthcare credential or license for a reason indicative to the NBNSC of insufficient knowledge.
3. Misrepresentation of certification status.

The Appeals Committee of the NBNSC provides the appeal mechanism for challenging revocation of Board Certification. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate this process.

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## CONTENT OF THE EXAMINATION

The Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians is a computer-based examination composed of 220 scored items, plus 30 pre-test items with a total testing time of four (4) hours. The test questions are multiple-choice, objective questions. The exam is broken into two 2-hour sections with a 15-minute break in between sections. The content for the examination is described in the Content Domains and Task Statements starting on the next page. Items on the examination will be presented in random order.

The pre-test questions are randomly distributed throughout the examination and do not count towards a candidate's score. The pre-test items are being evaluated to determine if they perform well enough statistically to be introduced as scored items on a future examination. Only the scored items count towards the candidate's final score.

The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in nutrition support and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the NBNSC. NBNSC, with the advice and assistance of the Professional Testing Corporation, prepares the examination.

The Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians will be weighted in the following manner:

I. Nutrition Assessment	32%
II. Clinical Management	55%
III. Process Management	3%
IV. Professional Practice	10%

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## CONTENT DOMAINS AND TASK STATEMENTS

<b>I. Nutrition Assessment</b>
<b><i>A. Screening</i></b>
T1. Identify patients with malnutrition.
T2. Identify patients with risk factors for developing malnutrition.
<b><i>B. Evaluation</i></b>
T3. Review patient history.
T4. Review patient current clinical status.
T5. Review diet, medication, and supplements for potential impact on nutritional status.
T6. Evaluate anthropometric data.
T7. Identify potential or existing nutrition support access sites.
T8. Perform nutrition-focused physical exam.
T9. Evaluate patient for potential complications of initiating nutrition support therapy.
T10. Determine fluid, nutrient, and electrolyte intake from all sources.
T11. Determine fluid, electrolyte, macronutrient, and micronutrient requirements for nutrition support therapy.
T12. Evaluate psychosocial, economic, developmental, functional, behavioral, and quality of life factors.
T13. Evaluate indication for, timing, and route of administration for nutrition support therapy.
T14. Determine etiology, degree, and type of malnutrition.
T15. Determine nutritional diagnosis.
T16. Assess patient and caregiver capabilities and limitations related to nutrition support therapy.
<b>II. Clinical Management</b>
<b><i>A. Initiation</i></b>
T17. Recommend administration route and access for nutrition support therapy.
T18. Recommend formulation, rate, and/or volume of nutrition support therapy.
T19. Recommend use of pharmacologic adjunctive agents.
T20. Recommend cost-effective and safety strategies in the provision of nutrition support therapy.
T21. Recommend short-term nutrition support therapy goals.
T22. Recommend long-term nutrition support therapy goals.
T23. Recommend diagnostic tests, procedures, or consultations that may modify the nutrition support plan.
T24. Recommend laboratory tests that may modify the nutrition support plan.
T25. Recommend regimen for initiation, advancement, and discontinuation for nutrition support therapy.
<b><i>B. Monitoring</i></b>
T26. Verify position of nutrition access device.
T27. Evaluate tolerance of nutrition support therapy.
T28. Evaluate fluid status.
T29. Monitor compliance with nutrition support therapy plan.
T30. Monitor for complications of nutrition support therapy.

T31. Evaluate laboratory test results to assess adequacy and tolerance of nutrition support therapy.

T32. Monitor nutritional and metabolic response to nutrition support therapy.

T33. Evaluate status of nutrition access device.

T34. Assess nutrition support therapy for safety concerns.

T35. Monitor for drug-nutrient interaction.

T36. Monitor for enteral or parenteral formula stability.

### ***C. Modification of Therapy***

T37. Modify nutrition support therapy based on changes in patient clinical status and medical plan of care.

T38. Manage complications related to nutrition support therapy.

T39. Reevaluate nutrition support therapy goals.

T40. Reevaluate adjunctive drug therapy.

T41. Transition or discontinue nutrition support therapy.

T42. Transition patient from one care setting to another.

T43. Educate patient and/or caregiver on nutrition support therapy management.

### **III. Process Management**

T44. Develop or update policies and procedures to guide patient care.

T45. Implement current guidelines and standards of practice in the provision of nutrition support therapy.

T46. Develop or update patient education materials.

T47. Utilize a continuous process improvement model to evaluate nutrition care.

### **IV. Professional Practice**

T48. Apply ethical principles in the application of nutrition support therapy.

T49. Provide nutrition support therapy in compliance with legal and regulatory standards.

T50. Evaluate scientific literature according to evidence-based guidelines.

T51. Apply principles of evidence-based practice in provision of nutrition support therapy.

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## SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

1. In a patient receiving lipid injectable emulsion, which of the following levels should be monitored?
  1. Serum glucose
  2. Serum ammonia
  3. Serum cholesterol
  4. Serum triglyceride

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2. Increased acetate supplementation in parenteral nutrition is most likely to be required in
  1. respiratory failure.
  2. intractable diarrhea.
  3. prolonged vomiting.
  4. furosemide treatment.

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3. Dermatitis and alopecia are symptoms of
  1. hypophosphatemia.
  2. magnesium deficiency.
  3. vitamin A deficiency.
  4. essential fatty acid deficiency.

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4. A 58-year-old patient has acute kidney injury following abdominal aortic aneurysm repair. Dialysis is planned. If the patient's BUN is 90 mg/dL and creatinine 8 mg/dL, the most appropriate enteral formula for this patient would provide
  1. 0.5 g protein/kg/day mainly as essential amino acids.
  2. 1 g protein/kg/day mainly as essential amino acids.
  3. 0.5 g protein/kg/day as both essential and nonessential amino acids.
  4. 1 g protein/kg/day with both essential and nonessential amino acids.

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5. Complaints of altered taste and smell are common symptoms of deficiency of which trace element?
  1. Zinc
  2. Copper
  3. Selenium
  4. Chromium

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6. Indirect calorimetry provides a measure of
1. basal metabolic rate.
  2. past 24-hour dietary intake.
  3. energy expenditure.
  4. calorie needs for weight gain.
- 
7. Which of the following is most appropriate during transition from central parenteral nutrition support to enteral nutrition support?
1. Dextrose should be infused peripherally to avoid hypoglycemia
  2. Transition to enteral nutrition should be discontinued if diarrhea develops
  3. Some parenteral nutrition should be maintained until the patient has demonstrated tolerance to enteral nutrition
  4. Central venous access should be discontinued as soon as the patient's nutritional requirements are met
- 
8. During parenteral nutrition, the infusion of large amounts of dextrose increases electrolyte requirements for
1. sodium and potassium.
  2. sodium and phosphorus.
  3. potassium and chloride.
  4. potassium and phosphorus.
- 
9. Metabolic consequences of the refeeding syndrome include
1. hyperkalemia.
  2. hypoglycemia.
  3. hypermagnesemia.
  4. hypophosphatemia.
- 
10. An 85-year-old man receiving enteral nutrition support due to dysphagia develops increased stooling and has a temperature of 38.3° C/100.9° F. Which of the following should be done?
1. Obtain stool cultures
  2. Decrease water flushes
  3. Begin diphenoxylate/atropine
  4. Change to a fluid-restricted tube feeding formula
- 
11. Which of the following is a metabolic adaptation to simple starvation?
1. Decrease in urinary nitrogen losses
  2. Increase in hepatic glucose production
  3. Decrease in utilization of body fat stores
  4. Increase in cerebral glucose utilization
-



12. The small bowel usually has an absorption capacity of approximately

1. 400 mL/day.
  2. 1 L/day.
  3. 5 L/day.
  4. 9-12 L/day.
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ANSWER KEY	
Q	A
1	4
2	2
3	4
4	4
5	1
6	3
7	3
8	4
9	4
10	1
11	1
12	4

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## ONLINE PRACTICE TEST

A practice test is available to provide candidates with a better understanding of what the actual certification examination is like. The practice test consists of 50 questions, has a testing time of two hours, and is taken online available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. The practice test is developed according to the content outline.

After completing the online practice test, you will receive an instant score report showing overall test score as well as a score for each content area. The score report does not provide correct answers or indicate which questions were answered correctly or incorrectly. Once the practice test is scored, you cannot return to the test to review the questions. The results of the practice test should not be interpreted as a predictor of performance on the actual examination. The scores do not provide a valid or reliable indicator of how well you will perform on the actual examination.

The PTC Online Testing System does not demonstrate the testing software used during the certification examinations. Those who purchase the online practice test should be aware that they will use a different testing platform when they take the actual examination.

The online practice test is an optional tool candidates may use as they prepare for the certification examination. The practice test is not a requirement for certification eligibility, nor does it contribute in any way to success on the certification examination. There are many ways candidates should prepare for the certification examination. Candidates should use a variety of resources and consider their own education and experiences. Review the content outline and reference materials listed in the handbook for additional exam-related information. Since the practice test is NOT intended to be a study guide nor the sole source of preparation for the actual certification examination, candidates are NOT provided with the answer key, rationales for each question, nor notification of which specific items were answered correctly or incorrectly.

**FEE:** \$70 by credit card

**APPLY:** Go to <https://secure.ptcny.com/webtest/> and select Online Practice for Nutrition Support Clinicians

**FURTHER INFO:** Visit [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) or call Professional Testing Corporation at 212-356-0660

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## REFERENCES

The following references may be of some help in preparing for the examination. The list does not attempt to include all acceptable references nor is it suggested that the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians is necessarily based on these references. The NBNSC does not endorse any reference or resource as an official study guide for the certification exam.

Practice Recommendations, Clinical Guidelines and Standards for Nutrition Support:

[https://www.nutritioncare.org/Clinical\\_Practice\\_Library/](https://www.nutritioncare.org/Clinical_Practice_Library/)

American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN) Board of Directors and Clinical Practice Committee. Definition of Terms, Styles, and Conventions Used in ASPEN Board of Directors-Approved Documents. American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition.

[https://www.nutritioncare.org/Clinical\\_Practice\\_Library/](https://www.nutritioncare.org/Clinical_Practice_Library/)

Ayers P, Adams S, Boullata J, et al. ASPEN Parenteral Nutrition Safety Consensus Recommendations. JPEN J Parenter Enteral Nutr, March 2014; vol. 38, 3: pp. 296-333.

Boullata, J, Carrera A, Harvey, L, et al. ASPEN Safe Practices for Enteral Nutrition Therapy. JPEN J Parenter Enteral Nutr, 2017; vol 41, 1: pp 15-103.

Corkins M.R. et al. (Eds.) The ASPEN Pediatric Nutrition Support Core Curriculum, 2nd Edition. Silver Spring, MD: ASPEN, 2015.

Mueller, C. et al. (Eds.) The ASPEN Adult Nutrition Support Core Curriculum, 3rd Edition. Silver Spring, MD: ASPEN, 2017.

### **Ultimate Authority**

If it appears that an answer to an exam question may vary depending on the reference used the following policy will be followed:

- 1) The ASPEN Practice Guidelines and Standards and Practice papers will be considered the final authority when questions of answers are raised. These papers are available at no charge on the ASPEN website: [http://www.nutritioncare.org/guidelines\\_and\\_clinical\\_resources/](http://www.nutritioncare.org/guidelines_and_clinical_resources/)
- 2) If the NBNSC determines that a guideline or standard from another organization differs from those published by ASPEN, it will only be considered authoritative if it is a peer reviewed document from a recognized organization and has been published after the publication date of the ASPEN document it disagrees with.
- 3) In the event that a question's answer is challenged the question and answer will be reviewed by the exam chairperson, the chairperson of the Executive board and, if necessary, by a third person with special knowledge of the field.

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