



Alberta Health Care Aide Registration Exam (AHRE) Policy

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College of LPNs and HCAs of Alberta

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INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Aides of Alberta (CLHA) has the **authority** under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to carry out its activities and **govern** **Health Care Aides** (HCAs)* in a manner that protects and serves the public interest.

Through the **registration** process in Alberta, the CLHA manages access to the Alberta Health Care Aide Registration Exam (AHRE). This exam is a standardized assessment to determine an HCA's ability to meet the HCA entry to level competencies required to safely practice in Alberta.

Terms found in the definition section are **bolded** where they appear for the first time in this document.

PURPOSE

This document is intended to clarify and direct the development, delivery, access, and administration of the AHRE.

DISCUSSION

AHRE Development and Updates

The **Alberta HCA Competency Profile (2018)** outlines the roles and **responsibilities** of HCAs in Alberta, which guides the development and maintenance of the AHRE.

The CLHA utilizes a Subject Matter Expert (SME) Advisory Group to create and provide recommendations on the AHRE content. The SME Advisory Group is comprised of educators, employers, health care providers, HCAs, Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, and other expert groups working with HCAs in Alberta.

Development of the AHRE is:

- **psychometrically** sound, and
- approved by representatives of the SME Advisory Group.

The AHRE aligns with and is mapped to the Alberta HCA Provincial **Curriculum** (2019). It is updated annually and as changes in competencies or the HCA profession's legislation arise.

* In this document, "HCA(s)" has the same meaning as "regulated member(s)" in the *Health Professions Act*.

Eligibility to Write the Alberta HCA Registration Exam

To be eligible to write the AHRE, a **candidate** is required to have:

- 1) received their HCA credential from an approved **HCA program** in Alberta and have applied for, and been approved to, the **HCA provisional register**;
- 2) received their HCA credential from an approved HCA program in Alberta and have applied for, and been approved to, only write the exam;
- 3) been registered on the provisional register pending final assessment to determine **substantial equivalence** by successfully completing the Alberta HCA Registration Exam; or
- 4) successfully completed a **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)** assessment as part of their HCA program through a licensed **post-secondary institution** (PSI).

Candidates who apply for provisional registration and are approved will have one year and three attempts to successfully pass the AHRE.

Candidates who do not wish to apply for provisional registration and only wish to write the AHRE will have four years after graduating from an approved HCA program to write the exam. Once their application is approved, they will have one year to complete their three attempts.

Note: HCA students who completed their course prior to February 2, 2026, and were enrolled as Certified in Progress on the Alberta HCA Directory, will be transitioned to the CLHA regulated provisional register. HCAs on the provisional register will be eligible for three exam writes, including any that were written before February 2, 2026. An HCA can only remain on the provisional register for one year.

AHRE Fees

Candidates are required to pay the AHRE fee prior to booking each AHRE attempt as per the fee schedule available on the CLHA website.

AHRE Access

The **exam administrator** will provide candidates with exam information, such as:

- process to pay and book;
- delivery, location, date, and time; and
- required documentation.

At the time of writing the AHRE, candidates must present two valid government-issued identifications (one must include photo identification).

- Identification must be valid (not expired).
- Copies of the identification will not be accepted.

The first and last name and date of birth used on the candidate's registration must exactly match the first and last name and date of birth on the identification presented at the time of the AHRE.

Acceptable identification includes:

- birth certificate
- passport and/or NEXUS card
- Canadian driver's license
- Canadian citizenship card
- Alberta identification card
- permanent resident card
- treaty status card
- Canadian immigration visa
- Correctional Services Canada card
- employee ID for child and family service authority card
- firearms card
- Canadian Forces identification card
- corrections officer identification card

Unacceptable identification includes:

- Social insurance card
- Alberta health care card
- non-government-issued identification documents

The AHRE is computer-based and will be written in person at an approved location managed by the exam provider.

The AHRE is offered only in English. It is important that HCAs can communicate effectively in English. Written and oral communication skills are an important component of delivering competent care.

Candidates must review the AHRE Candidate Handbook (available on the CLHA website) prior to taking the AHRE. It is a comprehensive tool and resource that candidates should use to aid in their success. The AHRE Candidate Handbook contains information on how to prepare for the AHRE and what to expect during the exam.

AHRE Writing Attempts

Candidates have a maximum of three AHRE writing attempts. Those candidates who fail all three AHRE attempts:

- are considered not to have the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes as per the CLHA Entry Level Competencies, required to safely practice as an HCA;

- are required to re-take an entire HCA-approved program to be eligible for another three attempts at the AHRE; and
- those who choose not to re-take the entire HCA-approved program are not eligible for PLAR.

A fourth attempt will only be permitted under exceptional circumstances.

AHRE Accommodations

In accordance with the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, a candidate who has a physical or mental disability that impacts their ability to write the AHRE, or seeks **accommodations** based on other protected grounds, may request accommodations. The CLHA will consider accommodation requests and will accommodate a candidate's needs to the point of undue hardship.

Candidates requesting an **accommodation** to write the AHRE are required to submit a completed Accommodation Request Form to the CLHA and may be required to provide further information, including medical documentation, to support the request.

The accommodation request must:

- include information on how the disability or other protected ground is a barrier to writing the exam;
- indicate the accommodation being sought (e.g. additional time, a private room, in person reader, or screen reader);
- identify how the accommodation requested will assist in addressing the barrier;
- be supported by information from the applicant's medical provider and/or PSI; and
- be submitted a minimum of 30-calendar days prior to their desired AHRE booking date.

AHRE accommodation requests will not be provided:

- when an accommodation would impact the integrity of the AHRE,
- in situations that would interfere with the ability to reasonably assess the applicant's knowledge of the exam material, or
- in other circumstances where accommodation requests cannot be reasonably provided.

Where an accommodation request would result in undue hardship, a CLHA representative and the candidate will discuss whether a mutual alternative is available.

If a candidate's request for accommodation is denied, the CLHA will provide the candidate with written notification.

AHRE Scheduling

Once a provisional HCA or candidate has been approved to write the AHRE and has paid for the AHRE, within 10 business days, they will be placed into the first available testing window to write the exam.

Provisional HCAs or candidates who do not write the AHRE during the assigned testing window will be charged a \$100 “**did not write**” fee.

Testing windows are in February, April, June, August, October, and December.

AHRE Cancellations, Fees, and Refunds

The following summarizes important information about AHRE fees.

- The AHRE fee covers the cost of exam development and administration.
- Candidates must pay the full AHRE fee for each attempt.
- If a candidate reschedules their AHRE at least 48 hours before the sitting, for any reason, they may defer their AHRE fee to the next sitting within the same testing window.
- If a candidate cancels their AHRE at least 48 hours before the sitting, they will receive a refund of their examination fee, minus administrative fees.
- Candidates who do not show up for their AHRE will not receive a refund of the AHRE fee.
- Candidates who do not write the AHRE in the assigned testing window will be charged a \$100 “**did not write**” fee.

Candidates who miss their scheduled AHRE due to **extenuating circumstances** (e.g., **serious health condition**, life event, **emergency** conditions) must inform the CLHA as soon as possible and may request the CLHA to consider a refund or deferral of the AHRE fee on a case-by-case basis.

Any candidate arriving 15 or more minutes late to sit the AHRE will be given the status of “**did not write**” and will forfeit the AHRE fee.

AHRE Results

The following summarizes how AHRE results and feedback are provided.

- Candidates will receive a pass or fail mark on their AHRE four to six weeks after the testing window has closed. An email will be sent directly to the candidate when their result is posted on their MyCLHA account.
- AHRE scores are not provided.
- Candidates who receive a fail result will receive AHRE diagnostic information.

- Candidates will not be provided with information about which questions they answered incorrectly.

Exam Violations

Candidates are monitored for any irregularities that may indicate cheating during the supervised examination writing. Candidates scheduled for an exam are expected to read and comply with all rules and instructions provided by the examining body and proctors. Actions and behaviours must maintain the confidentiality of exam content and uphold ethical and professional behaviour.

If there is evidence or reason to believe that a candidate has engaged in improper conduct before, during, or after a required exam, the candidate may face disciplinary action as determined by various factors. There is no time limit for when evidence of wrongdoing may be brought forward or reviewed by the CLHA.

For more information on exam violations, please see the *Exam Validation* policy.

Exam Misconduct

Exam misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

a) Before/After the Exam

- unauthorized access to exam content (e.g., leaked questions);
- disseminating or soliciting confidential exam information;
- falsifying exam-related documentation (e.g., accommodation requests); and/or
- planning with others on ways to cheat or harvest exam content.

b) During the Exam

- possession or use of unauthorized materials or devices (including electronic devices),
- copying or attempting to copy exam content,
- receiving assistance from others,
- communicating with others during the exam (except authorized persons),
- impersonation or arranging for another person to write an exam,
- tampering with exam materials or systems,
- use of prohibited assistive technology such as artificial intelligence (AI),
- talking aloud, unless an approved accommodation is granted, and/or
- anyone else entering your testing area.

Suspicious patterns identified via data forensics or remote proctoring tools will be reviewed alongside other evidence to confirm suspicious behaviour and assist with decision-making.

Consequences of Misconduct

When a report or piece of evidence indicating possible misconduct during an exam is received, it is investigated for validity. If the complaint of exam misconduct is determined not to have occurred, the complaint against the candidate will be dismissed. If it is determined that exam misconduct has occurred, it may be addressed through:

- the exam process by considering it a fail, counting it toward an exam attempt, making the candidate ineligible to re-write another time, or with other approaches and conditions as necessary;
- the CLHA registration process, by assessing whether the candidate meets the good character and reputation requirements necessary for initial registration and renewal of a practice permit;
- a referral of a provisional HCA to the CLHA conduct process, which may result in disciplinary action; or
- legal action if the alleged misconduct is also a criminal offence, such as theft of exam materials or forgery.

These paths are not mutually exclusive, and more than one response may be appropriate, depending on the nature of the evidence and the degree of certainty that cheating occurred.

If exam misconduct is suspected and the investigation is inconclusive, a rewrite may be required at no extra charge, without penalty.

Exam Appeals

AHRE results cannot be appealed. Candidates may appeal only the AHRE administration process, such as a technical issue experienced by the exam administrator that prevents the exam from proceeding.

Candidates must submit a written exam appeal to the CLHA within a maximum of five business days after the candidate receives their official examination result.

The **examination provider** will give information and/or data to the CLHA for the appeal process. An appeal will be reviewed by an independent person appointed by the CLHA within five business days following the receipt of the appeal. The CLHA will notify the candidate of the outcome of the appeal by email.

Candidates who successfully appeal will receive one additional examination attempt at no extra cost.

Information, timelines, and processes for appealing the examination administration process are posted on the CLHA website.

Provisional HCAs and exam candidates cannot appeal for the following issues:

- missed attempts or “no shows,” including those caused by a mix-up with the scheduled time;
- failing to review the email from Meazure Learning confirming the date, place, and time of the examination;
- not revisiting the original booking platform to reschedule the booking date and time if needed;
- being unable to take the examination because of failure to provide accepted identification documents;
- not completing any or all exam attempts within the one-year timeframe; and
- experiencing test-related anxiety.

CONCLUSION

This document outlines the development, delivery, access, and administration of the AHRE. Candidates can find specific information about writing the exam, including fees, number of attempts, scheduling, cancellations, refunds, and results.

Documents are updated frequently. For the most current version and access to related documents and resources, please visit the Knowledge Hub on clha.com.

If after reading this document you have questions about this topic, please contact the CLHA’s Registration Department at hcaregistration@clha.com, 780-484-8886 or 1-800-661-5877 (toll free in Alberta).

DEFINITIONS

Accommodation: making changes to certain rules, standards, policies, and physical environment to ensure they do not negatively impact a person because of a disability or any other protected ground.

Alberta HCA Competency Profile: outlines the core competencies for HCAs, including the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attitudes required by all HCAs who deliver care in Alberta and provides the foundation and structure for the 2019 HCA Curriculum.

Authority: refers to the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience. It can also mean the appropriate person to give orders or make decisions.

Candidate: a provisional HCA or individual who is eligible to write the Alberta HCA Registration Examination.

Curriculum: the Government of Alberta HCA Provincial Curriculum (2019) is based on the Alberta HCA Competency Profile (2018) and outlines the knowledge, learning activities, and instructional methods that facilitate attaining the key competencies required for HCAs to provide safe, quality care to Albertans.

Did not write: candidates registered to take the examination at a scheduled date and time but failed to show and write the examination without any notification or communication to the examination provider.

Emergency: a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action.

Exam administrator: contractor who manages the examination process, including communication with candidates, registration, etc.

Examination provider: contractor who provides the examination platform for the AHRE and delivers and proctors the examination.

Extenuating circumstance: unforeseen exceptional events beyond a person's control to be considered by the Registrar when a candidate requests the CLHA to consider a refund or deferral of the AHRE fee.

Govern: to lead, control, or manage an organization or group, often by creating rules and making decisions that guide their actions.

Health care aides (HCAs): someone registered with the CLHA who provides basic health services, assistance/support with activities of daily living, and who also performs restricted activities under supervision for clients who have medical conditions or functional limitations.

HCA program: an HCA program delivered in Alberta that is approved by the CLHA's Council in accordance with the HPA that meets educational requirements needed for entry to practice as set out in the LPN and HCA Profession Regulation.

Provisional register: a register for temporary registration of a person who has the required education but has not completed exams for full registration as an HCA in Alberta. This register includes individuals who are currently Alberta nursing students applying to work as an HCA while completing their nursing education.

Post-secondary institution: A post-secondary institution is any school, college, university, or institute offering education after high school (secondary school), providing degrees, diplomas, or certificates for careers or further study.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR): a standardized process utilized to assess and recognize a person's knowledge and skills, acquired through formal and informal learning, in relation to a certain goal (for example, receiving credit in a post-secondary program, meeting professional licensure/certification requirements, or obtaining employment).

Psychometric: is a foundation of assessment and measurement based on science. Within psychometrics, there are four fundamental principles used to judge the quality of assessment. These are reliability, validity, standardization, and freedom from bias.

Registration: when a regulatory college approves an applicant to use a specific title, like Health Care Aide, and work in a certain profession.

Responsibilities: the ability to respond and answer for one's actions and duties. Being responsible means that an individual is trustworthy and reliable.

Serious health condition: an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves medical intervention and/or hospitalization.

Substantial equivalence: means an individual's application is assessed to determine if they have a combination of education, experience, practice, or other qualifications that demonstrates competence required for registration as an HCA.

REFERENCES

Alberta Human Rights Commission. *Duty to Accommodate*. Government of Alberta, [Duty to Accommodate | Alberta Human Rights Commission](#).

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta. *Personal Information Protection Act*. <https://www.oipc.ab.ca/legislation/pipa.aspx>.