



PEDIATRIC NURSING
CERTIFICATION BOARD



PNCB Exam Candidate Handbook

Effective May 7, 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About PNCB	1
Where You Will Test.....	1
Nondiscrimination Policy.....	1
Exam Administration	2
Exam Eligibility Approval & Scheduling Notification	2
Testing Windows	2
Disability Accommodations	3
How to Schedule Your Exam	3
Cancellation, Rescheduling, Late Arrival or No Show for a Scheduled Exam.....	4
Policies Regarding Lateness and No Show	5
Extension of Testing Window.....	5
Exam Withdrawal Policy.....	5
Exam Fees Policies.....	6
Inclement Weather, Power Failure or Emergency.....	6
Taking the Exam at a Prometric Test Center.....	7
Identification for Admission to the Exam.....	7
Name Changes.....	7
Security.....	8
Testing Restrictions	9
Misconduct/Irregular Behavior	9
Tutorial	11
Timed Exam	11
PNCB Exam Information.....	11
After the Exam.....	12
If You Pass	12
Using your Credential.....	13
If You Do Not Pass	13
CPNP Candidates Testing with a Transcript Exception.....	13
Pass/Fail Score Determination	14
Cancellation of Scores	14
Exam Copyright and Confidentiality	14
Candidate Confidentiality.....	15
PNCB Recertification Program.....	15
Note on Candidate Data.....	15
Note on Policies.....	15
Special Note about PMHS Testing Windows.....	15

About PNCB

Thank you for choosing the Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PNCB)! Established in 1975, PNCB offers the following certification examinations in a computer-based testing format:

- Certified Pediatric Nurse (CPN®) – exam offered year-round
- Primary Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (CPNP-PC®) – exam offered year-round
- Acute Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (CPNP-AC®) – exam offered year-round
- Pediatric Primary Care Mental Health Specialist (PMHS®) – exam offered in May and November annually

Our Mission

PNCB promotes optimal outcomes in global pediatric health by providing certification services that validate specialized knowledge and continuing competence in pediatric nursing.

Our Vision

Every child receives care from a PNCB certified nursing professional.

Where You Will Test

PNCB delivers its exam through Prometric testing centers. Prometric is an independent testing agency and the leading provider of testing services and solutions for corporate, academic, government, financial and professional service clients.

Exams are delivered by computer at over 300 Prometric Test Centers located throughout the United States, Canada, some US territories, and the UAE. A current listing of centers, including addresses and driving directions, can be viewed at <http://prometric.com/pncb>. Specific address information will be provided when a candidate schedules an exam appointment. We suggest you also visit <http://prometric.com/pncb> to review Prometric’s commonly asked questions regarding exam day and more.

Nondiscrimination Policy

PNCB and Prometric do not discriminate among candidates on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, age, health status, disability, marital status, lifestyle, or sexual orientation.

Exam Administration

Exams are administered by appointment only during your assigned testing window. Typical hours for test centers are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Candidates are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Prometric centers close on the following US holidays. Canadian centers may close on different holidays.

- *New Year's Day*
- *Martin Luther King Day*
- *Presidents' Day*
- *Memorial Day*
- *Independence Day (July 4)*
- *Labor Day*
- *Thanksgiving Day (and the following Friday)*
- *Christmas Eve Day*
- *Christmas Day*
- *New Year's Eve Day*

Exam Eligibility Approval & Scheduling Notification

PNCB exam candidates are ready to schedule their exam with Prometric after they receive an official eligibility approval and scheduling notification by email from PNCB. Emails are sent to contact information included on the candidate's exam application. Candidates are responsible for keeping contact information current with PNCB.

The detailed email about eligibility approval and scheduling notification will also be available to each candidate by logging in at www.pncb.org to view Message History. Read your eligibility email immediately and follow the instructions on how to schedule your exam.

Testing Windows

The notification described above informs each candidate of the testing window assigned to them. CPNP and CPN candidates receive a 90-day window. PMHS candidates receive a shorter window for either the month of May or November, depending on the date of application*.

Candidates will select a date within their assigned window to test and will then contact Prometric to schedule their exam. Schedule promptly after receiving your eligibility approval and scheduling notification because many other organizations use Prometric for testing. Waiting to schedule may impact your opportunity to take the exam on your preferred date, time, or location. If you cancel less than 5 days before the end of your testing window, and Prometric cannot accommodate you with a reschedule within those 4 days prior to the end of your testing period, you will need to reapply and you must repay the application fees.

Disability Accommodations

PNCB and Prometric comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and strive to ensure that no individual with a disability is deprived of the opportunity to take the exam solely by reason of that disability. PNCB makes special testing arrangements for any candidate with a professionally diagnosed and documented disability. Under the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; OR (2) has a record of such an impairment; OR (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

PNCB and Prometric make every attempt to address requests for testing accommodations based upon review of documented health needs. Wheelchair access is available at all Prometric centers. **In all cases, requests for special accommodations including breast pumping and documentation of disability needs are to be included at the time of application.** [This form](#) is required before accommodation requests may be granted. Review the requirements for special testing accommodations at www.pncb.org or call PNCB at 1-888-641-2767 for questions. Candidates with special accommodation(s) **must schedule their exam by phone** with Prometric.

How to Schedule Your Exam

Candidates can schedule their exam online at <http://prometric.com/pncb> or by phone at 866-496-9748. You will need the eligibility ID number provided in your PNCB notification to be able to schedule.

To Schedule Online:

Visit <http://prometric.com/pncb> to use Prometric's online registration and scheduling system. The website guides you through the complete process and prompts you to schedule an exam appointment. Prometric will send an email confirmation of your scheduled exam shortly after you schedule, as well as a reminder email 48 hours before the scheduled appointment.

If special accommodations have been approved by PNCB, candidates must register with Prometric by phone at 1-800-967-1139.

To Schedule by Phone:

Call Prometric at 866-496-9748 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, excluding holidays observed by Prometric.

OR

Call a local Prometric test site. Visit <http://prometric.com/pncb> and follow online instructions to locate a test site's phone number.

OR

Use Prometric's Interactive Voice Response. Call Prometric at 866-496-9748.

Be prepared to provide your eligibility ID number (see your examination eligibility notification), the exam name, and

preferred test date when making your appointment by phone. Prometric will provide candidates with the appointment length and time, exam name and location. All candidates will be asked to provide an email address so Prometric can provide email confirmations. Check your spam/junk folder for this important confirmation. If you cannot provide Prometric with an email address, you should log on to <http://prometric.com/pncb> and print an exam confirmation.

Cancellation, Rescheduling, Late Arrival, or No Show for a Scheduled Exam

A candidate who is unable to test as scheduled within their assigned testing period can reschedule or cancel an exam. Candidates can reschedule by visiting <http://prometric.com/pncb> or calling Prometric’s Candidate Services at 866-496-9748. Certain fees may apply for rescheduling or cancelling a scheduled exam. The following fees apply to candidates who reschedule, cancel, arrive late or do not appear for their scheduled exam:

Cancellation/Reschedule Period	Prometric Cancellation and Reschedule Fee
16 or more days before test date	No fee. CPN or CPNP exams must be rescheduled within assigned 90-day testing window. PMHS must be rescheduled within the assigned testing window (May or November)*.
5 – 15 days before scheduled test date.	Prometric charge of \$25 per cancellation or reschedule. Candidates must contact Prometric. CPN or CPNP exams must be rescheduled within assigned 90-day testing window. PMHS must be rescheduled within the assigned testing window (May or November)*.
Reschedule less than 5 days before test date.	Prometric charge of \$50 per reschedule. Candidates must contact Prometric. CPN or CPNP exams must be rescheduled within assigned 90-day testing window. PMHS must be rescheduled within the assigned testing window (May or November)*. You cannot reschedule an exam on the day of your exam appointment.
A) Cancellation less than 5 days before test date or B) Fails to appear for a scheduled test or C) Arrives at the Prometric Testing Center more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time for taking the test and is refused admission.	Candidate forfeits all fees paid. Visit www.pncb.org to complete a new exam application. Please call PNCB with questions at 1-888-641-2767. If you cancel your exam less than 5 days before the end of the testing window, and Prometric cannot accommodate you with a reschedule during those 4 days prior to the end of your testing window, you will need to reapply and must repay the application fees.

Candidates who reschedule or cancel by phone must make and confirm all cancellations/changes through direct

contact with Prometric's Candidate Services personnel. Leaving a voice mail message is **not acceptable** means to confirm cancellation or exam date changes. Candidates may also make changes by logging in at <http://prometric.com/pncb>.

Policies Regarding Lateness and No Show

- A candidate who appears more than 15 minutes late for an exam will not be able to test and will be considered a no show. The candidate forfeits all fees and must reapply in order to test. This will also count as one use of a PNCB No Pass, No Pay payment charge code.
- A candidate who fails to schedule an exam or fails to report for a scheduled exam within the assigned testing window forfeits all fees. The candidate will be required to reapply, including candidates using the PNCB No Pass, No Pay payment charge code.
- A reduced reapplication fee is offered to no-show candidates or those who have previously taken the same certification exam but were unsuccessful. This fee is not available for candidates using the PNCB No Pass, No Pay payment charge code.

Extension of Testing Window (One time only)

To extend a **CPN or CPNP** 90-day testing window, the following policies apply:

- Your online application for an extension of a 90-day testing window must be completed 5 **business** days before your current window expires.
- An additional non-refundable registration fee is required.
- You are limited to one 90-day extension.
- The new 90-day testing window begins once your application for an extension is processed. It does not grant you 180 days to take the exam.
- An online extension application completed after your 90-day testing window expires will not be honored. You must complete a new exam application.
- Extensions are not available for CPN exam candidates using a PNCB No Pass, No Pay payment charge code.

To extend a **PMHS** testing window, the above policies apply except that your assigned testing window will move to the next testing window available, either May or November, depending on your currently assigned window*. Testing windows may only be extended one time.

Exam Withdrawal Policy

In order to successfully withdraw from your testing window, please note the following requirements:

- A written withdrawal request must be received at PNCB 16 **business** days before expiration of an assigned testing window, in order to receive a refund of the exam fee only. When you apply for an exam, the cost

includes a registration fee for which no refunds are given. See www.pncb.org for more details about fees.

The withdrawal request must be emailed to exam@pncb.org.

- Candidates are responsible for cancelling any exam appointment made with Prometric no less than 16 days before the scheduled test date.
- Withdrawal requests received following the expiration of a testing window will not be honored and no fees will be refunded.
- The candidate must reapply and pay all fees in order to take the exam in the future.

Exam Fees Policies

- The exam registration fee will not be refunded under any circumstances.
- The retest fee will not be refunded under any circumstances.
- A non-refundable one-time-only extension fee is required for an extension of a testing window.
- If an application is not eligible for processing, all fees will be refunded to the applicant.

A candidate forfeits all fees:

- If the candidate fails to schedule an appointment with Prometric within the assigned testing window,
- If the candidate fails to report for a scheduled exam appointment,
- If the candidate is not able to sit for the exam because of lateness or unacceptable identification,
- If the candidate wishes to reschedule an exam but fails to contact Prometric at least 5 business days prior to the scheduled testing session to cancel an appointment,
- If the candidate fails to submit a withdrawal request to the PNCB at least 16 business days before expiration of an assigned testing window, or
- If the candidate fails to submit an online application for extension to the PNCB 5 business days before expiration of an assigned CPN or CPNP 90-day testing window, or 1 day before the expiration of a PMHS month-long testing window*.

Inclement Weather, Power Failure, or Emergency

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on a test day, Prometric will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling, of an exam. Prometric generally determines the night before if a center will close. To learn if your site is currently closed for appointments or will be the next day, visit: <http://www.prometric.com/sitestatus/default.htm>.

If an exam is cancelled, Prometric will contact impacted candidates to reschedule. Every attempt is made to administer the exam as scheduled. The exam will usually not be rescheduled if Prometric personnel are able to open the center. If power to a center is temporarily interrupted during an administration, your exam will restart where you left off and you will be able to continue. Prometric's policy allows for 30 minutes of interrupted time before the candidate is asked about rescheduling.

Taking the Exam at a Prometric Test Center

Your exam will be given on a computer at a Prometric Test Center. You do not need computer experience or typing skills to take your exam. Candidates should arrive at the test center at least 30 minutes prior to their scheduled exam. **A CANDIDATE WHO ARRIVES MORE THAN 15 MINUTES AFTER THE SCHEDULED TESTING TIME WILL NOT BE ADMITTED.** We suggest you also visit <http://prometric.com/pncb> to review Prometric’s commonly asked questions regarding exam day and more.

Identification for Admission to Exam

To be admitted to a Prometric Testing Center, you must present two forms of identification, one with a current photograph. Both forms of identification must be current and both must include the candidate’s current legal name and signature.

You Must Present 2 IDs	
You must present 1 Primary Source ID	And you must present 1 Secondary Source ID
Must have your photo and your signature. Acceptable examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Driver’s License or Permit with photo• Current State Identification Card with photo• Current Passport with photo• Current Military ID Card with photo	Must have your signature. Acceptable examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment ID Card with signature• Student ID Card with signature• Credit Card or Debit Card with signature and current expiration date• Original RN License with signature and current expiration date
Not Accepted: Temporary identification, certificate of naturalization, social security cards, computer-generated copies of RN licenses, and identification cards such as PALS, ACLS, etc. A marriage license/certificate or divorce degree is also <i>not acceptable</i> at the Prometric Test Center. Name change documentation must be received by PNCB at least 5 business days prior to your exam date. See below for additional information.	

- All secondary forms of identification must include a signature.
- You may present 2 primary source IDs instead of 1 primary source and 1 secondary source ID.
- Candidates who do not provide acceptable identification will not be allowed to take the certification exam and all fees will be forfeited.

Name Changes

The first and last names on the candidate’s ID must match the legal names used on the candidate’s exam application. If at any time prior to testing your legal name changes, you must submit [PNCB’s online Name Change Attestation Form](#) and supporting documentation. **Name changes must be received by PNCB at least 5 business days before your exam date or you will not be permitted to test.** Name changes may not be made with Prometric and must be reported to PNCB before testing. Your first and last name as used on your application must match the two forms of identification you show to Prometric center personnel as proof of your identity. If both forms of identification do not match the name on your eligibility approval and scheduling notification, you will be denied

admittance to the testing center and additional fees will apply. Your name change documentation must include a copy of the marriage license, court-approved name change document, divorce decree or marriage certificate with a copy of your government-issued identification reflecting the name change.

Security

PNCB and Prometric maintain exam administration and security standards that are designed to assure that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities in a fair and professional testing environment. All certification exams are monitored by at least one proctor at all times and will be continuously monitored by proctor walk-throughs and the observation window during your test. All testing sessions are video and audio recorded. You will be required to sign in and out on the roster each time you enter and leave the test room.

- The following restrictions apply during the examination. The only item allowed in the testing area is identification. Prometric is not responsible for items left in reception area. Testing centers may have small lockers for items such as purses that cannot be left behind.
- You may not bring a calculator. However, on-screen calculators are available for all PNCB exams.
- No guests, visitors, or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.
- No weapons are allowed in the test center.
- Prometric will provide each candidate with an erasable whiteboard. Note taking before test start time is not allowed. The whiteboard must be returned to the proctor upon completion of the exam.
- Candidates are required to empty and turn pockets inside out before entering the testing room.
- All candidates will be required to remove their eyeglasses for close visual inspection by a test center associate upon checking in and again when returning from breaks.
- Jewelry outside of wedding and engagement rings are prohibited. Do not wear any jewelry to the test center. You will be asked to store additional jewelry in your locker.
- All hair accessories are subject to inspection. Refrain from wearing ornate clips, combs, barrettes, headbands, or other hair accessories as you may be prohibited from wearing them in the testing room and will be asked to store the item in your locker.
- Use of a cellular phone or other electronic devices is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the exam.
- No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the testing room.
- No questions concerning the content of the exam may be asked during the testing session.
- Eating, drinking, or smoking is not permitted at the testing center.
- Additional detailed testing center regulations are posted on [Prometric's website](#).

Testing Restrictions

- No personal belongings will be allowed in the testing center. Testing centers may have small lockers for items such as purses, backpacks, outerwear, hair clips, jewelry, etc. which must be secured.
- PNCB exam candidates are not allowed access to lockers during testing. Prometric uses color-coded locker key tags and exam candidates receive a colored locker key tag upon check in. PNCB exam candidates receive a red colored locker key tag which means the candidate does not have locker access.
- Candidates will not be allowed to bring food or drink inside the testing room. Individuals must have prior permission from PNCB if he/she needs food or drink, take medications or have access to medical supplies during the exam. Smoking is also not permitted at the testing center.
- Electronic devices, including cell/mobile phones, listening devices (e.g., headphones), pagers, PDAs, laptop computers, MP3 players, electronic tablets, watches and calculators are not allowed in the testing center. Candidates will not be permitted to use any electronic device during testing and will be dismissed from the exam room and not allowed to continue the exam if found in possession of any electronic device.
- No documents or notes may be removed from the testing room.
- No questions about exam content may be asked during the testing session.

Candidates may take a break whenever they wish, but will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks. Total testing time is 3 hours for the CPN and CPNP exams and 2 ½ hours for the PMHS exam.

Misconduct or Irregular Behavior

Irregular behavior is attempted violation(s) of the rules regarding any part of the examination process. Irregular behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Violations before testing:
 - Providing false information on the application.
 - Providing false admittance information.
 - Altering transcripts.
 - Seeking information about exam items and/or answers from previous examinees or formal or informal test preparation groups.
 - Engaging an impersonator.
 - Using a camera device.
- Violations while testing:
 - Impersonating an examinee.
 - Possessing or accessing unauthorized items in the testing room or center, e.g., food, electronic devices.
 - Communicating with other examinees during the testing period.

- Failing to adhere to a proctor's instruction or request.
- Attempting to gain access to content being tested during the testing or on breaks.
- Creating a disturbance, being abusive or uncooperative.
- Caught with a camera device while in the testing room.
- Accessing a locker.
- Violations after testing:
 - Altering exam results.
 - Reproducing exam items, by any means, including reconstruction from memory.
 - Communicating by any method about exam items and/or answers with other examinees, potential examinees or formal or informal test preparation groups.
 - Attempting to remove notes or documents used during testing.
- Consequences of Irregular Behavior
 - If evidence is found of a breach of exam materials before the exam administration, and evidence suggests that the behavior is organized and/or may involve a number of examinees, PNCB reserves the right to cancel the exam administration. If evidence is found of possession a camera prior to test administration, the exam administration will be cancelled. If evidence is found of a breach in the security of exam materials after an exam administration, and evidence suggests that the behavior was organized and/or may have involved a number of examinees, PNCB reserves the right to nullify the exam results of some or all examinees.
 - If violations are observed during the exam, the testing vendor will report the violations to PNCB and an investigation will ensue. If PNCB determines it has sufficient evidence of the irregular behavior, the candidate will be notified of the nature of the evidence and given an opportunity to respond in writing. If a candidate is caught with a camera while in the testing room, the camera will be confiscated and the exam immediately suspended. If exam results have not been reported, they will be withheld during the investigation, and the candidate will not be permitted to take subsequent exams until a final decision regarding irregular behavior has been made.
 - If after PNCB's review of the available information it is determined that irregular behavior has occurred, the violator's exam results will be invalidated. The candidate will either be prohibited from taking future PNCB certification exams or special procedures will be implemented for future exams. PNCB reserves the right to request a retest of any candidate if available evidence causes loss of confidence in the exam results for any reason. PNCB may choose to provide notice of the sanctions imposed to entities with a need to know such as a state board of nursing. Exam fees will not be refunded and PNCB may also pursue a legal remedy against the examinee(s).
 - If the irregular behavior involves unauthorized reproduction and/or distribution of exam materials or dissemination of exam content, PNCB will pursue all legal means available to protect the copyrighted materials.

Tutorial

After your identification is confirmed, you will be seated at a personal testing carrel. Prior to taking the timed exam, you will be given the opportunity to practice by taking a 15-minute tutorial on the computer. The time you use for this tutorial is **not counted** as part of your exam time or score. When you are comfortable with the computer testing process, you may quit the tutorial and begin the timed exam.

Timed Exam

Following the tutorial, you will begin the timed certification exam. Instructions are provided on the screen before beginning. The computer monitors the time you spend on the exam. The exam will end as soon as the time allowed for testing is reached. A digital clock that indicates the time remaining for completion of your exam will be displayed on your screen. Unlike adaptive testing used for the NCLEX exam, PNCB certification exams do not end when a passing score is determined. Your exam will only stop if you reach the end of your allotted testing period or if you finish and submit your answers for scoring before the end of your allotted testing period. You also can return to questions and change an answer before final submission.

Only one question is presented at a time. The question number appears in the lower left-hand corner of the screen. Choices of answers to the exam question are identified as A, B, C, or D. You must indicate your answer by using your mouse to click the radio (i.e., circular) button next to your answer. You may change your answer as many times as you wish during the exam time limit. To move to the next question, click on the “Next” button at the bottom of your screen. This action will move you forward through the exam question by question. If you wish to review any question previously seen, click the “Previous” button at the bottom of your screen to move backward through the exam.

An exam question may be left unanswered and returned to later in the testing session. These questions should be bookmarked for later review by clicking the “Mark” button at the bottom of your screen. Questions may also be bookmarked for later review by clicking the “Review” button at the bottom of your screen. Click the “Next” button to advance to the next unanswered or bookmarked question on the exam. When the exam is completed, the number of exam questions answered is reported. If not all questions have been answered and there is time remaining, return to the exam and answer those questions. You should answer all questions to the best of your ability. If you are uncertain about an answer, you should guess, because an unanswered “No Response” question has no chance of earning you any credit. There is no additional penalty for incorrect responses as opposed to “No Response” questions.

PNCB Exam Information

PNCB's national certification exams (CPNP and CPN) contain 175 multiple-choice items (questions). Twenty-five of the items are non-scored pre-test items and are randomly distributed throughout the exam. PNCB's Pediatric Primary Care Mental Health Specialist (PMHS) exam contains 150 items. Twenty-five of the items are non-scored pre-test items and are randomly distributed throughout the exam.

You should answer all exam items to the best of your ability. Please inform the exam proctor at your center if the exam unexpectedly ends before you have completed all test items. Report any technical difficulties to the exam proctor as well.

Each exam item has 3 to 4 suggested responses, only **ONE** of which is correct. Each year new exam items are pre-tested as non-scored items to determine how well they will perform before they are used in the scored portion of the exam. These pre-test questions cannot be distinguished from the scored exam items, so it is important to answer **all** items. Also note that each candidate's pass/fail status is determined by their responses to the scored items. Answers you provided for the pre-test items do not affect your score. Sample questions are posted at www.pncb.org, in addition to your exam's content outline (test blueprint), and possible preparatory resources.

If you experience any difficulties while at the test center, please alert the Prometric on-site test center administrator (TCA). This Prometric staff member will make every effort to remedy the situation. If the problem cannot be remedied within a reasonable amount of time – usually 30 minutes – you will be offered another date/time within your testing window to take the exam. In order to have the incident investigated by PNCB, you must:

1. Alert test center staff promptly.
2. Request a ticket number from the TCA before leaving the test center.
3. Notify PNCB via email to exam@pncb.org or call PNCB at 1-888-641-2767 (PNCB's business hours are Monday-Friday 8:30am-5:00pm ET) immediately after you leave the test center.

Notification must be timely. PNCB staff will investigate the issue reported and follow-up with the candidate. Please be patient as this investigation could take 1-2 weeks depending on the type of issue reported.

After the Exam

Candidates are asked to complete a short evaluation after their testing experience. Candidates will then be able to view their personal unofficial preliminary exam status indicating: Exam Status = Pass **OR** Exam Status = Fail. PNCB will email official pass/fail results, usually within 10 business days.

If You Pass

An official congratulations letter noting your PNCB certification number will be emailed to you. An online wallet card can also be accessed by logging in to your PNCB account. A wall certificate will be mailed to you within 4-6 weeks. You will also receive future emails about maintaining your newly earned credential through PNCB recertification. Please visit www.pncb.org for detailed information about recertification.

Using Your Credential

Our suggestion is to always list your degree first, then licensure followed by certification. Should you have any awards or honors, these come last:

- Terri Moore, BS, RN, CPN
- Patricia Johnson, PhD, RN, CPNP-AC/PC, PMHS, FAANP

Listing your highest degree first is fairly standard. If you have a non-nursing degree, this would come next then licensure. If you have multiple certifications, often people list the one earned first in the first position, and the one earned most recently in the final position. If you want to use your credentials when charting, be sure to check your employer's policy on doing so. Let others know the value of your PNCB certification by wearing your lapel pin and introducing yourself as a Certified Pediatric Nurse or Nurse Practitioner to patients, their families, and peers. Mention your credential in your hospital staff bio. PNCB credentials are federally trademarked and may only be used by those who earn and actively maintain their certification.

If You Do Not Pass

Official results will be emailed from PNCB once the result file is received and processed – usually within 10 business days. Your score report will provide details of your performance in each major content area on the exam content outline. Please review your score performance to learn more about your strengths and weaknesses in all of the exam content areas. CPNP exam candidates can visit www.pncb.org for current retest policies and timing. Unsuccessful CPN exam candidates may apply to retest after receiving official test results and will be assigned a different form of the exam and a new 90-day testing window, provided they still meet PNCB's eligibility criteria. Unsuccessful PMHS exam candidates may apply to retest after receiving official test results and will be assigned a new testing window, provided they still meet PNCB's eligibility criteria. You can complete your re-examination application online via the PNCB website at www.pncb.org. Please contact PNCB if you have any questions at exam@pncb.org.

CPNP Candidates Testing with a Transcript Exception

Candidates who have met criteria for a transcript exception and pass the exam will not receive official score results until the official, final transcript is received. For unsuccessful candidates who tested under the exception of final transcript posted more than 30 days after graduation, official failing exam scores will not be released and the candidate may not retest until the final transcript is received. For unsuccessful candidates enrolled in a DNP program who were granted a transcript exception, official failing exam scores are released and the candidate may retest according to PNCB's retest policy.

Pass/Fail Score Determination

PNCB examinations are criterion referenced. This means the passing score is based on predetermined criteria. Your ability to pass the examination depends on the knowledge you display, not on the performance of other candidates.

The methodology used to set the minimum passing score is the Angoff method, applied by a representative sample group of subject matter experts in the field from across the country who also hold credential you are seeking. This panel evaluated each question on the examination to determine how many correct answers are necessary to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to pass.

How many questions do I need to get right to pass the exam?

Passing scores may vary slightly for each version of the examination. To ensure fairness to all candidates, a process of statistical equating is used. This involves the following:

1. Selecting an appropriate mix of individual questions for each version of the examination that meet the content distribution requirements of the examination content outline.
2. Obtaining an overall difficulty level (as each scored question has been pretested, a difficulty level is available); the standard setting process then considers the overall difficulty level of each test form.
3. Slight variations in difficulty level are determined, then addressed by adjusting the passing score up or down, depending on the overall difficulty level statistics for the group of scored questions that appear on a particular form of the examination application.

PNCB uses scaled scores that range from 200 (0 items correct) to 800 (all items correct) with a scaled score of 400 corresponding to the cut-point on the exam. This means that the passing score across all forms is 400. Using a **scaled score** is how a certification board may put all scores, regardless of which form the candidate takes, on the same scale, or frame of reference.

Cancellation of Scores

PNCB and Prometric are responsible for the validity and integrity of the scores they report. On occasion, occurrences, such as computer malfunction or misconduct by a candidate, may cause a score to be suspect. PNCB and Prometric reserve the right to void or withhold exam results if, upon investigation, violation of its regulations is discovered.

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PNCB Recertification Program

Upon passing the exam, you will receive important information describing requirements for maintaining your certification through the PNCB's Recertification Program. For detailed information, visit www.pncb.org.

Note on Candidate Data

PNCB shares candidate data in aggregate with third parties for research and other purposes.

Note on Policies

PNCB reserves the right to amend the procedures outlined in this handbook. Current policies are always posted at www.pncb.org.

Special Note about PMHS Testing Windows

The PMHS testing window is during the month of May or November. Please see our [website](#) for additional information.

PNCB wishes you much success on your upcoming exam!

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