

CERTIFICATION GUIDE *to the* CDMS[®] EXAMINATION



Accredited By:
The National Commission for Certifying Agencies
(NCCA)

BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR ON-LINE APPLICATION:

For the best online experience, please use the latest version of Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. Microsoft Edge is known to be incompatible with certain features of The Commission's online platform.

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SECTION 1: Certification Program

Program Overview

CDMS^{®1} certification is the gold standard in workplace solutions. Individuals working in the field of absence and disability management find that the CDMS credential distinguishes them in this dynamic and evolving field.

In addition to attesting to an individual's specific knowledge, level of competency and experience, CDMS certification promotes high professional standards and ethical practice. CDMS certification also demonstrates that disability management professionals have the business acumen necessary to practice in the field. The CDMS credential recognizes that the field of absence and disability management has a distinct focus on workplace issues, emphasizing the role of the disability manager in helping injured or ill employees stay at or return to work, restore their earning power and contribute to the company's productivity.

Each certified professional participating in the practice of disability management must abide by The Commission's [Code of Professional Conduct for Disability Management Specialists](#). In addition, certified professionals must also adhere to any other professional code of conduct to which the certificant is bound for guidance and support in evaluating and determining how to approach ethical conflicts.

Certificants shall practice only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, appropriate professional experience and other professional credentials. They shall not misrepresent their role or competence to clients.

It is not the intent of The Commission to guarantee that a specific individual is suitable for employment or to impose restrictive staffing requirements. Rather, the objective is to establish a national certification process that can be used with confidence by any interested party as an assessment of an individual's basic knowledge of voluntary and statutory disability income replacement and job protection regulations, compliance with these programs, and return to work strategies which can help protect the employees' and employers' interests.

In an effort to protect the public, a credentialing process was developed. Persons who earn the credential of Certified Disability Management Specialist (CDMS[®]) must demonstrate that they abide by The Commission's Code of Professional Conduct for Disability Management Specialists, meet acceptable standards of quality in their practice, and have the requisite education and professional background. In addition, to become certified, disability management specialists must achieve a passing score on the CDMS[®] examination.

The Commission ensures that its certification exam remains valid and relevant with current practices in the field through an in-depth "Job Task Analysis.", formerly known as the "Role and Function Study." This study is undertaken every 5 years to determine the roles, functions, knowledge and skills of disability management specialists. Additionally, new examination items are continuously created and added to the certification examination.

Initial certification is valid for 5 years. The certification can be renewed at 5-year intervals if certificants can demonstrate their ongoing professional development through re-examination or documented continuing education. This type of recertification is considered an essential part of an effective credentialing process. It is intended to help practitioners keep abreast of current trends and new technologies and to enhance critical skills. For complete details regarding recertification, please review the [Candidate Guide for Recertification](#).

The Commission does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, national origin, religion/spirituality, sexual orientation, marital status/partnership, language preference, socioeconomic status, or any basis prescribed by law.

Information submitted as part of the application, certification, and recertification processes becomes the property of The Commission and will not be released to outside parties unless authorized by the applicant/certificant or required by law. If information is released for a legal matter, The Commission will inform the individual. Individual exam results are released to the candidate but are not released to any institution or employer. For research and statistical purposes only, data resulting from the certification process may be used in an anonymous and unidentifiable manner.

The Commission provides a database listing all certificants on its website. This resource is updated periodically for the use of the public. The Commission also receives and responds to requests for information about the certification status of those holding one of its credentials.

History

With a rich history spanning more than 30 years, the CDMS offers the only independent, nationally accredited program that certifies disability management specialists. CDMS was originally established in 1984 as the Certification of Insurance Rehabilitation Specialists Commission (CIRSC) to implement recognized professional standards for rehabilitation services provided under public and private sector disability compensation systems and changed its name in 1996 to reflect the growth and development of the field and its practitioners. In 2016, the CDMS credential was acquired by The Commission which administers and governs the Certification of Disability Management Specialists Credential® (CDMS®) as its own exam and credential.

Our **purpose** is to provide certification and recertification to ensure the competence of those who provide disability management services.

Our **vision** is to serve those who contribute to the health and well-being of organizations through integrated ability management.

The **overall goal** of the CDMS is to ensure that prospective employers will be able to recruit and hire individuals who have demonstrated an acceptable level of knowledge in the field of disability management.

Overview of Disability Management

Disability management is a workplace program that seeks to reduce the impact of injury and disability and to accommodate employees who experience functional work limitations. In recent years, there has been significant growth in disability management programs as an increasing number of employers recognize the value of these services. As a direct result of their disability management practices and programs, employers have realized substantial financial savings and better vocational outcomes for employees with disabilities due to illness and injuries.

Disability management has undergone tremendous change over the past several decades. In the late 1970s and 1980s, rising disability costs became a major concern of employers, leading most states to enact workers' compensation reforms. Disability insurers also experienced significant and unexpected claim losses and were forced to re-examine their underwriting and contract provisions. This prompted employers to implement changes in the way they responded to workers with disabilities in order to reduce workers' compensation losses. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, a growing number of employers were implementing disability management programs.

Today, disability management encompasses illness and injury prevention -- early intervention to facilitate a safe and timely return to work. A disability case manager who provides services to an injured employee must be proactive and must consider the needs of the employee and the employer. Disability management needs to focus not only on a specific case, but also on its duration and impact to productivity. Other issues addressed in disability management are prevention, safety, disease management, employee wellness and health and productivity.

Many professionals in disability management hold more than one credential, and some may have licenses related to specific occupations. Those who hold additional credentials do not see them as competing but rather as complementary credentials, demonstrating expertise in more than one area.

Scope of Practice

Board-Certified Disability Management Specialists analyze, prevent and mitigate the human and economic impact of injury, illness and disability for employees and employers to optimize quality of care, productivity, organizational health and regulatory compliance.

Specific techniques and practice behaviors within disability management may include, but are not limited to:

- Disability and Work Interruption Case Management
- Workplace Intervention for Disability Prevention
- Program Development, Management and Evaluation
- Employment Leaves and Benefit Administration

Practice Characteristics

The delivery of disability management services involves a complex interplay among workers with disabilities, employers, insurance carriers, labor unions, medical service providers, government agencies, and others. A major goal of disability management is to facilitate the worker's physical recovery, rehabilitation, and return-to-work process in a safe and timely manner while, concurrently, controlling the escalating

costs of injury and disability for employers, insurance carriers and government. Within this context of competing interests, the disability management specialist must function in an objective and ethical fashion. The disability management specialist must maintain a balance between providing services and interventions that protect jobs for workers with disabilities while controlling the financial, safety, and other risks that confront employers.



SECTION 2: Certification Calendar

Examination appointments will be taken over the course of designated days in the months of March and September. The following page on The Commission's website lists the upcoming exam windows and application deadlines:

<https://yourcommission.org/certification/certified-disability-management-specialist/get-certified/certification-guide-application-cycles>



SECTION 3: Eligibility & Requirements

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

To meet the eligibility criteria for the CDMS certification exam, applicants must possess both the educational and the employment requirements as outlined below. Additionally, those applying must abide by the principles and ethical requirements of The Commission's Code of Professional Conduct for Disability Management Specialists. The following pages in this section will define the requirements for the CDMS certification exam. Please read the eligibility criteria carefully and review Section 4 which highlights "Acceptable Employment Experience" to ensure that you meet all the requirements prior to applying for the exam. If you have questions, please direct them to: contact@yourcommission.org

Education

A Bachelor's Degree in any discipline or current state licensure as a Registered Nurse. The degree must be from an institution that is fully accredited by a nationally recognized educational accreditation organization.

Employment

1. At the time of application, applicants must be able to attest that a minimum of 2080 hours within the past five years of their documented work experience aligns with at least 2 of the 4 domains/practice areas. All employment experience, within the past five years, may be considered by The Commission in determining your eligibility for certification but you do not need to enter five years' worth of employment into the application. You only need to enter as many employment entries into the application that will meet one of the above requirements. Please do NOT enter your entire work history into the application. Part-time employment experience will be pro-rated based on a 37-hour full-time work week.
2. Experience must focus on the provision of direct administrative, preventative, or case management services to individuals experiencing short or long-term

health events. This includes working with individuals who have been impacted by their ability to maintain their economic standard of living and/or are receiving wage replacement benefits from a private, local, state or federal disability wage replacement system.

3. The Commission will accept only paid employment as a valid fulfillment of the employment criteria.
4. Unpaid internship, unpaid preceptorship, unpaid practicum and unpaid volunteer activities are NOT acceptable employment experience.

Application & Fees

1. Applicants must complete the online CDMS certification application and submit it with the appropriate fees, all of which must be received by The Commission no later than the date of the application window deadline. Instructions for completing the online application may be found on the last page of this Guide. A detailed outline of all applicable fees may be found at the end of this guide.

Audit

1. All applicants for the CDMS certification exam are subject to an audit to validate education and/or licensure and work experience. For more information about application audits, please see Section 5 of this guide.

Self-Employment Verification

Self-employed applicants must complete the CDMS Self Employment Verification Form, providing information for 3 different purchasers of their service and upload the form to their online application. Please contact The Commission if you need a copy of that form.

Earned Degree Requirements

In the event that you are audited, to verify your educational background, The Commission requires an official transcript that shows the granting of your degree. A transcript will be considered official only if it bears the seal of the college or university and the signature of the school's registrar. If your degree was granted under a name other than the one that appears on your application, the institution should be asked to include your present name with the transcript.

For a degree to meet the educational requirements for certification eligibility, the granting college or university must have been accredited at the time the degree was conferred by one of the national or regional accrediting associations accredited by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

If your degree is from a foreign country, The Commission will allow individuals to submit their transcripts in addition to an evaluation report from the following source:

World Education Services (WES)/International Academic Credential Evaluation

www.wes.org
(212) 966-6311

Note: The Commission will not accept evaluations completed by other sources. The evaluation report must be sent from the source directly to The Commission postmarked by the application deadline date and must include recognition status of foreign institution, level of education completed by student, U.S. degree comparability, field of study, courses, credits or units, individual grades or overall grade average, and course content. The Commission will evaluate the courses, units, and/or degrees on a course-by-course basis.



SECTION 4: Acceptable Employment Experience

In order for your employment experience at any position to qualify as “acceptable” for CDMS certification, at least 2080 hours within the past five years must be directly associated to work in at least two of the four domains as outlined.



SECTION 5: Application Audits

The Commission randomly audits 15% of certification applications. Applications may be audited to verify employment/work hour information, and the state board of nursing may be asked to verify current licensure.

In the event that your employment experience is audited for an eligibility review, each place of employment must complete an Employment Verification Form and an official signed job description which you must include with your application packet. If an official job description is not available, or it does not accurately reflect all of your job duties, a detailed letter describing your specific job activities must be completed by your employer for submission.

Failure to provide requested documentation for an audit will result in the denial of the candidate’s application. Please note:

- Facsimiles or copies are not acceptable
- In addition to the standard 15% audit, other applications may be audited at the discretion of The Commission.



SECTION 6: Certification Examination

Examination Structure

The CDMS® certification exam is constructed to ensure that it is consistent with minimal competency requirements and criteria-referenced testing concepts. Standards for item selection include item difficulty (between .39 and .95 with a median in the .60-.70 range); a positive point biserial; and appropriate content distribution. Using an intensive written field-testing process, The Commission has developed a pool of questions that contain a comprehensive selection of statistically validated examination items. The Certification Services Committee comprised of subject matter experts in the field of absence and disability management are charged with continually adding to and upgrading this “item bank.”

The CDMS certification exam is a computer-based exam. The certification exam consists of 150 multiple-choice questions drawn from The Commission's CDMS item bank.

All candidates seeking certification must take this exam, which is based on a body of knowledge encompassing the laws, public regulations and existing delivery systems for disability services in the U.S. Each examination includes 25 field test questions that will not be used in the scoring of the examination. The examination is comprised of 4 major domains. Each domain is represented by a specific number of questions. Each question/response is referenced to the literature of disability management/laws and credit is given for each correct response based on that literature. Sample questions are included in this guide.

Examination Day Schedule

The CDMS® certification examination is a computer-based exam that is scheduled within a designated window in the months of March and September and have the option to take the exam at a testing location or by remotely proctored. Examination appointments will vary according to the examinee's individual schedule. Three and a half hours are allowed to complete the exam (with four hours total appointment time) unless accommodation is requested and approved by The Commission.

Examination Sites

Candidates will be able to choose from approximately 5,000 test administration centers in 180+ countries and territories. Because the location of test sites can change, The Commission does not maintain information regarding test sites. At the time candidates are notified of their eligibility to take the exam, they will be provided with complete instructions regarding exam scheduling and locations.

- Candidates should schedule their testing appointment as soon as possible in order to obtain a preferred location, date, and time. Extensions will not be granted due to delays in scheduling.
- Test administration centers are designed to provide standardized test administration.
- Test center personnel will guide candidates through the check-in process and will be available throughout the test administration in the event that a candidate has a question related to the administration of the exam.
- Test center personnel cannot respond to questions related to the content of the examination.
- You will be required to present one form of original (no photocopies), valid (unexpired) government issued ID that includes your name, photograph, and signature. The first and last name that you used to register must match exactly the first and last name on the ID that is presented on test day. All IDs required must be issued by the country in which you are testing. If you do not have the qualifying ID issued from the country you are testing in, an International Travel Passport from your country of citizenship is required. If you have any questions or concerns about the ID you are required to bring with you to the testing center for admittance for your exam please contact Pearson customer service at <https://home.pearsonvue.com/Test-takers/Custom-service.aspx>. To view the full ID policy, including any

additional allowances to this policy, please visit

<http://www.pearsonvue.com/policies/1.pdf>.

- Candidates with invalid or insufficient identification will also be subject to a re-test fee.
- Upon admission, the testing center will take a photo of each candidate.
- All personal belongings will need to be placed in a locker available at the test center.
- Books, paper and other resources are not allowed.
- Test center personnel will provide a whiteboard that must be turned in at the end of the exam. No food or drink may be taken into the testing room.
- Candidates who attempt to violate exam security in any way will be dismissed from the test center and may forfeit their right to seek certification.

Examination Medium

The CDMS® certification examination has been validated in a multiple-choice format; therefore, alternative versions of the exam can be provided only in that format.

However, various accommodations may be provided by The Commission™ to afford access to the exam for individuals with disabilities who qualify for accommodations.

Examination Accommodations

The Commission is committed to the fair administration of its certification examinations. In addition to providing smoke-free, fully accessible examination sites, The Commission's commitment includes provisions for candidates who need assistance due to functional limitations.

The Commission and Pearson make every effort to reasonably accommodate candidates with documented special accommodations needs, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. If a candidate requires special accommodation, they must indicate this need on the application. The candidate will be asked to provide medical documentation and attach it to their online application.

Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- An inhaler
- A magnifying glass
- Medication
- Special requirements for taking the exam
- A separate room
- Extra time to take the exam

Special consideration may be given to applicants who can document a bona-fide disability as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) and who have had a relevant history of accommodations, where such accommodations were possible. Reasonable accommodations, as provided by The Commission, must be consistent with established practices and research regarding fairness and equity in testing in order to protect the integrity of the examination process.

The ADAAA retains the American with Disabilities Act's (ADA) basic definition of "disability" with respect to an individual as:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual
- A record of having such an impairment

- Being regarded as having such an impairment (ADA, 1990, Section 12102)

The following guidelines are for candidates requiring examination accommodation:

- Notification of a candidate's need for exam accommodation must be made at the time of application.
- The candidate must provide a letter that describes the type of disability and gives a detailed description of the accommodation being requested. In addition, the candidate must provide a letter on official letterhead from a physician or other licensed specialist that documents the diagnosis, treatment provided, and last date of treatment. The letter must also explain the need for the requested accommodation and included in their online application.
- A detailed statement must be sent to The Commission regarding past exam accommodation and, if none were provided, explaining why the requested accommodations are currently needed.
- If additional time is being requested, the precise amount needed must be specified and the letter from the physician or other healthcare professional must also indicate the time needed as well as the diagnostic basis for the request.
- All documentation/information provided must be current and at the time of application not more than 90 days (3 months) old.

Late Arrival or Failure to Show

It is recommended that candidates arrive fifteen minutes prior to their scheduled appointment time. Candidates who arrive late and cannot be seated, or do not show for a scheduled appointment are subject to payment of the full examination fee, should they apply for the next window.

Request For Withdraw

If you wish to withdraw and receive a refund, you need to make an official request in writing to contact@yourcommission.org no later than the last 10 days of the exam window for which you were initially approved and our certification specialists will help you.

Rescheduling and Deferrals

Candidates who are unable to take a scheduled exam for any reason are permitted only one reschedule/deferral to the next exam window. Please note acceptable timeframes, conditions and additional fees that apply to rescheduling and deferring.

- a. Candidates who wish to defer their exam appointment to the next available exam window will be subject to pay a \$85 deferment fee in addition to the cancellation fee.
- b. Candidates who cancel their appointment less than 48 hours prior to their examination date, arrive late to their appointment, are not seated due to invalid identification, or who do not appear for their appointment may reschedule but will be considered a no-show and subject to pay the full application and exam fee of \$430.
- c. Regardless of reason, candidates who are unable to sit for the second scheduled exam will not be issued a refund. Candidates who wish to continue to pursue certification will be required to submit a new application packet, together with the certification fee, to continue their pursuit of the CDMS

credential. Such reapplications will be subject to all criteria in effect at the time of reapplication.

Reschedule/Cancellation Policy

If it is less than 48 hours, you will not be allowed to cancel or reschedule your exam unless any of the following four situations have occurred:

1. Jury Duty
2. Death in immediate family
3. Military Deployment
4. Sickness

If you experience any of the above, you **MUST** cancel your appointment with Pearson before rescheduling.

****If none of the above are the reason for needing to reschedule or cancel your exam less 48 hours prior to your scheduled exam date, then you will not be allowed to reschedule or cancel your exam and if you do not show up, you will be considered a "no show", your examination fees will be forfeited, and you will be required to re-register and pay all fees prior to sitting for the exam****

Retake Exam

For those that did not pass, the exam results will include the performance for each domain (proficient, marginal, or deficient). Candidate domain-level information has limitations and is provided for information purposes only.

Candidates who do not achieve a passing score on the CDMS® certification exam are allowed to re-take the exam once during the next subsequent testing window. Candidates will be required to notify The Commission™ of their intention to take the test again and will also be required to remit a \$195 retake fee. Candidates who do not achieve a passing score on their second attempt and who wish to continue to pursue certification will be required to submit a new application and full certification exam fee of \$430 in order to continue their pursuit of the CDMS credential. Such reapplications will be subject to all criteria in effect at the time of reapplication.

The Commission offers two exam cycles annually which means candidates must wait in between cycles to limit knowledge recall. Changing the exam form for each window or requiring the candidate to test on a different exam form in the next window also limits exposure.



SECTION 7: Examination Content

Knowledge Domains and Subdomains

Domain 1: Disability and Work Interruption Case Management	36%
A. Perform comprehensive individual case analyses with consideration to applicable benefits	
1. The impact of illnesses and injuries to functional capacity	
2. The impact of mental health conditions as they relate to functional capacity	
3. The impact of comorbid conditions to functional capacity	
B. Analyze products, services, and strategies to ensure quality care, recovery, cost effectiveness, and to maximize return on investment	
C. Utilize effective communication strategies to facilitate collaboration among stakeholders (e.g., conflict resolution, negotiation, active and reflective listening)	
D. Demonstrate cultural competence in stakeholder interactions	
E. Conduct worksite/job analyses	
1. Follow best practices for acquiring, measuring, and documenting findings	
2. Knowledge of essential functions, tools, trainings, qualifications, modifications, accommodations	
F. Develop individualized worker Return-to-Work programs (e.g. stay-at-work, return-to-work, transitional work, leave of absence, employability, retraining)	
G. Leverage benefits, services, and community resources to facilitate optimal functioning (e.g., treating physician, independent clinical evaluations, expert medical opinion)	
H. Assess case progress and facilitate change throughout the continuum of care	
I. Disseminate and manage information in compliance with standard practice and regulations	
1. Case documentation best practices (e.g., case notes, status reports, record release)	
2. Privacy and confidentiality requirements (e.g., HIPAA, informed consent, release)	
Domain 2: Workplace Interventions	27%
A. Demonstrate compliance with local, state, and federal regulations (e.g., OSHA, ADAAA)	
B. Facilitate an interactive process that enables individuals functioning in the workplace (e.g., vocational rehabilitation, transitional employment, reasonable accommodation)	
C. Recommend individual and workplace strategies to address ergonomic, safety, and accessibility needs	
D. Leverage education and health-and-wellness resources to support individuals, organizations, and their communities	
E. Incorporate health risk factors and prevention strategies to reduce and prevent loss	
Domain 3: Program Development, Management, and Evaluation	18%
A. Assess organizational needs and incorporate best practices to establish disability management program goals	
B. Advocate for change in organizational behavior/culture to support disability management program goals	
C. Participate in the design, implementation, and evaluation of a sustainable disability management program in collaboration with stakeholders	

D. Provide education and training consistent with disability management program goals and compliance
E. Evaluate disability management program effectiveness and support improvement to determine performance metrics (e.g., trends, return on investment)
F. Integrate internal and external services/partners (e.g., third party vendors) to align with disability management program goals
G. Evaluate and utilize relevant technology to influence disability management
H. Recognize the strategies that support an inclusive and diverse workforce (e.g., employee resource groups, cultural sensitivity training)
I. Recognize the benefit plans and other services that optimize the health and productivity of individuals
Domain 4: Employment Leaves and Benefits Administration 19%
A. Identify elements of employer leave and benefit plans and how they relate to local, state, and federal regulations
1. Income protection plans (e.g., Short and long term disability, Workers' comp, Pa
2. Job protection plans (e.g., FMLA, Military leave)
3. Healthcare benefit continuation plans (e.g., COBRA)
4. Contractual employment and collective bargaining agreements
B. Identify how the relationship between employment leaves and work interruptions influences individual or organizational productivity
C. Communicate essential elements of benefits and employment policies to workers, managers, and other stakeholders



SECTION 8: Sample Examination Questions

The following questions are provided to give an idea of what examination questions could look like:

1. Transferable skills analysis is most effective for a disability management specialist to identify jobs that demonstrate:
 - A. unskilled and semi-skilled tasks requiring little or no training.
 - B. the worker's rehabilitation potential.
 - C. existing openings that include on-the-job training.
 - D. the same or lesser degree of skill required, compared to past work.

2. In advising employers regarding prevention of workplace violence, a key area that the disability manager should recommend for reviewing is:
 - A. employee lounge accommodations.
 - B. availability of dangerous tools.
 - C. psychological evaluation.
 - D. security procedures.

3. The most reliable predictor of the employment outcome for a worker who has sustained a closed head injury is:
 - A. financial report.
 - B. the length of time in coma.
 - C. the location of the brain lesion.

4. Federal legislation that mandates the extension of health insurance for workers who have a pre-existing medical condition is:
 - A. Health Maintenance Organization Act of 1973 (HMOA).
 - B. Employee Retirement and Income Security Act (ERISA).
 - C. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

5. Costs of retraining employees due to industrial injuries are:
 - A. fixed costs.
 - B. direct costs.
 - C. indirect costs.
 - D. variable costs

6. Outcome-based payment systems may encourage disability management specialists to sacrifice:
 - A. quick payment.
 - B. time efficiency.
 - C. high quality job matches.
 - D. maximum medical improvement.

7. Long-term disability (LTD) coverage provides benefits to replace income lost due to occupational or non-occupational disabilities. During the initial coverage period, claimants are eligible for benefits provided they are:
 - A. eligible for workers' compensation partial disability benefits.
 - B. unable to perform any type of work.
 - C. eligible for Social Security partial disability benefits.
 - D. unable to work at their previous occupation.

8. To be eligible for Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) benefits, a disability must prevent the performance of substantial gainful activity and have lasted or be expected to last:
 - A. 6 months.
 - B. 12 months.
 - C. 18 months.
 - D. 24 months.

Correct responses are 1-D, 2-D, 3-B, 4-C, 5-C, 6-C, 7-D, 8-B



SECTION 9: Examination Scoring, Results,

Certificates, Inquiries and Test Score Review

Examination Scoring

The Commission® selects a panel of subject matter experts to participate in its standard setting workshop. This panel arrives at a recommended passing score for the examination using a method called the modified Angoff approach. In this method, each expert considers examination questions individually and makes a judgment about the probability that a minimally competent candidate would answer the questions correctly. The overall passing scores were then computed as the average of the predicted probabilities for all individual questions. This panel then recommends the passing score for the examination to The Commission, who sets the passing score. The passing score represents the minimum level of knowledge that must be demonstrated to pass the examination.

Because of the need for security, multiple forms of the examination (each containing a different combination of questions) are used. The passing scores cannot be set as specific raw scores or numbers of questions answered correctly because some of the test forms may be slightly easier or more difficult than others. Requiring the same raw scores to pass all the different forms, therefore, would not be fair. A statistical procedure called equating is used to adjust for any differences in levels of difficulty among examination forms. Once the examination forms have been equated, a procedure called scaling is used to convert the actual number of correct answers, or raw scores, to a uniform scale. These converted scores are called scaled scores. Scaled scores ensure that all examinees demonstrate the same level of ability in order to pass the examination.

The Commission disapproves of using test results for any purpose other than the use for which the examination is developed and conducted. This includes using test results for internship or employment selection. In addition, test results may not be used to compare educational programs. Certification tests are mastery tests not achievement or selection instruments.

Scoring Model

Each individual who takes the CDMS® exam is provided an immediate pass/fail notification, which displays on the computer screen, and is available to print before the candidate leaves the testing center. This score is considered 99% accurate and is your immediate pass/no pass result. Those individuals who pass the exam will be asked to wait until receiving their official certificate via mail before using the CDMS credential. Please read carefully the Exam Application Schedule and Notification Timeline posted on The Commission's website to know when to expect certificate and pin by mail. Any questions can be directed to The Commission Certification Coordinators at 856-380-6836 or contact@yourcommission.org

Examination Profiles

Candidates should check their application on their account at <https://yourcommission.org> for the final pass/not-pass notification based on the

Exam Application Schedule and Notification Timeline posted are on The Commission's® website. Please read this carefully to know when to expect notification about CDMS® exam results. Only those candidates who did not pass will receive a profile via email showing their performance in each content area and on the examination as a whole. The profile will indicate that the candidate was either proficient, marginal or deficient by domain. This profile is confidential. Individual score reports are not released to any institution or employer and are not provided over the phone.

Examination Inquiries

Candidates who feel an error or omission occurred during the examination process or those who question any aspect of the examination procedure may address an inquiry to The Commission Certification Coordinators. If a candidate feels an error or omission occurred during the examination process it will be reviewed by staff and, if necessary, referred to the Certification Services Committee for consideration. Failure by a candidate to achieve a passing score on the certification examination cannot be appealed.

Certificates

A certificate and lapel pin will be sent to each candidate who passed the CDMS examination. This certificate is the official proof of certification and candidates are entitled to begin using the designation "CDMS" after their names as soon as they receive the examination profile that reports the achievement of a passing score. Certificates are mailed from a third party, The Award Group. An email will be sent to certificants to order a complimentary certificate, with the option to order additional copies and frames to display the certificate. Please be sure to monitor email, including spam folders for an email from The Commission (contact@yourcommission.org). Add this email to your email address book to best ensure receipt.

The Commission will not be responsible for issuing replacement certificates that have not been requested within three months from the time the original should have been received, based on the Exam Application Schedule and Notification Timeline posted on The Commission's website. Please read this carefully so you know when to expect your email to order your certificate. Duplicate or replacement certificates can be requested from The Commission Certification Coordinators at 856-380-6836 or contact@yourcommission.org. The information will then be sent to a third party to process. There is a fee for this service.



SECTION 10: Use of the CDMS® Credential

Use of the CDMS® credential is strictly limited to those individuals who:

- Have met all the criteria for the credential, have taken the certification examination, achieved a passing score and have been officially notified by The Commission to obtain their results on their CDMS dashboard
- Have subsequently maintained their certification status as required under the CDMS recertification requirements.

Individuals using the CDMS credential, or otherwise represent themselves as being certified without first having fulfilled these requirements, will be deemed to be in violation of The Commission's Code of Professional Conduct for Disability Management Specialists and may be denied the right of certification. Such individuals may also be subject to legal action.



SECTION 11: Denial of Eligibility

Candidates who are denied eligibility will have the opportunity to appeal that decision. The denial reason will be listed in your application. Requests can be made through "My Account" or by contacting The Commission Certification Coordinators at 856-380-6836 or contact@yourcommission.org. Candidates have 30 days from the date the eligibility denial is posted to contest a denial. Denial of eligibility will be upheld for any candidate who does not appeal the denial within the 30-day period.

Candidates who contest their eligibility decision within the 30-day period may be required to provide additional information about themselves, their work history and experience, their licensure or certification and/or documentation of any legal or regulatory issues that may have caused their applications to be denied.

The Commission Certification Coordinators will gather all necessary information and conduct an escalated review of the application. If necessary, a review panel will be convened to provide a final decision. The appeal process can take up to four months from the deadline to complete, depending upon the levels of review required.

Candidates whose initial denials are overturned will be notified by email within one week of decision. Instructions for how to register for the exam will be emailed to the candidate. Candidates whose denials are upheld will be notified by email within one week of decision. Individuals are welcome to reapply at such time that eligibility criteria can be met.

Candidates whose applications are initially denied and who choose to reapply will be subject to eligibility criteria and will be required to pay application and examination fees in place at the time of re-application. Candidates who are denied eligibility to sit for the CDMS examination will receive a refund of the examination fee once the examination period has ended. **THE APPLICATION FEE IS NONREFUNDABLE.**



SECTION 12: Certification Revocation

The following shall constitute grounds for immediate revocation of an individual's CDMS® certification:

- Falsification of information or providing misleading or inaccurate information on the application
- Failure to maintain eligibility once certified
- Failure to pay required fees
- Misrepresentation of CDMS certification status
- Cheating on the certification exam

- Violations of The Commission’s Code of Professional Conduct for Disability Management Specialists

Furthermore, if an individual’s CDMS certification is revoked or suspended, notice of this action may be provided to other appropriate agencies.



SECTION 13: Recertification

Initial certification as a CDMS is valid for 5 years. The Commission believes that all CDMS certificants should continue to expand their skills in order to enhance the quality of the services that they provide. Recertification may be achieved by acquiring 80 clock hours (including a minimum of 4 hours in the area of ethics) of continuing education every 5 five years or by re-taking and achieving a passing score on the certification examination every 5 years.

Those individuals who do not recertify are officially notified that they may no longer use the CDMS credential nor represent themselves to the profession or the public as being certified. Likewise, they may not exercise any rights and privileges ascribed to a credential holder. A certification renewal reminder will be emailed prior to the expiration date of the current certification.

The Commission requires all certification holders to keep the office advised in writing, either through email or The Commission’s website, of any changes in their name or email address to ensure prompt receipt of such notifications. To make updates to your contact information, click on ‘update my profile’ located on the top right of the page. You will have the option to ‘Edit’ your information. Once complete, hit ‘Save’ after you modify. The Commission will make every reasonable effort to send recertification reminders to credential holders. However, it is the individual’s responsibility to re- certify at the appropriate time.



SECTION 14: FEES

***All fees are non-refundable and subject to change**

Certification Exam Fees

Application Fee	\$235
Exam Fee	\$195

Related Fees

Retake Fee	\$195
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- Candidates who fail the examination on their first attempt and schedule to take the exam a second time during the next subsequent testing dates.

Deferment Fee	\$85
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- Candidates who wish to defer the examination to the next testing dates.

No Shows, Late Arrivals, Insufficient Documentation & Unexcused \$430

- Any applicant who was not seated for a scheduled appointment due to invalid identification, late arrival or who did not appear for their appointment will be required to complete the application process again and pay the full exam fee if they wish to reschedule

Pearson Fees

You may schedule your exam appointment directly on the Pearson Web site. Alternatively, you may call the Pearson Contact Center to have an agent assist you with scheduling for a \$10.00 USD fee payable by credit card.

Certificate Reprint/Replacement

\$25

Note: Applicants are asked to pay particular attention to the deadlines that occur during the application process. If an applicant or candidate does not meet schedules/deadlines for requested information, The Commission may assess a late documentation fee to cover its additional processing costs.

Are You a U.S. Veteran or Dependent?

Veterans, reservists and their dependents who are disability management specialists are eligible for education reimbursement under the GI bill for the CDMS exam. Certification is an investment in your career. Because the knowledge and skills demonstrated through certification are valuable to employers, it's also an investment they're willing to make on your behalf. For more information, contact us at 856-380-6836 or email contact@yourcommission.org.



SECTION 15: Completing Your Application

Special Notes

- Prior to completing the application, be sure that you meet all educational and employment requirements.
- All educational and employment requirements must be fully satisfied by the application deadline date.
- Before completing the employment section of the application, read the definition of "Acceptable Employment Experience" (Section 4) very carefully.
The Commission will not extract information from a resume.
- If you require exam accommodations, you must indicate this on your application. Once the application has been submitted, you will receive an accommodations form with instructions on how to complete.

Application Instructions

Use the following instructions to verify that you have included all necessary documents in your application prior to submitting it to The Commission™. Your application will not be processed unless it is complete. Incomplete applications may cause you to miss your targeted test cycle.

1. Visit <https://yourcommission.org>
2. Click "Log in" at the top of the page

3. Follow the instructions to create a new log-in and password or log-in if you already have an account with The Commission.
4. Once you are logged in, choose “Apply for the CDMS® exam”
5. Once the application is complete, please hit “Submit and Pay”.
6. Enter credit card information.

You will receive an automatic notification stating that your application has been received. In the event that you are audited, you will be informed and will need to submit the appropriate information.

Please allow up to 2 weeks for The Commission to review your application and send you the scheduling instructions.

QUESTIONS?

All questions related to the CDMS certification program and application process may be directed to The Commission’s Certification Coordinators at contact@yourcommission.org or 856.380.6836.



Certification & development of client advocacy
professionals for a future-ready workforce

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT US:

The Commission
1120 Route 73, Suite 200
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054
856.380.6836
contact@yourcommission.org