

### **Overview**

To maintain their certification, NCCPA board-certified PAs must pass an assessment of their core medical knowledge and clinical skills before the end of the ten-year certification maintenance process. Board-certified PAs may recertify by passing the Physician Assistant National Recertifying Examination (PANRE) within four attempts during the last two years of their certification maintenance cycle or they may choose the Physician Assistant National Recertifying Examination Longitudinal Assessment (PANRE-LA) for their recertification assessment.

PANRE-LA is a longitudinal assessment that requires PAs to apply in Year 6 of their ten-year certification maintenance cycle and to participate in at least eight assessment quarters over Years 7, 8, and 9 of their certification maintenance cycle. PAs may participate in up to twelve assessment quarters during that period. Scoring for pass/fail decisions will begin after PAs participate in eight quarters, and only the highest scoring eight quarters will be counted. PAs will be exited from the PANRE-LA when they reach a passing score or at the end of the twelve quarter assessment period. At least one assessment quarter must be taken in each of Year 7 and Year 8. PAs enrolled in PANRE-LA who have not passed PANRE-LA by the end of Year 9 must take and pass PANRE by the end of Year 10 in order to recertify.

In its sole discretion, NCCPA may pause PANRE-LA administrations for any assessment quarters or develop modified timelines for PANRE-LA activities; in that event, NCCPA will publish the changes and will provide notification to PAs participating in the PANRE-LA program.

### **Eligibility**

- Only PAs holding current board certification from NCCPA are eligible to participate in PANRE-LA. PAs seeking initial board certification must pass PANCE. PAs whose board certification has expired or whose eligibility for board certification has been reestablished following revocation of their NCCPA board certification must pass PANRE to regain certification.
- Beginning in 2022, board-certified PAs whose certification cycle expires in 2026 or thereafter are eligible to apply for the PANRE-LA in Year 6 of their certification maintenance cycle for the PANRE–LA exam that will launch in January of Year 7 of their cycle.
- NCCPA will not waive eligibility requirements, and eligibility requirements are not subject to NCCPA's Exception to Policy procedures, except for testing accommodations required under the ADA for PAs seeking to regain NCCPA board certification. It is the responsibility of the PA who is applying for PANRE-LA to read and meet the eligibility requirements.
- If NCCPA determines that an ineligible individual is registered for PANRE-LA, took one or more assessment quarters, or earned recertification through passing PANRE-LA, the application and any examination results will be voided, and the examination results and recertification, as applicable, will not be reported, or if previously reported, will be rescinded.
- PAs may only be registered for one NCCPA recertification exam at any given time (i.e., PAs with current board certification who participate in PANRE-LA may only register for PANRE if they withdraw or are withdrawn from PANRE-LA or complete their PANRE-LA assessment quarters without achieving a

passing score).

- To maintain eligibility for participating in the PANRE-LA, PAs must fulfill all certification maintenance requirements (e.g., earning and logging CME credits and submitting the certification maintenance fee) and any outstanding audit requirements by the specified deadlines and comply with the participation requirements for the PANRE-LA program.
- PAs who meet the eligibility, certification maintenance, audit, and participation requirements are eligible to continue in the PANRE-LA program until the end of Year 9 or until the PA has achieved a passing score, whichever comes first.
- PAs who have fulfilled all other certification maintenance requirements but have not met their recertification exam requirement by passing the PANRE-LA by the end of Year 9 will have up to three attempts to take and pass PANRE in Year 10 of their certification maintenance cycle.
- PAs who voluntarily withdraw or are administratively withdrawn from the PANRE-LA program must recertify by passing PANRE. They are eligible to apply for PANRE to meet their recertification exam requirement in Year 9 or Year 10 of their certification maintenance cycle, as long as they have maintained board certification. These PAs will have a total of up to three attempts to take and pass PANRE in Years 9 and 10 of their certification maintenance cycle, if they participated in at least one assessment quarter of PANRE-LA. PAs who, despite registering for PANRE-LA, never accessed any of the PANRE-LA exam content may have up to four PANRE attempts. PAs will be informed of their specific situation at the time of their withdrawal.
- PAs must provide a valid and current email address for receiving NCCPA communications related to the administration of the PANRE-LA program and must promptly notify NCCPA of any change in their preferred email address.
- As with all of its activities, NCCPA evaluates applications for participation in PANRE-LA without regard to age, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital status or disability and fully complies with non-discrimination laws and its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **Application Period**

- PAs due to recertify in 2026 or later must apply for the PANRE-LA program in Year 6 of their certification maintenance cycle, with the assessment quarters becoming available in January of Year 7.
- The application period opens in early July and extends through the final day of testing in the calendar year, with the PANRE-LA administration beginning the following January. The specific dates for each year's application period are provided on NCCPA's website. PAs who miss the application deadline due to extenuating circumstances may be able to request consideration of an exception to policy, as specified in the Exceptions to Policy section. If NCCPA grants an Exception to Policy request to permit late access to register for the PANRE-LA exam, the PA must accept that the PA will have fewer than twelve assessment quarters available to PA, due to the PA's late application.
- All examination application related materials and payment must be submitted in order for the application to be deemed complete and to allow the individual to begin the examination.

### **Testing Accommodations**

- NCCPA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In administering the PANRE-LA, NCCPA will provide necessary testing accommodations for examinees with properly documented disabilities covered by the ADA, in accordance with legal requirements. Accommodations may also be

approved for examinees with documented qualifying medical conditions that may be temporary or are not otherwise covered by the ADA. Available accommodations may include increasing the response time allocated for each question or, to the extent supported by the exam delivery platform, format changes in the delivery of the assessment questions.

- Accommodations are provided on an individual basis and depend on the nature of the disability or medical condition. NCCPA will make reasonable efforts to provide the requested accommodations provided the functional impairment has been demonstrated through documentation, the accommodations do not fundamentally alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge the examination is intended to test, do not jeopardize examination integrity or security, and do not result in an undue burden to NCCPA.
- The decision as to which testing accommodation(s) will be provided will be made at the sole discretion of NCCPA, consistent with legal requirements.
- PAs requesting testing accommodations must indicate that accommodations are needed when they apply for the PANRE-LA and identify the accommodation(s) that are needed.
- PAs should submit appropriate and sufficient documentation with their application or as soon as possible thereafter, or, for PAs who experience a new impairment during the course of participation in the PANRE-LA program or did not request accommodations for an existing one in their original application, as soon as practicable after the PA learns of the need for accommodation. If the request is approved, the accommodation(s) will be implemented with the next available quarter of PANRE-LA administration. Information on accommodations and the required documentation is available on the [NCCPA website](#).
- Requests for testing accommodations will not be granted by NCCPA until complete documentation has been received, and a request for accommodation may be denied based on insufficient documentation or if the submitted documentation does not adequately support the requested accommodation. Unless the PA has also been granted an [Exception to Policy](#) with respect to the application deadline for PANRE-LA, all required documentation submitted in connection with an application to participate in PANRE-LA must be received by NCCPA within 10 calendar days after the application deadline to allow time for the accommodation requests to be reviewed and approved prior to the January launch of exam questions.

### **Participation in the PANRE-LA Program**

- The PANRE-LA program is administered over a total of twelve quarters, beginning in Year 7 of the PA's certification maintenance cycle. PAs will be scored on eight assessment quarters by the end of the third year of the administration. In each quarter, PAs will have approximately ten weeks to access and complete the 25 exam questions. Each question will have a five-minute time limit. If a PA has selected a response but does not submit the response prior to the end of the time for the question, the selected response will be recorded for scoring purposes as if it had been submitted.
- **PAs must take the examination in a location and manner in which no other individual may view the test items in the examination and must not disclose or consult with any other individual about the content of test items viewed by the PA.**
- PAs participating in the PANRE-LA program are required to participate in at least one quarter in the first year of their administration window (Year 7 of their certification cycle) and at least one quarter in the second year of their administration window. Participation in an assessment quarter is defined by NCCPA as opening or accessing at least one exam question in the quarter. PAs who do not meet these

minimal participation requirements will be withdrawn from the PANRE-LA program and will forfeit the fees submitted with their application.

- In addition to submitting responses to the test questions, PAs will be required to respond to unscored feedback questions that gather information that will be used to help evaluate exam content and customize the exam experience.
- Other than the mandatory one quarter of participation in the first and second years of their exam administration window, PAs in the PANRE-LA program may choose the quarters in which they participate. Although the participation requirements allow PAs flexibility for participating in the PANRE-LA, PAs are encouraged to participate in as many quarters as possible during their three-year exam administration window, until a passing decision has been made. PAs who participate in all or most of the available quarters in the first and second years of administration and score well may achieve a passing score before the end of the third year of administration. Participation in the early assessment quarters also provides an opportunity for PAs to later sit out one or more quarters if they experience challenging life situations. In addition, front-loading participation in assessment quarters allows PAs who have scored lower than the passing standard to improve their scores through participating in more than eight assessment quarters.
- If a PA meets participation requirements in Year 7 and Year 8 of their certification cycle but does not participate in eight quarters by the end of Year 9, for scoring purposes, if the PA did not complete eight quarters, final scoring will be based on eight quarters of test questions regardless of the number of quarters the PA completed. The questions in each skipped quarter will be scored as incorrect when tabulating the PA's final score.
- PAs are permitted to consult reference materials when taking the exam. However, PAs participating in the PANRE-LA are prohibited from discussing the content of the exam questions with others, including for purposes of obtaining an answer, to get help with an answer or have others answer the questions for them, or to assist another PA who is taking or plans to take the PANRE-LA exam. PAs are also prohibited from disclosing, distributing, or sharing the exam content with others, whether while taking the exam or at any other time. A breach of this policy may be considered irregular behavior under [NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for PA Disciplinary Matters](#) and a violation of [NCCPA's Code of Conduct](#), with serious consequences.
- Due to the widespread incorporation of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) or Large Language Models (LLM) in digital technology, PAs are prohibited from entering PANRE-LA content (i.e., intact test items, answer options, rationales, or substantial portions of the same) into websites, search engines or search bars, or AI chatbots during or after testing. Doing so would compromise the security of the test items and is therefore subject to disciplinary action as described in [NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters](#). PAs may enter discrete keywords into searches.
- The timing for the opening and closing of the exam quarters is established by NCCPA and cannot be adjusted based on requests from PAs participating in the PANRE-LA.
- PAs are not permitted to complete multiple quarters of exam questions in a single quarter.
- While enrolled in the PANRE-LA process, PAs will have access to the exam questions, responses, and rationales for the exam questions that the PA accessed in the current and previous quarters. PAs will not have access to any of the exam materials for questions they skipped and did not open in any of the previous or the current quarter.
- NCCPA does not consider exam grievances for PANRE-LA because of the flexible timing for attempting the PANRE-LA questions, the option for PAs to take more than 8 quarters of PANRE-LA, and the PA's

control over where and when the PA attempts PANRE-LA questions. It is solely the responsibility of PAs participating in the PANRE-LA to ensure they have access to a functioning device with the minimum system requirements and internet connectivity when accessing and responding to the assessment questions.

- PAs are advised not to wait until the final day of a quarter to respond to assessment questions so they can address, before the expiration of the quarter, any computer or connectivity problems they may experience, or so that other unanticipated disruptions do not prevent them from participating in the examination during that quarter.

### **Continuing Medical Education and Certification Maintenance**

- PAs must fulfill all certification maintenance requirements by the specified deadlines, including earning and logging Continuing Medical Education credits, satisfying audit requirements, and paying the requisite fees, in order to be eligible to apply for the PANRE-LA program and/or to continue in the program after it launches.
- PAs who have not completed their certification maintenance requirements by December 31 of the year in which the requirements are due will continue to be enrolled in the PANRE-LA exam program during the Administrative Certification Extension (ACE) period of January 1 – January 31 in the year after requirements were due and can access the exam once they satisfy the ACE requirements. PAs who fail to satisfy their second audit requirements are not eligible for the ACE period. PAs who do not complete their requirements by the end of the ACE period will be withdrawn from the PANRE-LA program and will no longer have access to the exam content or information about exam performance, effective February 1 (i.e., the day after the expiration of the ACE period), unless they have been granted an extended timeframe based on an approved exception to policy for extenuating circumstances. The PA's NCCPA board certification will expire due to failure to meet the certification maintenance requirements, and these PAs will need to apply to regain board certification and must take and pass PANRE in order to regain board certification.
- The American Academy of PAs (AAPA) has approved the PANRE-LA as a Category 1 Self-Assessment CME activity, and PAs will be awarded 2 Self-Assessment Category 1 CME credits for each quarter in which they access all 25 exam questions. NCCPA will adjust the credit awarded using a 50% bonus for activities approved for Category 1 Self-Assessment CME credits. However, PAs should keep in mind that this additional credit is only applicable to meet NCCPA's CME requirements. State licensing boards may have independent CME requirements.

### **Loss of Eligibility or Voluntary Withdrawal**

- PAs who do not fulfill all eligibility and participation requirements as specified in the Eligibility and Participation sections will be disqualified from continued participation in the PANRE-LA program and will be withdrawn from the program. PAs who do not participate in at least one assessment quarter in the first and the second years of their exam administration window will be withdrawn from the program, unless granted an exception to policy.
- PAs who are participating in PANRE-LA and whose board certification and/or eligibility for board certification is revoked following disciplinary review will be withdrawn from participation in the PANRE-LA program.
- PAs may request to be voluntarily withdrawn from the PANRE-LA program at any point during their exam administration window. If the request is received by NCCPA prior to the closing of the first

quarter of exam questions and no exam questions have been accessed, the PA will be eligible for a refund of the fees submitted, as described in the Financial section. PAs who request voluntary withdrawal from PANRE-LA after the close of the first assessment quarter will not receive a refund of fees, even if the PA has not yet accessed exam questions in any assessment quarter.

- The PANRE-LA administration will not count as a recertification exam attempt if the PA is withdrawn prior to the launch of the first quarter of their exam administration window or if the PA has not opened or accessed any of the exam questions in any quarter. PAs in this situation may maintain up to four attempts for PANRE, depending on the timing of the withdrawal.
- PAs who lose eligibility to participate in the PANRE-LA program or who voluntarily withdraw after accessing any portion of the exam but prior to participating in eight assessment quarters will not receive a pass/fail result. However, participation in PANRE-LA will count as one recertification attempt, and the PA may have up to three available PANRE attempts.
- PAs who are withdrawn from the PANRE-LA program prior to participating in eight assessment quarters for any reason will immediately lose access to the exam content, exam dashboard, performance data, and any other information related to the administration of any of the PANRE-LA exam questions.
- PAs who have participated in eight or more assessment quarters and choose not to complete additional quarters will receive a pass/fail result based on their eight highest-scoring quarters; their non-participation in further quarters will not be treated as withdrawal from the program.

## **Financial**

- A \$350 application fee must be paid when PAs apply for the PANRE-LA. NCCPA requires all fees to be paid online in U.S. funds through their NCCPA account. Until complete payment has been received by NCCPA, the application will not be processed, and the PA will not be able to participate in the PANRE-LA program. NCCPA's acceptance of payment does not imply exam eligibility.
- No application will receive final approval until payment for all current, outstanding, and past due fees owed by the PA to NCCPA has been received by NCCPA. Any additional fees incurred between the time the application is processed and the time the PA's score becomes available must be paid before NCCPA releases exam results.
- Approved refunds will be issued directly to the party who paid the exam fee.
- PAs who submit a written request to withdraw from the PANRE-LA or lose eligibility prior to the closing of the first quarter and who have not accessed any exam questions will receive a full \$350 refund. Written requests must be sent to [ExamAdmin@nccpa.net](mailto:ExamAdmin@nccpa.net).
- No refunds will be issued after the closing of the first quarter of the PANRE-LA administration unless the PA has filed a request for an [Exception to Policy](#) that has been approved.
- No refunds will be issued after the end of the PA's three-year PANRE-LA exam administration window.
- NCCPA will assess a \$35 service charge for all declined credit cards and credit card charge backs. The PA's application will not receive final approval until all fees are successfully submitted.
- NCCPA will assess a \$50 charge to issue a replacement certificate due to a name change, loss, change of address, or other factors beyond NCCPA's control.

## **PANRE-LA Exceptions to Policy (ETPs)**

- Requests for exceptions to PANRE-LA policies are governed by those included in this document and the applicable [NCCPA's Policies Governing the Consideration of Requests for Exceptions to Policy](#). Decisions on any requests for [exceptions to policy](#) are at the sole discretion of NCCPA. [NCCPA's Exception to Policy Procedures](#) apply to any requests under this policy.
- *Requests for application deadline extensions received between the close of the application period of Year 6 and April 30 of Year 7 of the PA's certification cycle:* PAs who missed the deadline to apply for PANRE-LA due to extenuating circumstances may submit a request for an exception to policy, which must be supported by documentation to substantiate the extenuating circumstances. Requests submitted between the close of the PA's application period and April 30 of Year 7 of the PA's certification cycle will be assessed under NCCPA's generally applicable [NCCPA's Policies Governing the Consideration of Requests for Exceptions to Policy](#). Additional information on filing requests for [exceptions to policies](#) is available on NCCPA's website. Requests for an extension to the application deadline must be submitted no later than April 30 of the first year of the applicable three-year PANRE-LA exam administration period.
- Exception to policy requests to extend the application deadline will not be accepted after April 30 because, with the time required to review and approve those requests, any further extension would prevent the PA from meeting the minimum requirement to participate in at least one assessment quarter during the first exam administration year. If the request to extend the application deadline is approved, the PA will begin the PANRE-LA process in the first available quarter after the decision has been made and will not be allowed to make up the earlier missed quarter(s). PAs who have been granted an extension of the application deadline and enter the PANRE-LA program late may have as few as nine assessment quarters in which to participate in the program.
- *Requests for [exceptions to policy](#) during participation in the PANRE-LA program:* PAs accepted into the PANRE-LA program may submit requests for exceptions to PANRE-LA policies only (1) on legally protected grounds for personal medical extenuating circumstances that prevented them from meeting the PANRE-LA requirements, consistent with the ADA, or (2) due to technical difficulties related to NCCPA system issues.
- PAs who, due to personal medical extenuating circumstances, do not meet the minimum participation requirements in the first year of their PANRE-LA exam administration window (i.e., the PA has participated in no assessment quarters in Year 7) may submit an exception to policy request for waiver of the minimum participation requirement for that year. The request must be submitted by January 31 of the second exam administration year. While the request is under consideration, PAs will continue to have access to the PANRE-LA exam content.
- PAs who have participated in four exam assessment quarters but, due to personal medical extenuating circumstances, do not meet the minimum participation requirements in the second year of their PANRE-LA exam administration window (i.e., the PA has participated in no assessment quarters in Year 8) may submit an exception to policy request for waiver of the minimum participation requirement for that year. The request must be submitted by January 31 of the third exam administration year. While the request is under consideration, PAs will continue to have access to the PANRE-LA exam content.
- PAs who, due to personal medical extenuating circumstances, participated in fewer than four exam assessment quarters by the end of their second exam administration year (i.e., the PA has participated in three or fewer assessment quarters in Years 7 and 8) may submit a request for an exception to



policy to permit them to participate in one or two additional exam quarters immediately following the third examination administration year, up to a total of eight quarters of participation. The request must be submitted by June 30 of the third exam administration year. For example, if a PA participated in one exam assessment quarter in Year 7 of the PA's certification maintenance cycle and two quarters in Year 8 but was prevented by a medical crisis from participating in additional quarters during Year 8, the PA would be unable to complete eight PANRE-LA quarters by the end of Year 9. If the PA qualified for an exception to policy and did not pass PANRE-LA by the end of Year 9, NCCPA would permit the PA to participate in an additional exam assessment quarter during the first quarter of Year 10. The PA will not have access to the PANRE-LA exam content while the request is under consideration. If the PA does not pass PANRE-LA, the PA will have three attempts to recertify by taking and passing PANRE within one year from completion of the additional assessment quarter, as long as all other certification maintenance requirements are met. PANRE attempts will be limited to not more than one attempt every 90 days.

- PAs who had participated in at least four exam assessment quarters by the end of their second exam administration year but, due to personal medical extenuating circumstances, participated in fewer than eight exam assessment quarters and did not pass PANRE-LA by the end of the third exam administration year may submit a request for an exception to policy to permit them to participate in one or two additional exam quarters immediately following the third examination administration year, up to a total of eight quarters of participation. The request must be submitted by January 31 following the third exam administration year. The PA will not have access to the PANRE-LA exam content while the request is under consideration. If the request is approved, and the PA does not pass the PANRE-LA after completing the additional quarter(s), or if the request is denied, the PA will have one year from completion of the additional assessment quarter(s) or from the date of denial within which to take up to three PANRE attempts, as long as all other certification maintenance requirements are met. The PANRE attempts will be limited to not more than one attempt every 90 days.
- PAs may not submit requests for an exception to policy to remain in the PANRE-LA program after they have achieved the passing standard.
- PAs who do not complete their certification maintenance requirements during the Administrative Certification Extension (ACE) period that occurs January 1-31 of each year will be withdrawn from PANRE-LA unless they have been granted an extended timeframe to complete certification maintenance requirements based on an approved exception to policy for extenuating circumstances.
- *Requests for an exception to policy for not meeting the ACE requirements:* Requests for not meeting ACE requirements (i.e. earning, logging and/or paying certification maintenance fee) received after January 31 will be considered, **and if granted**, PAs who have been withdrawn from PANRE-LA will be allowed back into the examination. If an exception is granted, the maximum timeframe for an extension to complete ACE certification maintenance requirements is **six months (including ACE period) for non-personal medical circumstances**. Depending on the timing of when the exception is received and granted, PAs may miss questions and/or quarters of the exam. PAs will not be permitted to make up these missed quarters.

### **Scoring and Pass/Fail Decisions**

- The pass/fail score decision for participation in the PANRE-LA will be based on eight quarters of exam questions.



- If a PA participates in a quarter but does not answer all questions, the unanswered questions will be scored as incorrect.
- If a PA selects a response but the time allocation for the question ends before the PA clicks on submit, the answer that was selected will be recorded for scoring purposes, as if the answer had been submitted.
- During the PANRE-LA program, PAs will be administered targeted questions on content topics they previously encountered. When targeted questions are administered, the best response will be included for scoring to allow PAs the opportunity to benefit from the learning aspect of the PANRE-LA program.
- If, at the end of the three-year exam administration period, a PA has not participated in eight quarters, the final score will still be based on eight quarters of exam questions (i.e., the number of correct answers out of the total of scored test questions).
- Although the PANRE-LA program provides PAs the opportunity to skip quarters, PAs are encouraged to participate in all quarters to allow the greatest opportunity for passing.
- Throughout the PANRE-LA program, NCCPA will conduct analyses of questions administered. It may be possible that a small number of exam questions may be removed from scoring based on the results of the analyses.
- Scoring to determine a pass/fail decision will begin after a PA has participated in eight quarters. The result of the scoring process will be posted on the PA's PANRE-LA dashboard. If a passing score has been achieved, the PA will be notified via email, an official performance report will be posted in the PA's personal certification record, and the PA will be exited from the PANRE-LA program. PAs who have passed PANRE-LA after eight or more quarters of participation cannot participate in further quarters, even if additional quarters remain before the end of the third exam administration year.
- PAs who have not achieved a passing score after participating in eight quarters may continue in the PANRE-LA program until the end of the quarter in which the PA achieves a passing score or until the end of the three-year exam administration window, whichever occurs first. Scores will be calculated at the end of each subsequent quarter and will be based on the PA's highest scoring eight quarters. PAs will be notified of the results of the scoring after each subsequent quarter or at the end of the three-year period.
- PAs who have not passed the PANRE-LA by the end of the three-year period will have one year and up to three attempts to take and pass PANRE to fulfill their recertification examination requirement, as long as they meet all other eligibility requirements for PANRE.
- The performance of all examinees is monitored and may be statistically analyzed for irregularity. Scores that, in the sole discretion of NCCPA, do not represent a reasonable assessment of a PA's knowledge as sampled by the exam may be judged invalid (neither pass nor fail).
- Scores may be considered invalid for a variety of reasons, which may include aberrations in the exam administration beyond the examinee's control and intentional or inadvertent irregular behavior (see Irregular Behavior) on the part of one or more examinees. Also, if statistical analyses indicate that scores may be invalid, the score will not be released, may be rescinded if already released, and may be voided pending completion of an analysis to verify validity.
- NCCPA reserves the absolute right to cancel the exam and/or invalidate scores if, in its sole discretion, NCCPA determines that irregular behavior has occurred.
- After receiving notification of the final score results, PAs may request that NCCPA mail a printed copy to their address of record. If the PA has not received the printed score report after 30 days from the date NCCPA mailed the report and the PA has not had an address change, the PA may submit a written request for a duplicate score report to be sent.

## **Appeals**

- PAs who disagree with an NCCPA decision or policy have the right to seek review of that decision or to seek consideration of a policy exception by mailing, emailing, or faxing a written and signed request with appropriate supporting documentation to NCCPA. Upon receipt of the request, NCCPA will make a decision on the request and provide the PA with a written notice of the decision. If the decision is adverse, the PA will be provided with a copy of the Review and Appeal Policies and Procedures, which describes the process for requesting further review of the decision. If further consideration is desired, the Request for Review must be filed within 30 days after the date of notice of the adverse decision.

## **Exam Security and Irregular Behavior in Violation of NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for PA Disciplinary Matters**

- NCCPA defines irregular behavior as any behavior that, in the sole discretion of NCCPA, undermines or threatens the integrity or validity of the application, assessment or certification processes of NCCPA, whether it occurs before, during or after an exam. [\*NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters\*](#) describes examples of irregular behavior and the disciplinary actions that may be taken based on irregular behavior. Nothing in this policy shall limit or prevent NCCPA from imposing sanctions as set forth in its [\*NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters\*](#).
- In relation to the PANRE-LA program, irregular behavior includes, but is not limited to, engaging in or assisting another individual in engaging in:
  - having or seeking access to assessment questions, answer options, rationale for correct answers, the list of reference materials provided in the PANRE-LA answer rationale, or other feedback on questions and answers provided by NCCPA (hereafter referred to as exam content) before the exam;
  - impersonating an examinee or engaging someone else to take the exam by proxy;
  - consulting with another person about a test item after seeing the test item and before answering the test item;
  - answering the PANRE-LA exam questions for someone else;
  - copying answers from someone else or allowing one's answers to be copied;
  - copying, recording, saving, screen capturing, or memorizing and reproducing or publishing exam content (including by sharing exam content online);
  - violating the published examination procedures for the examination or the specific examination conditions authorized by NCCPA for the individual in a way that casts doubt on the individual's exam results or that of another person;
  - altering or misrepresenting scores;
  - or other such behavior which may jeopardize the integrity of the exam results of that or another person.
- Irregular behavior may also include making false representations during the application process or in connection with NCCPA board certification status, altering or falsifying NCCPA certification or other documents, or making a false representation that one is certified by NCCPA by using the legally-protected marks, PA- C® or Physician-Assistant Certified® or by any other means.
- The exam content of NCCPA's PANRE-LA and each of its exam questions and all exam materials are proprietary and strictly confidential, and the unauthorized retention, possession, copying, distribution, disclosure, discussion, or receipt of any examination content, in whole or in part, by written, electronic, oral or other form of communication, including but not limited to emailing, copying or printing of

electronic files, and reconstruction through memorization and/or dictation, before, during, or after an examination, is strictly prohibited. In addition to constituting irregular behavior subject to disciplinary action as described in [NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters](#), such activities that violate NCCPA's proprietary rights, including copyrights, may subject violators to legal action resulting in monetary damages.

- Entering or uploading PANRE-LA content (i.e., intact test items, answer options, rationales, or substantial portions of the same) other than discrete keywords into websites, search engines, or chatbots that may or may not incorporate generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) or Large Language Models (LLM) is strictly prohibited, and doing so constitutes irregular behavior subject to disciplinary action as described in [NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters](#).
- For exam quality and security and for research purposes, NCCPA collects and uses the information described below, and any other information deemed relevant by NCCPA, in order to prevent, detect, investigate, and remediate exam-related misconduct, such as cheating, fraud, deception, or collusion among exam participants:
  - Collection of exam data: When an individual uses exam software, such as the PANRE-LA platform, NCCPA collects information on the individual's response data (i.e., response dates, response times, responses, keystrokes, etc.), location data at the time the individual accesses the exam platform system (which may include the individual's IP address), and information about the type of device used to access the examination software.
  - Combination with existing information: NCCPA may combine the exam data with other information it has collected about an individual through the individual's interactions with NCCPA.
  - Information received from third parties: In response to suspected irregular behavior, NCCPA may conduct an investigation based on interviews, publicly available information, responses to requests from NCCPA to third parties for information, internet searches, or third-party investigators. This information may be combined with other information to determine whether irregular behavior has occurred.
- While it is permissible to consult reference materials when responding to the PANRE-LA examination questions, participants may not consult with others for answers after viewing the test question. The PANRE-LA is an assessment of the participant's own knowledge and clinical skills. Failure to work independently of others when completing the PANRE-LA questions will constitute irregular behavior and violates [NCCPA's Code of Conduct](#), as does assisting others in answering PANRE-LA test questions.
- PANRE-LA participants may be subject to disciplinary actions as described in [NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters](#) if, at its sole discretion, NCCPA determines through any means available to it that the participants may have engaged in collaborative, disruptive, or other irregular behavior related to an NCCPA examination or certification or if NCCPA determines that the integrity or validity of the examination otherwise is in question.
- In some instances, while the evidence of irregularity is sufficiently strong to cast doubt upon the validity of scores, such evidence may not enable NCCPA to identify the particular individuals involved. In any such circumstances, NCCPA reserves the right to withhold the scores of all participants, including individuals not directly implicated in the irregularity and, if necessary, issue sanctions in accordance with [NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters](#). Such determination is at the sole discretion of the NCCPA.

- Anyone who has information or evidence that irregular behavior has occurred should submit a written, signed statement to NCCPA detailing the incident, with copies of any supporting evidence or documentation.
- If NCCPA determines that allegations of irregular behavior are supported by available evidence, it will impose sanctions against the offending individual, in accordance with [NCCPA's Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary Matters](#), or other sanctions as deemed appropriate in NCCPA's sole discretion. NCCPA may also initiate legal action against the offending individual. Certain sanctions (e.g., revocation, disciplinary or administrative suspension, or letter of censure) are public and are reported to the Federation of State Medical Boards and may be listed on NCCPA's website.

## **General Policies**

- NCCPA has established policies and procedures to govern examination administrations in an attempt to ensure that no examinee or group of examinees receives an unfair advantage or disadvantage on the examination. Efforts are made to ensure that the examination is administered consistent with the principles on which the examination is developed and scored. However, if the integrity of the examination process is jeopardized, NCCPA reserves the right to invalidate the entire examination or take other appropriate action.
- Only PAs who hold a valid NCCPA board certification may use the designations, Physician Assistant-Certified® and PA-C®. Both designations are legally protected certification marks over which NCCPA exercises exclusive control.
- Allowing NCCPA board certification to expire may affect a PA's authorization to work for their employer or to practice clinically in their jurisdiction. It is the responsibility of all PAs to know and comply with applicable state laws and/or their employer's or institution's policies regarding all requirements to practice.
- NCCPA board certification does not confer any property or contractual rights on any individual regarding continued or future certification or examination eligibility.
- NCCPA amends its policies from time to time, and candidates for certification, recertification, certification maintenance, Certificates of Added Qualifications (CAQs), or maintenance of a CAQ must comply with the current NCCPA policies in effect at the time.
- Information on how NCCPA shares data is provided in the [NCCPA Information Disclosure Policy](#).
- To ensure receipt of NCCPA-related materials in a timely fashion, individuals must notify NCCPA in writing, by email or by signing into their personal certification record online, of any name, email, or address changes, whether or not the U.S. Postal Service is also notified. Notification of a name change must be accompanied by a signed statement and an easily visible and legible, enlarged photocopy of the individual's current driver's license or passport with the correct name. **It is solely the individual's responsibility to notify NCCPA promptly of all name, email, or postal address changes and to monitor NCCPA communications received at the physical and email addresses on the PA's NCCPA account.** Failure to do so may result in delays in receiving information and may lead the PA to miss reminders about deadlines for NCCPA requirements. PAs should ensure that NCCPA's domain name (nccpa.net) is listed as a permitted or trusted domain for the email account the PA has provided to NCCPA, in order to avoid having NCCPA's communications screened out or classified as spam, junk, or promotional messages. **Failure to comply with an NCCPA examination-related or other requirement will not be excused on the grounds that a name, email, or postal address has been changed unless acceptable and timely notice of such change was received by NCCPA.**

## **Other Relevant Policies**

- NCCPA expects PAs applying for or participating in the PANRE-LA program to review and comply with all applicable NCCPA policies, including [NCCPA's Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Use Policy](#). Other NCCPA policies are available on [NCCPA's website](#).
- Due to the timing of the launch of the PANRE-LA program, additional policies apply specifically to PAs due to recertify in 2024 and 2025 who had not previously participated in the Alternative to PANRE Pilot and who applied and are participating in the PANRE-LA administration that launched in January 2023. The Additional Policies Specific for PAs Due to Recertify in 2024 and 2025 Who Are Participating in the Inaugural Launch of the PANRE-LA in 2023 provide these PAs the full opportunity for participating in the three-year PANRE-LA program.

## **Affirmation and Authorization**

I hereby apply to NCCPA to participate in the PANRE-LA program for examination and, if I achieve a passing score, for issuance to me of Recertification as a PA in accordance with and subject to the procedures and regulations of NCCPA governing the PANRE- LA program. I have read and agree to the conditions set forth in NCCPA's Policies and Procedures, covering the administration of the PANRE-LA program; the Certification/Recertification process, and other NCCPA policies. I agree to disqualification from examination; disqualification from participation in the PANRE-LA program; denial of NCCPA Board Certification/Recertification; denial of future eligibility for Certification/Recertification; and forfeiture and redelivery of any certification granted me by NCCPA or any other sanction authorized in NCCPA's policies in the event that any of the statements or answers made by me in this application are false or in the event that I violate any of the rules or regulations governing an NCCPA examination, including the PANRE-LA program.

I authorize NCCPA to make whatever inquiries and investigations it deems necessary to verify my credentials, my professional standing, and my identity. I understand that this application and any information or material received or generated by NCCPA in connection with my Certification or Recertification will be kept confidential and will not be released except as follows: (1) the fact that I am or am not, or have or have not been, Certified or Recertified, my certificate number, and the relevant dates, are matters of public record and may be disclosed; (2) information will be released if I have authorized such release or such release is required by law; ; (3) publicly reportable final disciplinary action by NCCPA and the underlying facts thereof may be reported to state licensing agencies and to the Federation of State Medical Boards and may be disclosed to other interested parties and published by NCCPA, including on NCCPA's website; and (4) NCCPA shall disclose to state and federal agencies information requested by those agencies to facilitate the state licensure process or in connection with licensing oversight, regulatory actions, or law enforcement matters, or in connection with NCCPA's own disciplinary review process; such information may include examination scores or pass/fail status on an examination if requested. I understand that NCCPA will comply with state or federal laws, court orders, subpoenas, or military deployment information requirements.

Further, I allow NCCPA to use information from my application and subsequent examination for the purposes of research and statistical analysis, provided that my personal identification with that information has been deleted.

I understand that the content of NCCPA's PANRE-LA and each of its examination questions and rationales are proprietary and strictly confidential, and that the unauthorized retention, possession, copying,

distribution, disclosure, discussion, or receipt of any examination question, in whole or in part, by written, electronic, oral or other form of communication, including but not limited to emailing, copying or printing of electronic files, and reconstruction through memorization and/or dictation, before, during, or after an examination, is **strictly prohibited**. I further understand that, in addition to constituting irregular behavior subject to disciplinary action such as revocation of board certification, revocation of eligibility for future Board Certification, and disciplinary fines, such activities violate NCCPA's proprietary rights, including copyrights, and may subject me to legal action resulting in monetary damages.

I further understand that I can be disqualified from taking or continuing to sit for an examination, or from receiving examination scores, and that I may be required to retake an examination if, at its sole discretion, NCCPA determines through statistical analysis or any other means available to it, that I was engaged in collaborative, disruptive, or other irregular behavior before, during the administration of, or following, the examination, or if NCCPA determines that the integrity or validity of the examination otherwise is in question.

I further understand that, in some instances, while the evidence of irregularity is sufficiently strong to cast doubt upon the validity of scores, such evidence may not enable NCCPA to identify the particular individuals involved. In any such circumstances, I understand that NCCPA reserves the right to withhold the scores of all candidates, including candidates not directly implicated in the irregularity and, if necessary, to require all candidates to take an additional examination at a later date under conditions which will ensure the validity of all scores.

I understand and agree to abide by all NCCPA's PANRE-LA program requirements and policies.

### **Limitation of Liability**

I hereby agree to hold the NCCPA, its officers, directors, examiners, employees, and agents, harmless from any actual, consequential, special, or other damages arising out of any action or omission by any of them in connection with my application to participate in the PANRE-LA program, my participation in the PANRE-LA program, any examination given by the NCCPA, any score relating thereto; the failure to issue me any certificate or credential, any demand for forfeiture or redelivery of such certificate or credential, or the enforcement of any NCCPA policy or standard; provided, however, that my waiver of my right of recovery does not extend to any violation by NCCPA of a state statute or federal statute that authorizes a claim for recovery.

**AGREEMENT TO RESOLVE LEGAL DISPUTES BY ARBITRATION: READ CAREFULLY, AS ARBITRATION LIMITS CERTAIN OF YOUR RIGHTS, INCLUDING YOUR RIGHT TO BRING A COURT ACTION**

I and NCCPA agree that I and/or NCCPA have the right to elect that any dispute or claim between me and NCCPA (or any of its officers, directors, employees or agents) arising out of or relating to this application, any future application by me to NCCPA in connection with a certification, recertification, PANRE-LA program participation, or CAQ exam, my certification status with NCCPA, or enforcement of NCCPA's policies, whether the dispute is based on contract, tort, statute, or otherwise, be submitted to and resolved by individual binding arbitration before a single arbitrator within 30 miles of NCCPA's headquarters in Johns Creek, Georgia, under the commercial dispute rules and procedures of the American Arbitration Association; provided, however, that the arbitrator shall allow the filing of dispositive motions; and provided further nothing in this provision shall restrict NCCPA from seeking injunctive relief against me in any court of competent jurisdiction. The prevailing party in any such action shall be entitled to all costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred in

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connection with the litigation, and the arbitration fees shall be shared between the parties, except that if the statute giving rise to the dispute provides for a different allocation of responsibility for attorneys' fees and costs, the arbitrator shall allocate responsibility for the arbitration fees and for the parties' attorneys' fees in accordance with the relevant statutory scheme at the conclusion of the arbitration. The arbitrator shall apply the law of the State of Georgia and/or U.S. federal law to the dispute.

The right to elect arbitration means that, if I or NCCPA file or threaten to file a court action, the other party can compel arbitration by sending a written notice compelling the party with a claim to instead file a demand for arbitration, and the court will no longer have authority to decide the claim. Arbitration is a method of resolving disputes between parties without filing a lawsuit in court.

IF EITHER I OR NCCPA CHOOSE ARBITRATION, NEITHER PARTY WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO A JURY TRIAL OR TO ENGAGE IN DISCOVERY, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN THE APPLICABLE ARBITRATION RULES, OR OTHERWISE LITIGATE THE DISPUTE OR CLAIM IN ANY COURT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF AN ACTION FOR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF BY NCCPA. FURTHER, I WILL NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE AS A REPRESENTATIVE OR MEMBER OF ANY CLASS OF CLAIMANTS PERTAINING TO ANY CLAIM SUBJECT TO ARBITRATION. THE ARBITRATOR'S DECISION WILL BE FINAL AND BINDING. OTHER RIGHTS THAT I OR NCCPA WOULD HAVE IN COURT ALSO MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ARBITRATION.

The arbitrator shall have no authority to arbitrate claims on a class action basis, and claims brought by or against me may not be joined or consolidated with claims brought by or against any other person. The Federal Arbitration Act ("FAA"), 9 U.S.C. §§ 1, et seq., shall govern this arbitration provision. This arbitration provision shall survive the termination of my relationship with NCCPA.

### **Right to Opt Out**

I understand that I may opt out of this Agreement to Resolve Legal Disputes By Arbitration by sending NCCPA at the address that follows a notice ("Opt Out Notice") that NCCPA must receive within fifteen (15) days of the date I submitted this agreement. My Opt Out Notice must include my full name, my current address, my current telephone number, my current email address, my full social security number for identity verification purposes, and must be signed by me. Any Opt Out Notice will apply only to this arbitration agreement and will not apply to any prior or future arbitration agreements that I may enter into with NCCPA. The Opt Out Notice must be mailed with return receipt requested to:

NCCPA: Attn: Opt Out Notice; 12000 Findley Road, Suite 200, Johns Creek, GA 30097-1409.

In the event of any dispute concerning whether I have provided a timely Opt Out Notice, I must produce the signed receipt for mailing the Opt Out Notice. In the absence of the signed receipt, NCCPA's received date stamp on the Opt Out Notice shall be conclusive evidence of the date of receipt. These instructions constitute the only method that I can use to exercise my right to opt out of this arbitration agreement.

If I opt out, or if I file suit against NCCPA and NCCPA does not elect arbitration or if NCCPA files suit against me and I do not elect arbitration, I agree that any such action shall be governed by and construed under the laws of the State of Georgia without regard to conflicts of law. I further agree that any such action shall be brought in the applicable Court of Fulton County in the State of Georgia, or the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia; I consent to the jurisdiction of such state and federal courts; and I agree that

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the venue of such courts is proper. I further agree that, should I not prevail in any such action, NCCPA shall be entitled to all costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred in connection with the litigation.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE DECISION AS TO WHETHER I QUALIFY FOR CERTIFICATION/RECERTIFICATION RESTS SOLELY AND EXCLUSIVELY WITH NCCPA AND THAT THE DECISION OF NCCPA IS FINAL.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THESE STATEMENTS, INCLUDING IN THE LIMITATION ON LIABILITY, AND IN THE AGREEMENT TO RESOLVE LEGAL DISPUTES BY ARBITRATION, AND I ACCEPT AND I INTEND TO BE LEGALLY BOUND BY THEM.