



## Steps to Become an NCCAOM® National Board-Certified Acupuncturist™

All the following information is available on the NCCAOM website at [www.nccaom.org](http://www.nccaom.org)

### 1. What to know before you begin the *NCCAOM® Application for Certification*:

Three things are required to become an *NCCAOM® National Board-Certified Acupuncturist™*.

1. Graduate transcript
2. Clean Needle Technique (CNT) Certificate
3. Pass required exams

What state do you plan to practice in? \_\_\_\_\_ The state requirements will determine if you need NCCAOM Certification and what exams you will need to pass. An interactive map showing state licensure requirements is available at <https://www.nccaom.org/state-licensure/>

What NCCAOM Certification are you applying for? \_\_\_\_\_

OM: Oriental Medicine – Required exams are FOM, AC, CH, BIO

AC: Acupuncture – Required exams are FOM, AC, BIO

What pictured ID will you use at the testing site? \_\_\_\_\_

A pictured ID (i.e., driver's license or government identification) is required to enter the testing site. **The name on the ID must match the name on your NCCAOM application.**

Know your route to NCCAOM Certification. Route 1: Formal Education: United States Applicant.

Know your educational degree (MSOM, MSTCM, M.Ac., MSTOM, etc.).

Be ready to pay the application fee. \_\_\_\_\_

OM application fee: \$595

AC application fee: \$500

### 2. Create an NCCAOM Certification account on the NCCAOM website.

Go to NCCAOM's website ([www.nccaom.org](http://www.nccaom.org)).

- Select 'Log In' at top right corner.
- Scroll down and select the 'Certification' Portal (left side).
- Select 'Create New Account'.
- Complete the information and click the 'submit' button.
- You will be emailed your NCCAOM ID number. This number is unique to you forever, regardless of your status with NCCAOM. The system will also email you your username and password which you can change if you wish.



3. Submit an *NCCAOM® Certification Application*.

The earliest you can apply is 60 days before you graduate. Be sure to communicate with your school that you have completed the application because your required documents (graduate transcript and CNT Certificate) must link to your NCCAOM application to show in your Certification account.

- Go to NCCAOM's website ([www.nccaom.org](http://www.nccaom.org)) and 'Login' at the upper right corner.
- Select the Certification Portal (left side) and login into your NCCAOM Certification account.
- Select the orange button 'Apply for New Certification' at the top of the page.
- Be prepared to complete the application at one sitting – **you cannot save the application** and finish it later. You will need to answer the following information. Most areas are pull-down menus.
  - Certification type (OM or AC)
  - School attended
  - Health and Legal Questions
  - Attestation – *NCCAOM® Code of Ethics* (Attachment 1) and the *NCCAOM® Grounds for Professional Discipline* (Attachment 2). Both documents are available at <https://www.nccaom.org/advocacy-regulatory/professional-ethics-and-discipline/>
- Submit the application and pay the fee. NCCAOM accepts Visa, MasterCard or American Express. You can also pay through a PayPal account.
 

OM application fee:	\$595
AC application fee:	\$500

You are now an 'NCCAOM Applicant'

4. Request your CNT Certificate from CCAOM.

- Go to the NCCAOM website at [www.nccaom.org](http://www.nccaom.org).
- Select the 'Certification' tab at the top of the page.
- Select 'Eligibility Requirements'.
- Scroll down and select 'Submit Clean Needle Technique (CNT) Certificate'.
- Click on 'CCAOM' in second paragraph. This takes you to the CCAOM website.
- Select 'Certificate/Verification Request' at the upper left.
- Open the PDF form and print it.
- Fill in the information and pay a \$15 fee. Fax the form to CCAOM. CCAOM will upload your CNT Certificate which will link to your NCCAOM application and show in your Certification account.



## 5. Graduate Transcript

Once you have submitted your *NCCAOM® Certification Application* and have graduated, your school will upload your graduate transcript to the NCCAOM website which will link to your NCCAOM application and show in your Certification account.

You are now an 'NCCAOM Candidate'

## 6. *NCCAOM® Authorization to Test (ATT) Letter*

Once you have submitted your application and NCCAOM has received your CNT Certificate and your graduate transcript, you will be approved to sit for the exams. An *NCCAOM® Authorization to Test (ATT) Letter will be sent to you at the email address on your application.* The ATT letter is very important because it lists the exams you are approved to take, provides instructions to schedule your exams, and you must show the letter when entering the testing site. The ATT Letter is available for download from your Certification account at any point during your testing period.

## 7. NCCAOM Examinations

- Do not wait to take your exams!!
- Visit the *NCCAOM® Exam Preparation Center* to access practice tests at <https://www.nccaom.org/certification/nccaom-exam-preparation-center/>.
- The NCCAOM exams are given at a PearsonVUE Testing Center.
- The exams you are approved to sit for are listed on your ATT Letter.
- You have five (5) opportunities or attempts to pass each of the exams.
- Adaptive exams may be scheduled and taken in any order, at your convenience. Adaptive exams will be offered until October 31, 2019. Exams will NOT be available until January 13, 2020 at which time the Linear exams begin.
- Linear exams start on January 13 and go through February 1, 2020. A second exam period is scheduled for April 27 and through May 16, 2020. For exam differences and registration dates see Attachment 3 or go to <https://www.nccaom.org/certification/exam-administration/>.
- Differences in the 2019 and 2020 *NCCAOM® Exam Content Outlines* are available in Attachment 4.
- All required exams must be passed within 4 years from the date you submit your application.
- Select the PearsonVUE Test Center you plan to go to at [www.pearsonvue.com/nccaom](http://www.pearsonvue.com/nccaom).



### Scheduling Exams Online or By Phone

- Have your *NCCAOM® Authorization to Test Letter* ready.
- Go to [www.pearsonvue.com/nccaom](http://www.pearsonvue.com/nccaom) or call Pearson VUE/NCCAOM candidate services at 888-235-7649 (Monday thru Friday, 7:00 am to 7:00 pm CST).
- For online scheduling select 'Create a Web Account'
- From the ATT Letter, be ready to enter or tell the customer service representative the information below.
  - Name
  - Email address
  - NCCAOM ID number
  - School Code
  - Test center location
  - Testing date and time
- You can reschedule or cancel your exams using this process.

### Exam Day

Report Time and Start Time: The time printed on the *Pearson VUE Admissions Letter* is your required report time. Allow enough time to find the test site and arrive 30 minutes prior to the scheduled time.

***If you are late, you will not be admitted to the test site, you will not be able to take the exam and you will forfeit the fee.*** You will be required to reapply for another exam date and pay the fee again.

### Required Identification at the Pearson VUE Test Center

- *NCCAOM® Authorization to Test Letter*
- Driver's license OR government identification with your photo and signature.
- A second personal ID [school, work, etc.] with your signature.

***If the name on the pictured ID and the ATT letter do not match or your ID is expired, you will not be able to take the exam and you will forfeit the fee.*** You will be required to reapply for another exam date and pay the fee again.

### Personal Property

- ***Do not bring anything to the testing site.***
- You will be provided a locker for your purse, cell phone, etc.
- A ring binder containing five sheets of erasable board and a marker will be provided and collected at the end of the exam.



- If testing staff determine there is evidence of cheating (additional paper, writing on the body, etc.), you will:
  - be removed from the exam and testing site,
  - forfeit all application and exam fees,
  - be barred from applying for NCCAOM certification for up to five years, and
  - be considered a new applicant if you choose to reapply.

Childcare - Childcare services are not provided while a parent/caregiver takes an examination.

### Examination Security

Candidates will be audio and videotaped during the examination for security purposes.

All candidates will be photographed and have a palm vein test at the test center. Palm Vein Technology ensures:

- each test taker has a single record,
- represents a virtually error-free identification system that is non-intrusive to the user.
- increases accuracy and security around your check-in (and out) process, and
- verifies you as you enter (or exit) the test center.

### Entering the Exam Room

- You will be given a checklist of rules to review.
- Additional fingerprints will be taken before you are seated and if the you leave the room at any time during the exam.
- You may not begin writing on your note board until the computer test has begun so ***do NOT get side tracked!*** Pay attention to the computer screen. ***You have 5 minutes to:***
  - verify that your identification information and exam category are correct, and
  - accept the terms of the *Non-Disclosure Agreement and General Terms of Use for NCCAOM Exams* (Attachment 5; <https://www.nccaom.org/certification/board-examination-process/examination-process-details/>).
- ***If you do not complete the 2 steps above in the 5-minute window, the computer will shut down and you will be asked to leave and forfeit the exam fee.***

### Exam Results

- Exams are scored pass or fail.
- For Adaptive exams, you will receive a 'Preliminary' result at the end of the exam.
- You may track your exam results in your Certification online account. Results are posted 20 to 30 business days after you complete of the exam.



- An 'Official' exam result letter will be mailed to you via United States first-class mail.

### Failing an Exam

- You have 5 attempts to pass an exam.
- Each attempt requires you to pay the exam fee.
- If you fail, you must wait 45 days to reschedule the exam with PearsonVUE.

## 8. NCCAOM Certification

Once you have passed all the required exams, you will be certified as an NCCAOM Diplomat.

**Congratulations!** You are now an *NCCAOM® National Board-Certified Acupuncturist™*.

- Your NCCAOM Certification will be processed within 1 to 2 weeks.
- In approximately 6 weeks you will receive via USPS mail:
  - The *NCCAOM® Official Congratulatory Letter* with a wallet-sized NCCAOM ID Card.
  - The *NCCAOM® Certificate* to frame for your office or home.

NCCAOM Diplomat Benefits: Attachment 6 or <https://www.nccaom.org/certification/diplomat-benefits/>.

### NCCAOM Service Marks and Credentials

Service Marks and credentials have been the mark of excellence in AOM since the inception of each certification program. Distinguish yourself from other practitioners and explore the opportunity to be at the center of the action. It is for this reason that the NCCAOM encourages you to use your Service Mark and credential after your name.



Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)®



Dipl. C.H. (NCCAOM)®



Dipl. ABT (NCCAOM)®



Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)®

How to write your credentials for your professional resume: Jane Doe, MSOM, Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)®, A.P.

### NCCAOM Advocacy

The NCCAOM advocacy team is committed to advancing NCCAOM National Board-Certified Acupuncturists™ and the practice of acupuncture at the federal, state and local levels. NCCAOM advocates for Diplomates and the profession to build awareness of acupuncture as a mainstream, evidence-based methodology, expand patient access to certified acupuncturists nationwide, and develop relationships with legislators, regulators and stakeholders across the healthcare industry on behalf of our members.



### NCCAOM Marketing Materials

Promote your business with personalized marketing materials. These versatile marketing solutions get the word out in person or by mail.

### Volunteering for NCCAOM

After 5 years of practical experience in the AOM profession, you qualify to volunteer as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) on one of the 4 *NCCAOM® Exam Development Committees*. You will be trained to write the exam questions and work with your peers to develop the exams.

### NCCAOM Recertification

- To maintain your Active status with NCCAOM, you must recertify every 4 years.
- 60 hours/PDA points and a CPR Certificate are required to meet recertification within the 4-year cycle.
- Find PDA approved courses on the *NCCAOM® PDA Search Engine* at [www.nccaom.org](http://www.nccaom.org).
- Track your PDAs/CEUs on your online educational record.
- If you do not recertify, you will be moved to 'Lapsed' status and lose your NCCAOM Diplomate Benefits. You have up to 3 years to return to 'Active' status. If you do not, you will be terminated and must retest to return to Active status.

## 9. Apply for State Licensure

- Login into your online Certification account.
- Click the 'Request State Verification' link (orange button at top of page).
- Select your state(s).
- Pay the \$45 fee online for each state verification.
- The NCCAOM will email your test scores (pass/fail) and certification (if required) directly to the state acupuncture board.

## 10. Support your profession by joining your State Acupuncture Association.

11. When you leave school and begin your practice, be sure to **update your NCCAOM Certification online account** with your new address, phone, and email. *Find A Practitioner* is the most visited section of the NCCAOM website, and you will want your colleagues, peers and the public to be able to find you and/or refer patients.

Questions? Contact Jennifer Nemeth, Continuing Education Director and School Liaison at [jnemeth@thenccaom.org](mailto:jnemeth@thenccaom.org).



## Steps to Become an NCCAOM® National Board-Certified Acupuncturist™

### Attachment 1

## NCCAOM® Code of Ethics

*As a Diplomate of the NCCAOM,  
I hereby pledge my commitment to the following principles:*

Respect the rights, privacy and dignity of my patients and maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries at all times.

Treat within my lawful scope of my practice and training and only if I am able to safely, competently and effectively do so.

Allow my patients to fully participate in decisions related to their healthcare by documenting and keeping them informed of my treatments and outcomes.

Accept and treat those seeking my services in a fair and nondiscriminatory manner.

Render the highest quality of care and make timely referrals to other health care professionals as may be appropriate.

Continue to advance my knowledge through education, training and collaboration with my colleagues to maintain excellence and high ethical standards in our profession.

Support my medicine's access to all people and its growth in the broad spectrum of U.S. healthcare.

Assist in the professional development and advancement of my colleagues.

Participate in activities that contribute to the betterment of my community.



Effective January 1, 2016





## Attachment 2

### NCCAOM® Grounds for Professional Discipline

Protection of the public is the highest priority of the NCCAOM. To fulfill this mission, the NCCAOM reserves the right to take and publish disciplinary actions taken against Respondents, (as defined by Section 1 of the *Procedures for Upholding Professional Conduct*), in accordance with its *Procedures for Upholding Professional Conduct* for violations of the following:

1. Failing to cooperate with a disciplinary investigation.
2. Providing false or deceptive information on an application for NCCAOM certification, recertification, PDA providership or disciplinary investigation.
3. Violating NCCAOM policies, regulations or procedures, including but not limited to complying with continuing education requirements.
4. Misrepresenting professional credentials or titles.
5. Advertising false or misleading information.
6. Exceeding the scope of practice as defined by state or federal statute or regulation.
7. Obtaining or attempting to obtain compensation or reimbursement through fraud.
8. Failing to notify the NCCAOM within thirty (30) calendar days of any of the following:
  - a. Notice of a disciplinary investigation in any jurisdiction pertaining to a healthcare practice.
  - b. Any order issued by any jurisdiction pertaining to a healthcare practice.
  - c. Violent felony charges.
  - d. Violent or non-violent felony convictions.
  - e. Misdemeanor criminal convictions related to a healthcare practice.
9. Being convicted of a felony. (Note: Pursuant to Section 3, #10 of the *Procedures for Upholding Professional Conduct*, serious violent felonies may deem a candidate permanently ineligible for NCCAOM certification, recertification or PDA providership).
10. Being convicted of a misdemeanor related to a healthcare practice.



11. Being the subject of disciplinary or administrative action taken by a licensing board or health-related regulatory agency or school.
12. Failing to maintain proper records as required by state or federal statute or regulation.
13. Performing services without informed consent as required by state or federal statute or regulation.
14. Failing to maintain patient/practitioner confidentiality.
15. Failing to maintain professional boundaries in relationships with patients, or in any way exploiting the practitioner/patient trust.
16. Engaging in sexual contact with a current patient if the contact commences after the practitioner/patient relationship is established.
17. Engaging in sexual contact with a former patient unless a period of six (6) months has elapsed since the date that the professional relationship ended.
18. Gross negligence or a pattern of negligence in your practice or under your supervision.
19. Being unable to safely and effectively engage in practice due to substance abuse, physical or psychological impairment. \*

**\*Summary of PEDC Substance Abuse Policy Statement:** A Respondent whose capacity to safely and effectively treat patients has been diminished as a result of drug or alcohol abuse which has not resulted in harm to a patient, may temporarily and voluntarily surrender NCCAOM certification by forwarding his/her certificate to NCCAOM and temporarily withdrawing from practicing in order to complete an agreed upon treatment plan as decided by the PEDC. Upon the PEDC's receipt of a certificate of disposition from the pre-approved treatment facility, Respondent shall be returned their NCCAOM certificate and resume practice. A surrender of certification under this provision shall be confidential and shall not be considered an admission of abuse, disability or a violation of the Ground for Professional Discipline # 21. However, this surrender shall not confer immunity upon Respondent with respect to any other Grounds for Professional Discipline and is unilaterally revocable by PEDC in the event the agreed treatment was not completed or harm to a patient has occurred.

20. Violating federal or state statute or regulation relating to safe, ethical, and/or competent practice.



Attachment 3

## NCCAOM® Adaptive vs. Linear Exams

### 2019 – 2020 Schedule for all NCCAOM Exams

Adaptive exams close on October 31, 2019. Exams will not be available until January 13, 2020.

Linear exams

January 13 to February 1, 2020. Registration is between November 7, 2019 and January 31, 2020.

April 27 to May 16, 2020. Registration is between February 3 and May 15, 2020.

Adaptive exams resume July 1, 2020.

### Computerized Adaptive vs. Linear Exam Formats

Administration Features	Adaptive Format	Linear Format
Adheres to Exam Content Outline	Yes	Yes
Availability	Year round	Specified dates
Exam Length and Allotted Time	100 items 2.5 hours allotted time	<u>Foreign Language Exam</u> 100 items 2.5 hours allotted time  <u>English Exam</u> 130 items 3.25 hours allotted time
Non-Disclosure Agreement	Yes	Yes
Exam Administration	Unique format for each candidate	Fixed format for all candidates
Ability to Skip Items	No	No
Review Feature	No	Yes, once all items have been answered.
Preliminary Pass/Fail Status Before End of Exam	Yes	No
Official Results Report	Mailed within 20-30 business days	Mailed within 30-45 business days



## Attachment 4

### NCCAOM® Exam Content Changes in 2020

New content outlines were developed for the NCCAOM® Foundations of Oriental Medicine (FOM), Biomedicine (BIO), Acupuncture with Point Location (ACPL), and Chinese Herbology (CH) examinations, based specifically on the survey results from the 2017 JA study. The major outcomes affecting the content of the new exam content outlines from the 2017 JA are:

- The individual domain percentages (weightings) changed for all examinations – ACPL, BIO, FOM and CH;
- The FOM content outline includes a new subdomain: Lifestyle changes and self-care modalities;
- The BIO content outline includes:
  - Clarification and additions to the lists of pharmaceuticals, nutrients and supplements, and medical conditions
  - Addition of a new subdomain: Integration of acupuncture and Chinese medicine with biomedicine;
- The ACPL content outline includes:
  - Extra Points relevant to entry-level practice
  - Treatment Techniques which is now a separate domain; and
- The CH content outline includes a published list of single herbs along with an increased number of herbal formulas.

2019 NCCAOM Exam Content Outline

<https://www.nccaom.org/certification/nccaom-exam-preparation-center/exam-content-outlines/>

2020 NCCAOM Exam Content Outline

<https://www.nccaom.org/certification/nccaom-exam-preparation-center/exam-content-outlines-2020/>



## Attachment 5

### Non-Disclosure Agreement and General Terms of Use for NCCAOM Exams

*"I have read and understand the Examination Instructions. I have agreed to abide by the NCCAOM® Grounds for Professional Discipline and acknowledge that if I am caught cheating on this examination, including the sharing of information after the examination is complete; I will be subject to review by the Professional Ethics and Disciplinary Committee of NCCAOM. If I am found to have violated the NCCAOM® Grounds for Professional Discipline, I understand that my scores will be cancelled and I may not have the opportunity to test again.*

Additionally, I understand that this exam is confidential and is protected by trade secret law. It is made available solely for the purpose of becoming certified by NCCAOM. I am expressly prohibited from disclosing, publishing, reproducing, or transmitting this exam, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means, verbal or written, electronic or mechanical, for any purpose.

I am the candidate whose name appears on the initial screen and as an affirmation to the Statement of Acknowledgement I signed when submitting my application, I acknowledge that I am prohibited from transmitting information about NCCAOM examination questions or content in any form to any person or entity. I also acknowledge that if I suspect a violation on the part of others, it is my responsibility to report these actions to the NCCAOM."



## Attachment 6

### NCCAOM® Diplomate Benefits

- 🕒 Have consumers and professionals find you in the *NCCAOM® Find a Practitioner Directory*.
- 🕒 Be promoted as an *NCCAOM National Board-Certified Acupuncturist™* to the media and public through the national public educational campaign.
- 🕒 Have Insurance companies and employers verify your certification status through the *NCCAOM® Registry*.
- 🕒 Be eligible to apply for a job at the *Veteran's Health Administration* that requires an NCCAOM® Board-Certified Acupuncturist™ as an essential part of ensuring safe and high-quality acupuncture treatment.
- 🕒 Be promoted by the *NCCAOM® Advocacy Team* advancing NCCAOM certification at federal and state levels.
- 🕒 Create a **FREE website** from ChiOnline and access discounted wall-mounted frames for displaying your *NCCAOM® Certificate*.
- 🕒 Join NCCAOM as a Volunteer & serve on a committee, panel or taskforce with your peers.
- 🕒 Receive issues of the NCCAOM newsletter *The Diplomat: E-news You Can Use* and the *NCCAOM® Advocacy Update*.
- 🕒 Be eligible for *reduced fees* for services offered by NCCAOM and its strategic partners.