

Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner - Acute Care (CPNP-AC)

RECERTIFICATION

A GUIDE FOR MAINTAINING YOUR CREDENTIAL



EFFECTIVE FOR 2024 RECERTIFICATION

November 1, 2023 - January 31, 2024

EARLY BIRD SAVINGS: November 1, 2023 – November 30, 2023

LATE FEE PERIOD: February 1 - 28, 2024



PEDIATRIC NURSING
CERTIFICATION BOARD

www.pncb.org

Dear CPNP-AC,

Congratulations on belonging to a community of 4,000+ CPNP-ACs! You've met a rigorous standard to add those letters behind your name. We're here to help you understand the process to maintain this respected credential you worked hard to earn.



Being a CPNP-AC represents more than passing an exam; it's part of your deep commitment to staying up to date in pediatric healthcare.

This guide shares information to help you feel confident in your choice of recertification method and activities. If you have any questions along the way, please contact the PNCB team at recert@pncb.org or 1-888-641-2767.

Thank you for maintaining your CPNP-AC certification as part of your professional journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheri Sesay-Tuffour".

Sheri Sesay-Tuffour, PhD, CAE, ICE-CCP, CNED
PNCB Chief Executive Officer

About Recertification

Recert, renewal, maintenance, recertification... no matter the name, all certification boards require a process to document how you are maintaining competence in practice. CPNP-AC recertification is annual. This keeps requirements more manageable for you.

Practice hours are not required for recertification. If you need contact hours to recertify, PNCB's [Marketplace](#) offers CE modules, and some are free. In-depth [Pediatric Updates modules](#) (7.5 contact hours each) required during your 7-year cycle are always available.

When to Recertify

You recertify every year during an open enrollment period **between November 1 and January 31** prior to the expiration date on your online wallet card. You pick which day of open enrollment to recertify using PNCB's online application.

To maintain your certification for 2024, you will need to document completed activities on PNCB's online recertification application no later than January 31, 2024 to avoid a late fee.

Avoid the late fee: A \$100 late fee is added to your fees if you wait to recertify between February 1 and February 28.



Annual recertification keeps costs manageable and your contact information current, so you don't miss important reminders. As a courtesy, PNCB will send you a postcard, email, text, and robocall reminders unless you opt out. It is your responsibility to keep your contact information up to date.

Newly Certified?

You will recertify the next calendar year after passing the initial certification exam. For example, if you pass the initial PNCB board exam in June 2023, you do not recertify that fall/winter. Your first year to recertify will be during the next enrollment window of November 1, 2024 to January 31, 2025 (or February 1 to 28, 2025 with a late fee).

Regardless of when you became certified, the expiration date on your wallet card will be February 28.

New on the Application

When adding recertification activity, you will have the option to select 1 of 6 competency areas that best aligns with each activity. These 6 Pediatric RN role-based competency areas are found within PNCB's [Competency Framework for Pediatric Nurses](#), a [resource](#) showing how pediatric nurses progress in their professional role over time. These will be updated in 2025 to reflect CPNP-PC and CPNP-AC competencies, at which time they will be required.

This represents a key element of PNCB's ongoing Continuing Competence Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to develop well-informed methods of ensuring continuing competence in the context of PNCB's certification maintenance programs. Need more information? Contact us at recert@pncb.org.

Example:

Please choose from the drop-down menu the competency area which best matches the selected activity.*

Select One ▾

- Advocate
- Clinician
- Collaborator
- Educator
- Innovator
- Leader

Applying Credits

[Add/Edit Contact Hours](#)

Description	Course Name	Completed Date	Total Hours Earned	Rx Hrs	Psycho Rx Hrs	DBMH Hrs	DBMH Used Hours	Total Hrs Balance	Apply Credits	Uploaded Files	Competency
Self Reported	Contact Hours Test	03/03/2023	5	0	0	0		5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Educator ▾

Competency Area: Advocate

Definition: The pediatric nurse advocate acts on behalf of patients and families, nurses, communities, and self to improve, influence, and transform patient care, healthcare systems, the nursing profession, and social and political health-related policy.

Competency Area: Clinician

Definition: The pediatric nurse clinician uses evidence-based practice, clinical judgment, professional engagement, and informatics to provide safe patient- and family-centered care for diverse pediatric populations A pediatric nurse clinician engages in lifelong professional development to build and maintain

Competency Area: Collaborator

Definition: The pediatric nurse collaborator builds relationships with patients, families, and the team in order to identify needs and goals and incorporates these into decision-making processes. A pediatric nurse collaborator works with interprofessional colleagues to assist in meeting optimal patient goals.

Competency Area: Education

Definition: The pediatric nurse educator is engaged in the process of knowledge transfer at all levels or practice over the care continuum while tailoring approaches to the needs of specific target audiences to achieve optimal outcomes.

Competency Area: Innovator

Definition: The pediatric nurse innovator creates or adopts new methods, ideas, or products through creative solutions and generates new knowledge through scientific inquiry.

Competency Area: Leader

Definition: The pediatric nurse leader develops relationships and uses systems thinking in the workplace to guide and influence nurses and the profession, resulting in improvements in the provision of care and health outcomes.

HOW TO RECERTIFY CPNP-AC QUICK GUIDE

A current/active/unrestricted nursing license is needed to renew.



EARN 15

Before you can recertify, complete 15 contact hours (or equivalents that PNCB accepts).

Practice/work hours **are not required** but can count as a maximum of 10 toward the 15. Activities like academic credit can be used too. It doesn't matter to PNCB which accepted methods you choose to earn the 15, as long as the hours are:

- ✓ Already earned
- ✓ In the accepted date range
- ✓ Accredited (if actual contact hours)
- ✓ Not a refresher of PALS etc. or initial PALS etc. that has already been applied to past Recert
- ✓ Relevant to CPNP-AC practice



INCLUDE 7-YEAR REQUIREMENTS

Plan for incorporating your 7-year cycle requirements as you recertify annually:

15 hours of pediatric pharm +

4 required PNCB modules (2 Acute Care, 2 of your choice)

You don't document the above in addition to the 15 hours needed each year—you make them part of the 15. You decide when to incorporate these requirements each year. The idea is to complete cycle requirements little-by-little over the 7-year period. We suggest you *begin* incorporating the module and pharm requirements by Year 3 at the latest. "Acute Care" will be in the module title.

PNCB modules are available year-round. PNCB offers pharm modules if you don't have access to pediatric pharm elsewhere. Your personalized Recert Dashboard helps you track requirements.

Recertification happens when you complete the online application with either your payment or a No Pass, No Pay code. Your receipt and updated wallet card mean you are recertified.



IT'S ANNUAL

To recertify your credential, you document your 15 hours on an online application between **November 1 and January 31 each year**. You choose the day during this window. PNCB sends a postcard reminder, plus emails unless you opt out of General Alerts. **If you wish to receive the courtesy reminders it is your responsibility to keep your contact information up to date.**



- **Avoid the late fee.** A late fee is added if you wait to recertify between February 1 and 28.
- **Newly certified?** You will recertify the next calendar year after passing the initial exam.

The cost for Recert is a range of \$20 to \$105 depending on the option you use to recertify.



NEED HELP?

You get outstanding customer service from recert@pncb.org. Our hours are Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. We respond during normal business hours. See the website for [holiday closings](#). PNCB also offers [free CE](#) if you need contact hours!

During Recert time, log in at www.pncb.org to complete your application.

RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

You will need to meet the following requirements on the application and over each 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle to maintain your PNCB certification.

1

Keep your license current, active, and unencumbered.

You are not permitted to maintain your certification if your license is inactive. You'll document current US, Canadian, or US territory RN or RN/APRN licensure on the Recert application. Email recert@pncb.org if your license is placed on probation, suspended, or revoked and send a copy of related board of nursing documentation. **If your license becomes encumbered at any time, or you have been notified by your state board of nursing of an investigation or complaint, you must immediately communicate with PNCB. You cannot recertify until you communicate with us.** You must maintain an active license.

AND

2

Each year, document 15 completed contact hours or equivalent activities accepted by PNCB that are related to the CPNP-AC certification specialty on an online application.

You can also use 1 Record Review Year (see pages 6 and 14) during each 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle. The following pages outline strategies for meeting the annual requirement of 15 completed contact hours or accepted equivalents.

AND

3

Over a period of 7 years, document a total of 15 hours of accredited pediatric pharmacology. These hours can count toward the 15 required each year. Learn more on page 10. You can choose to complete PNCB's Pediatric Updates to meet this requirement, which also meets the requirement of completing 2 modules of your choice.

AND

4

Over a period of 7 years, complete required 4 PNCB Pediatric Updates modules.

Pediatric Updates are evidence-based online modules developed by PNCB and CPNP-AC and CPNP-PCs. You decide when to order and complete them. Learn more about modules on page 7.

- You earn 7.5 contact hours after successful module completion.
- These contact hours count toward the 15 contact hours needed each year.
- PNCB assigns each CPNP-AC a 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle. A new cycle begins every 7 years.

Here are the module categories you need to complete within 7 years. [Log in and click Marketplace](#) to browse topics and order.

- 2 Acute Care modules (they will contain "Acute Care" in the title)
- 2 modules of your choice

TIPS

- **Finishing a module is not the same as recertifying.** You will still need to use the online Recert application to officially tell PNCB that you want to apply a completed module to a recertification year.
- **Modules must be completed to count.** You must pass modules with a score of 70% or above.
- **If you complete PNCB's Pharm Pediatric Updates, they can count towards required pharm hours and toward your choice/elective modules.** This strategy allows you to address two requirements at the same time.

Your 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle

Although you will recertify with PNCB every year, to maintain your certification you will also complete **4 required PNCB Pediatric Updates and 15 hours of pediatric pharmacology** within a 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle assigned by PNCB.

The 7-Year Cycle does not mean you recertify every 7 years. See page 7 for more about required Pediatric Updates modules. Each year that you document contact hours from PNCB modules and pharmacology, those hours count toward the 15 contact hours needed for that year.

You are also allowed 1 Record Review Year in each 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle. Learn more about Record Review Year on pages 6 and 14. A new cycle begins every 7 years. [Log in to your Recert Dashboard](#) to see where you are in your current 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle. Here are suggestions on managing your 7-year cycle:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
<i>Get to know your Recert Dashboard early this year. Check it at least every spring. On this year's application, document 15 completed contact hours or other accepted activities.</i>	<i>Haven't started incorporating your 7-year requirements? Plan now to work some in next year. Be sure to have 15 contact hours of activity completed to document on this year's application.</i>	<i>On this year's application, PNCB recommends at least 1 required module be documented.</i>	<i>By now, PNCB recommends at least 2 required modules completed and about 8 hours of pediatric pharm completed.</i>	<i>At this point, PNCB recommends 3 required modules be complete. Pediatric pharm should be nearing 10 hours.</i>	<i>Are your 4 modules complete? Do you have a cumulative total of 15 peds pharm hours from any source PNCB accepts?</i>	<i>Already documented your 7-year cycle requirements? Consider documenting Record Review for Year 7 to save time and money.</i>

Details about Recert Methods

So how should you meet the 15-contact hour requirement each year? You can choose any PNCB accepted options as long as you also manage to complete and document your required 4 PNCB Pediatric Updates and 15 pharm hours per 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle. Policies for each method's activity are described on the pages that follow.

How you stay up to date during the year can often guide your choices. The purpose of recertification is to document the various ways you maintain current practice as a CPNP-AC. For example:

- Do you attend conferences or earn CE/CME online or at work?
- Do you work at least 200 or 400 direct patient care or indirect care hours in acute care pediatrics per year?
- Are you back in school seeking a higher nursing degree?

Activities must be:

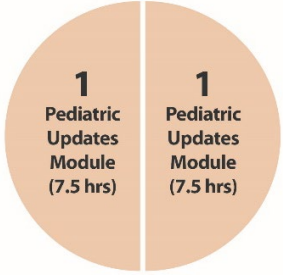
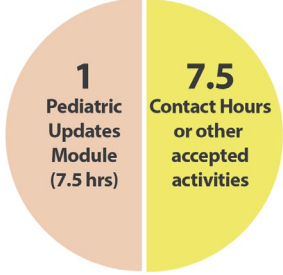
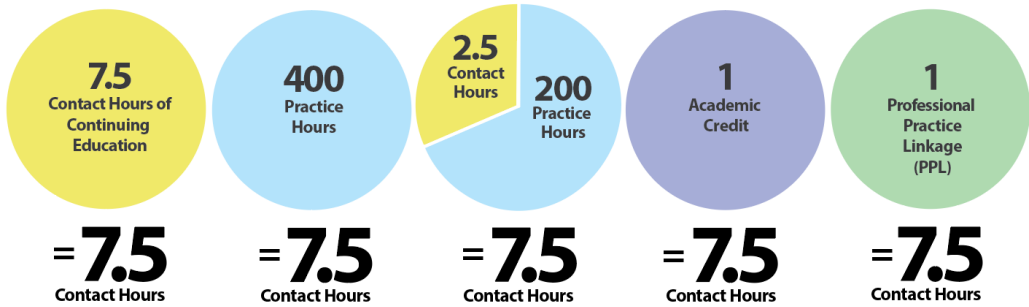

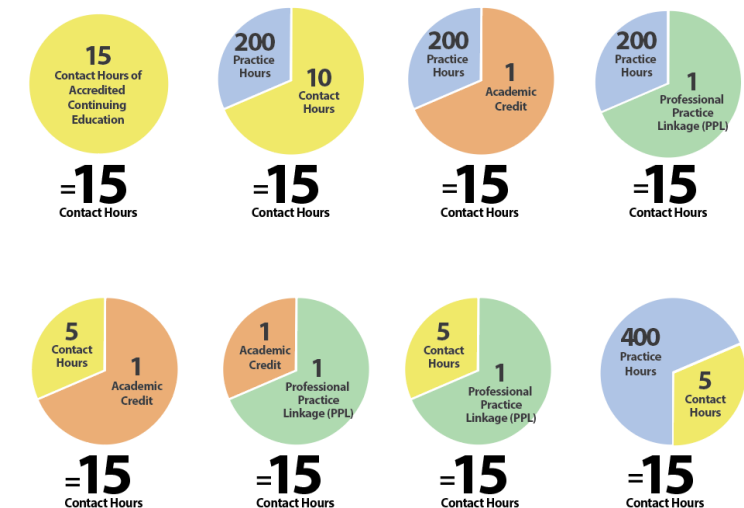

- Completed before you start the application.
- Meet all specific policies, including timeframe in which the hours were earned.
- Related to the CPNP-AC credential.

Tips:

- You do not have to use the same option each year.
- It doesn't matter to PNCB which accepted method you choose, as long as you meet 7-year cycle requirements.
- Early in the online application, PNCB will alert you to any completed date-valid Pediatric Updates. This will help ensure you apply those completed activities and receive credit.

RECERTIFICATION METHODS

The online application offers the following choices. *You will choose 1 method below.*

Choose 1 Method	Details
 <p>1 Pediatric Updates Module (7.5 hrs)</p> <p>1 Pediatric Updates Module (7.5 hrs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can apply a maximum of 2 modules per annual application. Completing modules is not the same as recertifying. You need to apply modules on the Recert application for them to count. Use your Recert Dashboard to track these requirements. The Dashboard shows statuses for the number and categories needed.
 <p>1 Pediatric Updates Module (7.5 hrs)</p> <p>7.5 Contact Hours or other accepted activities</p> <p>You have choices for the 7.5 contact hours. You will choose from combinations at right.</p>	 <p>7.5 Contact Hours of Continuing Education = 7.5 Contact Hours</p> <p>400 Practice Hours = 7.5 Contact Hours</p> <p>2.5 Contact Hours + 200 Practice Hours = 7.5 Contact Hours</p> <p>1 Academic Credit = 7.5 Contact Hours</p> <p>1 Professional Practice Linkage (PPL) = 7.5 Contact Hours</p>
 <p>15 Contact Hours or Accepted Equivalents</p> <p>You have choices for the 15 contact hours. You will choose from combinations at right.</p>	 <p>15 Contact Hours of Accredited Continuing Education = 15 Contact Hours</p> <p>200 Practice Hours + 10 Contact Hours = 15 Contact Hours</p> <p>200 Practice Hours + 1 Academic Credit = 15 Contact Hours</p> <p>200 Practice Hours + 1 Professional Practice Linkage (PPL) = 15 Contact Hours</p> <p>5 Contact Hours + 1 Academic Credit = 15 Contact Hours</p> <p>1 Academic Credit + 1 Professional Practice Linkage (PPL) = 15 Contact Hours</p> <p>5 Contact Hours + 1 Professional Practice Linkage (PPL) = 15 Contact Hours</p> <p>400 Practice Hours + 5 Contact Hours = 15 Contact Hours</p>
 <p>Record Review Year</p> <p>Application and fee still required. No other activity required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to you one time per 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle. To use this method, you still complete the Recert application to update your information. You pay a reduced fee, but do not document contact hours or other activity that year. You must be on track for 7-Year Cycle requirements. For example, you cannot use this method for Years 6 and 7 if you have not completed your 4 Pediatric Updates and 15 Rx hours.

Fees

Recert Method	Early Bird Cost Nov. 1 – 30, 2023	Cost Dec. 1, 2023 – Jan. 31, 2024	Late Fee Pricing Feb. 1-28, 2024
2 Pediatric Updates Modules	\$ 0	\$ 20	\$120
1 Pediatric Updates Module + 7.5 hours of accepted activity	\$45	\$ 65	\$165
15 contact hours of accepted activity	\$85	\$105	\$205
Record Review Year – allowed once per 7-year Recert cycle	\$65	\$ 85	\$185

Pediatric Updates

Developed by CPNP-AC and CPNP-PCs, Pediatric Updates are self-paced learning modules and a required component of your recertification. They feature updated knowledge of PNP practice.

Think of the modules as open-book evidence-based literature reviews. Collaboration is allowed.

- Each Pediatric Updates module consists of 35-40 questions that you answer online.
- You earn 7.5 contact hours accredited by NAPNAP each time you pass a module.
- These contact hours count toward the 15 contact hours needed each year.

Pediatric Update FAQs

What's included?	Log in and explore available modules for an overview of what references are included for each specific module. You also receive in-depth rationale for each question, plus you receive instant scoring after completion.
What's required?	In a 7-year period, you'll complete 2 Acute Care modules and 2 modules of your choice. For each of these required categories, you have topic choices. You must finish and pass a module (with a score of 70% or above) to be able to apply it to your Recert application.
How do I get them?	Log in here to explore and order modules. You can order year-round. Modules cannot be ordered on the Recert application with the promise to fulfill them in the future because the application requires you to document completed activities.
When should I order and complete them?	Ultimately you decide when to fulfill this requirement. Spring and summer are good times for many CPNP-ACs to complete them. Key points to remember are that you have 150 days from purchase date to complete a module and 24 months to apply it to a recertification application after completion. Note that the Recert deadline takes precedence over your module 150-day expiration date if you need or want to use the module on this year's Recert application.
How do I recertify with them?	After you pass a module, your CE certificate is processed within 72 hours and added to your ReCErt Tracker . When you return to the website between 11/1 and 1/31 (or between 2/1 and 2/28 with a late fee) to complete your online Recert application, PNCB prompts you to apply any modules you passed. You have 24 months from the date on your CE certificate to apply a module to a Recert application.
What if I don't pass?	You receive a free retest if you do not earn a score of 70% or above. Your certification has not lapsed if this occurs, but you must pass a retest to be able to apply the module to recertification. Allow 72 hours for retest processing.
What if I have a question?	For content related questions, contact ce@pncb.org . You will have access to technical support while your module is active

Accredited Contact Hours

Contact hours (also known as CE, CNE, or CME) are earned for participating in **accredited continuing education (CE) activities which you attend**. One contact hour is equivalent to a 60-minute educational program. Examples can include lectures, presentations, seminars, conferences, online education, grand rounds if accredited CE is awarded, journal activities, and in-services that award continuing education.



FAQs for Contact Hours

Are actual contact hours required? Not necessarily. You could use PNCB-accepted activities like practice hours, academic credit, and Professional Practice Linkages (PPL) to count as contact hours.

When do I need to earn the hours? Contact hours must have been earned **within 24 months** preceding your recertification application submission.

What content is accepted? Hours related to your certification specialty.

Do I need to send paperwork or CE certificates? Not unless selected for audit. PNCB is required to conduct random audits of Recert applications. If your application is selected for audit, you will be asked to submit all supporting documents. Please maintain copies of any supporting certificates and other documents for at least 24 months after you recertify to satisfy any audit requests. Annual audit takes place during April/May after recertification ends.

Can I use PALS, PEARS, or BLS? Hours from programs such as PALS, PEARS, Advanced Pediatric/Cardiac/Trauma Life Support, or Basic Trauma Life Support from the American Heart Association (AHA) or Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) or the Emergency Nurses Pediatric Course (ENPC) **are applicable only when earned from the initial course/certification, not a refresher course, and accredited contact hours are awarded for completion/attendance**. If audited, providing a PALS, etc. card is not acceptable documentation. Only a certificate acknowledging awarded contact hours for PALS, etc. is acceptable for recertification. The initial program may be applied to recertification only once.

What information do I type on the application? You will choose “Self-Reported” and type the name of activity, date contact hours were awarded, accrediting body, and number of hours.

Can I enter a single aggregate “lump sum” entry for UpToDate, Audio Digest, Prescriber’s Letter, etc. and conferences? Yes, however, if you are audited, you will need to provide your CE certificates and transcripts to document the pediatric content.

What accrediting bodies must award the hours? PNCB accepts continuing education contact hours accredited by the organizations on the next page, **among others**. The accrediting body will be listed on your CE certificate. PNCB reviews its list annually and has a process for adding new accredited CE providers.

What if the accrediting body on my certificate is not on PNCB’s list? If the organization that accredited or approved the hours is not listed below/on our online recertification application, email recert@pncb.org. You will be asked to send your CE certificate for review.

Tips

- Save time by preloading activity on the ReCErt Tracker any time of the year. If the CE is earned from PNCB, we will automatically load it for you, including the type after the CE activity is completed.
- Consider entering only the 15 hours required each year on the application.

Accepted CE Providers



- Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) - Category 1 - AMA
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
- American Association for Respiratory Care
- American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN)
- American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE)
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners
- American Heart Association (AHA)
- American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)
- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Association for Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN)
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
- Emergency Nurses Association (ENA)
- International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET)
- International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE)
- National Association of Neonatal Nurses (NANN)
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- National League for Nursing (NLN)
- Nurse Practitioner Associates for Continuing Education (NPACE)
- Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM)
- Society of Pediatric Nurses (SPN)
- State Boards of Nursing (SBN)
- State Nurses Associations (SNA)

What if the accrediting body on my certificate is not on PNCB's list?

Email recert@pncb.org. You will be asked to send your CE certificate for review.

The CE accrediting organization name is on the CE certificate, sometimes in fine print near the bottom. Look for language like "approved by," "accredited by," or "accredited per."

PNCB Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (Provider Number: A 01)
2101 Gaither Road, Suite 150 • Rockville, MD 20850
Phone: 1-888-641-2767 • Email: ce@pncb.org

By awarding the certificate, providers assure that the participant has successfully achieved the continuing education objectives of the program.

Name: _____
 National NAPNAP Member Number: _____ Nonmember: _____ RN State: _____ License Number: _____

Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Program Title: _____
 Program Date(s): _____
 Program Location (Facility, City, State): _____

Awarding Institution: NAPNAP 5 Hanover Square, Suite 1401 New York, NY 10004	Provider Information: Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PNCB) 2101 Gaither Road, Suite 150 Rockville, MD 20850 www.pncb.org Provider Number: A 01	Chapter/Agency/Program #: N/A
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This program is accredited for 0.0 NAPNAP CE contact hours of which 0.0 contain pharmacology (Rx) content, (0 related to psychopharmacology) (0 related to controlled substances), per the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners Continuing Education Guidelines.

Caroline Bauer
 Caroline Bauer, MSN, RN, CPNP-PC/AC, PNCB Credentialing Program Associate

KEEP THIS CERTIFICATE FOR YOUR RECORDS FOR SIX (6) YEARS. Request for duplicate certificates should be made to PNCB.

NAPNAP is approved by the Florida Department of Health, Division of Quality Assurance, BDN
 Accreditation (CE Provider) _____ per the California Board of Registered Nurses Provider Number F0816700

This program is accredited for 0.0 NAPNAP CE contact hours of which 0.0 contain pharmacology (Rx) content, (0 related to controlled substances), per the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners Continuing Education Guidelines.

Pharm-specific Contact Hours

Pediatric Pharmacology Hours:

CPNP-ACs are required to complete 15 contact hours of accredited pediatric pharmacology within each 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle.

Are actual contact hours required?

Yes. These hours can come from any accredited source that PNCB accepts.

See the previous page for a list of commonly used accrediting organizations.

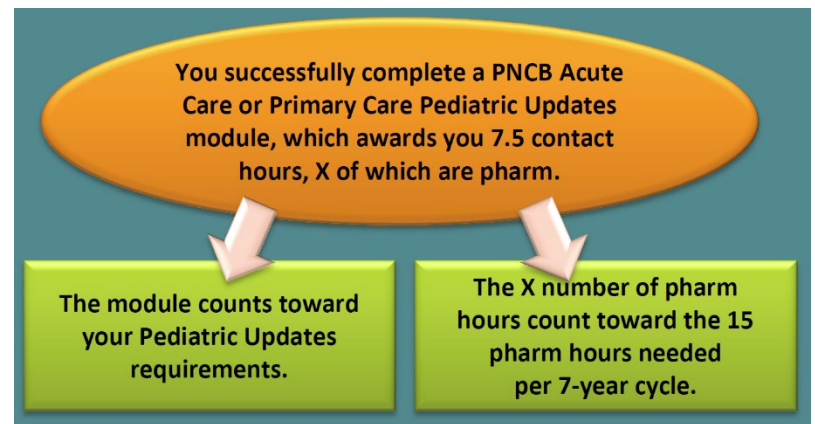
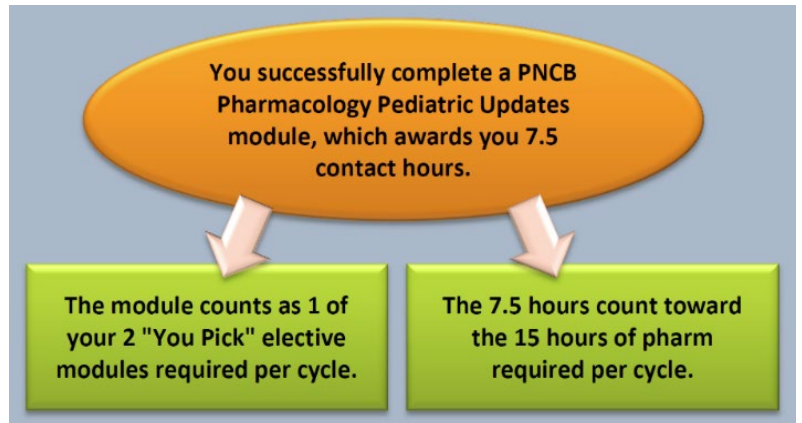
When do I need to earn the hours?

You decide when to complete these hours during each 7-Year Tracking Cycle but be sure to document any hours on a Recert application within 24 months of earning them.

PNCB's Pharmacology Pediatric Updates

If you complete these modules, each will count toward your elective module requirement and toward your pharm hour requirement.

These scenarios at right can help you maximize the activities you complete.



Practice Hours

Can count for a maximum of 10 contact hours – not required to recertify



Practice hours include **direct or indirect care** of the pediatric population that relates to your certification specialty, whether paid or volunteer hours. Documenting practice hours can be helpful when you do not have a chance to earn enough contact hours to recertify. Practice hours must have been completed while holding active licensure for the state/territory in which the hours were performed.

- **Direct care** involves “hands-on” care of patients.
- **Indirect care** includes nursing roles that impact patient care and influence nursing practice through management, teaching, research, or consultation.

How Practice Hours work:

- A minimum of 200 hours in the past 12 months counts as 5 contact hours
- A minimum of 400 hours in the past 12 months counts as 10 contact hours

You can combine practice hours with other PNCB-accepted activity to meet the 15 contact hours requirement. Here are some scenarios you could use:

- 200 practice hours + 10 accredited contact hours = 15 hours for that year
- 400 practice hours + 5 accredited contact hours = 15 hours for that year
- 200 practice hours + 1 academic credit = 15 hours for that year
- 200 practice hours + 1 Professional Practice Linkages = 15 hours for that year

Options for Practice

If Non-faculty

- ✓ May be direct “hands-on” assessment/clinical management of pediatric populations - **OR** -
- ✓ May be management of other acute care advanced practice nursing personnel or students (NP or CNS) to help achieve patient care goals (precepting does not count here; it’s in the PPL category on pages 12-13) - **OR** -
- ✓ May be consultation or clinical education

If Faculty (Including adjunct)

- ✓ May be direct supervision of acute care pediatric clinical hours with advanced practice nursing students in acute care (NP or CNS) - **OR** -
- ✓ May be teaching class time that awards accredited academic credit to advanced practice nursing students

If Research (Faculty or non-faculty)

- ✓ May be IRB research related to the certification specialty for which you are a primary researcher does not need to be a primary component of your employment

FAQs for Practice Hours

Are practice hours required? No. Practice hours are optional.

Can I double practice hours? You can document a maximum of 400 hours (counts as 10 contact hours). The option for 600 hours included on the ReCert Tracker is for a different certification (Pediatric Primary Care Mental Health Specialist) and cannot be used for CPNP-AC.

How recent must the hours be? Worked **within 12 months** preceding your Recert application submission.

Do I need to send paperwork? Not unless selected for random audit.

What information do I type on the application? You will be asked to describe practice hours as 200 or 400 hours at (employer or organization name) and provide start and end dates.

Professional Practice Linkages (PPL)

Can count for a maximum of 10 contact hours



PPL activities contribute to professional growth and development. Categories accepted by PNCB are:

- Authorship
- Poster
- Lectures or Presentations
- Precepting
- Committees
- Quality Improvement Projects
- Nursing Awards

Specific policies are described on the next page.

Teaching and IRB research projects are considered Practice Hours activities. See the preceding page for details.

How PPL works:

You can count PPL as 10 contact hours and combine them with 5 contact hours of other PNCB-accepted activity to meet the requirement of 15 hours per year. **Here are 4 examples.** The next page explores accepted PPL activities.

- 1 PPL + 1 academic credit = 15 hours for that year
- 1 PPL + 5 accredited contact hours = 15 hours for that year
- 1 PPL + 200 clinical practice hours = 15 hours for that year

FAQs for Professional Practice Linkages

Is PPL required? No. PPL is optional.

How many contact hours does a PPL activity equal? PPL equals 10 contact hours toward recertification.

Can I use more than 1 PPL? No. A maximum of 1 PPL per annual CPNP-AC recertification application is allowed.

How current must the PPL be? The activity must have been accomplished **within 24 months** preceding your recertification application submission.

Do I need to send paperwork? Not unless selected for random audit.

What information do I type on the application? You will be prompted for dates and the following:

- Authorship, posters, lectures, or presentations:** Type title. Date is published date.
- Precepting:** Type 80 hours at (employer/institution name).
- Committee membership:** Type name of committee/task force and the name of state or national organization.
- Quality Improvement Project:** Type name of project at (employer/institution name).
- Nursing Award:** Type the name of the award and the name of the organization granting the award.

What Counts for PPL

Type of PPL	What's Accepted
Authorship	Peer-reviewed journal article, textbook contributions, or teaching aids for patients and families related to your certification specialty. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Any page length. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May be co-authored. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unpublished or published Doctoral dissertation/capstone project or Master's thesis completed will also be accepted, if not part of the education that allowed you to meet CPNP-AC exam eligibility requirements.
Poster	Scholarly poster presentation selected for conference or hospital presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Related to your certification specialty.
Lecture or Presentation	<i>Use PPL specifically for non-academic Settings (e.g., conferences). For academic settings, faculty count classroom lectures as Clinical Practice (pg. 11).</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Related to your certification specialty. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sponsored by employer or a membership or an educational organization. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At least one hour in length. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included learning objectives and a reference list. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A specific lecture cannot be used more than once for PPL credit. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In addition, this option must have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awarded CE to attendees or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included education materials created for public education or patient/family teaching.
Preceptor Hours	A minimum of 80 hours completed in the past 24 months prior to Recert enrollment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level-appropriate: CPNP-ACs must precept graduate PNP or FNP students with a focus on mastery of acute care pediatric clinical content. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed while holding active licensure for the state/territory in which the hours were performed. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not include orientation of new employees to hospital/employer policies and procedures. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preceptor hours cannot also be used as a clinical practice option for Recert.
Committee Membership	Local, state, or national level as an officer or committee task force member. Also accepted: review and editorial board membership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Related to your certification specialty. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PNCB committee members receive CE and discounted recertification fees for volunteering and therefore cannot also apply PNCB activity to the committee PPL option.
Quality Improvement Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A minimum of 10 hours of your involvement in the project. Not required to be a primary project lead but must have held a significant role. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Must be involved in the entirety of the project from conception through completion. Completion is defined as one complete cycle from conception to initiation, implementation, measurement of outcomes, and re-evaluation/future initiatives. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project must have been completed in the past 24 months prior to Recert enrollment. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A project previously submitted for PPL, either as a publication or poster presentation, cannot be used again for QI PPL. Conversely, QI PPL cannot be duplicated as a publication or poster presentation for another Recert application.
Nursing Award	A national or international award. Examples of awards or organizations granting eligible awards include but are not limited to the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP), Daisy, GEM, Nightingale, PNCB, Magnet Nurse of the Year, Society of Pediatric Nurses (SPN). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Related to your certification specialty.

Academic Credit

Can count for a maximum of 10 contact hours



Academic credit is coursework **taken by you** relevant to your certification specialty whereby **you earned a grade** from an accredited institution/college/university.

How academic credit works:

You can count academic credit as 10 contact hours and combine it with any other accepted activity equaling 5 contact hours (5 accredited contact hours, 200 clinical practice hours, or ½ PPL) to meet the requirement of 15 hours per year. **Here are the 3 scenarios you could use:**

- 1 academic credit + 5 accredited contact hours = 15 hours for that year
- 1 academic credit + 200 clinical practice hours = 15 hours for that year
- 1 academic credit + 1 PPL = 15 hours for that year

Restrictions:

- ✗ Cannot be the same credit that allowed you to meet CPNP-AC exam eligibility requirements.
- ✗ Cannot be the same credit applied in a previous year.
- ✗ Adult continuing education at colleges or universities are to be counted as contact hours, not as academic credit.

FAQs for Academic Credit

Is academic credit required? No. Academic credit is optional.

How many contact hours does academic credit equal? PNCB equates 1 semester or quarter hour of academic credit to 10 contact hours when you combine it with accredited contact hours or clinical practice. Academic credit is 5 contact hours with Professional Practice Linkages (PPL).

How current must the academic credit be? Academic credit must have been awarded by an institution within 24 months preceding your recertification application submission. **However, it cannot be the same credit that allowed you to meet CPNP-AC exam eligibility requirements.**

Do I need to send paperwork? Not unless selected for random audit.

What information do I type on the application? You will be asked to enter course name, institution name, credit hours, and date completed.

Record Review Year

Can equal 15 contact hours for 1 Recert application per 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle



The Record Review Year option is available to you one time during each of your 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycles. This option allows you to review and update your information with PNCB and maintain your certification. To use Record Review Year, you will still complete the online Recert application to update your information. You pay a reduced fee, but do not document contact hours or other activity that year.

Is it required? No. Record Review Year is optional once per 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle.

Do I need to do anything to use this option? Yes. To use Record Review Year, you will still complete the online Recert application to update your contact and license information plus other demographic data. You pay a lower fee.

Record Review Year continued

Why use it? Documenting a Record Review Year is helpful if a major life event occurs or when you are unable to complete contact hours or other activity that PNCB will accept.

Can I use a Record Review Year even if I have not met my Pediatric Updates requirements? Maybe. It depends on where you are in your 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle. You are required to complete 4 Pediatric Updates (2 Acute Care and 2 of your choice) and 15 pharmacology hours for your 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle to remain certified.

Example 1: A CPNP-AC needs to recertify for Year 6 and still has not completed any of his 4 required PNCB Pediatric Updates modules to fulfill his 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle. He would not be able to use the Record Review Year option for Years 6 or 7. He would need to successfully document the modules (documenting 2 completed modules per each remaining year of that cycle).

Example 2: A CPNP-AC needs to recertify for Year 2 and has not completed any Pediatric Updates, but a major issue has happened in her life. She is early enough in her cycle to use Record Review Year and still meet her requirement of 4 Pediatric Updates.

Does using this option impact board of nursing verification? No. If a CPNP-AC recertifies using the Record Review Year option, your board of nursing or any third-party verification requestor receives the standard primary source verification of certification information. The words “Record Review Year” do not appear in verification documentation.

Tools

Recert Dashboard

[Log in](#) to check your status of all required modules and pharmacology hours, basic policies, and a snapshot of past application activities. This tool also tracks the once-per-7-year use of the Record Review Year option.

ReCErt Tracker

[Log in to pre-load](#) completed activities and save time on the Recert application. PNCB’s Pediatric Updates, Free CE, and Alternative CE modules automatically load for you when your CE certificate is processed.

- **Note that you will be asked to enter your license information on the actual Recert application.**
- Use the Applied Points column to see the number of hours applied toward a past Recert. If no number is listed, hours may be available to apply. Check Completed Date to confirm they will not expire before you submit your Recert application.

Tips: Before Recertifying

Content Must Relate to Your Certification Specialty

All PNCB-accepted activity, including PNCB’s own Free CE, Alternative CE, and Pediatric Updates CE modules must relate to your certification specialty if you want to apply the contact hours toward Recert.

Complete Activities *Before* Recertifying

When you start the online application, you will be asked to document completed activities. You cannot document activities that are incomplete or scheduled for the future.

Need Contact Hours?

Pediatric Updates and free or low-cost CE is available in your PNCB portal’s Marketplace. PNCB’s website offers links to other respected free or low-cost CE sources. Be sure that the content of the activity is accepted for your recertification.

Preload Completed Activities

While you are not required to use your *ReCErt Tracker*, it can save you time on the online application. This tool can also be used for personal recordkeeping because you can track activities not used for recertifying. You can even upload documentation there. PNCB's Pediatric Updates and Free CE modules are loaded for you automatically after your CE certificate is processed. **Do not manually enter completed PNCB's Pediatric Updates or other PNCB modules as continuing education.**

Tips: Using the Online Recert Application

Find the Application

Log in to the PNCB portal at <https://mypncb.pncb.org/pncbssa>. You will also find the portal login link at the upper right of the PNCB website.

Device Compatibility

The application works best with a PC, and we do not guarantee compatibility with iPads, iPhones, Kindles, or other devices. Contact website@pncb.org for technical assistance. We will respond during normal office hours.

Dates

You recertify using an online application at www.pncb.org during open enrollment between November 1 and January 31. You can recertify with a late fee between February 1 and February 28. You pick the day and time to recertify during the open enrollment timeframe.

Have Any Paperwork Handy

Gather CE certificates not issued by PNCB and not yet added to your ReCErt Tracker and allow approximately 15 minutes to complete the online application.

Check the Boxes

After you enter activity on the Recert application (or if you see preloaded activity from your ReCErt Tracker), you will need to check the boxes to the right of the activity to apply it on the application.

Restarting an In-Progress Application

If you start an application but don't finish it, your submittals grid will guide your next step.

- **Click the "Click to View" link unless your application is expired.** If an application is in progress, you may see a status of pending, No Pass, No Pay, or checkout, etc. Return to your in-progress application by clicking the blue phrase "Click to View" at the far right of the final line item.
- **Expired status?** An application expires in 10 days if you don't complete it. If the application has expired, create a new one with the lower right blue button.

How Do I Know I Recertified?

PNCB Email

You will receive an email from PNCB confirming successful recertification. PNCB sends these on a weekly basis.

Your Emailed Receipt

After payment and submission of your application, look for your receipt email. If you do not see it within 24 hours, check your spam inbox. Not there? Log in to your portal and view your Message History Report. Here you can print a receipt. Not there either? Contact recert@pncb.org.

Your Updated Wallet Card

Your online wallet card is always available online. It is updated immediately after your application is submitted. A good time to print or download a copy of your updated card for your records is right after recertifying. Log in to your PNCB [portal](#) for this documentation.

Other Ways to Know

In your PNCB [portal](#), your Recert Dashboard will be updated, and the ReCErt Tracker will reflect applied activity. You also would not be able to start another Recert application until the next November 1.

Verification for Boards of Nursing

Each Board of Nursing has on-demand access to a verification of certification portal. Boards will continually be notified to log in and view the current recertification information for nurses who are licensed in their state and have recertified. State Boards of Nursing you list on your Recert application receive verification at no cost to you.

- If you need additional verifications sent to employers, additional boards, or a new board, order verifications in [your portal](#).
- Additional verifications (e.g., to employers or to a new state board not listed on the application) are \$60 each. Fees are subject to change without notice. Check www.pncb.org for current costs.

Benefits & Discounts

Thank you for maintaining your certification with PNCB! Log in to your PNCB portal at <https://mypncb.pncb.org/pncbssa> to [see all benefits and discounts](#).

Planning to Retire?

Read about how to officially [retire your certification](#) so we can remove you from recertification reminders and send you a letter thanking you for your years of service to children and families.

Audit

PNCB is required by our accreditor to randomly audit recertification applications. PNCB will notify you if selected and inform you of how and when to submit supporting documentation. If your record is audited, you will be required to submit supporting documents, such as a copy of the completion CE certificate(s) showing the dates, title, number of contact hours, sponsoring organization, etc. In addition, you may be required to provide evidence of the applicability of the program/course to your certification. Non-compliance with audit may affect your certification. Annual audit takes place during April/May after recertification ends.

Appeals

An appeals process is available to those who wish to contest an adverse decision or proposed action affecting their application for certification, exam results, or recertification. Decisions made by PNCB during the appeals process are final. [See Appeals Procedures](#).

Ethics

To support excellence in nursing practice, PNCB requires that every nurse certified by this organization will uphold and adhere to the [Certificant Code of Ethics](#). In addition to addressing patient care, respect, and safety, the Certificant Code of Ethics states that you cannot falsify information provided to PNCB or act dishonestly concerning PNCB exams and recertification. This includes disclosure of exam content to candidates. Protect your certification by adhering to the Certificant Code of Ethics.

Assistance & FAQs

Contact PNCB any time of the year for questions about recertifying. Our office hours are Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Eastern Time. [See holiday closings](#).

Recertification	recert@pncb.org
Pediatric Updates and CE content	ce@pncb.org
Verifications	verif@pncb.org
Web Technical Support	recert@pncb.org

Can I recertify if I no longer hold a license?

No. A current, active, unencumbered RN or RN/APRN license is always required to maintain certification. You must immediately report to PNCB if your license is ever lapsed, suspended, revoked, or encumbered in any way. Changing the status of your RN license (or APRN if you do not hold a separate RN license) to 'inactive' will result in the immediate expiration of your CPNP-AC certification.

If a conference awards me more than 15 contact hours, can I use the remaining hours next year?

Yes. Hours can be used the next year provided they were earned within 24 months preceding your recertification application submission.

Why are Pediatric Updates required to be completed before I recertify? This policy aligns with all other PNCB documentation strategies for recertification enrollment: all activities must be completed before you can use them to recertify.

What if I will be seeking Primary Care PNP certification as well? CPNP-ACs who later earn Primary Care Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner certification will enter the dual CPNP-AC/PC recertification program the calendar year after passing the CPNP-AC exam. Dual CPNP-AC/PC certification saves you time when filling out the recertification application and reduces costs. You will start a new 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle that includes both certifications. You will have 2 additional Pediatric Updates to complete per cycle. Review [Dual AC/PC recertification](#) information on the web to learn more.

What if I hold both CPNP-AC and Certified Pediatric Nurse (CPN) certification?

You will need to fulfill both your CPN and your CPNP-AC annual and 7-Year Recert Tracking Cycle requirements to maintain both certifications. Recertification programs are consistent with the professional scopes and standards of practice for roles. Dually certified CPN/CPNP-ACs must demonstrate continuing competency for both roles. PNCB recognizes that some individuals may want to maintain both certifications and has **reduced the cost** to maintain the CPN certification. For additional information about appropriate continuing education, please review the [online FAQs](#).

Visit PNCB's website for [additional FAQs](#). Thank you for recertifying!