



Community Health Aide Program Certification Board

Authorized by Alaska Area Native Health Service

Administered by

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

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February 1, 2022

RE: Important Notice for CHAP Program Supervisors Regarding Standard Changes to CHAPCB Standards and Procedures Section 2.50.200 Requirements for Renewal.

Dear CHAP Director:

The Community Health Aide Program Certification Board believes that clinical competency is vital to providing high quality healthcare in remote Alaska. Periodically, the Board reviews CHAPCB Standards & Procedures to ensure that they align with the goals and best practices of the program. Recently, the CHAPCB determined, after extensive consideration of Community Health Aide Program stakeholder input from the CHAP Academic Review Committee, CHAP Training Center Coordinators, and Alaska Association of CHAP Directors, that a change was needed to CHAPCB Section 2.50.200 to ensure that all Community Health Aides, regardless of certification level, complete a standardized biennial competency evaluation.

On January 13, 2022, the Community Health Aide Certification Board approved the following change to **Section 2.50.200 Requirements for Renewal**:

Sec. 2.50.200. Requirements for Renewal. (amendments are underlined)

(a) A certified community health aide, community health practitioner, dental health aide, or behavioral health aide or practitioner applying for certificate renewal shall:

- (1) apply on a form provided by the Board;
- (2) pay the application fees required by the Board;
- (3) provide evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant has met the continuing education requirements of the Board;
- (4) provide evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant continues to demonstrate the practical professional competencies required for the level of certification sought;

(A) for a community health aide or community health practitioner, a re-entry evaluation, following CHAP guidelines, will be conducted for an applicant who has not been employed in direct patient care for a minimum of 80 hours with a minimum of 30 patient encounters in the six months prior to submission of the application;

(B) for a community health aide or community health practitioner, a biennial clinical competency evaluation will be conducted

- (5) continue to meet the requirements of chapter 2 [certification of CHA/Ps, DHAs, & BHAs]; and
- (6) if seeking recertification as a community health practitioner, no less often than once every six years, the individual must re-satisfy the requirements of section 2.20.500 [CHP training & education requirements]; or

(7) if seeking recertification as a dental health aide therapist practitioner, no less often than once every six years, the individual must re-satisfy the requirements of section 2.30.700 (3) and (4) [DHATP training & education requirements].

WHAT THIS CHANGE MEANS

As a Community Health Aide (CHA/P) progresses through basic training, there is a standardized process to document clinical competence as they learn and hone their clinical skills. However, outside of the basic training structure, there is not a standardized process to document clinical competence for any:

- a) CHA/P seeking certification unable to complete at least one basic training session within the preceding two years
- b) CHA/P seeking certification who completed basic training more than two years prior to recertification, and
- c) CHP seeking recertification with completion of preceptorship more than two years prior to recertification.

While each THO is required to maintain the competency of their health aides, and attest to this fact when submitting renewal certification paperwork to the board, there is significant variability in how this competency is assessed and documented across organizations. To ensure that all certified CHA/Ps receive a standardized clinical competency evaluation every two years prior to recertification, the board worked closely with stakeholders to create a formal process known as the Biennial Skills Evaluation. The biennial skills evaluation will require the CHA/P to demonstrate, under supervision, their competency to perform a list of required skills for their corresponding certification level(s) and maintain documented completion of this assessment.

EXAMPLES OF WHEN A BIENNIAL SKILLS EVALUATION IS REQUIRED

I have a health aide that recently completed a basic training session and field training and is ready to apply for the next level. Do they have to complete an additional biennial competency evaluation prior to applying for their certification?

No. As long as they have completed all post session learning needs within the two-year recertification period, they do not need to complete a biennial competency evaluation.

I have a health aide who is certified as a CHA III in 2021, but has not been able to attend Session IV. Will they need to complete a biennial competency evaluation if they cannot complete the Session IV training prior to recertification?

Yes. Anyone, including a CHA/P who remains at one certification level for more than 2 years or a CHP whose last preceptorship was completed more than two years ago, who needs to renew their CHAPCB certification, must complete a formal biennial skills evaluation as part of the recertification process.

WHEN DOES THIS CHANGE GO INTO EFFECT?

You will have one year to implement these changes within your Community Health Aide Program. Any CHA/P renewing their board certification during the 2022 calendar year *will not* be required to complete a biennial skills evaluation, but it is recommended you start the process as soon as possible. Beginning January 2023, the Biennial Skills Evaluation will be a requirement for certification.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

With this letter, you will find attached the instructions for completing the Biennial Skills Evaluation with CHA/Ps in your organization and the required *Biennial Skills Evaluation Checklist* form that Field Instructors, Training Center Instructors, or Supervising Providers will use to complete this competency evaluation every two years. This information will be available

on akchap.org (hyperlink will soon be available).

We feel this change will only strengthen the Community Health Aide Program and ensure that our Native People and other Alaskans living in remote communities continue to receive the highest quality of health care available.

Sincerely,



Steve Daniel, MD
CHAP Certification Board Chair



Carolyn Craig, PAC-, Director, ANTHC CHAP CHAPD
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CC: THO CEO