Program Guide

REV. 2026 01 16

For questions about AMIA Health Informatics Certification

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Statement of Non-Discrimination

AMIA does not discriminate against individuals with respect to age, sex, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, or any other characteristic, class, or status protected by law. Reasonable and consistent use of non-discrimination and impartiality policies and procedures apply to all certification program processes, to include application, assessment, ACHIP eligibility requirements, and business operations. AMIA complies with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Version

The original version of this guide was approved by the AMIA Health Informatics Certification Commission and AMIA Certification Department in April 2021.

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About the *AHIC Program Guide*

This guide provides information on how to apply for and maintain AMIA Health Informatics Certification (AHIC). The sections that follow provide an overview of the AHIC program, outline steps for pursuing AHIC, present key AHIC policies, and include links to related documents. The most current version of this document supersedes any previous versions and can be found at www.AMIA.org/AHIC.

It is essential that AHIC applicants and diplomates are aware of the policies that affect their application and ongoing certification. AHIC applicants should read this handbook prior to submitting an AHIC application. AMIA certification staff are available to answer your questions. Email is the most efficient method of communicating with us: certification@amia.org.

Acronyms and Definitions

AHIC™: AMIA Health Informatics Certification

ACHIP™: AMIA Certified Health Informatics Professional

HIPEC™: Health Informatics Professional Emeritus Certificate

HICC: Health Informatics Certification Commission

Applicant: an individual who submitted an application for certification

Candidate: an individual who received confirmation of AHIC eligibility

Diplomate: an individual who has earned the ACHIP credential and meets criteria for recertification

Certification: A process by which individuals who have demonstrated the level of knowledge and skill required in the profession, occupation, or role are identified to the public and other stakeholders (ICE Handbook, 2nd Edition).

Recertification: Requirements and procedures for certified individuals must meet to ensure continuing competence and renew/maintain their certification.

AMIA's Commitment

For over 35 years, American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) members have been leading the effort to transform healthcare through informatics practice, research, and education. AMIA is committed to advancing the field, supporting informatics professionals, and promoting informatics best practice to assure that health data and information technology are used most effectively to promote health and health care.

AMIA established the AMIA Health Informatics Certification (AHIC) program to address the needs created by the growing number and expanding role of health informaticians and the concomitant increased impact of their work in healthcare delivery, public health, and consumer health.

AMIA seeks to provide a customer-focused certification process that meets the highest standards for certification program quality as defined by certification program accreditation criteria (i.e., *National Commission for Certifying Agencies*). AMIA established the Health Informatics Certification Commission (HICC) to manage the program with impartiality and objectivity. The HICC is independent and autonomous with respect to certification and recertification decisions, policies, and procedures. To ensure the integrity of the AHIC certification program and its exams, there is a firewall between the HICC and certification staff (on one side of the firewall) and AMIA education staff, Education Committee members, course developers and instructors, and the Board of Directors (on the other side of the firewall).

AHIC Overview

The AHIC Program Mission

The AHIC Program is dedicated to enhancing and promoting the health informatics profession by providing the premier health informatics credential program. The AHIC program accomplishes this mission by establishing standards for professional practice; creating a fair, valid, and reliable examination process by which professionals can demonstrate their knowledge and skill; granting certification to those who meet the program's standards; and communicating the value of the credential to employers and other key constituencies.

AHIC was created by and for health informaticians. AHIC enables health informatics professionals to demonstrate competence and commitment to excellence. It is intended for individuals seeking to document mastery of health informatics knowledge and readiness to apply this knowledge to real world healthcare challenges. AHIC provides health informatics practice benchmarking and competency criteria that support health informatics professionals and organizations that hire them. Further, by supporting the use of best health informatics practices, AHIC is expected to strengthen the healthcare system and protect public safety.

AHIC is intended for professionals who

- come from a range of educational and training pathways including, but not limited to, dentistry, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, public health, health informatics, and computer science
- use informatics concepts and tools to design solutions to complex problems or identify opportunities for improvement in health care, public health, or consumer health at the individual, unit, organization, or system level
- have health informatics experience that includes critical thinking and analysis; independent decision-making; project management; managing personnel, resources or partner relationships; leading or supporting teams; policy development; or strategic planning

AHIC assesses competence of health informatics professionals whose work may impact organizational performance or affect public safety. As a result, the AHIC program emphasizes operational, rather than research-focused dimensions of informatics.

The AHIC process involves 3 major elements -- eligibility determination, examination to assess competence, and recertification requirements. Pursuant to best practice, the 2019 Health Informatics Practice Analysis and resulting Health Informatics Delineation of Practice underpin AHIC eligibility criteria and the *AHIC Outline of Exam Topics*. An individual who meets the AHIC eligibility criteria, passes the AHIC exam, and fulfills recertification requirements is known as an AMIA Certified Health Informatics Professional or ACHIP™.

Figure 1 summarizes the steps to become certified. The remainder of this guide describes the policies and procedures associated with these steps.

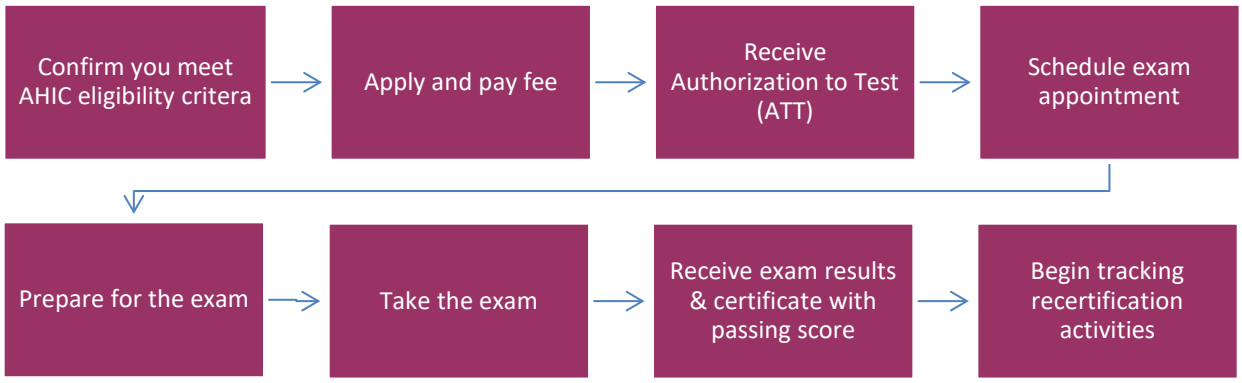

Figure 1. Key Steps for AHIC Applicants and Candidates

AHIC Benefits

For Diplomates

The AHIC program (i.e., becoming certified as an ACHIP) provides objective, third-party validation of mastery of health informatics and demonstrates expertise to employers, patients, grantors, publishers, students, and other stakeholders. AHIC signals commitment to maintaining professional competency, continuous learning, and adhering to professional standards.

Achieving AHIC is a significant accomplishment that distinguishes ACHIPs from other health informatics professionals. AHIC conveys dedication to practice excellence and signals the knowledge and skills needed to drive healthcare improvement and innovation through safe and effective use of health information and information technology.

AHIC recertification ensures that diplomates maintain professional competency and acquire new skills. Thus, AHIC diplomates are able to effectively apply health informatics expertise to current and emerging health care challenges.

For Other Stakeholders

AMIA designed AHIC to:

- Contribute to public safety and well-being through the certification of health informatics professionals who are capable of
  - enhancing organizational performance and positively impacting individual and population health
  - avoiding costly and potentially harmful adverse effects associated with implementation and use of health information systems
- Support employers by defining the standard for health informatics practice and highlighting the types of skills AHIC diplomates can bring to an organization
- Provide guidance to future or emerging health informatics professionals on the education and experiences that will prepare them for more advanced roles

Eligibility Requirements

There are two dimensions of AHIC eligibility – a degree in health informatics <u>or</u> a related field <u>and</u> "qualifying" health informatics experience. The amount of required experience is determined by type of degree.

"Qualifying" experience includes work that aligns with *AHIC™ Outline of Exam Topics [Appendix A]*. Qualifying experience may be gained prior to the completion of the qualifying graduate degree. Finally, qualifying experience must have occurred within the past 6, 8, 10, or 12 years, depending on the eligibility route. Table 1 summarizes AHIC Eligibility Criteria.

Table 1: AHIC Eligibility Criteria

Track	Academic Degree	% Work Time in Health Informatics	Qualifying Health Informatics Experience
1	Master's or doctoral degree **in health informatics or a degree with a focus in informatics** from an accredited program, college, or university *Examples of qualifying degrees include (but are not limited to) those associated with: Clinical informatics, consumer health informatics, public health informatics, clinical research informatics, or translational bioinformatics*	50%-100%	4 years within the past 6 years
		20%-49%	6 years within the past 8 years
2	Master's or doctoral degree in a **health informatics related field** from an accredited program, college, or university *Examples of qualifying degrees include (but are not limited to): Dentistry, Nursing, Medicine, Nutrition, Computer and Information Science, Pharmacy, Public Health, Biomedical and Software Engineering, and* ***other health professions***	50%-100%	6 years within the past 8 years
		20%-49%	8 years within the past 10 years
3	Baccalaureate degree in **health informatics** or a Baccalaureate degree in a **health informatics related field** from an accredited program, college, or university *Examples of qualifying degrees include (but are not limited to): Dentistry, Nursing, Medicine, Nutrition, Computer and Information Science, Pharmacy, Public Health, Biomedical and Software Engineering, and* ***other health professions***	50%-100%	8 years within the past 10 years
		20%-49%	10 years within the past 12 years

Note: Individuals who do not work 100% in health informatics and whose other responsibilities comprise clinical or public health practice will bring their health informatics knowledge and skills to their other roles, and their health informatics work will be informed by their other roles. Therefore, there is a rational basis for using a prorated approach for counting years of service for individuals who do not work 100% in health informatics.

Outside-the-USA Applicants

Applicants who reside, work, or were educated or trained outside-the-USA and who satisfy the other eligibility criteria will be eligible for the AHIC certification program.

The AHIC exam is based on the scope of practice of health informatics professionals within the USA, having been derived from the Heath Informatics Delineation of Practice that emerged from a survey of health informatics professionals that included few outside-the-USA respondents. Thus, the exam will contain items that are specific to health informatics practice within the USA, such as US law related to health informatics.

The exam fees for applicants residing outside-the-USA will be slightly higher than the fees for applicants residing within the USA, to cover the higher costs of shipping certification recognition materials (certificate hardcopy, etc.).

Steps to Certification

The following steps outline the process to apply, prepare for, and earn the ACHIP credential.

Step 1: Confirm your eligibility.

Review AHIC eligibility criteria to determine if you meet the eligibility requirements. AMIA offers free eligibility reviews as part of the application process. The eligibility review request includes information about your education and qualifying health informatics experience.

After submitting an eligibility review request, monitor your email for confirmation of eligibility or requests for additional information about your education or experience

Please allow up to 30 business days for the eligibility check to be completed.

Step 2: Apply and pay examination fee.

Once your eligibility is confirmed, you will receive an email with instructions on completing the AHIC application. While completing the certification application, applicants will document their commitment to the *AMIA Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct*. After your application is confirmed to be complete, you will receive a link to pay the examination fee.

Step 3: Monitor your email for an Authorization to Test (ATT) Notice.

Once the exam fee payment is received, eligible candidates **receive an Authorization to Test (ATT) Notice** via email, which will include an Eligibility ID number and instructions on how to schedule an exam appointment on the date and time of the candidate's choosing (subject to availability at the selected test center). **Candidates have 6 months (180 days) from the date of the ATT Notice to take the exam**.

Step 4: Schedule the AHIC exam.

Candidates schedule the certification exam using the details provided in the ATT Notice. Candidates should schedule in advance to obtain a preferred testing date and time, as exam appointments are first-come, first-served.

Step 5: Prepare for the exam.

Taking a professional certification exam should be approached thoughtfully and with care. The *AHIC List of Suggested References* aligns with the body of knowledge necessary for health informatics professionals.

Step 6: Take and pass the AHIC exam.

Candidates receive exam results via email from the test delivery provider within a few hours of completing the exam. Candidates who pass the exam subsequently receive an official certificate (digital and hardcopy), digital badge, and (magnetic) lapel pin celebrating their success. Candidates who do not pass the exam may retake it for a reduced, retake fee.

The AHIC Application

The AHIC application is accessed online from the AMIA website. The application includes three primary sections – education, experience, and agreement to follow the AMIA Code of Ethics. To reduce burden on applicants, AMIA will accept unofficial documentation of graduation and the applicant's attestation of employment for determination of eligibility. Additional information may be requested if questions arise during the application review. Further, as noted below, official transcripts and confirmation from employers will be needed for applications selected for audit. AMIA membership is not required for eligibility for the AHIC exam.

Please note: The name on the AHIC application must exactly match the name listed on your valid, government issued ID. If a name change occurs after submitting an application, please provide the supporting documentation to certification@amia.org.

Application Audits

AMIA audits at least 10% of all AHIC applications. Applicants randomly selected for audit will be asked to provide additional documentation in support of the application. This documentation may include an official transcript for the qualifying degree, attestations to work experience from supervisors, and/or other clarifying information.

Exam Accommodations

In compliance with the provisions of the US Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) and Title VII of the US Civil Rights Act, as amended (42 USCG 2000e, et seq.), AMIA's HICC provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to qualified candidates who supply appropriate documentation, to ensure that all eligible candidates have the opportunity to take the AHIC certification exam on an equitable basis, in a manner that fairly assesses each candidate's competency on an even playing field with all other eligible candidates. The HICC follows the *Principles of Fairness* set forth by the Institute for Credentialing Excellence.

An applicant requesting special accommodations must do so in writing by completing the *Request for Special Accommodations Form*. The request must include BOTH proper documentation from a licensed professional or certified specialist who diagnosed the condition (*Documentation of Disability-Related Needs Form*) AND the specific accommodation(s) being requested. These forms can be downloaded as part of the application process.

Accommodations, if approved, will be provided at no additional charge. AMIA certification staff will review the request and provide a response in writing to the applicant along with the eligibility determination. If the applicant has been deemed eligible, the Authorization to Test (ATT) notice will include the accommodations that have been approved.

All special accommodation forms and related documentation are confidential and will not be released to any parties outside of AMIA staff, contractors and certification partners, and relevant volunteer leaders (e.g., HICC or Appeals Committee members) without the written consent of the applicant. See *Appendix B* for further details and the *Special Accommodations Form*.

Preparing for the Exam

The AHIC certification exam is based on the *AHIC Outline of Exam Topics*, which is rationally based on the results of the *Health Informatics Practice Analysis Study* performed by AMIA and facilitated by ACT ProExam in 2019.

Individuals come to the health informatics field in a variety of ways (e.g., from a formal informatics education, from a clinical or public health background, from a computer science background), therefore assessing one's personal experience in and knowledge of the health informatics field should be the first step in preparing for the exam.

AMIA suggests that candidates review the *AHIC Outline of Exam Topics*, which helps identify the skill areas in which to concentrate one's studies. Once gaps are identified, there are several ways to improve knowledge and skills:

- Identify someone whose job role may be different but covers the topical areas in which you need to improve and ask to shadow this professional.
- AMIA (and other related organizations) offers online and in-person training courses that may assist in filling your knowledge gaps.
- Form a study group with other AMIA members or colleagues from your organization.
- Identify a mentor in the field who is willing to guide your preparation for the exam.

Please Note: The AMIA Health Informatics Certification Commission does not approve, endorse, or require for eligibility use of any specific exam preparation products.

The AHIC Exam

The AHIC exam is a multiple-choice exam consisting of 150 items, each of which consists of a stem (question) and three answer options. All 150 exam items are scored. There is no negative scoring (incorrect answer options are worth zero points, rather than detracting from the candidate's exam score—so guessing when uncertain of the correct answer is better than leaving an answer blank).

Candidates have 4 hours to complete the exam. Exam results are emailed from the test delivery provider to the candidate (typically within several hours of exam completion), along with an overview of the candidate's performance in each of the exam's top-level domains. For exam security purposes, candidates will not be informed of which specific exam items were answered correctly or incorrectly, and scores are reported using a scaled score format rather than a raw score format.

Scheduling the Exam

Candidates can schedule an exam appointment as soon as the ATT notice has been received. The exams are administered at secure, computer-based test centers around the world through our test delivery partner, Pearson Vue. To ensure exam security, there are multiple, equated exam forms, the items within each exam form are presented to each candidate in random order, and the test centers operate under strict security protocols. For a full list of test center locations and additional information about testing, please visit www.pearsonvue.com.

Exam Eligibility Extensions

If a candidate is unable to test during the initial 180-day exam eligibility period, the candidate may request a one-time exam eligibility extension for a $150 fee.

Only ONE exam eligibility extension may be requested by a candidate; second requests will not be granted. The extension request can be made at any time between the date of the candidate's ATT notice and the last day of the exam eligibility period. The candidate must request an extension in writing via email to certification@amia.org. The candidate **must cancel** any previously scheduled exam appointments **directly with the exam delivery provider** to take advantage of this option, and all rescheduling or cancellation fees apply.

Extensions of exam eligibility and associated fees are non-transferrable.

Failure to Schedule an Exam Appointment

If a candidate does not schedule an appointment for, or take the exam during, the original 180-day exam eligibility period for which he or she was approved, and the candidate does not request an extension before the last date of the original eligibility period for which he or she was approved, the candidate forfeits the exam fee in its entirety.

Candidates who subsequently wish to re-apply will need to submit a new application and pay the then-current fees to continue their pursuit of certification. Such re-applications will be subject to all eligibility criteria in effect at the time of the new application.

Cancelling or Rescheduling an Exam

Once deemed eligible, candidates have 6 months (180 days) to take and pass the exam. Candidates may reschedule their exam 5 days or more before their scheduled exam date without paying additional fees.

It is mandatory that candidates who need to cancel or reschedule their exam FIRST make those arrangements directly with the exam delivery provider (via the contact information provided in the ATT notice) and THEN notify AMIA of the change via email to certification@amia.org. Only the candidate may request a cancellation, regardless of whether the exam fee was paid by the candidate or another party.

The exam delivery provider is unable to honor cancellation or rescheduling requests received fewer than five (5) days prior to a scheduled exam appointment. Exams cancelled or rescheduled fewer than five (5) days before the scheduled exam appointment result in the candidate forfeiting all fees; if there is still time within the exam eligibility period, the candidate may pay the retake fee to reschedule the exam.

Failure to Appear for a Scheduled Exam

If a candidate fails to appear for the scheduled exam appointment, the candidate forfeits all fees. If a candidate arrives late for a scheduled exam appointment, admission to the test is at the discretion of the Test Center staff. Candidates arriving late may not be allowed to test, in which case all fees will be forfeited, and the candidate will need to pay the retake fee to reschedule the appointment.

Refunds will not be given to candidates who fail to appear or arrive late for their exam appointments for any reason.

Exigent Circumstances

If a candidate is unable to keep an exam appointment due to an exigent circumstance that arises within the five (5) days prior to the scheduled exam appointment, the candidate is required to submit a formal request to reschedule due to exigent circumstances, accompanied by supporting official documentation, by email to certification@amia.org in order to avoid forfeiting fees. This information must be received by the AMIA Certification Department within seven (7) calendar days after the candidate's scheduled exam appointment. The following exigent circumstances will be considered if appropriately supported by official documentation:

- Emergency room visit or hospitalization
- Severe medical condition requiring non-elective hospitalization (of the candidate or the candidate's spouse, child or other legal dependent, parent, grandparent, or sibling)
- Death of an immediate family member (the candidate's spouse, child or other legal dependent, parent, grandparent, or sibling)
- Jury duty
- Active military duty

In summary: Candidates who do not schedule and take an exam—and fail to request an extension—within the 180-day exam eligibility period, and candidates who cancel within five (5) days of the scheduled exam appointment or fail to show up on time for a scheduled exam appointment—and do not provide sufficient official documentation of an acceptable exigent circumstance (at the sole discretion and interpretation of AMIA's certification department staff)–will forfeit all fees.

What to Expect on Exam Day

Please arrive at the test center 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment time. This will give you adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late for

your appointment, you may be refused admission, and the exam fees will be forfeited.

You will be required to present one form of original (no photocopies), currently valid (unexpired), government-issued ID that includes your name, photograph, and signature. The first and last name that you used to register must match exactly the first and last name on the ID that is presented on test day; if there is a difference between your first and last name as they appear on your ATT Notice and as they appear on the ID that you will present on test day, please contact the AMIA Certification Department immediately at certification@amia.org.

If your name on your ID does not EXACTLY match the name provided in your exam application, you will not be allowed to test, will be considered a no-show and will forfeit all fees, and will have to pay the retake fee to reschedule your exam.

All IDs required must be issued by the country in which you are testing; alternatively, if you do not have a qualifying ID issued from the country in which you are testing, an International Travel Passport from your country of citizenship is required. If possible, please bring a second government identification (that matches the same requirements as the primary ID) to your exam appointment, in case there is an issue with your primary identification.

Test Center Security

Please be prepared for a high-security test delivery environment. This means all personal items must be locked in a locker for exam security purposes, so please limit what you bring to the test center. Security procedures are strict and are designed to minimize the risk of cheating and protect the intellectual property of exams being administered.

Candidates will need to empty their pockets, remove all outerwear and bulky clothing that might conceal illicit items, register fingerprints, and be scanned with a metal detector or other body-scanning or detection devices, at the discretion of the test center staff.

Candidates will not be permitted to bring into the exam room any reference materials, notes, dictionaries, language translation dictionaries or devices, cellular telephones or smartphones, PDAs, computers or tablets, calculators, cameras, video cameras, scanners, digital watches or smart watches, or other electronic or communications devices, weapons of any kind, outerwear (coats, etc.), jewelry (other than wedding and engagement rings), or handbags. We do suggest dressing in layers to allow for variations in room temperature. No food or drink will be allowed in the test center (unless authorized in writing by AMIA in advance, in accordance with the Exam Accommodations procedures).

For additional details on the security procedures at the exam delivery provider's test centers, please visit www.pearsonvue.com.

Dismissal from the Testing Center

The proctor may dismiss you from the exam for any of these reasons:

- Unauthorized admission to the exam

- Creating a disturbance or being abusive or otherwise uncooperative
- Bringing unauthorized electronic devices including cellular/smart phones, other handheld computers, calculators, pagers, alarms, and other signaling or recording devices
- Bringing notes or other resources into the testing center
- Attempting to record test questions or make notes
- Attempting to take the exam for someone else
- Giving or receiving help or being suspected of doing so
- Leaving the test center during the exam administration

If you are dismissed for any of these violations, your exam score will be voided, and your fees will not be refunded. Evidence of misconduct will be reviewed by the HICC Discipline Committee to determine whether you will be allowed to reapply for the exam. If a re-exam is granted, a complete application and fee are required to reapply.

Misuse/Disclosure of Exam Content

Any individual who removes or attempts to remove materials from the testing center, or who receives, discusses, discloses, reproduces, distributes, displays or otherwise misuses a test question or any part of a test question from a certification exam 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, will be subject to legal action and monetary damages.

Any candidate or diplomate who engages in such improper behavior may also face denial or revocation of eligibility for certification or denial or revocation of certification.

Exam Scores

One point is granted for each correct answer. There is no penalty assessed for an incorrect answer; points are scored only for correct answers.

The “cut score” (passing point) for the examination has been set according to accepted practices for standardized testing. The modified Angoff method was utilized to set the exam’s cut score. This is a common testing and measurement technique, through which a panel of subject-matter experts determine the difficulty of each exam item and recommend the cut score based on the expected performance of a minimally qualified candidate. The HICC Cut Score Task Force performed this type of formal cut score study and recommended the exam’s cut score, which was subsequently considered and recommended by the HICC Exam Committee, and then was considered and approved (as originally recommended by the Cut Score Task Force of subject-matter experts) by the HICC.

There are 150 multiple-choice questions on the AHIC exam, all of which are scored. Exam scores are reported to candidates as scaled scores ranging from 0 to 800 (rather than as raw scores). Candidates must achieve a scaled score of 600 or higher to pass the AHIC™ exam.

To support ongoing professional growth and help direct continued studies, score reports provide a dashboard summary of the candidate’s performance in each of the major content areas of the exam—but

for exam security purposes, the score reports will not indicate which specific exam questions the candidate answered correctly or incorrectly.

Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy

AMIA understands that security and protection of privacy are necessary in a credentialing process. The utmost care is taken to ensure all applicant, candidate, and diplomate documentation, including application status and examination scores, remains confidential. No information about candidate files is shared with individuals or organizations outside of AMIA staff, AMIA certification and test delivery and digital badging contractors, or HICC or Appeals Committee members without express written permission.

The certification application stipulates that data provided by or obtained from an applicant may be used for research purposes, and submission of the application authorizes such use of the data. The use of applicant, candidate, diplomate, or past diplomate data for any research project, study, or activity would have prior approval from the HICC or AMIA Board of Directors.

Individual examination score report data is retained in a candidate's (or diplomate's or past diplomate's) file. Access to the individual-specific information in the file is restricted to members of the HICC, authorized AMIA staff and certification contractors, and AMIA research and evaluation consultants, except where the individual provides a written request for distribution of information to another agency, individual, or organization. Aggregate (de-individualized) data may be used by AMIA for any purpose without written permission of each candidate / diplomate / past diplomate.

Names, geographic locations, organization names, and email addresses of individuals who have earned the AHIC certification and whose certification is currently active (and who have opted in through or after the certification application process) shall be available to the public via the online Certification Directory, through AMIA's digital badging provider, or through inquiry to AMIA staff or certification contractors. This publicly available information shall be limited to confirming an individual is "currently certified" or individual is "not certified". The Directory contains the most recent employer, email address, and location listed in the diplomate's AMIA website user profile.

Candidates', diplomates', and past diplomates' contact information (other than what is mentioned above) is not published by AMIA. Any further details regarding an individual's certification status are only released upon receipt of a release signed by the diplomate about whom information is being sought. Upon receipt of the signed release, AMIA may release the following information for diplomates whose ACHIP credential is currently active:

- Name of the individual
- Name of the designation
- Initial certification date
- Certification expiration date

Confidential information that will not be released, even if a signed release is provided, includes: Names of candidates for certification who have not yet passed the exam; names of individuals who were not successful on the examination; information regarding past diplomates whose ACHIP credential has expired; and individual exam scores.

If AMIA receives a lawful subpoena or court order to release applicant, candidate, diplomate, or past diplomate information, it will comply with that order, regardless of candidate release or general policy to the contrary. In other words, compliance with applicable law supersedes AMIA policy.

If formal disciplinary action is taken by the AMIA HICC against an applicant, candidate, diplomate, or past diplomate (such as suspension or revocation of the credential), that disciplinary action may be made public, at the discretion of the AMIA HICC.

Re-Examination

Candidates who do not achieve a passing score are permitted to retake the exam. The exam may be retaken as many times as necessary during a two-year period.

Candidates' certification eligibility determination remains valid for a two-year period following the date of the original ATT notice. If you do not pass the exam successfully within the two-year period, you must re-apply as a new applicant (and pay the then-applicable exam fee, rather than the retake fee). All required documentation will need to be submitted and eligibility determined.

Exam Retake Fees (AMIA Member or nonmember): USD 503 per retake

Official Notice of Certification

Within 15 business days after achieving a passing score on the exam, candidates receive official notice via email of having successfully earned certification as an AMIA Certified Health Informatics Professional (ACHIP). Following this notification, diplomates may add the ACHIP designation to their email signatures, social media, and business cards.

After you receive notice of successfully passing the exam, AMIA will provide you with a variety of materials to help you promote your certified status. This includes:

- A hardcopy certificate noting your achievement;
- A digital copy (PDF) of your certificate;
- A digital badge for use across social media platforms or to embed in your email signature;
- A sample press release to help make sure your colleagues and community know of your achievement;
- The opportunity for AMIA to notify your employer of your achievement;
- An ACHIP lapel pin;
- Inclusion in the ACHIP Directory on the AMIA website.

Please note: Use of the ACHIP™ certification mark, logo, spelled-out words ("AMIA Certified Health Informatics Professional"), or digital badge must be in accordance with the Use of the ACHIP™ Certification Mark Policy, found at the end of this Candidate Guide.

Recertification Requirements

Maintaining AHIC™ requires diplomates (i.e., AMIA Certified Health Informatics Professionals™ or ACHIPs™) demonstrate ongoing commitment to enhancing their health informatics competence. Diplomates must successfully complete a recertification process every **four** years. ACHIP status and all entitlements therein, including the use of the designator of ACHIP, shall cease upon failure to complete the recertification process within established deadlines.

To maintain AHIC, ACHIPs must meet requirements in two areas:

1. Active Practice
2. Professional Development

ACTIVE PRACTICE

Active Practice is comprised of sustained effort in one or more of the following roles:

- performing, directing, or managing health informatics activities, tasks or processes
- teaching health informatics (HI)
- conducting health informatics research

The Active Practice section of the Recertification Application requires documentation of HI employment that averages at least 20% of the recertification period, and is to include:

- job title(s)
- job description(s): responsibilities and a detailed description of duties as types of functions performed
- dates of position(s)
- percent effort devoted to informatics in each position

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development encompasses activities that enable an ACHIP to maintain and expand HI knowledge and skills. The Health Informatics Certification Commission (HICC) recognizes two categories of qualifying professional development activities and assigns Professional Development Units (PDUs) to these activities as outlined in the tables below.

Category 1: health informatics coursework/continuing education activities that align with the AHIC Exam Outline

Category 2: health informatics scholarly activities/professional service, beyond the scope of the diplomate's primary work role, that advance or serve the field and provide opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills for HI practice

ACHIPs must earn **60** Professional Development Units (PDUs) during the 4-year recertification period. ACHIPs are encouraged to build a balanced portfolio of recertification activities by

- accruing credits in both categories; and

- ensuring that educational experiences address multiple areas of the AHIC Exam Outline.

To meet the intent of ongoing education in this rapidly evolving field, it is strongly recommended that PDUs be earned throughout the 4-year Recertification Cycle.

Activities that are part of normal job duties **are not considered professional development activities;** for example, individuals whose health informatics responsibilities include training other staff on the use of an organization's electronic health record system may not claim the time spent doing so as a professional development activity. Similarly, paid faculty teaching a course may not claim that time as a professional development activity. Activities that contribute to the advancement of the field such as the publication or presentation of research results, peer review, or service on informatics-related organizations qualify for AHIC professional development.

The Recertification Application requires diplomates provide detailed documentation of the activity, including type (i.e., webinar, CE class, article review, service on national committee, etc.), title, date, and description. Diplomates must also identify which domain from the AHIC Exam Outline most closely relates to the activity.

Diplomates should retain supporting documentation such as transcripts, certificates, receipts, etc. in the event the application is selected for an audit.

As an alternative to accruing 60 PDUs during the 4-year certification period, diplomates may retake and pass the AHIC exam within the last year (365 days) the certification is valid as a way of demonstrating they have maintained health informatics competence.

CATEGORY 1: Health Informatics Coursework/Continuing Education Activities

	Activity	PDUs
1.1	**Completion of university graduate courses that offer academic credits, including AMIA 10x10 Virtual Informatics Education**	**5 / course credit hour earned**
1.2	Audited university graduate courses	3 / course credit hour completed
1.3	Continuing education activities such as sessions at informatics scientific meetings and conferences, webinars, or other formal educational opportunities associated with an educational institution or recognized professional association, including NLM, HL-7, SNOMED, etc. Note: Training or educational activities that focus solely on vendor specific content or intended as a "sales pitch" do not qualify for AHIC professional development. If a vendor-organized educational activity offers continuing education credit, the activity will qualify for AHIC professional development.	1 / contact hour
	Recertification Application Documentation Required: Title of course, program, or conference and session title(s); dates; sponsoring organization; credits, if applicable.	

	Audit: If a recertification application is selected for an audit, the diplomate will be required to submit supporting documents such as transcripts or receipts.

CATEGORY 2: Health Informatics Scholarship/Professional Service

	Activity	PDUs
2.1	**Development and presentation of original work in the field of health informatics**	
2.1.1	Speaker at a conference or educational program	1 / 20 minutes of podium time
2.1.2	Panel moderator or participant at a conference or educational program	1 / 60 minutes of podium time
2.1.3	Participant in demonstrations, connect-a-thons, hack-a-thons, and showcases	1 / 20 minutes of demonstration time
2.1.4	Guest lecturer for a college / university class	1 / 20 minutes of podium time
2.1.5	Unpaid faculty for HI course at an accredited college or university	5 / credit hour offered by the course
2.1.6	Author or co-author of content for e-learning or other media presentations	1 / 20 minutes of presentation time
2.2	**Development and publication of original work in the field of health informatics**	
2.2.1	Author or co-author of book	20 / book
2.2.2	Editor or co-editor of book	10 / book
2.2.3	Author or co-author of book chapter	4 / chapter
2.2.4	Author or co-author of article published in peer-reviewed journal	4 / article
2.2.5	Contributing author of an article published in peer-reviewed journal	2 / article
2.2.6	Article published in professional newsletter, white paper, report, guideline, working paper, government document, evaluation, op-ed, etc.	1 / article
2.2.7	First author for a poster presentation at a national or international conference	2 / poster
2.2.8	Contributing author for a poster presentation at a national or international conference	1 / poster

2.2.9	Editor-in-chief, editor, or associate editor of a peer-reviewed journal (If serving in these roles, no credits may be claimed for review of articles for the journal)	15 / year
2.2.10	Special issue or guest editor of a peer-reviewed journal (If serving in these roles, no credits may be claimed for review of articles for the journal)	5 / issue
2.3	**Peer review in the field of health informatics**	
2.3.1	Peer-reviewed journal Editorial Board or Editorial Advisory member	3 / year
2.3.2	Peer reviewer of a submitted journal article	1 / article reviewed
2.3.3	Invited reviewer of grant proposal or report	2 / proposal reviewed (Max: 16 credits over the 4-year recertification cycle)
2.3.4	Peer reviewer for professional society conference submissions	1/ 4 submissions reviewed
2.4	**Professional service in the field of health informatics**	
2.4.1	Elected or appointed position of a recognized national or international HI organization (non-governmental)	10 / year
2.4.2	Elected or appointed position of a recognized regional or local HI organization or a specialty section of an HI-related organization (non-governmental)	5 / year
2.4.3	Elected or appointed member of a committee for a recognized HI professional organization (non-governmental)	3 / year
2.4.2	Volunteer member of a working group or committee for a recognized HI professional organization (non-governmental)	1 / year
2.4.5	Appointed member of a federal or state government HI advisory group or committee	8 / year
2.4.6	Volunteer consultant (i.e., officially recognized volunteer subject matter expert contributing to completing scope) for NIH or other grant	1/ 16 hours of service
2.4.7	Formal preceptor for practicum that is documented via an agreement	3 /student

2.4.8	AHIC™ certification exam Item Writer	1 / 5 submitted draft exam items (Max: 10 credits over the 4-year recertification cycle)
2.4.9	AHIC™ Ambassador	1 / year
	Recertification Application Documentation Required: Appropriate to PDUs for activity being claimed (e.g., title, dates, role, time involved, organization). **Audit:** If a recertification application is selected for an audit, the diplomate will be required to submit supporting documents such as: a copy of presentation slides, abstract, letter inviting the diplomate to speak, or evidence demonstrating that the diplomate presented; a copy of the claimed publication; a letter attesting to the claimed service, with a description of how this service demonstrates the diplomate's enhancement of HI knowledge, skills, or abilities.	

Recertification Schedule

There will be two recertification application windows each year.

Individuals who choose to recertify via professional development units (PDUs) must submit the recertification application prior to the end of their certification period per the schedule below.

Individuals recertifying via examination must take and pass the AHIC examination prior to the end of their recertification period per the schedule below.

During the recertification application window, ACHIPs will use the Recertification Portal to complete the Recertification Application.

ACHIPs are considered "provisionally recertified" upon submission of the Recertification Application and payment of the Recertification Fee. ACHIPs will be notified when their Recertification Application has been verified and their new certification period begins.

Recertify by PDU

Current Certification Expiration Date	Recertification Application Window Opens	Recertification Application Due Date	New Certification Period Begins*
January 1 to July 30	January 15	June 1	July 30
August 1 to December 31	August 1	December 1	January 30 (the following year)

*Pending staff confirmation of Recertification Application

Recertify by Exam

Current Certification Expiration Date	Recertification Application Window Opens	Authorization to Test Issued Following Submission of Application*	Deadline to Take and Pass AHIC Exam	New Certification Period Begins**
January 1 to July 30	January 15	Within 15 business days	July 15	July 30
August 1 to December 31	January 15	Within 15 business days	December 15	January 30 (the following year)

*Pending staff confirmation of Recertification Application
**Pending passing the AHIC Examination

Alternatives to Recertification

Inactive Status

The HICC recognizes that in some instances, active practice in health informatics may not be possible due to personal, professional, or economic factors. Inactive status is available for a total of up to two (2) years (at any one time or across multiple instances during a single recertification period). To apply for inactive status, diplomates must complete an ACHIP Inactive Status Request and pay the USD 99 inactive-status fee. Inactive status applications must be received prior to the end of the recertification period for the request to be honored. Diplomates who stop working in health informatics and wish to keep their ACHIP designation should apply for inactive status immediately to pause the Active Practice "clock"; once approved, Inactive Status is effective as of the date indicated on the application.

Diplomates may reactivate the status of their ACHIP credential (unpausing the Active Practice clock) at any time up to two (2) years after having applied for inactive status, by completing an ACHIP Reactivation Request. Upon reactivation, the date for recertification will be updated to reflect the length of the inactive status period (e.g., inactive for 6 months, clock extended 6 months). After 2 years, inactive status automatically ends, and the Active Practice clock resumes.

Health Informatics Professional Emeritus Certificate™ (HIPEC™)

Diplomates who are no longer actively working in health informatics and intend not to return to work in the field may exchange their ACHIP credential (ACHIP-a credential with recertification requirements) for a Health Informatics Professional Emeritus Certificate™ (HIPEC™-a certificate with no recertification requirements), by paying a one-time fee of USD 998 (equal to two cycles of recertification fees).

Former AHIC diplomates who have exchanged their ACHIP credential for the HIPEC certificate may not continue to use the ACHIP designation or certification mark(s). If an individual exchanges the ACHIP credential for a HIPEC certificate, then returns to work in the health informatics field and wishes to earn the ACHIP credential again, that individual would need to

1. submit a new AHIC application and exam fee;
2. meet the then-current eligibility requirements; and
3. pass the then-current AHIC exam to re-earn the ACHIP designation.

AHIC Fees

Current AHIC exam and recertification fees are published on the AHIC website.

All fees are non-refundable and non-transferrable under any circumstances. Please refer to relevant sections of this guide for additional information.

AHIC Applicant, Candidates, and Diplomate Responsibilities

- Applicants attest to their commitment to the AMIA Code of Ethics as part of the application process.

- Applicants, candidates, and diplomates are responsible for updating their online profiles and notifying AMIA of changes to their contact information. Failure to keep AMIA informed of current contact information (including but not limited to email address) may result in non-receipt of important information such as application status, exam results, or recertification information.

- Certification expires automatically at the end of each four (4)-year certification period. It is the diplomate's responsibility to renew his or her certification before it expires—even if recertification notices are not received by the diplomate.

- Recertification is required for continued use of the AMIA Certified Health Informatics Professional™ (ACHIP™) credential and its associated certification marks (logo, spelled-out title, and acronym). Diplomates who allow their certification to expire (or from whom the certification is suspended or revoked) may not represent themselves as being certified as an ACHIP™.

Appeals Process

The HICC makes every attempt to make fair and accurate decisions based on the information provided by applicants, candidates, and diplomates. An appeals procedure is available to those who wish to contest any adverse decision related to his or her initial certification eligibility, exam accommodations, exam exigent circumstances, or recertification.

The HICC Appeals Committee will review appeals of adverse certification decisions from ACHIP certified individuals ("diplomates"), individuals whose ACHIP credential has expired ("past diplomates"), applicants for AHIC certification ("applicants"), and applicants who have been deemed eligible but have not yet passed the AHIC examination ("candidates"). Parties other than those listed here have no standing to file an appeal of an adverse certification decision.

Candidates are permitted to appeal an adverse certification decision on the grounds that AMIA certification staff or the HICC did not properly apply published certification eligibility criteria or that the decision was based on a factual error that affected the outcome. Adverse certification decisions include: Denial of eligibility for initial certification, denial of exam accommodations, rejection of claimed exigent

circumstances as an excuse for failing to appear for a scheduled exam appointment, and denial of recertification. Sanctions imposed by the HICC's Discipline Committee have a separate appeals policy and procedure, as described in the Complaints and Discipline section of this Certification Guide.

No appeal may be taken from an adverse decision based on an individual's incomplete application or receipt of a failing score on an AHIC examination, absent extraordinary circumstances, as determined solely by the HICC.

Individuals cannot appeal (1) the AHIC exam's cut (passing) score or actions taken in setting the cut score; (2) the AHIC program's eligibility criteria; (3) AHIC exam items; or (4) AHIC exam content validity.

The forms, content, scaled score conversion table, answer keys, and results of AHIC examinations are privileged, confidential, trade secret, and proprietary information. Due to the importance of exam security and intellectual property protection, none of that information will be disclosed or made available for review by candidates or by any other party other than AMIA certification staff and contractors, the HICC (and subordinate committee) members, and AMIA's test development and delivery vendor(s).

Upon receipt of the notice of an adverse decision, the applicant, candidate, diplomate, or past diplomate has the right to submit a written appeal to the HICC Appeals Committee within fifteen (15) calendar days after the date the notice of the adverse decision was issued by AMIA, by emailing certification@amia.org. Any individual who does not file an appeal within the required time limit shall permanently waive the right to appeal.

In the written appeal, the appellant shall detail the nature of the request for appeal, the specific facts and circumstances supporting the request, and all reasons why the action or decision should be changed or modified. The appellant has the burden of producing any documentation necessary to support the appeal. The applicant shall bear the burden of proving that the adverse decision was based on AMIA certification staff or the HICC improperly applying published certification eligibility criteria or that the adverse decision was based on a factual error that affected the outcome.

Appellants shall receive notification of the results of the appeal within fifteen (15) business days after AMIA receives the written appeal. Should the appellant not be satisfied with the decision rendered by the HICC Appeals Committee, the candidate may submit a secondary, written appeal to the HICC itself within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date of the initial appeals decision notice, by emailing certification@amia.org. Any individual who does not file a secondary appeal within the required time limit shall permanently waive the right to appeal.

The HICC will review the secondary appeal and accompanying documentation and will make a de novo determination.

Secondary appellants will be notified of the HICC decision within forty-five (45) business days after AMIA receives the written secondary appeal. The HICC decision is final and cannot be further appealed. The full policy and procedure guide for the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee can be viewed on the AMIA website.

Send all appeals to certification@amia.org.

Records Retention Policy

AMIA institutes best practices with regards to retention, security, and disposal of paper and electronic records received from applicants and diplomates. These practices are reviewed regularly and may be modified at any time by AMIA at its sole discretion for compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, including EU GDPR.

Certification records are considered confidential information, and include but are not limited to academic transcripts, continuing education documents, education records (FERPA), financial data, personally identifiable information (PII) / unique identifiers as defined by HIPAA, and personal data as defined by EU GDPR. Data from paper records may be entered into the AMIA database (the repository for all pertinent and associated information) and other management systems, documents, spreadsheets, and files. This information becomes a permanent electronic record and will be used by AMIA for purposes of managing the applicant's or diplomate's (or past diplomate's) certification-related activity and to market AMIA products and services (including but not limited to education, communities, career centers / job boards, directories, conferences and events, and recertification) to the individual whose data is being stored by AMIA.

All documents submitted for application, initial certification, or recertification become the property of AMIA. Individuals should retain copies of their records for personal use. AMIA is under no obligation to return or issue copies of these documents for future use by an applicant, diplomate, or past diplomate. Failure to submit required documentation or fees will delay the review and approval of an application for initial certification or recertification.

Policy on Use of the Certification Mark

This policy is applicable to all individuals certified by AMIA.

An individual who applies to the AMIA Health Informatics Certification™ (AHIC™) program, meets the eligibility requirements of the AHIC™ program, and passes the AHIC™ exam is certified by AMIA as an AMIA Certified Health Informatics Professional™ (ACHIP™).

The ACHIP™ designation is a certification mark (trademark) in the United States of America, and its use is protected by applicable trademark law in the USA and in other countries and jurisdictions.

AMIA and its HICC grant limited permission to individuals who have satisfied all of the AHIC program eligibility criteria, passed the AHIC exam, received notification by AMIA that they have successfully earned the certification and may use the ACHIP designation, and maintained the certification in compliance with the recertification requirements.

This limited permission allows only individuals whose certification is currently in good standing (not expired, exchanged for the HIPEC™ certificate, suspended, or revoked) to use the designation as part of the diplomate's professional title. Diplomates who are on official "inactive status" may continue to use the ACHIP™ designation until the expiration date of their certification.

Proper uses of the designation include:

- Signatures
- Business cards
- Letterhead
- Directory listings
- Social media profiles
- Marketing materials (e.g., press releases, ads, etc.)

Acceptable examples:
Jane J. Torres, ACHIP™
Jane D. Jones, ACHIP™, Ed.D.
Jordan Doe, Ph.D., ACHIP™

Use of the ACHIP™ designation by individuals whose certification is not currently in good standing (e.g., have not been granted certification by AMIA, have failed to properly maintain certification (periodically recertify), or have had the certification suspended or revoked) is strictly prohibited. The AHIC program certifies individuals, rather than accrediting organizations, so it is prohibited for an organization to describe itself (i.e., the organization) as ACHIP certified—even if that organization employs individuals who are ACHIP diplomates. Improper use of the designation or certification mark (trademark) may result in disciplinary, civil legal, or criminal legal action.

All AHIC applicants, candidates, and current diplomates have an affirmative responsibility to report in a timely manner any misuse, unauthorized use, or other violation of this Policy to AMIA via email to certification@amia.org. This reporting responsibility includes any circumstance in which the ACHIP™ certification mark is used by an individual who is not an ACHIP diplomate in good standing (or is used by any entity other than an individual), and where the certification mark is used improperly by an ACHIP diplomate. Suspected improper use of the ACHIP™ designation should be reported via email to the AMIA Certification Department at certification@amia.org.

A report of improper use must include a copy of the materials showing the misuse (e.g., a copy of a CV, email signature line, business card, online profile, etc.). The complainant must include his or her name and contact details when lodging a complaint, and the complainant's identity will likely be disclosed to the individual alleged to be misusing the certification mark, within the context of a due process resolution of the complaint.

Within ten (10) business days after receipt of a report of suspected misuse, AMIA certification staff will verify the current certification status of the individual reported to have been misusing the designation. If the individual's AMIA certification is currently active and in good standing, and the certification mark is not being misused, AMIA certification staff will notify the complainant of that.

If the individual purportedly misusing the designation is not currently certified in good standing, AMIA certification staff shall contact the individual alleged to be misusing the certification mark, in writing via any traceable method. The notice shall request that the respondent forward any evidence of current certification (copy of certificate, or award of certification letter) to AMIA's certification staff within 15 business days after the date of the notification. The respondent may also reply acknowledging the improper use, with evidence that corrective action has been taken (e.g., removal of the designation from business cards, website, CV, etc.) or evidence that an application has been submitted to achieve the

certification.

If no response is received within the stipulated timeframe, AMIA certification staff shall then request legal counsel to send a cease-and-desist letter to the individual, demanding a response and applicable mandatory corrective action.