

# Commission on Dietetic Registration

## *Board Certification as a Specialist in Pediatric or Renal Nutrition*



### Responses to Frequently Asked Questions

#### Table of Contents

General Specialty Questions	2
Specialty Eligibility Application Questions	3
Documentation of Specialty Hours	4
Pediatric and Renal Specialty Certification Examination Questions	4
Examination Score Reports/Retests	6
Recertification	8

#### List of Abbreviations

CDR	Commission on Dietetic Registration
AMP	Applied Measurement Professionals
CSP	Board Certified Specialist in Pediatric Nutrition
CSR	Board Certified Specialist in Renal Nutrition
RD	Registered Dietitian
SME	Subject Matter Expert
IG	Information Gathering
DM	Decision Making
MPL	Minimum Passing Level

Commission on Dietetic Registration  
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995

Phone: 800/877-1600, ext. 5500

Fax: 312/899-4772

E-mail: [cdr@eatright.org](mailto:cdr@eatright.org)

Web Site: [www.cdrnet.org](http://www.cdrnet.org)



**Commission on Dietetic Registration  
Board Certification as a Specialist in Pediatric or Renal Nutrition  
Responses to Frequently Asked Questions**

**General Specialty Questions**

**Question: Why did the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) choose to implement computerized testing for its Specialty examinations?**

Answer: The Commission decided to implement computerized testing for the Specialty examinations because of the many advantages it offers to examinees. These include:

- More test dates- there will be two, three-week testing windows a year. Examinees will be able to take the examination at any time within regular computer center hours during the testing windows.
- More test sites- there will be over 100 test center locations nationwide.
- Faster retest- available within six months to eligible candidates.

**Question: How can I receive an eligibility application?**

Answer: Eligibility applications can be requested by telephone, e-mail, or letter to CDR.

Commission on Dietetic Registration  
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995  
1-800/877-1600 ext 5500  
E-mail: [cdr@eatright.org](mailto:cdr@eatright.org)

Applications can also be downloaded and printed from CDR's website at the following link: <http://www.cdrnet.org/certifications/spec/index.htm>.

**Question: Where will the computerized examinations be administered?**

Answer: CDR's testing agency, Applied Measurement Professionals, Inc (AMP), uses approved H&R Block sites to administer the Specialist examinations.

**Question: How often will the computerized examinations be administered?**

Answer: The examinations will be administered two times a year, during three-week testing windows. Examinees will be able to take the examination at any date or time within regular computer center hours during the testing windows at over 100 approved H&R Block test center locations nationwide based on availability. All test sites are open Monday through Friday

during business hours. Eligible candidates will be instructed to call AMP at a toll-free number or to visit AMP's website to schedule an appointment to take the examination.

**Question: How much is the specialty examination fee?**

Answer: The specialty examination fee for the specialty examination is \$250 and must be sent with a completed examination application. The fee can be paid by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express), check, cashier's check, or money order payable in U.S. dollars and drawn on a bank in the United States. Checks or money orders should be made payable to CDR. Do not send cash.

**Question: Are specialty examination fees refunded?**

Answer: Refunds will be provided under the following guidelines:

- If you are ineligible to take the examination.
- A candidate who does not schedule his/her examination appointment during the current test administration window may have their application and examination fee transferred to the next administration free of charge. Candidate's eligibility and examination fee will only extend one test administration window.
- A candidate who does not schedule his/her examination appointment after confirmation of eligibility may request a full refund, if you do not wish to test during the current or subsequent test administration window.
- A candidate who wishes to reschedule their examination, but fails to contact AMP at least four business days to the scheduled testing session will be required to pay a \$79 fee to reschedule the examination.

**Specialty Eligibility Application Questions**

**Question: What are the requirements to be eligible to take the Board Certification as a Specialist in Pediatric or Renal Nutrition?**

Answer: The requirements to be eligible to take the Board Certification as a Specialist in Pediatric or Renal Nutrition are as follows:

- Current Registered Dietitian (RD) status by CDR.
- Maintenance of RD status for a minimum of two years from original examination date (by specialty examination date).
- Documentation of 2,000 hours practice experience as an RD in the specialty area within the past five years (by the date the application is due). Related experience can include direct and indirect activities.

## **Documentation of Specialty Hours**

**Question:** How does one document employment hours of specialty practice?

Answer: There is a form with the application (Part C-Documentation of Specialty Practice Hours), where the amount of specialty practice hours within the past five years would be estimated and then an authorized individual would sign the form to verify the hours that are documented.

**Question:** How does a consultant document employment hours?

Answer: For consultants, to document employment hours an authorized individual to sign the form can be the person or MD who refers clients to you. Another option for consultants to document hours would be to include tax/income documentation as well as a brochure about your business.

**Question:** Do all of the hours documented on the Part C Documentation of Specialty Practice Hours form need to be within the past five years?

Answer: Yes, documented hours must be within the past five years (by the date the application is due).

## **Pediatric and Renal Specialty Certification Examination Questions**

**Question:** How is the examination content outline (test specifications determined)?

Answer: The content of the examinations is based on the 2004 Pediatric and Renal Audits. The examinations have been developed by content experts to objectively measure the knowledge and skills required for Board Certification as a Specialist in Pediatric or Renal Nutrition. CDR introduces new items to the pool each year. Please refer to the eligibility application or CDR's website: (<http://cdrnet.org/certifications/spec/index.htm>) for the content outline of the examinations.

**Question:** How many questions will be on the Board Certification as a Specialist in Pediatric Nutrition or Renal Nutrition examinations?

Answer: There will be nine patient management problems. In this type of examination candidates are required to apply dietetics principles to the solution of clinical problem situations. These problems are designed to sample a broad area of practice competencies, not the recall of isolated facts. Candidates are required to gather, interpret, and evaluate clinical data. Refer to the *Candidate Handbook*, Eligibility Application and CDR's website for more information.

**Question: How much time will examinees have to complete the examination?**

Answer: Examinees will be allowed four hours to take the examination. The computer will indicate the time remaining on the screen. If you find it distracting, the time feature may be turned off during the examination.

**Question: At the computer center will examinees be given an opportunity to become familiar with the computer before beginning the examination?**

Answer: Yes. Examinees will be allowed to familiarize themselves with the computer process before beginning the actual examination. Candidates will be able to practice on a computerized sample problem at the test site. The sample problem will not necessarily be dietetics related.

**Question: Will a calculator be provided at the test center?**

Answer: No. Examinees are permitted to use their own calculators during the examination. Only silent, hand-held, solar- or battery-operated calculators without paper-tape printing capabilities or alphabetic keypads may be used. The use of a calculator that does not meet this description constitutes grounds for immediate dismissal from the test. In addition, calculator malfunction during a test does not constitute grounds for challenging test scores or requesting additional testing time.

**Question: Will examinees be allowed to change question responses, skip questions, or review question responses?**

Answer: No. Each question requires a response in order to continue the examination process. Once the examinee makes a selection, the response cannot be undone.

**Question: Will there be staff available at the test center, in case the computer malfunctions?**

Answer: Yes. Each test center will be staffed with personnel to assist examinees in the event of a computer malfunction. If it is not possible to resolve the problem, examinees will be rescheduled to test as soon as possible.

**Question: How should I report scheduling or onsite testing problems?**

Answer: If you experience difficulty either during scheduling, please contact AMP at 913/541-0400. If you experience problems with testing, please contact H&R Block personnel.

**Question: Will the Commission continue to make special accommodations for examinees with disabilities?**

Answer: Yes. The Commission will continue to make reasonable accommodations for candidates with disabilities, provided appropriate medical documentation is submitted with the request for special testing accommodations. Refer to the *Candidate Handbook* for specific documentation requirements.

**Question: What if I have comments regarding examination questions?**

Answer: Candidate may comment on any question after the examination by requesting a candidate comment form from the examination proctor. The candidate comment forms are sent directly to AMP.

**Question: What if I have comments regarding examination questions, once I leave the examination?**

Answer: Once you leave the test center, you may also forward written comments to CDR by mail or e-mail. Examination comments must be postmarked no later than five business days after the close of the testing windows. Please note the appeal procedure is different.

**Question: Are there materials available to assist examinees in preparing to write the examination?**

Answer: CDR provides a detailed content outline and reference list. There is one renal and one pediatric practice questions available on CDR's website. The problem is not scored. The purpose is to help familiarize you with the computerized delivery of the patient management problems. There are Online Self-Assessment Simulations available to purchase. More information about these simulations is available on CDR's website (<http://www.cdrnet.org/certifications/spec/index.htm>).

### **Examination Score Reports/Retests**

**Question: When will examinees receive their score report?**

Answer: Score reports will be distributed to examinees approximately eight weeks after the last date of the examination. Candidates who passed the examination will receive a certificate and orientation packet with their score report. Scores are reported in written format only by U.S. mail. Scores are not reported over the telephone, by electronic mail or by facsimile.

**Question: Why does it take so long to receive my score?**

Answer: Before final scores are released to the candidate, each examination undergoes quality control checks. A thorough item analysis is completed and is used as part of the statistical review of the performance of the examination. CDR, AMP, and subject matter experts (SME's) review examination date and candidate comments. All these materials are reviewed during a key validation meeting with SME's to ensure that the scoring of the questions is appropriate.

**Question: How is a pass/fail score determined?**

Answer: The examination includes both Information Gathering (IG) and Decision Making (DM) sections. In order to pass the examination, candidates must achieve the minimum passing level (MPL) in both major sections for the total examination. It is not necessary for a candidate to "pass" each problem to pass the examination. A good performance on one problem can offset a poor performance on another problem, as long as the total is higher than the overall minimum passing level for both the IG and DM sections for the total examination. Further information is included in the Candidate Handbook.

**Question: What information will be included on the examinee score report?**

Answer: The examinee score report will include scores by simulation problem, further divided into information-gathering scores and decision-making scores. Refer to the *Candidate Handbook* for more details regarding score reporting.

**Question: How soon can unsuccessful examinees retake the specialty examination?**

Answer: Examinees will be allowed to retest at the next examination date. They must contact CDR to receive another eligibility application. Candidates will have to be reauthorized as examination-eligible and pay the current examination application fee. Applications from previous examinations or photocopies of applications will not be accepted.

**Question: Under what conditions must the examinee contact the Commission on Dietetic Registration to be reauthorized to test?**

Answer: The examinee must contact the Commission to be reauthorized to test:

- when the examinee fails the examination,

- when the candidate fails to cancel the testing appointment within the specified timeline,
- when the candidate arrives late for the scheduled testing appointment,
- when the candidate does not complete the examination during the test appointment.

**Question: How often may candidates take the specialty examination?**

Answer: As long as the eligibility requirements are met, there is no limit on the number of times an examinee may take the examination. However, candidates may take the examination only once during the three-week testing window.

### **Recertification**

**Question: Once my five year specialty certification period ends, how can specialists recertify?**

Answer: At the end of the specialist five-year certification period, specialists who wish to recertify must be a current Registered Dietitian with the CDR and:

- Successfully complete an eligibility application – including the required minimum number of specialty practice hours
- Successfully complete a specialty examination
- Submit an application fee

**Question: Why is recertification testing required for CDR Board Certified Specialists?**

Answer: The reasoning for requiring recertification testing is that the Specialty Board Certification is a practice credential, a credential that represents to the public that the certificant possesses the knowledge, skills and experience to function effectively as a specialist in that area. The nature of the knowledge and skills to practice at a specialty level is subject to change due to technological and scientific advances. Recertification testing helps to provide continuing assurance that the certified specialist has indeed maintained their knowledge in the specialty area.

If you have questions about CDR's specialty certifications, please contact 1-800/8771600, ext. 4705 or [specialists@eatright.org](mailto:specialists@eatright.org).