



CLINICAL NURSE LEADERSM (CNL[®])

RENEWAL GUIDELINES (April 2022)



The CNL Certification Program is managed by:

Commission on Nurse Certification

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Washington, DC, 20001

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Email: CNL@aacnnursing.org

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The Clinical Nurse LeaderSM (CNL[®]) certification is granted for a period of five (5) years and must be renewed prior to the expiration date to maintain an active status. The purpose of the renewal policy and criteria is to enhance continued competence of certificants. Renewal assures the public that the nationally certified CNL has maintained current and relevant knowledge of the CNL skill set. The CNL Certification Program is managed by the Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC) Board of Commissioners and CNC staff.

REQUIREMENTS FOR RENEWAL

Renewal Criteria

Licensure, professional practice, and continuing education enhances competency through continuous learning allowing the certificant to enhance the knowledge and skill acquired at the time of initial certification. **Retesting is not required.**

For CNL renewal, the following is required:

- **Application Fee:**
 - **Renewal Application Fee:** \$310 (Submitted on or before the December 31st deadline)
 - **Late Application Fee:** \$360 (Submitted after the December 31st deadline and on or before June 30th)
 - **Reinstatement Fee:** \$460 (Submitted after the December 31st deadline and between July 1st – December 30th of the following year)

Fees are non-refundable. Refunds are not available to those who do not maintain an active status. Failure to pay the application fee is grounds for revocation of certification.

- **Registered Nurse (RN) Licensure:** Applicants will be ineligible if they are currently being disciplined by a state nursing board. It is the responsibility of the certificant to notify the CNC when any restriction is placed on his/her RN license.
- **Standards of Conduct:** Certificants are required to adhere to the CNL Standards of Conduct (included in the online application).
- **Professional Practice**

Applicants must attest to their employment status of a minimum 2000 hours in the five-year certification period. **A CNL job title is not required for renewal.**
- **Contact Hours/Continuing Education:** A minimum of 50 contact hours must be earned within your 5-year certification period. **Contact Hours used to renew RN licensure will be accepted.** Contact Hours may be earned in a variety of ways. **Note:** These activities (see page 3) should support the [CNL Exam Content Outline](#) or AACN's [Competencies and Curricular Expectations for Clinical Nurse LeaderSM Education and Practice](#). Publications must be on the CNL skill set/competencies, this would include a dissertation.

Contact Hour Calculations:

- 1 CME (Continuing Medical Education unit) = 1 Contact Hour
- 1 CNE (Continuing Nursing Education unit) = 1 Contact Hour
- 0.10 CEU (Continuing Education Unit) = 1 Contact Hours
- 1 quarter credit or unit = 10 Contact Hours
- 1 semester credit or unit = 15 Contact Hours

Recognition of Graduate Course Work: Graduate course work must be accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Mentoring: Providing mentoring, coaching, preceptorship or clinical supervision also counts toward contact hours.

- **Documentation**

CNLs are responsible for maintaining records of their continuing education credits and may be required to substantiate these units during random audits. Certificants are encouraged to maintain an electronic portfolio. However, documentation may be submitted to the CNC electronically or in a hard copy format.

Ways to Earn Contact Hours

Activity	Contact Hours Earned	Audit Documentation
Participate in approved professional educational programs (conferences, workshops, seminars, or classes including face-to-face, audio/web-conference, and online)		
Graduate course work (e.g., face-to-face, independent study/correspondence, online) taken for academic credit at a U.S. accredited academic institution	1 quarter credit or unit = 10 Contact Hours <u>or</u> 1 semester credit or unit = 15 Contact Hours	College transcript
Attend a continuing education conference	Education provider determines contact hours for CME, CNE or CEU	Certificate of completion
Complete continuing education articles in professional journals. Must be published within current 5-year certification period.	Education provider determines contact hours for CME, CNE or CEU Unlimited Contact Hours for CNL renewals due December 31 of 2021 and 2022.	Certificate of completion
Participate in webinars/teleconferences	Education provider determines contact hours for CME, CNE or CEU Unlimited Contact Hours for CNL renewals due December 31 of 2021 and 2022.	Certificate of completion
Participate in dissemination of the value of the CNL skill set by presentations or publications		
Author or editor of a book pertaining to the CNL	30 Contact Hours	Copy of book page with your name
Publish a CNL article in a local newsletter	5 Contact Hours	Copy of article
Unpublished master's thesis or equivalent final project	15 Contact Hours	Copy of document
Publish an original peer-reviewed research or EBP article in a national journal/magazine	30 Contact Hours	Copy of article
Publish an original peer-reviewed non-research article in a national journal/magazine	20 Contact Hours	Copy of article
Provide a professional presentation/poster on the CNL	5 Contact Hours per presentation hour	Program Brochure
Teach a course within a CNL academic program. <i>Courses cannot be used more than once for CEUs within the same certification period.</i>	5 Contact Hours per credit hour	Syllabus with Name
Participate in volunteer or preceptorship activities related to the CNL		
Hold Leadership Position (e.g., Board, Committee, Ambassador)	10 Contact Hours per year of service	Roster
Providing mentoring/coaching/preceptorship/clinical supervision	1 Contact Hour per mentoring hour Maximum of 10 Contact Hours	Included in the CE Section of the Online Renewal Application

- **Optional Survey:** Applicants are requested to complete a brief survey about their current CNL responsibilities. The survey is not required for renewal.

Filing Renewal: The online renewal application must be received on or before the certification expiration date. All practice hours, contact hours, and graduate course work must be earned prior to the certificate expiration date to apply towards renewal – activities towards renewal must have occurred within the five-year renewal period.

Certification Expiration: CNL certification is recognized for a period of five (5) years. The actual expiration date of a CNL certificate is December 31st of the 5th complete year after certification (i.e., certification of CNLs initially certified in April 2021 expires December 31, 2026).

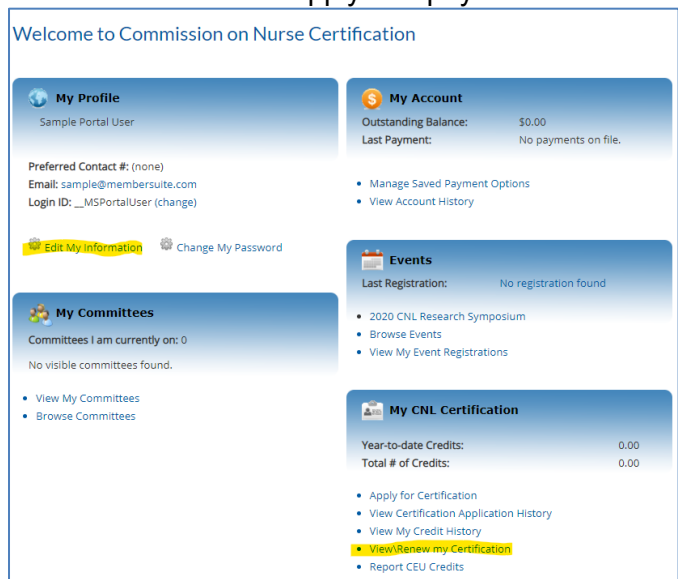
Renewal Recognition: Individuals maintaining the credential will receive a new certificate. Certification status is a matter of public record and may be released. Names of “active” CNLs will be listed in the CNL certification directory.

Application Audit: CNC reserves the right to verify information supplied by, or on behalf of, a certificant. If selected for a review, the certificant will be required to submit documentation substantiating eligibility. The CNC randomly audits approximately 10% of certificant renewal applications for review. An individual selected for review will be required to submit verifiable documentation for each activity listed in the renewal application. **CNC recommends that certificants retain all records for at least two years following the cycle end date.**

If credit for any program or CE activity is denied as a result of the review, the certificant will be given 60 days to report additional hours to cure the deficiency. The certificant will remain authorized to use the CNL designation during this 60-day period. If the deficiency is not cured within the 60-day period, a deficiency notice will be sent. If the necessary hours remain unreported the individual will no longer be certified and will not be authorized to use the CNL designation.

CNL RENEWAL PROCESS

1. All CNL certificants must log-in and update their [MyCNC Profile](#) first then click on “Edit My Information.”
2. Once the certificants profile has been updated (be sure to complete all required fields with a red asterisk), look under the “My CNL Certification” blue tab and click on “View/Renew my Certification.” Then click on “Renew” to apply and pay the fee.



Note: Individuals paying the late fee to renew, or reinstating must first complete the Online Renewal Application and submit the appropriate fee online.

- CNC staff will notify CNLs by mail 6 months prior to the date of expiration that renewal is due and send monthly email notifications.
- CNC staff will review each application to determine if the certificant has met the renewal requirements.
- CNC staff will contact the certificant if further information is needed and a deadline will be given for submitting the additional materials.
- If the application is incomplete, the certificant will receive a letter specifically detailing the items that are missing.
- The certificant will have 30 days after the expiration of their CNL to submit the missing items.
- If the certificant does not submit the missing items within the thirty (30) days, CNC will send a second letter informing the certificant that the renewal application is invalid, and the certification may be suspended.
- If the certificant submits an incomplete renewal application and fails to complete the application within the timeframe established by CNC, the certificant will forfeit all renewal application fees.

Statement of Certificant Responsibility: Each certificant must log into their [MyCNC Profile](#) and make updates to their mailing address, email address, and name changes. It is also the responsibility of each certificant to know when to apply for renewal.

Certification Status: Certificants are categorized as follows:

- **Active** – Certificant meets certification/renewal requirements.
- **Lapsed** – Certificant has not satisfied renewal requirements and certification has expired. Allowing a lapse without completing and submitting the necessary documents for renewal or without notifying CNC of a change in employment status will result in a lapsed status.
- **Inactive** – Certificant is no longer employed within the nursing profession (refer to professional practice criteria) and use of the designation is not required. The certificant is responsible for notifying CNC in writing of employment status. Log into your [MyCNC Profile](#) to apply for Inactive Status (Under the Forms blue tab, click on “View Available Forms”).
- **CNL-Retired** – Certificant has retired. Log into your [MyCNC Profile](#) to apply for CNL-Retired status (Under the Forms blue tab, click on “View Available Forms”).

Reinstatement: If certification has been expired for over six months and less than one year, an individual may reinstate his/her certification by meeting all of the published renewal requirements, submitting the complete online Renewal Application and Reinstatement fee. If the application is approved, the individual’s expiration date for the reinstated credential will be the same as if the certification had been renewed on time.

CNL Reinstatement requires:

- CNL certification which expired over six months and less than a year, or within inactive or retired status
- Current and active, unrestricted professional Registered Nurse license
- Employment status attestation: minimum of 2,000 hours
- 50 continuing education hours that relate to the [CNL Exam Content Outline](#) or AACN’s [Competencies and Curricular Expectations for Clinical Nurse LeaderSM Education and Practice](#)
- Online Renewal Application and \$460 USD Reinstatement fee. Log into your [MyCNC Profile](#) to renew (Under the My CNL Certification blue tab, click on “View/Renew My Certification”).

If certification has been expired for one year or more, an individual who wishes to regain CNL status must meet all eligibility requirements in effect at the time of re-application and pass the examination.

Application Status: Approval of an application may be deferred if the application is incomplete or if the information submitted requires clarification or documentation. If a renewal application is deferred, the specific reason(s) for that action will be made available to the certificant in writing. Certificants who have their renewal deferred will be given the opportunity to submit additional requested materials within thirty (30) days. If material is not submitted as requested, the certification status will change to “lapsed” if not received within three (3) months of the date of notification.

Approval of renewal may be denied by the CNC and revoked for non-compliance with renewal policies including any of the following:

- Failure to maintain eligibility requirements
- Failure to maintain RN license in good standing
- Falsification of documentation
- Failure to pay renewal fee
- Providing false or misleading information
- Misrepresentation of CNL status
- Conviction of a felony
- Cheating on the CNL examination

Applicants denied renewal will be notified in writing of the specific reason.

At least 6-8 weeks after renewing, applicants approved for renewal will receive confirmation from CNC via email and will be able to print the CNL Certification Certificate from their MyCNC Profile.

Non-Discrimination: The CNC does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, political beliefs, disability, or national origin.

APPEALS PROCESS

The certification renewal decision will be based solely on materials submitted by, or on behalf of, the certificant.

Appeals regarding renewal eligibility and status must be submitted to the CNC Director at sjohnson@aacnnursing.org 30 calendar days after the adverse decision or notification. The candidate must submit the appeal explaining in detail: 1) The nature of the request and the specific facts and circumstances supporting the request, and 2) all reasons why the action or decision should be changed or modified. The candidate also must provide accurate copies of all supporting documents. The CNC Director will review the appeal within 15 days.

Extension Requests: Requests for extensions of renewal deadlines will not be granted.

CNL RENEWAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

For more information regarding CNL certification and renewal, contact CNC Staff at:

Telephone: 202-370-3608

Email: cnl@aacnnursing.org

www.aacnnursing.org/CNL-Certification/Renew-Certification

CNL ONLINE RENEWAL APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Application Information:** I have completed the online renewal application.
- Payment:** I have submitted payment with the online application.
- CNL Standards of Conduct (part of online application):** I have pledged to adhere to the CNL Standards of Conduct when I completed my online renewal.
- Professional Practice:** I have completed a minimum of 2000 hours in the five-year certification period.
- Continuing Education:** I have completed a minimum of 50 contact hours that support the [CNL Exam Content Outline](#) or AACN's [Competencies and Curricular Expectations for Clinical Nurse LeaderSM Education and Practice](#).
- Documentation:** I have maintained documentation of professional activities listed in the online application. Copies of documentation are available (hard copies or electronic format) if audited by CNC.
- Survey (optional):** I have completed the survey about my current CNL responsibilities as they relate to the end of program competencies and/or elements of the CNL outlined in AACN's *Competencies and Curricular Expectations for Clinical Nurse LeaderSM Education and Practice*. The survey is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CNLRecert>

