

# Veterinary Credentialing Guide



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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 About AHDI

The Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity (AHDI) is a not-for-profit professional association incorporated in California in February 1978 with headquarters in Modesto, California. AHDI offers information about the profession of healthcare documentation (human and veterinary), provides continuing education for healthcare documentation professionals, and enhances communication among those allied with the profession of healthcare documentation. Over time the industry has evolved, and with it, new titles, roles, and duties have emerged. Although various titles are used, such as medical transcriptionist (MT), auditor, speech recognition editor (SRE), medical language specialist, abstractor, and others, please note that AHDI uses the title “healthcare documentation professionals” (HDPs) to reflect the broad and extensive responsibilities and services these professionals provide in the creation of accurate patient care records for people and for their animals/pet’s/companions.

Find out more about AHDI by visiting our website – [www.ahdionline.org](http://www.ahdionline.org).

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## 1.2 Why Credentials?

When considering the potential implications, risks, and benefits of a credentialing requirement in any profession, it must be determined if ultimately the industry is better served by the adoption of regulations that restrict entry to practice and access to the public sector than if those regulations did not exist. In some cases, it could be argued that an industry is hindered by such regulations. Where credentialing healthcare documentation professionals is concerned, however, attention must turn to what is ultimately in the best interests of patient care delivery. In what measurable ways would restricting entry to practice healthcare documentation potentially protect patients, enhance the delivery of patient care services, and create operational efficiencies in healthcare delivery? These are the questions that should be at the center of any discussion of credentialing of healthcare documentation professionals.

While certainly there is much that has and can be said about protecting the privacy and security of patient records, it cannot be overlooked here that an unregulated, unmonitored healthcare documentation workforce creates an access point to patient records that is incongruent with the intent of confidentiality of patient records and ethical practice in veterinary medicine that complies with the Veterinary Practice Act. It might be tempting to argue that healthcare documentation professionals do not need to be credentialed in order for their unique access to patient records to be tracked and monitored. Safeguarding patient records does not just involve protecting the access points. It should likewise involve protecting patient record outcomes by ensuring that only skilled, qualified, and *accountable* individuals have access to patient records for the purpose of creating, modifying, and formatting the veterinary medical record.

Healthcare documentation involves an interpretive skillset where veterinary technician specialists partner with providers to create an accurate reflection of a patient care encounter. Healthcare documentation demands the application of informed judgment and interpretive skill that extends beyond what is *heard*. It requires that a foundational understanding of the diagnostic process, clinical medicine, treatment, and care be interpreted accurately and applied within the context of dictation.

Healthcare documentation professionals cannot bring that interpretive skillset to the table without a significant foundation of knowledge and training. The pace at which healthcare delivery is moving does not allow for training or mentoring on the job. Unfortunately, an unregulated or informal training scenario creates unpredictable and dangerous gaps in knowledge and understanding that impact the interpretive process and limits the ability of the healthcare documentation professional to identify errors and inconsistencies in the dictated narrative – a role that is critical for risk management. Flagging inconsistencies and discrepancies in the health record is the guardian role of the HDP, and providers rely on the keen eyes, ears, and interpretive mind of the HDP to ensure that health data is captured and recorded accurately, that inconsistencies are addressed, and that the amended record is authenticated by the provider.

Promoting a credentialing requirement for the profession will send a clear message with healthcare delivery that healthcare documentation professionals have met minimum standards to engage in this risk management role. Given the vital role that health encounter documentation plays in patient care and accurate, timely documentation, healthcare delivery would be well served to understand and recognize the difference a *skilled, credentialed* HDP can make to that process. An HDP with questionable or marginal skills, at the very least, is going to be limited in their ability to play a contributory role in risk management and health record error analysis.

An HDP already working in a contributory, risk-management-impacting role through highly skilled and informed interpretive judgment has little to fear from mandatory credentialing and everything to gain by stepping across the line of accountability set by the standard. Providers likewise have much to gain and little to lose by drawing a line in the sand that will ensure our workforce is capable of performing their tasks accurately and with a measurable impact on healthcare's fiscal bottom line.

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## 2 AHDI Credentials

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### 2.1 Credentials Overview

AHDI offers a voluntary credential for veterinary healthcare documentation professionals:

- **Certified Veterinary Healthcare Documentation Professional (CVHDP)**

AHDI offers this voluntary credentialing exam to individuals who wish to demonstrate job readiness and level-specific competency to prospective documentation roles, employers, clients, and industry colleagues. In offering credentialing exams for healthcare documentation professionals, AHDI is protecting the public interest by promoting professional standards, improving the practice of healthcare documentation, and recognizing those professionals who demonstrate competency through the fulfillment of stated requirements.

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### 2.2 Test Development & Delivery

AHDI credentialing exams are developed with [the Credentialing Commission for Healthcare Documentation \(CCHD\)](#), who develops the tests, interprets psychometric data, and completes domain analysis, item writing and editing, and technical review.

AHDI has overall responsibility for test development and administration; however, the CCHD provides guidance for the testing program. AHDI's CCHD, a representative group of HDP content experts, has been trained to develop and review test questions and materials before these materials are used on exams to ensure relevancy and accuracy. The team also helps provide the job-related perspective that underlies valid exams. Each question is evaluated prior to its acceptance as a valid test item. The CCHD maintains responsibility for determining the exam content outline and test specifications, maintains an item bank of approved test items, approves the individual tests for administration, and, with psychometric guidance, sets the passing score for successful achievement.

AHDI exams are delivered by [Examroom.ai](#), a test development and delivery company that provides secure online testing technology, integrating item banking, test delivery, and reports. Examroom.ai provides live Online Proctoring (OLP) integrated with advanced AI technology, which uses remote video monitoring to observe test takers where they live, learn, or work.

The credentialing department at AHDI determines individual eligibility for exam admission. Based on test specifications developed by AHDI, Examroom.ai prepares and administers the individual tests approved by AHDI. Examroom.ai is also responsible for overseeing online proctoring, test security, test administration, and related functions.

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## 3 Certified Veterinary Healthcare Documentation Professional (CVHDP)

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### 3.1 Purpose and Description

The Certified Veterinary Healthcare Documentation Professional (CVHDP) exam is based on the Level 1 Core Competencies for veterinary medical documentation standards. It is a voluntary credentialing exam for individuals who wish to become certified healthcare documentation professionals in veterinary medicine. The CVHDP exam is designed to assess competency in veterinary medical documentation by determining if a candidate has the core knowledge and skills needed to practice veterinary documentation effectively in today's healthcare environment.

AHDI recommends that candidates possess the knowledge and skills identified and outlined in the CVHDP Exam Blueprint before attempting to take the exam. The CVHDP Exam Blueprint is detailed later in this chapter. Potential candidates for the exam are advised to review the outlines and assess their knowledge and skills to determine their readiness for the exam.

Individuals who successfully complete this AHDI credentialing process are recognized as Certified Veterinary Healthcare Documentation Professionals and are entitled to use the CVHDP designation. The credential is valid for **3 years**. CVHDPs are required to re-credential by earning a minimum of 30 continuing education credits (CECs). Upon passing the exam, each CVHDP receives a wall certificate that shows the date the credential was obtained and the date through which the credential is valid (renewal date).

The CVHDP exam consists of multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blank transcription against audio. These assessment types are used to test candidate knowledge and applied interpretive judgment in all knowledge domains represented on the CVHDP Exam Blueprint, including *Clinical Medicine, Health Information Technology, and Compliance and Documentation Standards and Patient Risk Evaluation*.

The transcription performance portion of the exam consists of short items employing medical dictation that must be transcribed. It consists of dictation that is representative of those encountered under actual working conditions. The content areas and issues tested are listed in Sections 3.3 and 3.4 of this chapter. Dictation is selected for its appropriate medical content. The practical portion of the exam is designed to test a candidate's knowledge, skill, and ability to practice documentation effectively in today's healthcare environment. Emphasis in the practical portion of the exam is more on critical thinking skills rather than keyboarding, research, or other technical skills.

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### 3.2 Eligibility and Requirements

Candidates may sit for the CVHDP exam solely for the intent and purpose of seeking an AHDI credential and for no other purpose.

### *Who should take this exam?*

- Anyone who participates in documenting veterinary patients' health care is eligible to take the CVHDP exam. This includes but is not limited to:
  - VHDPs who are recent graduates of veterinary healthcare documentation/medical veterinary education programs.
  - Veterinary technicians who document patient records in an electronic medical record.
  - Veterinary scribes.

Candidates are advised to first assess their skills and knowledge of the content areas outlined in the CVHDP Exam Blueprint of this Candidate Guide and prepare accordingly before registering to take the exam.

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## 3.3 Content Focus

As described above, the CVHDP exam is designed to assess the knowledge, skill, and interpretive ability of industry candidates seeking entry to practice. It is set up to test the key concepts, vocabularies, processes, systems, and standards outlined under the CVHDP exam blueprint. The goal is to ensure that candidates have a sound grasp of fundamental domains necessary to practice documentation and editing roles in veterinary medicine.

The knowledge and skill of CVHDP candidates will be assessed through two question types:

- **Multiple-choice.** Most objectives involve assessment via a multiple-choice question type whereby candidates are asked to select an appropriate answer from a choice of 4 options.
- **Transcription with Audio.** Some objectives require assessment via practical application. Candidates will be given an audio clip with transcribed text containing “blank” fields that must be filled in by the candidate. Excerpts may contain one or more blanks, and each blank will be scored individually.

CVHDP candidates will be given **100 questions** distributed by predetermined weight and scope within the following three content domains:

- **Clinical Medicine** – Questions in this section will assess the candidate's understanding of clinical terms, definitions, standards, and processes deemed to be level 1 concepts necessary for job readiness:
  - Medical terminology (including acronyms and abbreviations)
  - Anatomy
  - Physiology
  - Disease processes
  - Diagnostics (including laboratory testing and imaging)
  - Treatment (including pharmacology and surgery)
  - Classification systems
- **Health Information Technology & Compliance** – Questions in this section will assess the candidate's understanding of technology terms and definitions deemed to be level 1 concepts necessary for job readiness:
  - Healthcare technology (including acronyms and abbreviations)
  - Documentation security (including disclosure, ethical practices and implications, and risk management)
  - Navigation of the electronic medical record (including identifying pertinent information to document)

- **Documentation Standards and Patient Risk Evaluation** – Questions in this section will assess the candidate’s understanding of standards of documentation and elements of risk management deemed to be level 1 concepts necessary for job readiness:
  - Error-prone abbreviations
  - Medical record types and format for headings and subheadings
  - Verification of trusted resources
  - Critical thinking to identify content errors
  - Potential implications outcomes to rapid access to medical records



### 3.4 CVHDP Exam Blueprint

Section 1	Clinical Medicine
1.1	Given the meaning of a word, identify the correct prefix, suffix, combining word, or root word, <u>or</u> given a prefix, suffix, or combining form and a definition, identify what is needed to create another given word.
1.2	Given a/an anatomical/medical/clinical term, identify the definition, <u>or</u> given a definition, identify the correct anatomical/medical/clinical term or reference.
1.3	Given sentences, identify the correct use of a medical term or medication commonly confused for another.
1.4	Given a directional term, an anatomical position term, including oral cavity mapping, or a body plane term, identify the correct definition, <u>or</u> given a definition, identify the correct directional term, the correct anatomical position term, or the correct body plane term.
1.5	Given a laboratory panel, identify the tests associated with that panel.
1.6	Given a laboratory test, identify the normal values, <u>or</u> given a laboratory result, identify if the value is low, high, or normal.
1.7	Given a diagnostic test or laboratory study, identify what is being measured.
1.8	Given an audio excerpt containing a laboratory term, fill in the blank representing omitted information.
1.9	Given an imaging study type, identify the use, definition, or terminology related to that study type.
1.10	Given a medication order including a drug or drug type, identify the route or form of administration.
1.11	Given a drug term, identify the definition, <u>or</u> given a definition of a drug term, identify the term.
1.12	Given a drug's generic name, identify the brand name, <u>or</u> given a drug's brand name, identify the generic name.
1.13	Given a drug, identify the pharmacological category.
1.14	Given a medication, identify the symptom or disease for which it is prescribed, <u>or</u> given a symptom or disease, identify the medication that is prescribed.
1.15	Given an abbreviation/acronym specific to a clinical specialty, identify the correct term.
1.16	Given a sign or symptom, identify the disease or syndrome.
1.17	Given a disease or syndrome, identify the treatment course.
1.18	Given a classification system, identify the disease or affected anatomical part.
1.19	Given a common medical abbreviation or acronym, identify the correct meaning.
1.20	Given a physiologic process, identify steps or functions related to that process.
1.21	Given a type of sedation or anesthesia, identify how it is used; <u>or</u> given a drug, identify the type of sedation or anesthesia it is used for.
1.22	Given a parameter obtained during anesthesia or recovery, identify the correct term based on a relative reference range or physiological change or outcome.
1.23	Given an audio excerpt containing clinical content, identify the appropriate information to document.

<b>Section 2 Health Information Technology and Compliance</b>	
2.1	Given a term or concept related to the use of a normal, standard text, electronic library item, or a template, identify the correct definition; <u>or</u> , given the definition of a term or concept related to the use of a normal, standard text, or template, identify the term or concept.
2.2	Given an example of a normal, standard text, electronic library item, or a template, identify the type of risk to patient care.
2.3	Given examples of technology or human-factor workflow problems, identify recommended best practices.
2.4	Given a definition related to content importing technologies, identify the correct term; <u>or</u> , given a term related to content importing technologies, identify the correct definition.
2.5	Given a scenario, identify acceptable and unacceptable uses of content importing technologies.
2.6	Given a scenario, identify potential ethical or legal implications related to content importing.
2.7	Given a scenario, identify potential implications related to inaccurate documentation.
2.8	Given an abbreviation related to the healthcare record, identify the correctly expanded form.
2.9	Identify appropriate patient healthcare information disclosure under American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) guidelines and individual state practice acts.
2.10	Identify appropriate security measures for protecting client and patient information.
2.11	Identify ethical practices recommended by AVMA.
2.12	Given a scenario, determine the location in the EHR/EMR that would need to be accessed.
2.13	Given an audio excerpt of a patient encounter, identify pertinent information to be documented in the EMR/EHR.
2.14	Given a scenario, identify potential risk management issues.
<b>Section 3 Documentation Standards and Patient Risk Evaluation</b>	
3.1	Identify abbreviations that are error-prone and can lead to miscommunication and potential risk to patients.
3.2	Given sample report content, identify the correct report headings or subheadings; <u>or</u> , given a heading or subheading, identify what content would be included.
3.3	Given a scenario, identify credible resources for medical information.
3.4	Given a report excerpt, use critical thinking to identify and/or edit content errors that have potential risk to patient outcomes.
3.5	Identify potential implications that may result from a client's rapid access to their pet's medical records through a patient portal.

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## 3.5 Transcription Against Audio

In this section, you will be asked to listen to a dictated excerpt and compare it to transcribed text in which one or more blanks are present. Your task will be to fill in these blanks with the missing information based on what is dictated in the audio file.

Keep in mind that the exam will be evaluating two critical skills in this section: (1) your ability to accurately interpret the word or phrase being dictated, and (2) your ability to express that word or phrase according to industry standards for grammar and style. Some items are specifically written to assess your ability to recognize a dictated error and edit appropriately, but do not make unnecessary edits (those that relate to preference of expression) – make only those changes that would be required to edit for clarity.

To be successful with transcribing in this section, please keep these notifications and instructions in mind:

- *Do not* include words or phrases already provided in the text. Transcribe only the missing information.
- *Do not* add commas or semicolons to your transcribed responses, even if you think they should be included; all punctuation (commas, semicolons, and terminal periods) has been provided for you. If a period follows the blank, do not repeat it in your answer. Do use periods for abbreviations, if appropriate, and for decimal points. Use of punctuation already provided will result in a mismatch against the answer key, and the item will be marked wrong.
- *Do not* include a space, tab, indent, or other visible or hidden character at the end of your response, as this will result in a mismatch against the answer key, and the item will be marked wrong.
- *Do not* use short-cut keys; this results in immediate termination of the exam.
- *Do* include hyphens, percent signs, virgules (/), and other symbols as necessary.
- *Do* capitalize the first word of your response if it represents the first word of a sentence or is a word that would require capitalization within the sentence.

Navigate from one blank field to the next by using either your mouse or the Tab key on your keyboard.

All blank fields are scored individually, so each blank correctly answered will receive a point. For example, if an item contains 3 blanks, and you only correctly fill in 2 of the 3, you will receive points for those 2 items. Questions not answered will be automatically marked wrong, so answer all items as best you can and mark for review if needed.

The media player, located below the DIRECTIONS and above the transcribed text, will not play automatically. It appears as shown below when it is idle and not in use:



Use your mouse to select Play [▶]. While playing, the player appears as below:



The music note figure to the far right is the VOLUME control. You can increase or decrease the volume on each file by clicking the music note and sliding the bar up or down. The double-bar figure to the far left is the PAUSE control. Click this at any time to pause audio play.

As the audio plays, the black progress bar will move from left to right in the center area of the player. The progress counter at the far right of the center field will tell you how many seconds into the excerpt

you are at any time. FAST FORWARD or REWIND the audio by using your mouse to slide the black progress bar to the left or right as far forward or backward as you want to go. The audio file can be played repeatedly without restrictions and manipulated as often as you require. Use your mouse to navigate between the audio player functions and the transcription blank fields in the excerpt draft.

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## 3.6 CVHDP FAQs

### **What will the CVHDP credential do for me as a new graduate?**

Ultimately, industry employers are looking for workforce candidates with the ability to adapt quickly to the rigors of new proprietary technologies, account specifications, and variable complexities in dictation and document types. Industry graduates, no matter how well-prepared, will struggle with these challenges in the first year of employment. For that reason, industry employers know that a significant amount of time and fiscal resources will have to be invested in an industry graduate before that new VHDP becomes a productive, revenue-generating member of their employment team. *Any* advantage a new graduate can demonstrate to a cautious industry employer will be critical, and credentialing is no exception. The CVHDP credential will tell potential employers that you have met the industry's minimum benchmarks for entry to practice and are able to demonstrate competencies contained in an established industry blueprint. A credential is no guarantee that a veterinary healthcare documentation professional is well-suited for the demands and rigors of this niche market, but it can give an employer confidence in a candidate's core knowledge.

### **Why should a facility or private practice consider having their employees take the CVHDP?**

Veterinary healthcare documentation professionals require a specific skillset, and successful completion of the CVHDP demonstrates to employers that their employees possess the knowledge and skills needed to safely document patient care and have the critical thinking skills to prevent potential risk to patient outcomes.

### **Do I have to be a member of AHDI to take the exam?**

No. However, a sizable discount on the exam (as well as prep materials and practice exams) is given to members of AHDI, so we do suggest that you consider membership prior to completing the exam application. Visit the AHDI website for more information about membership.

### **May I use reference materials during the exam?**

No. Reference materials are not allowed for online proctoring exams. Electronic aids such as spellcheckers and abbreviation expanders will not be permitted. However, the exam has been designed to test core knowledge, which should not require reference materials.

### **Is it true that there will be no foot pedal?**

Ensuring the compatibility of foot pedal hardware and software is impossible in both an online testing environment as well as with multi-site testing centers around the world. You will be required to access audio files for this exam via the use of an audio player and your mouse. Audio excerpts for this exam do not exceed 2-3 sentences in length, making use of a foot pedal unnecessary for this process. You will have the ability to manipulate the audio player with your mouse for "Play," "Stop," and "Pause" functions, as well as the ability to move the position indicator slide bar to any point in the audio file for playback.

**Can keyboard shortcuts be used instead of the mouse?**

No. Although HDPs rely on keyboard shortcuts for efficiency in their jobs, keyboard shortcuts are not integrated into the exam platform, nor are candidates tested on their knowledge of keyboard shortcuts. *The use of shortcut keys results in immediate termination of the exam. Candidates must use the mouse to navigate through their exam as well as to play audio files.*

**When will I receive my results?**

The results will be available immediately upon completion of the exam. All candidates will receive a pass/fail report both on screen at the end of the exam and by email 24 hours after completing the exam. If you pass the exam, you will receive a certificate in the mail 10 to 14 days after you earned your credential.

**Will I see what items I got wrong?**

You will receive only a “pass” or “fail” result and will not receive a score or breakdown of exam section results. It is prevailing practice with high-stakes credentialing exams to provide a pass/fail result *only*. AHDI does not publish its exam cut scores, nor do we provide candidates with specific feedback about performance. Our exams are designed to measure skill and competency and should not be used as a diagnostic indicator of exam readiness.

**What if I pass only part of the exam?**

You must pass the entire exam to become certified. If you do not pass the exam in its entirety, you will need to retake the entire exam.

**How soon may I retake the exam?**

If you do not pass the exam, there is a 4-month waiting period before you are eligible to take it again.

**If I fail my exam, do I have to pay again to retake it?**

Yes. The prices listed for the CVHDP exams cover the cost of only one exam. If you fail an exam, you'll need to wait the required 4 months before you can reapply for eligibility. Upon receiving your Authorization-to-Test letter, you will need to follow the instructions outlined in the letter to purchase and schedule a new exam.

**Can I contest my exam results?**

The only grounds for *contesting* an exam result is in the event of unforeseen technical or logistical difficulties that may have compromised your exam session. If you feel this has been the case for your exam session, you should file a complaint with AHDI directly, and the technical log of your exam session will be reviewed to determine if your exam was in fact compromised. If your session was deemed to have been compromised by a significant technical or logistical problem (this does not include internet connectivity issues, which are the responsibility of the candidate), your only option is to reschedule your exam for a date beyond the 4-month wait period, given your exposure to the exam.

AHDI will not review the exam results of a first-time candidate **for any reason**. We will not respond to complaints or inquiries about failed exams on the first attempt. If you have failed an AHDI exam *more than once*, you may request a review of your exam file and general feedback on areas for improvement.

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## 4 When You Are Ready to Test

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### 4.1 Submitting Your Eligibility Fee

Congratulations! You are now ready to apply for exam eligibility. By submitting an eligibility fee and requesting an authorization to test, you are confirming that you have:

1. Read and accepted the terms and policies outlined in this guide.
2. Reviewed the exam blueprint and understood the competencies against which you will be evaluated on examination.

Submission of the eligibility fee will constitute a request for authorization to test, and once granted, your exam eligibility will be valid for a period of 180 days from the date of processing. You will receive your Authorization-to-Test email within 5 days of eligibility fee submission. Once you receive your Authorization-to-Test letter, it is your responsibility to purchase your exam from the AHDI website. Once you have purchased your exam, a user profile will automatically be created for you with our test administrator, Examroom.ai, so that you can log in and schedule your online proctored exam at a date and time convenient for you. **If you do not register and take your exam within the 180-day eligibility window, your eligibility will expire, and you will forfeit your exam fees. You will need to reapply for eligibility. Again, you pay your eligibility fee to AHDI first, and then you pay for your exam.**

To submit your eligibility fee, go to the “Certification” tab on the AHDI home page and select “Sign Up for an Exam.” Follow the instructions for adding the eligibility fee to your shopping cart. You will need to have a record created to submit exam eligibility.

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### 4.2 Membership Discount

Membership in AHDI is not required to take AHDI’s credentialing examination. However, AHDI members do receive a significant discount on credentialing exams as well as valuable resources and benefits. You pay your eligibility and exam fees directly to AHDI and then schedule your exam with examroom.ai. The price point offered to you on the exam fee page will be based on the membership type. Take advantage of the savings by purchasing membership before submitting exam eligibility fee.

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### 4.3 Exam Fees

Candidates seeking access to AHDI credentialing exams can find the pricing for these exams, based on membership status, outlined below:

**CVHDP Pricing (2-hour exam session)**

Online proctored (OLP) exam, member: \$125

Online proctored (OLP) exam, nonmember: \$205

Employers can participate in AHDI’s [bulk discount program](#) as an affordable option for transitioning current workforce candidates through the exams and moving toward the goal of having a fully credentialed workforce for our industry.

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## 5 Examroom.ai – Online Proctoring (OLP)

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### 5.1 How it Works

Exam candidates will take their exams remotely via the Examroom.ai online proctoring (OLP) platform. Candidates will launch their exams from a compatible computer using Google Chrome and are monitored live throughout the exam session by proctors. This is made possible using webcam video feed, whereby proctors can monitor the test taker to ensure a secure exam session.

During a webcam-monitored session, exam candidates are asked to use a webcam such that the face of the candidate can always be viewed by the proctor. The session proctor will watch the candidate throughout the session to ensure the candidate is engaging in a high-integrity, secure exam interface. Candidates are required to take the exam in an isolated location to prevent interruptions (i.e., no other individuals can be in the room or testing area), are not allowed to access or use any resources or ancillary materials, and are restricted from accessing any other software or programs on their computers while the test session is in launch mode. Proctors communicate via on-screen chat messaging to alert candidates to conditions or concerns the proctors may have with the test session, and sessions will be terminated if a proctor feels that a candidate is engaging in any activity, including talking (even to themselves), that could compromise the integrity of the exam session.

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### 5.2 Technical Requirements & Specifications

Candidates taking the online proctored exam should ensure compatibility with the recommended specifications for the testing computer, webcam, and microphone:

#### Computer & Internet Requirements

1. Windows or Macintosh Operating System\*\*: Windows 8.1 or 10; Macintosh: Mac Catalina+ and Linux (Ubuntu 16.04 +).
2. Hard Drive – Minimum 256 Gb+ available space is recommended.
3. RAM – 4 Gb+.
4. Internet Access – Internet access of at least 3.0 Mbps upload speed and 25 Mbps download speed. Wireless/Wi-Fi connections are not recommended because of the likelihood of inconsistent connectivity and camera feed issues. If you opt to use a wireless connection and your exam is suspended due to poor connectivity, you will risk forfeiture of your exam seat and fees.
5. Webcam/Microphone – Must be in working condition and drivers must be up to date.
6. Installed Applications – Latest version of Google Chrome.
7. Screenshot – Must be enabled from system settings. Refer to this link if using Mac OS: <https://docs.Examroom.ai/usermanual/mac-chrome/%23mac-screensharing>.
8. Network Requirements – VPN or any firewall-enabled connection is not allowed.

**Restrictions:** Any scheduled or system resident software or hardware that has the capability to interrupt, intercept, or otherwise interfere with test delivery must be disabled during test sessions. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Software that has the capability to produce alerts, such as contact managers, calendars, email, etc.
- Screen and device capture utilities or anti-virus software
- Windows updates

*NOTE: To avoid interruption during a test session, it is important that all test computer settings for Windows Update be set for manual updates. You can do this by going to the Control Panel and clicking Automatic Updates on the menu. Select the option Turn off Automatic Updates.*

## 5.3 What to Expect on Exam Day

Once you have submitted your eligibility fee, received your Authorization to Test email from AHDI, and paid your exam fees, you will log in to the Examroom.ai platform, where you will schedule your online exam. Once your exam is scheduled, you will be asked to go through several steps for biometric (identity) enrollment and technical setup, including capture and upload of a webcam-generated photo of yourself and typing DNA on exam day.

On the day of your exam session, you must log into Examroom.ai at least 10 minutes early and select the “Start Exam” button next to the exam reflected on your scheduling profile. To ensure a high-integrity exam process and limit the number of potential conflicts that could result in unexpected termination of your exam session, all candidates will be required to read and acknowledge the rules and restrictions noted below. Please read this list carefully and contact AHDI with any questions.

1. This is **not** an open book exam. Prior to logging into Examroom.ai, clear your desk of all books, reference materials, notes, and personal items.
2. Scratch paper is **not** allowed. Again, no notebooks, papers, or scratch pads can be on your desk.
3. No calculating devices, communication devices (e.g., pagers, cellular telephones), organizers, notes, reference book, dictionaries, or other aids are allowed.
4. Deactivate all pagers, cellular phones, and alarm-type watches until you have completed the examination and have disconnected from the test site. If you fail to do this and your phone or pager rings, you will be notified by the proctor that you have performed a disallowed act and you may forfeit your exam.
5. You will be asked 4 demographic questions prior to the start of the exam; these are required and are not optional. Please take the time to answer them honestly. Assessing your background and experience assists us in evaluating the performance of our exam items.
6. The examination has 100 questions, and a maximum of 2 hours is permitted. Your exam session will be terminated at that time, even if you are not finished. If you complete the exam sooner than 2 hours, you may submit your exam early. Your session is then completed.
7. Breaks are discouraged, but if absolutely necessary, you may take one 10-minute break. This must be requested from the proctor during the exam. This should be used solely to use the bathroom, stretch your legs, or access food/drink. Failure to return to your desk and re-initiate your exam within the allotted break timeframe will result in exam termination without refund.
8. You are permitted to have a drink on your desk during your exam, but it must be in a clear, unmarked container with no labels or writing on it. Food, if needed, may only be consumed during your break times and will not be allowed on your desk at any time.
9. Scoring is based on the total number of correct answers selected/entered. Since there is no penalty for choosing an incorrect response, you should answer all exam items.
10. For the multiple-choice items on this exam, each question has only one (1) correct answer. Read each question carefully before responding.
11. Do not read anything into the question that is not asked for. Be careful to make note of what the question is asking.
12. Instructions for the audio sections will be provided at the beginning of those sections. Please follow them very carefully to avoid formatting and keyboard errors.
13. You will have the option to mark items for review. Beneath each question, you will note a box you can check to mark an item for review. Before submitting your exam at the end, we strongly recommend you go back through your marked items on the left panel and review those completely.



You can access these at any time by clicking the “Review items with the Flag” in the left panel. Once you submit your exam, you cannot return to these items, and they will be scored in whatever state you left them in, even if they are still marked for review; so if you choose to mark an item for review without answering it, remember to go back and select an answer or you will automatically be given zero points for each of those questions.

14. If you lose your connection while taking your exam (loss of video feed, interruption in internet connectivity, loss of electricity, etc.) or if your computer locks up/freezes, please log back into your exam immediately and connect with an onboarding agent or call Examroom.ai support immediately to notify the proctor and seek assistance from the tech support team.
15. If you do lose connection and need to relaunch your exam, the testing interface by default will take you to your first unanswered question. If this was an earlier item you skipped and you wish to get back to the question you were on at the time you lost connection, select "Review All" at the bottom of the item window. This will take you to a listing of all exam questions by number and enable you to go back to the question you were on. Those marked with an asterisk represent items you had marked for review.
16. When you have finished the exam, have reviewed all marked items, and are confident that you are finished, select "End Exam" at the bottom of your item window. Keep in mind that, once submitted, your exam session will terminate and you will have no further access to your items, so only select "End Exam" when you are sure you are ready to turn in your exam.
17. Do not use keyboard shortcuts during your exam. Although HDPs rely on keyboard shortcuts for efficiency in their jobs, keyboard shortcuts are not integrated into the Examroom.ai platform, nor are candidates tested on their knowledge of keyboard shortcuts. *The use of shortcut keys results in immediate termination of the exam.* Candidates must use the mouse to navigate through their exam as well as to play audio files.

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## 5.4 Special Accommodations

Candidates seeking special accommodations for AHDI credentialing examinations for online proctored (OLP) exams need to request those accommodations and seek approval a *minimum of 30 days prior to testing*. Requests for accommodations related to test aids (reference books, foot pedals, scratch paper, calculators, and online resources) will not be accepted, as these items are prohibited for all candidates per the policies outlined in this guide (*See Section 6.3: What to Expect on Exam Day*), regardless of disability or special needs. For all other needs, particularly those related to visual or physical disability, medical condition/illness, etc., requests should be submitted via email to [credentialing@ahdionline.org](mailto:credentialing@ahdionline.org). Contact AHDI if you need assistance.

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## 5.5 Online Proctoring FAQs

### Can I use my foot pedal and headset?

Headsets are permitted, but foot pedals are not. Foot pedals are not compatible with the OLP testing software and audio player. However, the audio excerpts you will be asked to listen to and transcribe or edit are very short (2-3 sentences) and can be easily manipulated via the on-screen controls using your mouse.

### Can I take the online proctored exam via my laptop?

If your laptop and operating system are fairly new and meet the specifications outlined in the Test Taker Manual, you should be fine, but it will be important to secure a direct connection to the internet and *not* rely on a wireless/Wi-Fi connection.

### **What happens if I lose electricity or internet connection?**

When there is a loss of power or a break in internet connectivity, you will automatically be logged out of the OLP exam, and your exam timer will pause until you log back in. If you lose electricity or internet connectivity, have a computer freeze-up, or your webcam stops working, you should attempt to log back in immediately. If you do not have the option to relaunch the exam, call Examroom.ai Technical Support right away (keep the number somewhere close by before you launch your exam) so that they can get you right back into your exam. You must log back in and finish your exam before the close of business of your exam day or you will forfeit your exam seat and fees, and your exposure to the exam will mean having to wait 4 months before you can retake it.

### **How does Examroom.ai ensure my identity?**

Part of your biometric enrollment process during registration will be to submit a webcam photo for your user profile. On exam day, you will be asked to take another picture of yourself so that the Examroom.ai proctor can match your exam-day photo with the one in your registration file. In addition, you will be asked to hold up your government-issued photo ID (or equivalent for countries where IDs are not issued) so that proctors can verify that the name on your ID matches the name of the candidate on file and capture an image of your photo ID. When prompted to show your photo ID, hold it 10 inches from your webcam for 10 seconds.

### **What happens if I need to cancel or reschedule my exam?**

You can reschedule your OLP exam any time you want as long as it is prior to the 48-hour window (**2 business days**) just prior to your exam session. Prior to that 48-hour window (**2 business days**), a candidate can log in to Examroom.ai and change the date/time of an exam. Once you are within the 48-hour window (**2 business days**), you will be prohibited from changing your exam session date and time. No cancellations can be made, nor exams rescheduled, beyond that point. If you choose to cancel your exam, a \$30 administrative processing fee will be charged. If you fail to show up for your exam at the time originally scheduled, you will forfeit your exam seat and fees. In cases of emergent exception, Examroom.ai will allow a candidate to reschedule despite being within the 48-hour window (**2 business days**) or even after the fact, provided sufficient evidence can be provided to AHDI that an extreme circumstance was encountered. Rescheduling requests should be submitted to AHDI at [credentialing@ahdionline.org](mailto:credentialing@ahdionline.org).

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# 6 Exam Preparation

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## 6.1 Strategies for Exam Success

Successful completion of AHDl credentialing exams will depend not only on training and experience but very often on focused exam preparation and study. A goal-oriented approach to competency preparation can make the difference between earning and not earning that coveted credential. Candidates should consider any or all of the following recommendations for exam prep, independent exercise, and/or collaborative group study:

**1. Know and understand your exam blueprint.** The 100 items on the CVHDP exam from specific core competency objectives outlined on the exam blueprints. Understanding what competency is going to be evaluated for each objective will assist candidates in more focused and purposeful study. Blueprints for both exams along with sample assessment items and FAQs are housed in this candidate guide.

**2. Invest in exam prep resources and materials, such as:**

- Veterinary Healthcare Documentation Course
- [CVHDP Practice Exam](#)
- CVHDP Study Guide (coming soon)

**3. Join or start a CVHDP study group.** One of the best ways to prepare for any exam is to partner with other candidates to study, learn, and tackle exam prep collaboratively.

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## 6.2 Recommended Study Materials

The exam covers a broad spectrum of knowledge and skills related to veterinary healthcare documentation, and no single set of resources can completely encompass all the information. This list is a *sampling* of references corresponding to content areas in the certification exam. It does not include all the resources that could be helpful in preparing for the exam, nor is it intended to be an endorsement. It is not necessary to use any of these resources in order to pass the exam, and conversely, using all of these books will not guarantee passing the exam. The internet and local libraries and bookstores are excellent sources for these and other references. It is preferable to use the latest available edition. Ensure online resources used are reputable. No reference materials may be used during the exam itself.

**Comprehensive English dictionary, for example:**

- *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Houghton Mifflin Co.
- *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, Inc.

**Comprehensive Veterinary dictionary, for example:**

- *Saunders Comprehensive Veterinary Dictionary, 5<sup>th</sup> edition*, Saunders

**Anatomy and physiology, for example:**

- Aiello SE, Moses MA. *The Merck Veterinary Manual*. 11<sup>th</sup> ed. Merck; 2016.  
[www.merckvetmanual.com](http://www.merckvetmanual.com)
- Bassert J. *McCurnin's Clinical Textbook for Veterinary Technicians and Nurses*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Saunders; 2021.

**Veterinary terminology, for example:**

- Colville J, Oien S. *Clinical Veterinary Language*. Mosby; 2013.
- Jack CM, Watson PM, Donovan MS ed. *Veterinary Technician's Daily Reference Guide: Canine and Feline*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Wiley-Blackwell; 2008.
- Romich JA. *An Illustrated Guide to Veterinary Medical Terminology*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Cengage Learning; 2014
- Taibo A. *Veterinary Medical Terminology Guide and Workbook*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Wiley-Blackwell; 2019.

**Pharmacology, for example:**

- Budde JA, McCluskey DM. *Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Wiley-Blackwell; 2023.  
<https://plumbs.com>
- Reduce Prescription Errors flyer

**Style Standards, for example:**

- *Veterinary Record Keeping: Medical Templates, Examples, and Laws*. TeleVet.  
<https://televet.com/resources/veterinary-record-keeping/>

**Abbreviation references, for example:**

- *Standard Abbreviations for Veterinary Medical Records, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. American Animal Hospital Association.

**Medical ethics, for example:**

- *Principles of veterinary medical ethics of AVMA*. <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/avma-policies/principles-veterinary-medical-ethics-avma>
- *Veterinary Record Keeping: Medical Templates, Examples, and Laws*. TeleVet.  
<https://televet.com/resources/veterinary-record-keeping/>

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# 7 Recertification

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## 7.1 CVHDP Recredentialing

The CVHDP credential is good for 3 years and expires on the last day of the month in which the credential was obtained. *Example:* A healthcare documentation professional who successfully passed the CVHDP exam on September 3, 2023, would need to renew their credential by September 30, 2026.

CVHDPs maintain this credential through participation in continuing education activities relevant to veterinary healthcare documentation and paying a recredentialing fee. Recredentialing is required every 3 years. CVHDPs maintain and build on their competency in the field of veterinary healthcare documentation with continuing education (CE) activities. This is necessary for the practitioner to function effectively in today's fast-paced healthcare environment. A minimum of **30 continuing education credits (CECs)** must be accrued during that 3-year cycle, with at least 26 of these in the core areas of *Clinical Medicine, Technology & Tools, Professional Development, and Medicolegal Issues*. The remaining 4 required CECs may be obtained in either the Core areas mentioned above or the Optional area of *Complementary Medicine*. All 30 credits must be completed prior to the expiration date of the credential. CECs are documented on the CVHDP Summary Form. This form, along with the recredentialing fee, must be turned in to AHDI up to 3 months prior to but no later than the expiration date of their credential.

Membership in AHDI is not a requirement for the CVHDP credential; however, it is encouraged because of the opportunities and benefits afforded members.

Current CVHDPs can find further information about recredentialing, filing an extension, forms and procedures related to recredentialing, and end-of-cycle submissions and processes in the CVHDP Recertification area of the AHDI website.