



-BYLAWS-

Commission on Nurse Certification
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COMMISSION ON NURSE CERTIFICATION

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ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of the certification body is the Commission on Nurse Certification (hereinafter referred as “CNC”).

ARTICLE II
PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

Section A. Mission

The mission of the CNC is to oversee certification activities in order to assure communities of interest that certificants have met accepted standards of practice.

Section B. General Purpose

The CNC offers certification to graduates of degree programs who meet the eligibility requirements established by the CNC.

Section C. Goals

Consistent with these Bylaws, CNC will promote high quality patient care through the certification of qualified individuals by:

- Recognizing formally those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the certification program and pass the examination.
- Encouraging continued personal and professional growth in one’s practice.
- Providing a national standard of requisite knowledge and experience required for certification, thereby assisting communities of interest in the assessment of certificants.

Section D. Limitations

The CNC is not responsible for the accreditation of educational or training programs or courses of study leading to the certification.

Section E. Opportunity for Review

The CNC shall not finalize policies that alter the scope of certification until opportunity has been provided for the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (hereinafter referred as “AACN”) Board of Directors and CNC constituents to comment.

ARTICLE III
GOVERNANCE AND AUTHORITY

Section A. Governance

The CNC is governed by the Commission on Nurse Certification Board of Commissioners (hereinafter referred as “CNCBOC”).

Section B. American Association of Colleges of Nursing

CNC is an autonomous arm of AACN.

Section C. Autonomy

The CNC shall be autonomous in conducting all aspects of its certification functions including but not limited to the establishment of the Bylaws, policies, operating rules and procedures, and examinations; implementation of its operating rules and procedures; allocation of budget and expenditures; and selection of its own officers, evaluators, and consultants.

Section D. Staff

The CNC shall retain staff who will conduct the business of the CNC.

Section E. Memorandum of Understanding

The CNC is empowered to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with AACN or other organizations that support and facilitate the CNC mission.

Section F. Authorization to Act

Except as provided in these Bylaws, no CNCBOC member, officer, employee, agent, or representative of the CNC may act on behalf of CNC, or hold himself or herself out to the public as authorized to act on behalf of CNC, without the prior, express, written approval of the CNC.

Section G. Use of CNC Intellectual Property

Certificants may use trademarks, logos, symbols, and other intellectual property in a manner that is consistent with applicable law, these Bylaws, and the applicable CNC policies.

CNL[®] is a registered trademark of AACN; Clinical Nurse LeaderSM, Clinical Nurse Leader ExaminationSM, and Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC)SM are service marks of the AACN.

Section H. Recognition

The CNC shall have the authority to pursue and maintain recognition from a national accredited entity recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

ARTICLE IV **COMPOSITION AND CONSTITUENTS**

Section A. Composition

All individuals who serve the CNC and its certification process – including but not limited to CNCBOC, committees/task teams, item writers, staff, and consultants – are representatives of CNC.

Section B. Constituents of Certification

The constituents of certification include certificants, primary faculty contacts, deans/directors, and the practice contacts at institutions that are partnered with certificant programs.

Section C. Standards of Conduct

CNC may adopt and publish standards which shall apply to all certificants. In the event that standards are adopted, the CNC Standards of Conduct shall govern the activities and professional behavior of all certificants and, among other purposes, shall prohibit violations of these Bylaws.

Section D. Certificant Records and Certification Status

The CNC shall maintain records of all applicants' certification status for a designated period.

The CNC shall require periodic recertification of all certificants to maintain certification to assure communities of interest that certificants have met accepted standards of practice.

ARTICLE V **CNC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Section A. CNC Board of Commissioners

The CNCBOC includes nine voting members and one or more ex-officio (non-voting) members.

Voting members of the CNCBOC are as follows:

- four members from the practice setting (practice partners and practicing certifiants);
- four members primarily from the educational setting (faculty and administration); and,
- one consumer/public member.

Section B. Composition

The composition of the CNCBOC shall reflect the diversity of the community of interest.

The practice and education members must have a minimum of two years experience in the area of certification. The consumer/public member has been or is a potential consumer of the certifiant services and has experience with public advocacy; the consumer/public member is not a Registered Nurse.

Section C. Ex-officio/Liaison

The director of CNC shall serve as an ex-officio member of the CNCBOC. The CNCBOC may appoint other ex-officio members as deemed necessary.

Section D. General Powers

The CNC shall be autonomous in all decision making regarding the certification program such as eligibility standards; the development, administration and scoring of the assessment instruments; and operational processes. The CNCBOC shall have the powers designated by these Bylaws to conduct the affairs of the CNC, approve the annual budget of CNC; to elect or appoint officers, and other agents of CNC, and define their duties; to make and alter policies consistent with these Bylaws or with applicable statutes, for the administration of the affairs of CNC. Notwithstanding the above, the CNCBOC shall not engage in any business or other activity which is not in the furtherance of and exclusively for its education, scientific, research, mutual improvement, and professional purposes, and which does not comply fully with applicable laws.

Section E. Officers

1. Officer Elections

Officers of the CNCBOC shall be elected by members of the CNCBOC. The CNCBOC shall elect annually the vice chair, treasurer, and secretary. The chair is elected once every two years. The CNC may identify and elect other officers as necessary. The officers elected shall take office July 1.

Members of the CNCBOC seeking election as officers may be either self-nominated or nominated by another member of the CNCBOC. Officers of the CNCBOC shall be elected by majority vote of the CNCBOC members.

In a contested election involving more than two candidates, should no candidate receive a majority vote, the candidates receiving the fewest votes shall be declared to be not elected and a second ballot will be conducted for the remaining two candidates.

2. Absentee Voting

Absentee voting is not available for the election of officers.

Section F. Terms of Office

1. CNCBOC Terms

Terms of office on the CNCBOC are three years. Service is limited to a maximum of two consecutive terms.

All terms of office begin July 1 and end June 30.

2. Officer Terms

The chair serves a two-year term; all other officer positions are one-year terms. Incumbent officers may be re-elected annually by the CNCBOC to serve a maximum of three consecutive one-year terms for a position (i.e. vice chair, treasurer, or secretary). This limitation does not preclude one individual from serving as vice chair, treasurer, or secretary following completion of two terms serving as another officer.

Section G. Vacancies

1. Officers

Should the chair be unable to complete his/her term of office, the vice chair shall serve as acting chair until a subsequent election at the next scheduled CNCBOC meeting.

Should the vice chair be unable to complete his/her term of office, a new vice chair shall be elected at the next CNCBOC meeting.

In the event that both the chair and vice chair are unable to complete their terms of office, the CNCBOC shall hold a special meeting to elect new officers.

2. CNCBOC and Nominating Committee

Should a member of the CNCBOC or Nominating Committee be unable to fulfill his/her term of office, the Executive Committee may identify an individual for confirmation by the CNCBOC to serve on an interim basis until the next scheduled election at which time an election shall be conducted for the open position in keeping with these Bylaws. Completion of an unexpired term shall not count towards the maximum length of time allowed to serve on the CNCBOC.

Section H. Conduct/Limitations of the CNC

1. All individuals who serve the CNC and its certification process – including but not limited to members of committees, item writers, CNCBOC, and consultants – are representatives of CNC.
2. The CNCBOC and committee members shall not receive any compensation, or other tangible or financial benefit for service to the CNC. However, CNCBOC and committee members may receive reimbursement of expenses incurred to attend a CNC or committee meeting or other approved activities.
3. The CNCBOC and committee members shall act in an independent manner consistent with their obligations to CNC and applicable law, regardless of any other affiliations, memberships, or positions.

ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEES

Section A. Accountability

Committees serve the CNC and are accountable to the CNCBOC.

Responsibilities, composition, length of terms, and governance of all committees shall be defined by the CNCBOC and specified in the operating rules and procedures for the CNC.

Section B. Procedures

Committees shall follow the published rules and procedures. Decisions and actions that are within the purview of a committee shall be made in conformance with published procedures.

Committee members or liaisons to other health care organizations are appointed by the CNCBOC chair.

Section C. Reporting

The chair of each committee is responsible for providing a written report to the CNCBOC on the activities of his/her committee.

Section D. Meetings, Mail Ballots, and Conference Calls

Committees shall hold meetings as needed. Meetings may be called when necessary by the chair or by a majority of the members. Between meetings, a mail ballot, electronic discussion, or conference call may be initiated by the chair of the committee as necessary.

The chair of the CNCBOC has the authority to preclude the convening of a meeting or conference call.

Section E. Quorum

A quorum for a committee requires at least 50 percent of the members to be in attendance.

Section F. Standing Committees

A standing committee may be created and established upon resolution adopted by a majority of the CNCBOC, provided that a quorum is present. Each standing committee shall be permanent and continuing until such time that it is dissolved or modified by the CNCBOC.

Standing committees will include:

- Executive Committee. Composed of the CNCBOC officers. Will provide leadership and make decisions on administrative matters that are not specifically related to certification decisions or policy revisions.
- Finance Committee. Composed of the Treasurer and two other CNCBOC members appointed by the chair of the CNCBOC.
- Nominating Committee. Composed of CNCBOC members - one from the educational setting, one from the practice setting, and one-at-large appointed by the chair of the CNCBOC.
- Appeals Committee. Composed of three members of the CNCBOC.
- Marketing Committee. Composed of two members of the CNCBOC and two certified CNL non-Board members currently employed in the role.

Section G. Nominating Committee

1. Terms of Office

The Nominating Committee members shall be appointed by the Chair of the CNCBOC six months prior to the annual business meeting of the CNC.

Terms of office on the Nominating Committee are one year and membership on the committee shall be limited to a maximum of three terms.

2. Purpose and Function

A Nominating Committee shall be established to evaluate the applications submitted from individuals seeking to serve on the CNCBOC.

The Nominating Committee members will elect a chair of the Nominating Committee.

At least ten months prior to the fall annual meeting of the CNCBOC, an announcement shall be published and widely circulated to the CNC constituents indicating the available categories of positions.

The Nominating Committee shall review the qualifications of the applicants and propose a slate of qualified candidates to fill the vacant CNCBOC positions. The chair of the Nominating Committee shall submit the slate of candidates to the CNCBOC at least ninety (90) days prior to the annual meeting.

The Nominating Committee shall make all reasonable and appropriate efforts to assure that the individuals on the slate presented constitute a diverse group, which will represent the interests of the constituents.

Section H. Other Committees

The CNCBOC may establish other standing or ad hoc committees, as necessary.

ARTICLE VII
DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS

Section A. General Expectations

1. Duties

The CNCBOC and committee members are expected to attend and actively participate in all meetings for which their attendance is required. The CNCBOC shall have grounds to pursue the removal of a Commissioner or committee member who fails to participate in two consecutive meetings during a term of service.

2. Confidentiality

CNCBOC and committee members, consultants, staff, and others who represent CNC shall maintain the confidentiality of all discussions, decisions, and actions. To serve on the CNCBOC, Commissioners must sign a consent form adhering to the confidentiality policy.

If a question is raised as to the confidentiality of certain information, confidentiality will be determined by a vote of the CNCBOC. The CNCBOC shall have grounds to pursue the removal from the CNCBOC of any Commissioner or committee member who fails to respect the confidentiality of information.

3. Conduct

Representatives of the CNC shall conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner at all times when representing the interests of CNC, including, but not limited to meetings and communications.

4. Nondiscrimination

The CNC prohibits discrimination on the basis of creed, race, or national origin, ethnicity, gender, age, disability and sexual orientation. All CNC policies and procedures must ensure consistency and procedural fairness.

5. Recusals

The CNCBOC and committee members are expected to recognize potential conflicts of interest and remove themselves from deliberations concerning institutions, programs, organizations, and individuals with which a conflict of interest may exist.

A Commissioner or committee member who is affiliated with a certification applicant shall excuse him/herself from all deliberations regarding the applicant. Any Commissioner or committee member shall abstain from discussion and voting on any matter relating to an applicant for which he/she may have served as an instructor/employer.

6. Limitations

Members of the CNCBOC may not serve on the AACN Board of Directors, Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), or any other health professional certifying board. It is the intent of the provision to avoid a conflict of interest or the perception of conflict of interest with any individual or organization that may influence the certification process.

The CNCBOC shall not engage in any activities relating to election campaigns for candidates seeking political office on behalf of the CNC. No officer, agent, representative, or employee may engage in such activities on behalf of the CNC.

The CNCBOC shall have the authority, responsibility, and accountability to develop, establish, approve, and enforce policies and procedures necessary to implement the goals and requirements of this Article.

7. The CNC shall indemnify all Commissioners, director, committee members, and employees of the CNC to the full extent permitted by law and shall be entitled to purchase insurance for such indemnification to the full extent as determined from time to time by the CNCBOC.
8. Orientation

All new CNCBOC members shall be provided an orientation prior to attendance at their first meeting.

Section B. Officers

1. Chair

The chair shall preside at all sessions of the CNCBOC.

The CNCBOC chair appoints committee chairs and committee members (except for the chair of the Nominating Committee).

The chair designates liaison representatives to other health care organizations.

The chair as an ex-officio member of all committees (except the Nominating Committee), may attend any or all meetings of these committees, and may cast a vote in the case of a tie for committee meetings and CNCBOC meetings.

The chair shall serve as the chair of the Executive Committee.

The chair performs such other duties as may be assigned by the CNCBOC.

2. Vice Chair

The vice chair shall perform all functions and duties of the chair in the absence or inability of the chair to serve.

The vice chair may attend meetings of all committees (except the Nominating Committee) at the discretion of the CNCBOC chair.

The vice chair shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

The vice chair performs such other duties as may be assigned by the chair.

3. Treasurer

The treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee and provide a report to the CNCBOC concerning the financial status of the CNC.

The treasurer shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

4. Secretary

The secretary shall maintain the minutes or record of the meetings of the CNCBOC.

The secretary shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

5. Committee Chairs

The chairs of committees shall facilitate business of their respective committees.

Each committee chair reports to the CNCBOC on the activities of his/her committee.

ARTICLE VIII
RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Section A. Removal of a Member of the CNCBOC or Committee

The CNCBOC may consider the removal of a member from the CNCBOC or the removal of a non-CNCBOC member from a committee prior to the completion of a term of office if said individual fails to fulfill his/her commitments and responsibilities or violates the policies, rules, or procedures of CNC. The ground for dismissal shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee and a recommendation for action transmitted to the CNCBOC.

Section B. Removal of an Officer of the CNCBOC

The CNCBOC may consider the removal of an officer of the CNCBOC prior to the completion of a term of office if said individual fails to fulfill his/her commitments and responsibilities or violates the policies, rules, or procedures of the CNC. The ground for dismissal shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee and a recommendation for action transmitted to the CNCBOC.

Section C. Review and Dismissal Procedures

The CNCBOC shall define a process for the review of individuals who are subject to removal from office. The procedures for dismissal shall be specified in the operating rules and procedures of the CNC.

Section D. Resignation of a Member of the CNCBOC

A member of the CNCBOC may resign at any time by providing written notice to the CNC Director via certified mail or traceable carrier, signature required. Resignations take effect upon receipt of the resignation letter by the Director.

In the event of a vacancy among the CNCBOC, the Commission Chair may choose to leave the position unfilled.

ARTICLE IX **CNC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS -** **MEETINGS AND BALLOTS**

Section A. Meetings

1. Annual Business Meeting

The CNCBOC shall hold an annual business meeting in the fall.

2. Other Meetings

The CNCBOC meets quarterly, either face-to-face, conference calls or electronically, and at other times as necessary as determined by the CNCBOC chair.

3. Executive Session

Board and committee meetings are held in executive session and are not open to the public.

4. Absentee Voting

Members of the CNCBOC must be present at meetings to execute their voting privileges. Proxies are not permitted.

5. Quorum

A quorum shall be five members of the CNCBOC of whom at least one shall be an officer of the CNCBOC. A majority vote is required.

Section B. Mail Ballots

Between meetings of the CNCBOC, a mail ballot (including an electronic ballot) may be initiated by the chair, CNC director upon consultation with the chair, or upon written request of at least three members of the CNCBOC.

Section C. Minutes, Reports, and Official Transcripts

A written record shall be made in the form of minutes or reports providing details of committee recommendations and actions, and CNCBOC actions.

ARTICLE X
FINANCES

Section A. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year begins July 1 and ends on June 30.

Section B. Budget

The Finance Committee shall prepare an annual budget for the CNC which shall be submitted to the CNCBOC for review and adoption.

Section C. Funding Sources

The financial support of the certification services provided by CNC shall include certification and recertification application fees and other innovative funding strategies.

Certification activities must be cost-effective and cost-accountable with respect to the applicants and certificants.

Section D. Annual Report

Full disclosure of the prior year's financial results shall be included in the annual report of the CNC.

ARTICLE XI
ITEM WRITERS

The CNCBOC shall establish a pool of item writers for all exams. The CNCBOC shall review and approve the list of prospective item writers as needed.

ARTICLE XII
REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS

The CNCBOC shall establish mechanisms to review formal complaints and appeals directed towards the certification and recertification process or towards CNC.

ARTICLE XIII
AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Amendments to or a repeal of these Bylaws may be proposed by any member of the CNCBOC. Amendments to or a report of these Bylaws shall be adopted by the CNCBOC after approval of a majority of the vote of the entire CNCBOC at the annual business meeting or other meeting of the CNCBOC called for the purpose of Bylaw revision, provided: (i) written notice of proposed change has been sent to the CNC director for receipt not less than 45 days prior to such meeting and (ii) the CNC director has distributed the proposed changes to each member of the CNCBOC for receipt by not less than seven days prior to the meeting at which the proposed changes are considered by the CNCBOC.