



Part VI Specialty Certification

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NCTRC Certification Standards



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Preface

The NCTRC Certification Standards serve as the official document that governs the NCTRC certification process. The NCTRC Certification Standards are composed of six interrelated booklets. The booklets are designed to help candidates to locate and review specific areas of the standards and related application processes. All candidates for NCTRC certification and current CTRS certificants are responsible for reviewing and understanding the regulations and procedures contained in the NCTRC Certification Standards.

NCTRC's Certification Standards are updated periodically. Candidates are responsible for reviewing the most current information and to determine that they meet the current standards before they apply for certification. The most current NCTRC Certification Standards can be found at www.nctrc.org.

Complete list of NCTRC Standards

Part I: Information for New Applicants

Materials contained in this booklet include the NCTRC Prerequisites, Eligibility Requirements, and Exam Information.

Part II: NCTRC Exam Information

Materials contained in this booklet include the NCTRC Prerequisites, Exam Information, Exam Content Outline, and Exam References.

Part III: Recertification and Reentry

Materials contained in this booklet include the NCTRC Prerequisites and information about Renewal, Recertification, and Reentry.

Part IV: NCTRC Disciplinary Process

Materials contained in this booklet include the NCTRC Prerequisites, NCTRC Disciplinary Process, Grounds and Sanctions for Disciplinary Violations, and the Investigation Process.

Part V: NCTRC National Job Analysis

Materials contained in this booklet include an overview of the NCTRC Job Analysis Study and the identified Job Tasks and Knowledge Areas.

Part VI: Specialty Certification

Materials contained in this booklet include the NCTRC Prerequisites and the procedures for Specialty Certification.

NCTRC NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of NCTRC, its Board of Directors, committee members, and staff to comply with all applicable laws, which prohibit discrimination in employment or service provision because of a person's race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, national origin, or because of any other protected characteristic.

NCTRC CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

NCTRC does not release names and contact information on record to individuals and/or organizations for educational and/or research purposes without the expressed written permission of the applicant/certificant. When the release is authorized, the names and addresses are printed on mailing labels as requested by organizations sponsoring educational programs, conferences and special research studies.



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NCTRC is a member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) and the CTRS Credentialing Program is accredited by National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Table of Contents | 1 |
| Introduction | 2 |
| General Prerequisites | 2 |
| Purpose of Specialty Certification | 3 |
| Specialty Certification Professional Areas of Recognition | 3 |
| Specialty Certification Requirements | 4 |
| Specialty Certification Path A..... | 4 |
| Specialty Certification Path B..... | 5 |
| Specialty Certification Application Appeal Procedures | 7 |
| Appeal Instructions..... | 7 |
| Appeal to the Standards Hearing Committee with Executive Director Discretion to Reverse Decision..... | 8 |
| Review and Decision of the Standards Hearing Committee..... | 8 |
| Final Appeal to the NCTRC Board of Directors..... | 9 |
| Annual Renewal Requirements | 9 |
| CTRS Recertification Requirements | 9 |
| CTRS Recertification with Specialty Certification Designation | 10 |
| Interpretive Guidelines for Continuing Education | 13 |
| Specialty Certification Interpretive Guidelines | 15 |
| Specialty Recertification Procedures | 17 |
| Specialty Recertification Appeal Procedures | 18 |
| Appeal Instructions..... | 18 |
| Appeal to the Standards Hearing Committee with Executive Director Discretion to Reverse Decision..... | 19 |
| Review and Decision of the Standards Hearing Committee..... | 19 |
| Final Appeal to the NCTRC Board of Directors..... | 19 |
| Recertification Extension | 20 |
| Appendix A | 19 |
| NCTRC FEES AND POLICIES | 19 |
| Appendix B | 21 |
| 2007 NCTRC Job Analysis Job Tasks and Knowledge Areas for the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist..... | 21 |
| Job Tasks of the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist..... | 21 |
| Knowledge Areas for the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist..... | 23 |

Introduction

The National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification® (NCTRC®) encourages applications from all qualified Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (CTRSs) interested in applying for specialty certification. While NCTRC cannot warrant an individual's abilities in professional practice, specialty certification will help identify the individual who possesses the necessary knowledge for competent practice in therapeutic recreation. Please note: an individual must possess an active CTRS credential to be eligible to apply for recertification or specialty certification. If you are not an active CTRS then you are not qualified to apply for specialty certification. If you were previously certified but are currently inactive, then you will need to first become an active CTRS in order to apply for specialty certification. For information for New Applicants, please obtain PART I: Information for New Applicants for the CTRS before proceeding further. If you are a new applicant for the CTRS credential you will need to first apply for Professional Eligibility. Part of the Professional Eligibility application process is registering for the NCTRC Exam. If you have any questions about the NCTRC certification process or the information contained in this part of the NCTRC Certification Standards, please contact NCTRC at (845) 639-1439. The NCTRC office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Internet access is available at www.NCTRC.org or you can reach NCTRC by sending an email to nctrc@NCTRC.org.

General Prerequisites

NCTRC's voluntary credentialing program evaluates the educational and experiential qualifications of therapeutic recreation professionals. As a condition of eligibility for NCTRC certification, recertification and specialty certification, each candidate agrees to the following:

- **To Comply with ALL NCTRC Standards, Policies and Procedures.** NCTRC may deny certification or recertification, revoke certification or recertification, or issue other sanctions when a candidate does not comply with any of NCTRC's *Certification Standards* including these *Prerequisites*.
- **To Adhere to NCTRC Application and Notification Requirements.** Each candidate for CTRS certification must truthfully complete and sign the appropriate application provided by NCTRC. Candidates and certificants must notify NCTRC in writing within sixty (60) days of any change in name, address, telephone number, and any facts bearing on eligibility, certification, recertification, or reentry. Each individual bears the burden of showing and maintaining compliance at all times. Candidates and certificants must provide NCTRC with confirmation of compliance with NCTRC requirements as requested by NCTRC. In order to confirm receipt of communication required by NCTRC, candidates should use certified mail, return receipt requested, or other verifiable method of delivery for communications to NCTRC.
- **To Report Pending Litigation, Sanctions, and/or Criminal Convictions.** Candidates must notify NCTRC within sixty (60) days of any civil or criminal indictment or charge pending before a state or federal regulatory agency or judicial body, including but not limited to the following actions to the extent such actions relate to therapeutic recreation or public health and safety: investigation of any civil or criminal action; filing of any civil or criminal charge; indictment or litigation; conviction; plea of guilty; plea of no contest (*nolo contendere*); or investigation or disciplinary action by a health care organization, professional organization, or other private or governmental body.
- **To Respect the Property of NCTRC.** The examinations, certificates, certification cards, logo, emblem, and the name "National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification," the designation "Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist," and abbreviations relating thereto are all the exclusive property of NCTRC and may not be used in any way without the express prior written consent of NCTRC. In the event of suspension, limitation, revocation, or resignation from NCTRC, or as otherwise requested by NCTRC, each individual shall immediately relinquish, refrain from using, and correct at his or her expense any outdated or other inaccurate use of NCTRC's certificate, certification card, logo, emblem, the

name "NCTRC," the designation "Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist," "CTRS," and related abbreviations.

- **To Authorize the Release of Information by NCTRC.** The individual candidate or certificant agrees that NCTRC and its officers, directors, committee members, employees, agents, and others may communicate any and all information relating to the candidate's application, certification, and review thereof including, but not limited to, tendency or findings of violations of NCTRC's *Certification Standards*, to state and federal authorities, licensing boards, employers, other certificants, and others.
- **To Waive Claims Against NCTRC.** Each candidate and certificant agrees that he or she waives, releases, discharges, and exonerates NCTRC, its officers, directors, employees, committee members, panel members and agents, and any other persons authorized by NCTRC for any action taken pursuant to the NCTRC *Certification Standards* and policies and procedures from any and all claims or liability, including, but not limited to, claims or liability arising out of: (i) the furnishing or inspection of documents, records and other information; and (ii) any investigation, review, or decision regarding an application or certification made by NCTRC.

Purpose of Specialty Certification

As healthcare evolves, both the technical knowledge and the skills required to successfully practice in a complex service environment significantly increase. Although in practice there remains a need to possess a broad range of professional skills, there is an increasing expectation to develop focused and specialized knowledge and skills that are distinctive to a specific population and service sector. Health and human service professionals who acquire a higher level of knowledge and more advanced skill provide the consumer with a greater depth of service compared to individuals who practice at a less advanced level. Specialization is well recognized within professional practice and has become the norm within the health and human service delivery system today.

Establishing a method to distinguish professionals who practice at an advanced level is essential to ensure quality of care and risk management. The attainment of advanced knowledge and skill is acquired via several methods including education programs, conferences focused upon specific skills or diagnostic populations, and the successful acquisition of expert skills that have been mastered over a substantial period of practice. The primary purpose of NCTRC specialty certification is to acknowledge the CTRS whose practice has reached an advanced professional level, and to provide formal recognition of competence beyond the CTRS credential. NCTRC specialty certification provides an additional level of assurance to patients, consumers, and employers regarding the delivery of quality recreation therapy and therapeutic recreation services.

Specialty Certification Professional Areas of Recognition

NCTRC awards specialty certification in five areas of practice that are broadly defined as follows:

- **Physical Medicine/Rehabilitation**
This specialty area includes, but is not limited to, diseases, conditions, and impairments primarily associated with decreased capacity for homeostatic balance, physical functioning, and complications from secondary conditions. It is recognized that this specialty area includes a multitude of specific diseases and impairments that occur throughout the human lifespan. TR/RT services are usually provided within hospitals, rehabilitative centers, community-based clinics, and other areas of service.
- **Geriatrics**
This specialty area includes, but is not limited to, diseases, conditions, and impairments primarily associated with aging adults. These conditions often impact the physical, social, psychological, and cognitive functioning of older adults. TR/RT services are usually provided within hospitals, geriatric rehabilitative centers, community-based nursing facilities, and other areas of service.

- **Developmental Disabilities**

This specialty area includes, but is not limited to, diseases, conditions, and impairments that manifest prior to adulthood and directly impact normal and predictable human development in one or more major life functions. TR/RT services are usually provided within medical centers, educational facilities, community-based programs, and other areas of service.

- **Behavioral Health**

This specialty area includes, but is not limited to, diseases, disorders, conditions, and impairments related to emotional and cognitive functioning within human behavior. This area includes biologically based disorders that directly impact functioning. It is recognized that this specialty area includes a multitude of specific diseases and impairments that occur throughout the human lifespan. TR/RT services are usually provided within hospitals, rehabilitative centers, community-based clinics, and other areas of service.

- **Community Inclusion Services**

This specialty area includes a wide array of population groups that represent a range of disabilities, impairments, and conditions that may include any or all of the above outlined groups. Inclusion is a process that enables individuals with disabilities to have the opportunity to participate fully in all community activities offered to people without disabilities. Inclusion requires providing the necessary framework of adaptations, accommodations and support so that all individuals can benefit equally from a community-based experience.

For the purpose of specialty certification, each of the designated areas of practice listed above is viewed as a distinct and separate segment of the TR/RT delivery system. It is further recognized that the implementation of TR/RT services involves the direct application of the therapeutic recreation process as defined by the most recent NCTRC Job Analysis. In seeking specialty certification status, CTRSs should determine the primary focus of their expertise as related to TR/RT practice and select the practice area that best reflects their acquired knowledge, skill, and ability as a CTRS.

Specialty Certification Requirements

The NCTRC specialty certification program is a direct extension of the CTRS credential and therefore, only individuals who possess active NCTRC certification are eligible to apply. Individuals who hold active CTRS status may apply for specialty certification at any time during the five-year CTRS certification cycle, as long as the qualification requirements for specialty certification can be met. If for any reason an individual who has acquired specialty certification becomes CTRS inactive, then the specialty certification will also become inactive. Individuals who reinstate their active CTRS status will also regain their specialty certification status if they possessed specialty certification prior to becoming inactive. An active CTRS can apply and be awarded multiple specialty certifications if a separate application is completed for each specialty certification designation. However, each specialty certification application must contain separate and different documentation in meeting the requirements of the multiple designated areas of specialty certification. Documentation utilized to meet the requirements of one specialty certification criteria can not be used in a duplicate manner to qualify for an additional specialty certification designation.

There are two options available to apply for specialty certification:

Specialty Certification Path A

1. CTRS active status;
2. Completion of five (5) years of full-time professional therapeutic recreation experience within a designated specialty area;
3. Completion of 75 continuing education hours that include a minimum of three (3) professional certificate trainings within the designated specialty area. Each professional certificate training must

- be a minimum of six (6) CE hours. The CE hours must be completed during the five year period prior to application; and
4. Submission of two professional references: one from a peer professional and one from a recent employment supervisor.

Specialty Certification Path B

1. CTRS active status;
2. Graduate Degree in TR/RT;
3. Completion of nine (9) graduate-level credit hours within the designated specialty area;
4. Completion of one (1) year of full-time professional therapeutic recreation experience within the designated specialty area; and
5. Submission of two professional references: one from a peer professional and one from a recent employment supervisor.

The specialty certification designation is valid for a period of up to five years if awarded at the beginning of the five-year recertification cycle. If the specialty certification designation is awarded at a point after recertification, then the specialty certification validation period will be for the remainder of the five-year certification cycle. Recertification of both the CTRS credential and the specialty certification designation would then occur at the same time at the next scheduled due date. Documented Continuing Education (CE) hours used during the specialty certification application process can be utilized for CTRS specialty recertification as long as the documented CE hours were earned within the five-year CTRS recertification period.

The criteria for specialty certification are further explained in the following section. CTRSs are encouraged to contact NCTRC for additional information or explanation regarding the specialty certification criteria.

1. Active CTRS Status: At the time of the submission of the initial application (and throughout the entire recertification cycle) a CTRS must hold active CTRS status. Active CTRS status is determined by the fact that the CTRS is up-to-date in all dues related matters and has no disciplinary or ethical issues.

2. Professional TR/RT Work Experience: The specialty certification application must be submitted with evidence of the completion of full-time professional therapeutic recreation experience within the designated specialty area. The professional experience can be accumulated through the performance of one or several of the following professional roles within a noted specific designated area of TR/RT service:

Direct Service Provider: delivers TR/RT services directly to clients or groups as a recreational therapist or therapeutic recreation specialist by administering assessments, developing and implementing individual programs and treatment plans, documenting the assessments and interventions, working on an interdisciplinary team, performing outreach activities, etc.

Supervisor: primarily supervises therapeutic recreation personnel in the direct delivery of TR/RT service to clients.

Administrator: manages a department or a division that includes TR/RT services.

Consultant: performs consulting services in TR/RT for organizations, educational institutions, agencies or corporations.

Please note that the paid professional experience must be in therapeutic recreation and related directly to the noted designated specialty area of TR/RT service. If the experience does not reference the above job titles and does not appear to be therapeutic recreation according to the NCTRC Job Analysis Task Areas, then the certificant should provide an explanation of how the work experience is related to therapeutic recreation and the designated specialty area of service. Full-time as well as part-time professional experience will be accepted for

specialty certification. NCTRC requires that all professional work experience is confirmed by the human resource department of the organization that employs the CTRS.

Full-time work experience is defined as between 32 to 40 hours per week. Part-time work experience in a permanent employment position in therapeutic recreation practice will be accepted as long as it is between 20 to 31 hours per week. If the part-time experience is ruled to be acceptable, it will be prorated (i.e., one year of part-time experience at 20 hours per week will be evaluated as 6 months full-time experience). Seasonal, temporary, and/or consulting experience will not be accepted as full-time or permanent part-time work experience.

3. Continuing Education: The completion of this criterion requires that the CTRS completes 75 hours of continuing education that include a minimum of three (3) professional certificate trainings within the given specialty designated area. The CE hours may include completing educational contact hours at professional conferences, workshops, symposia and seminars. The CTRS may earn continuing education credits for authoring professional publications, giving professional presentations, and completing academic courses. The CTRS may also earn continuing education credits by participating in officially sanctioned NCTRC test development, item writing and other certification test related activities if such activities are directly relate to the given specialty designated area. The three (3) professional certificate trainings must be for a minimum of six (6) CE hours. Professional certificate trainings are defined as comprehensive learning opportunities that address a specific topic or practice area that is directly applied to the designated specialty area. Such training programs must meet the published guidelines of the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET).

4. Graduate Degree in TR/RT: For the purpose of specialty certification, NCTRC will only accept a degree and major that is documented on an official academic transcript. The following officially designated majors appearing on the transcript will be accepted for specialty certification: (a) therapeutic recreation (recreation therapy); (b) recreation or leisure with an option in therapeutic recreation; and (c) therapeutic recreation, recreation, or leisure in combination with other fields of study (e.g., Therapeutic Recreation and Health Studies; Recreation and Sport Management; Leisure and Tourism).

5. Graduate Level Coursework: NCTRC requires the completion of a minimum of nine (9) graduate-level credit hours within the designated area of specialty certification. Ideally, the nine (9) credit hours should represent three (3) distinctive courses; however, alternate course credit distribution is acceptable. The qualified graduate-level coursework must appear on an official academic transcript of an accredited university or college. The transcript must verify that the completed coursework was for graduate credit and that the applicant received a passing grade for the course(s). Courses taken for "audit" are not acceptable within the Specialty Certification application process.

6. Professional References: A required component of the specialty certification application process is the submission of two professional references. The professional references must be submitted using the official NCTRC Professional Reference Verification Form. The two professional references for Specialty Certification must be submitted by one (1) Peer Professional and one (1) recent Employment Supervisor.

The Peer Professional reference must be submitted from a qualified health professional who has worked with the applicant for a minimum of one year within the designated specialty area. This person must be a practicing professional within allied health or human services; possess a minimum of a Bachelors degree within his/her practice field and be credentialed at the professional level.

The recent Employment Supervisor reference must be from an individual who has provided direct supervision to the applicant for a minimum of one year of employment within the designated specialty area. The em-

ployment supervisor must be a qualified health professional or possess a degree in health or human service management.

Please note: for more information on requirements, please see *Specialty Certification Interpretive Guidelines* on page 14.

Specialty Certification Application Appeal Procedures

Upon receipt of a decision denying eligibility, the applicant has 45 days to submit an appeal application to NCTRC. If an applicant does not submit an appeal application and all supporting documentation requesting an appeal of the denial within 45 days, the applicant forfeits any right to appeal the decision denying specialty certification at a later date. Applicants who fail to submit an appeal within the 45 day time limit will have to reapply and meet all of the current NCTRC Specialty Certification Standards in order to obtain specialty certification. There is no additional filing fee to request an appeal at this stage of the appeal process. The grounds for an appeal are limited to:

- Demonstrate that the NCTRC Specialty Certification Standards were not properly applied; and/or
- Provide information that was not presented previously and which sustains the applicants eligibility for specialty certification.

Appeal Instructions

General Instructions: All requests for an appeal must be typed or printed on the NCTRC Specialty Certification Appeal Application. Applicants (appellants) should submit complete and accurate information. All materials submitted to the Standards Hearing Committee for the appeal become the property of NCTRC and will not be returned. Appellants should retain a copy of the appeal application sent to NCTRC.

All information submitted in an Appeal Application and supportive appeal materials must be true and correct. If it is found that false or inaccurate information has been presented, the appellant's request for specialty certification designation will be denied and the individual may be denied eligibility for future consideration of certification.

To verify academic coursework content or degree(s) earned: If credit was not awarded by NCTRC for coursework or degrees completed that the appellant believes should be applied to the specialty certification requirements, the appellant must submit official academic transcripts to verify degree(s) earned and official course outlines to verify any academic coursework to be evaluated as part of the an appeal process. Only official course outlines will be reviewed to determine the exact content of academic courses in therapeutic recreation and the designated specialty area of service. Letters from college/university faculty members may be used to further explain outlines but will not be accepted in place of official outlines. Course catalog descriptions do not provide sufficient information and will not be accepted in place of official outlines.

To verify full-time work experience: If credit was not awarded for work experience in therapeutic recreation and the designated specialty area of service, the appellant must document full-time, paid work experience. In order to do this official documentation must be submitted from the personnel department of the employing agency that verifies the full-time work experience with specific duties in therapeutic recreation and the designated specialty area of service. This verification should include the appellant's exact job title, the beginning and ending dates of employment, the total number of hours worked per week, and a description of therapeutic recreation job duties within the designated specialty area of service. This verification of employment and/or employment responsibilities must be submitted on official agency letterhead from the agency department and signed by an appropriate official.

To verify continuing education units/credits: The appellant must submit official documentation to verify that acceptable credit has been granted and/or that content is relevant to therapeutic recreation knowledge as defined by the NCTRC Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and related to the designated specialty area of service. To verify that the type of credit is acceptable, the appellant must submit an original certificate or documentation from the continuing education credit sponsor which demonstrates that credit granted follows the guidelines of the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET). To verify content, submit the program brochure or official description of the session or program and a written statement by the appellant of how the content relates to the therapeutic recreation knowledge areas and the designated specialty area of service. Official content descriptions and verification of legitimate continuing education credit should be provided from the sponsor of the continuing education credit.

To verify professional references: The Peer Professional reference and the Recent Employment Supervisor reference must be submitted using the official NCTRC reference form. All required information must be provided and signed by the respective reference. If NCTRC does not accept a submitted reference due to incomplete information or the reference does not meet the qualifications, the appellant should either submit an explanation or an updated reference form. The appellant is permitted to submit an additional reference form during the appeal process to take the place of a reference that was not accepted by NCTRC during the initial review.

Appeal Review Note: NCTRC will ensure that applicants are certified according to NCTRC standards. As a result, when reviewing an Appeal Application, if an error has been made in regard to a fact about an applicant's credentials, the Standards Hearing Committee may correct the error, even when the error is not in favor of the applicant. In addition, when submitting information pertaining to the appeal process the appellant should not include confidential patient/client records or information, program or agency brochures, letters from supportive colleagues, audio or videotapes, documentation of continuing education credit, copies of college/university term papers or written projects, or other information not specifically requested above.

Appeal to the Standards Hearing Committee with Executive Director Discretion to Reverse Decision: Upon receipt of additional information, the Executive Director shall review the documentation submitted and has the discretion to determine whether the specialty certification requirements have been met. The Executive Director shall either: (i) reverse the prior denial and award the specialty certification designation (notifying the appellant of the decision and terminating the appeal); or (ii) submit the additional documentation to the Standards Hearing Committee for consideration of the appeal.

Review and Decision of the Standards Hearing Committee: If the Executive Director does not reverse the denial of specialty certification, the Executive Director shall forward the appellant's appeal and appeal materials to the Standards Hearing Committee for review. The Standards Hearing Committee shall review the appeal. The scope of the Standards Hearing Committee's review is not limited to the decision prompting the appeal. The entire application for specialty certification is subject to review. At any time during its review of the appeal, the Standards Hearing Committee may request additional information from the appellant. Following its review, the Standards Hearing Committee shall make any of the following determinations:

- That the decision to deny was correct and is affirmed;
- That the decision of the staff is affirmed, but the Standards Hearing Committee modifies the basis for the decision. A decision modifying an appellant's educational or experiential compliance must be given full effect by the staff;
- That the decision was not correct and that the appellant should be awarded the specialty certification designation.

Within six weeks of the decision of the Standards Hearing Committee, NCTRC staff shall advise the appellant in writing of the Standards Hearing Committee's final decision regarding the appeal. The written notice shall describe specifically the decision of the Standards Hearing Committee, as well as any findings by the Committee modifying the appellant's educational or experiential compliance. If the Committee and Executive Director find that the appellant has been denied, the appellant will have to reapply and meet all of the current *NCTRC Specialty Certification Standards*.

Final Appeal to the NCTRC Board of Directors

A final appeal to the NCTRC Board of Directors is only available for decisions of the Standards Hearing Committee, which are alleged to have been rendered in an arbitrary and capricious manner. No other ground for appeal is available. All decisions by the Standards Hearing Committee, which are not alleged to be arbitrary and capricious and which are not appealed to the Board of Directors are final.

The appellant may appeal any decision of the Standards Hearing Committee which is alleged to have been rendered in an arbitrary and capricious manner to the NCTRC Board of Directors by submitting a written appeal statement along with a \$25.00 appeal filing fee within 30 days of receipt of the decision of the Standards Hearing Committee. NCTRC may file a written response to the appeal to the Board of Directors.

The NCTRC Board of Directors, by majority vote, shall render a decision on the record, without oral hearing, although additional written documentation may be submitted to support or refute the allegation of arbitrary and capricious decision-making by the Standards Hearing Committee.

The decision of the NCTRC Board of Directors shall be rendered in writing. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be transmitted to the individual by certified mail or other verifiable method of delivery.

Annual Renewal Requirements

Each year of the five year certification cycle, each Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) must submit an Annual Maintenance Application and fee to maintain CTRS certification and specialty certification. The Annual Maintenance Application and fee must be submitted by the due date (either May 1 or November 1). In the fifth year of the certification cycle, the maintenance fee must be submitted as part of the recertification application.

If the Annual Maintenance Application and fee are postmarked to NCTRC after the respective deadlines of June 30 and December 31, then both the certification and specialty certification will become inactive and the certificant will not be able to use the "CTRS" designation or the specialty designation. Inactive professional certification and specialty certification may be reinstated at any time during the five-year certification cycle by paying the current reinstatement fee plus any delinquent annual maintenance fees. Inactive certification and specialty certification may not be reinstated following expiration of the five-year certification cycle. During any cycle of time that the certification is inactive, the individual is prohibited from: (i) representing that the individual is a "Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist" ("CTRS") with specialty designation; and (ii) agreeing to serve as a supervisor for a proposed internship requiring a supervisor that is NCTRC CTRS certified.

CTRS Recertification Requirements

The NCTRC Certification Standards require certificants to maintain continuing professional competence in therapeutic recreation. It is each certificant's responsibility to collect and maintain all recertification materials over their five-year cycle of certification. Certificants who possess specialty certification must document specific continuing education credits as deemed acceptable by the Recertification Standards and an appropriate number of professional work hours in therapeutic recreation. The exam option for recertification is not permitted for CTRSs who possess the specialty certification designation.

The decision for a five-year recertification cycle was based on expert opinion and the results of the 1987 Job Analysis. This initial decision was reinforced by subsequent Job Analysis studies and reviews that indicated that the five-year recertification cycle correlates directly with observed changes within the profession of therapeutic recreation. All recertification hours must be earned during the recertification cycle. No credit is given for any continuing education or professional experience completed prior to or following the end of the recertification cycle. It is also the certificant's responsibility to submit a completed recertification application before the end of the five-year recertification cycle. The recertification application must include the annual maintenance fee. The certificant should also be prepared to submit official documentation pertaining to all completed continuing education hours if called upon to do so during the audit process. Successful completion of specialty recertification will result in automatic recertification of the CTRS credential since the criteria for the specialty recertification meets or exceeds the criteria for CTRS recertification.

CTRS Recertification with Specialty Certification Designation

Specialty recertification is required every five (5) years and must be submitted at the scheduled time of the CTRS Recertification. This requirement applies to all CTRSs who possess specialty certification, regardless of when they were awarded the specialty certification designation during the previous five-year cycle. Documentation used during the initial specialty certification application process can be applied to both the CTRS and specialty recertification applications if the documentation was earned within the previous five-year certification cycle.

Applications for specialty recertification may be submitted up to one year in advance of the recertification due date, if accompanied by a CTRS recertification application. If approved, both the CTRS credential and specialty certification will be valid for the next five-year recertification cycle.

The criteria for specialty recertification are summarized as follows:

1. Active CTRS status;
2. Complete a minimum of 1,000 hours of paid therapeutic recreation professional employment within the given designated specialty area during the previous five (5) year cycle;
3. Complete two (2) of the four (4) Specialty Certification Professional Advancement Activities listed below during the previous five-year specialty certification cycle:
 - a. **NCTRC Internship Supervision:** Serve as the direct field placement supervisor for two (2) separate internships conducted within therapeutic recreation and the given area of specialty certification. It is required that the internships are completed during different semesters and adhere to the NCTRC field placement guidelines.
 - b. **Publications and Research:** Serve as the author of a publication related to the given specialty area that has been peer-reviewed or serve as the identified investigator in an agency/university approved research project.
 - c. **Presentations:** Present at least three (3) separate and different professional Continuing Education peer reviewed and IACET guided presentations in the given specialty area to a professional audience of CTRSs or related health professionals.
 - d. **Academic Credit:** Complete six (6) semester hours of graduate coursework within the specialty area.
4. Complete a minimum of 50 Continuing Education hours in the designated specialty area as related to TR/RT service.

The criteria for specialty recertification are further explained in the following section. CTRSs are encouraged to contact NCTRC for additional information or explanation regarding the specialty recertification criteria.

1. Active CTRS Status: At the time of the submission of the recertification application (and throughout the entire recertification cycle) a CTRS possessing the specialty certification is required to hold active CTRS status. Active CTRS status is determined by the fact that the CTRS is up-to-date in all dues related matters and has no disciplinary or pending ethical issues.

2. Professional TR/RT Work Experience: As noted above, specialty recertification requires a minimum of 1000 hours of paid therapeutic recreation professional experience that must be earned within the five-year recertification cycle. The professional experience can be accumulated through the performance of one or several of the following professional roles within a noted specific designated area of TR/RT service:

Direct Service Provider: delivers TR/RT services directly to clients or groups as a recreational therapist or therapeutic recreation specialist by administering assessments, developing and implementing individual programs and treatment plans, documenting the assessments and interventions, working on an interdisciplinary team, performing outreach activities, etc.

Supervisor: primarily supervises therapeutic recreation personnel in the direct delivery of TR/RT service to clients.

Administrator: manages a department or a division that includes TR/RT services.

Consultant: performs consulting services in TR/RT for organizations, educational institutions, agencies or corporations.

Please note that the paid professional experience must be in therapeutic recreation and related directly to the noted designated specialty area of TR/RT service. If the experience does not reference the above job titles and does not appear to be therapeutic recreation according to the NCTRC Job Analysis Task Areas, then the certificant should provide an explanation of how the work experience is related to therapeutic recreation and the designated specialty area of service. Full-time as well as part-time professional experience will be accepted for specialty recertification. NCTRC requires that all professional work experience is confirmed by the human resource department of the organization that employs the CTRS.

Full-time work experience is defined as between 32 to 40 hours per week. Part-time work experience in a permanent employment position in therapeutic recreation practice will be accepted as long as it is between 20 to 31 hours per week. If the part-time experience is ruled to be acceptable, it will be prorated (i.e., one year of part-time experience at 20 hours per week will be evaluated as 6 months full-time experience). Seasonal, temporary, and/or consulting experience will not be accepted as full-time or permanent part-time work experience.

3. Specialty Certification Professional Advancement Activities: Recertification of CTRS specialty certification requires the completion of Professional Advancement Activities. These activities are viewed as necessary requirements to demonstrate continuing advancement within the designated specialty area of service as related to TR/RT practice. Certificants must complete two (2) of the following four (4) activities.

3a. NCTRC Internship Supervision: In meeting the requirements for specialty recertification a CTRS may utilize experiences related to the supervision of interns. The CTRS must serve as the direct field placement supervisor for two (2) separate internships conducted within the given area of specialty certification. It is required that the internships are completed during different semesters and adhere to the NCTRC field placement guidelines. Copies of the Field Placement Verification Form may be required as documentation of the internship supervision.

3b. Publications and Research: NCTRC recognizes that the engagement in professional publications and research is a note worthy activity that leads to continuing education and expertise. This criterion for specialty recer-

tification can be met by serving as an author of a book or article that has been peer reviewed and is related to the given specialty area. This criterion can also be met by serving as an identified investigator in an agency or university approved research project. Documentation of having met this criterion may include a copy of the published manuscript or a summary paper documenting the scope and nature of the research project, with verification documenting the peer reviewed process.

3c. Presentations: Professionally based presentations are recognized as contributing to one’s continuing education and expertise. In meeting this criterion, the CTRS must present a minimum of three (3) separate and different professional presentations related to the given specialty designated area. Each presentation should be selected as part of a peer reviewed process and delivered following IACET guidelines. The presentations must be delivered to a professional audience of CTRSs or related health professionals. Documentation of having met this criterion may include a copy of a conference brochure and a letter of acknowledgement from a conference or symposium organizer, with verification documenting the peer reviewed process.

3d. Academic Credit: In an effort to promote the professional advancement and expertise NCTRC accepts the completion of graduate level coursework as evidence of continuing education and expertise. In meeting this criterion the CTRS must complete six (6) graduate-level semester hours within the given specialty designated area. The graduate coursework must be completed within the five-year certification cycle prior to recertification and be from an accredited college or university. An individual may earn continuing education credits for an academic course taken for credit or taken as an audited course. An official academic transcript or grade report will serve as documentation of the successful completion of this criterion.

4. Continuing Education: In addition to the above criteria, the CTRS must complete professional level (baccalaureate level or higher) continuing education (CE) opportunities to enhance knowledge and expertise. The fulfillment of this criterion requires that the CTRS completes 50 hours of continuing education in the given specialty designated area. However, the continuing education experiences used to meet this criterion cannot be the same experiences used to meet the requirements of the other specialty recertification option areas listed above. In other words, the experiences and activities used to meet the 50 hour continuing education option must be distinctively different and separate from the ones used to meet the other specialty recertification options. The CE hours may include completing educational contact hours at professional conferences, workshops, symposia and seminars. The CTRS may earn continuing education credits for authoring professional publications, giving professional presentations, and completing academic courses. The CTRS may also earn continuing education credits for participating in officially sanctioned NCTRC test development, item writing and other certification test related activities if such activities are directly relate to the given specialty designated area.

The content of Continuing Education opportunities must relate directly to the specialty certification designated service area and the current NCTRC Job Analysis Knowledge Areas. Credits are measured according to the equivalency of an educational contact hour (60 minutes of actual classroom/instructional time, excluding registration time and breaks). NCTRC will also recognize continuing education units (CEUs) and translate these into credits as follows:

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 contact hour | = | 0.1 CEU | = | 1 credit |
| 10 contact hours | = | 1.0 CEU | = | 10 credits |

Interpretive Guidelines for Continuing Education

NCTRC offers an approval process for completed continuing education hours prior to the submission of a formal recertification application. NCTRC's Continuing Education Pre-Approval Review Process allows certificants to submit completed continuing education prior to recertification to determine whether it meets current recertification requirements. This process will allow for early confirmation of continuing education to individuals who are not certain if previously completed education will count towards NCTRC Recertification requirements. The application form is available at www.NCTRC.org under Standards and Publications.

The standards require a CTRS must submit an official document(s) (*not a copy*) of continuing education credit which indicates their name, attendance date (*which must be within the 5 year cycle*), title of the course or program and contact hours (*it does not have to be awarded in CEU credit*). If the CTRS is unable to obtain such a document, then the sponsor or instructor of the program must provide a written statement including all the necessary information mentioned above, on agency letterhead.

Continuing Education Courses such as conferences, symposia, seminars, etc. are accepted if the continuing education is approved by a therapeutic recreation organization at the local, state, or national level, that uses the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) Standards or through a hospital or other agency related to therapeutic recreation or through a college/university that uses national continuing education standards. The title of the course or program, as listed on the official document, is critical to whether it can be used toward NCTRC specialty recertification. The title must be related to one of the NCTRC Job Analysis Knowledge Areas. In order to match the title with the items, the title must be clear and reflective of the program. If it is not, the certificant will need to submit the program brochure with the continuing education materials. Certain continuing education will not be accepted toward NCTRC specialty recertification. This includes CPR, First Aid, Infectious Disease Control, Life Saving, and activity or other skill-based courses. Intervention skill sessions/courses will be accepted when the majority of the focus is on using the therapeutic recreation process. A certificant may also meet specialty recertification requirements by completing academic courses, professional publications and presentations that are directly related to the specialty certification designated area of TR/RT service.

Academic Coursework: A certificant can complete academic course work for continuing education credit. The course must be documented on an official transcript or grade report. Continuing education credits for completing academic courses for credit and audited academic courses are as follows:

Academic courses for credit:

1 semester credit = 15 CE hours
= 15 credits
1 trimester credit = 14 CE hours
= 14 credits
1 quarter credit = 10 CE hours
= 10 credits

Audited academic courses:

1 semester credit = 8 CE hours
= 8 credits
1 trimester credit = 7 CE hours
= 7 credits
1 quarter credit = 5 CE hours
= 5 credits

The content of academic courses must be linked directly to the therapeutic recreation knowledge areas delineated in the current NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty certification area. An individual may earn continuing education credits for an academic course taken for credit or taken as an audited course "only if taken as a continuing education component".

Publications and Presentations: A certificant may request credit for professional publications and presentations. Credit will not be given for material presented multiple times. Credit will not be given for the

same publication duplicated in different formats. When a certificant presents, continuing education credit will not be given for attending that session. The certificant may only receive credits for either making the presentation or attending the educational session, but not for both. Provided below is a table containing the credit values for publications and presentations.

| TYPE OF PUBLICATION | CREDITS |
|---|----------------|
| <i>Published professional book (original or subsequent editions)</i> | 25 |
| <i>Authored unpublished masters or doctoral thesis</i> | 20 |
| <i>Published editor of a professional book or professional journal</i> | 15 |
| <i>Published professional book chapter (original or subsequent editions)</i> | 15 |
| <i>Authored article in refereed journal</i> | 15 |
| <i>Published book review</i> | 10 |
| <i>Editorial review of professional journal article</i> | 5 |
| <i>Published research abstract or proceeding</i> | 5 |
| <i>Published article in non-refereed professional state, regional or national magazine</i> | 5 |
| <i>Published professional newsletter article</i> | 2 |
| <i>Presentation at professional conference (credits per presenter per hour)</i> | 2 |
| <i>Presentation of a research or program poster</i> | 2 |

The content of publications and presentations must be directly related to the NCTRC Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and the designated specialty certification service area. Agency presentations or in-services that are directly related to one's job duties are not accepted as professional presentations. Community service presentations to service clubs and parents groups are not accepted as professional presentations.

The table below shows the type of continuing education accepted and the "acceptable proof" the certificant must submit for the specialty recertification audit. Continuing education credits will not be awarded without original documentation, as described below.

Suggested Documentation for Specialty Recertification Continuing Education

| CATEGORY | DESCRIPTION | ACCEPTABLE PROOF FOR CREDITS |
|--|--|---|
| Academic Credit Courses | Academic courses offered by an accredited educational institution. Content must relate to Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and designated specialty area of service. | Official transcript or grade report. If the course title does not appear to be related to the Job Analysis Knowledge Areas, course outline should be submitted. |
| Therapeutic Recreation Continuing Education Programs from Conferences and Workshops | Programs, courses, symposia with therapeutic recreation content directly related to Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and designated specialty area of service. | Official documentation of continuing education credit which must include certificant's name, attendance dates, and title of course or program, contact hours, or written certification by the instructor. If the course or program title is not reflective of the knowledge areas from the Job Analysis, a content outline should be submitted. CPR, First Aid, Infectious Disease Control, Life Saving or other such skill or activity courses will not be accepted. |
| Publications* | The content must relate to Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and designated specialty area of service. The CTRS must be author, co-author, or editor. | Copy of publication or a copy of the title page, table of contents and publication date. If publication is in the process of being published, a publisher's notice of acceptance is permissible. |
| Presentations* | Seminars, conferences, or original papers. The CTRS can be a guest | Submit evidence of presentation (i.e., program announcement, brochure), date, exact number of contact hours, and a letter confirming that the presentation was completed |

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| | lecturer, primary presenter or a panel participant. Credit will not be given for repeat or multiple presentations of the same material. Content must relate to Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and designated specialty area of service. | (e.g., a thank you letter, session evaluation). |
| Poster Presentations* | Credit will not be given for repeat or multiple poster presentations of the same material. Content must relate to Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and designated specialty area of service. | Poster presentations are given 2 continuing education credits. Submit evidence of presentation (program announcement, brochure and letter confirming the presentation was completed). |

* No more than 25 CE credits in the areas of Publications and/or Presentations will be allowed toward Specialty Recertification Requirements.

Specialty Certification Interpretive Guidelines

Academic Courses for Credit: Course work taken at a college or university for academic credit and documented by an official transcript or grade report. Course content must be linked directly to the therapeutic recreation knowledge areas delineated in the current NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Activity Skill Session/Course: An activity skill session/course is where the focus of learning is on the experiential aspects of the activity. The majority of educational content is on learning, practicing, and/or participating in the activity skill.

Audited (not graded) Academic Course Work: Audited academic course work is taken at a college or university and no academic credit is awarded. No grade is recorded, and tests or examinations are not required. An official transcript from the college or university must indicate "audit". Course content must be directly linked to the therapeutic recreation knowledge areas delineated in the current NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Continuing Education Provider or Authority: NCTRC accepts the continuing education from education providers who follow the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) Criteria and Guidelines for continuing education, whether they are officially sanctioned by IACET or not.

Continuing Education Unit: One CEU = ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience, under responsible, qualified direction and instruction. The International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) is the caretaker of the CEU. IACET assumes responsibility for refining and disseminating information about the CEU. Through IACET programs, publications, research, and technical assistance, the Association assists organizations in correctly utilizing the criteria.

Guest Lecturer at a College or University: Presenting a lecture to an undergraduate or graduate class on a topic related to the NCTRC National Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and the designated specialty area of expertise. The lecture must be a minimum of 60 minutes and must be verified by the College or University.

IACET (International Association for Continuing Education and Training): The International Association for Continuing Education and Training is the internationally recognized organization for standards and certification for continuing education and training. The IACET Criteria and Guidelines for Quality Continuing Education and Training Programs are available for free at www.iacet.org. NCTRC uses these criteria and guidelines as an indicator of quality continuing education.

Intervention Skills Session/Courses: A therapeutic recreation intervention skill session/course may incorporate an activity skill, but the majority of the focus is on using the therapeutic recreation process through facilitation techniques that restore, remediate and/or rehabilitate functioning. The education content of an intervention

skills session/course must incorporate diagnostic and assessment information and involve the therapeutic recreation intervention planning and implementation process through the use of intervention modalities that adhere to professional standards of practice.

Job Analysis Task Areas: The NCTRC National Job Analysis Task Areas define the skills used by a professional Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist on the job. The tasks represent necessary competent practice. NCTRC uses these Job Task Areas as criteria for determining therapeutic recreation professional experience.

Job Analysis Knowledge Areas: The NCTRC National Job Analysis Knowledge Areas define the knowledge required to perform the Job Analysis Tasks used by a professional Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist on the job. The knowledge areas are the basis for educational and testing requirements at NCTRC. NCTRC uses these Job Knowledge Areas as criteria for determining whether continuing education is related to therapeutic recreation.

Length of Continuing Education: Each continuing education session must be 60 minutes or longer. Sessions of less than 60 minutes will not be accepted by NCTRC regardless of the content.

Professional Level Education: It is required that CTRSs will complete professional level (baccalaureate level or higher) continuing education. Professional level continuing education is defined as opportunities that are either sponsored by an organization representing professionals that have an entrance requirement of a four year degree or a continuing education experience that is primarily designed for an audience that possesses a bachelors degree or higher. Recertification should demonstrate that the CTRS is maintaining and enhancing knowledge and skill as related to the content areas of the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Publication Definitions:

Published professional book: A scholarly publication in therapeutic recreation; includes books used as texts in academic programs and theoretical/conceptual content so long as the content relates to the NCTRC Job Analysis. Also includes revising a book on TR practice relating to the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Authored unpublished masters or doctoral thesis: A scholarly work for academic credit documenting original research related to the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Published editor of a professional book or professional journal: Editing a book or a journal related to TR practice, the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise. Name of editors must be published in the book or journal or supported by letter from the publisher.

Published professional book chapter: Publishing an original or revised chapter in a book related to TR practice, the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Authored article in refereed journal: Authoring articles related to therapeutic recreation practice, the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise published in a refereed journal using blind, peer review of manuscripts.

Published book review: A book review published in a refereed journal related to TR practice, the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Editorial review of professional journal article: Editorial review of professionally prepared manuscript submitted for publication in a peer-refereed journal related to TR practice, the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Published research abstract or proceeding: A published synopsis of original research or conceptual theory that reflects a presentation of the original work. Content must relate to the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Published article in non-refereed professional state, regional or national magazine: Published articles on TR practice in a state, regional or national professional publication. Content must relate to the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Published professional newsletter article: A published article that discusses a topic related to the NCTRC

Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise.

Presentation at professional conferences: Presentations made at a professional conference, workshop or seminar with content related to TR practice, the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise. Presentations earn 2 credits for each 60 minutes of lecture. When there are multiple presenters each presenter may earn 2 credits for each 60 minutes of lecture. Credit will only be awarded once for each original presentation and will not be given for repeat presentations of the same topic.

Presentation of a research or program poster: A poster presentation is the sharing of research, conceptual, or programmatic information through a visual display. Presenters interact with conference attendees during the display time. The poster presentation at a conference must relate to TR practice, the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise. and may be either refereed/juried or non-refereed/non-juried.

Refereed or Juried Publication: Publications which use blind review, peer review and editing for manuscript critique.

Repeated Presentations: A presentation that is presented to a different audience where no significant changes have been made to the content of the presentation. Minor changes to the content, such as updating a few pieces of information, are considered a repeated presentation. Credit is not given for repeated presentations.

Reprinted Publication: An article or abstract printed in multiple publications (state society magazine, professional newsletter, and professional journal) with no significant changes made to the content of the article or abstract. Credit is not given for reprinted or multiple publications of the same material.

Specialty Recertification Procedures

NCTRC will notify each certificant approximately 60 days before the end of the five-year certification cycle. Specialty recertification applications may be submitted no earlier than 12 months prior to the certification due date (either May 1 or November 1) and no later than the expiration date (either June 30 or December 31). The submission of specialty recertification applications to NCTRC postmarked after November 1 or May 1 respectively, will be assessed a recertification fee. There will be no waiver of this fee. Specialty recertification applications postmarked after the respective expiration dates of December 31 or June 30 will not be accepted by NCTRC.

NCTRC requires the submission of all documents and materials used to verify the specialty certification process. Please do not send records of continuing education to NCTRC until a completed specialty recertification application is sent to NCTRC. NCTRC will not maintain partial records of specialty recertification requirements (i.e., pre-submitted CEU credit slips). Failure to submit the continuing education materials at the time of application may result in a denial of specialty recertification. Courses and CEU offerings used to document the specialty certification process will be reviewed by NCTRC on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, certificants should not rely on the recertification experiences of other certificants in the selection of courses and continuing education sessions for their own recertification. Professional NCTRC staff holding the CTRS credential will review specialty recertification applications to determine whether NCTRC's specialty recertification criteria are met. At any time during the specialty recertification application review, the Executive Director may request additional information from the certificant.

Once review of an application is complete, the NCTRC Executive Director shall inform the certificant of either (i) the decision to grant specialty recertification to the certificant, or (ii) an adverse decision on the specialty recertification application. The specialty recertification decision will be mailed to the certificant within eight to ten weeks of the specialty recertification deadline provided NCTRC receives the complete application before the last 90 days of the certificant's certification cycle. Specialty recertification applications received within the last ninety days may take longer to review. Results of specialty recertification reviews will not be provided over the telephone. Individuals who are denied specialty recertification have the right to appeal the decision or regain their CTRS status via the Reentry program. There is no provision for reentry for

specialty certification. CTRSs must reapply if specialty certification expires due to non-renewal of recertification or if the specialty recertification application is denied.

Specialty Recertification Appeal Procedures

Upon receipt of an adverse determination, a certificant has 45 days to submit an appeal application. If a certificant does not submit an appeal application and all supporting documentation requesting an appeal of the determination within 45 days, the certificant forfeits any right to an appeal of the adverse determination. There is no additional filing fee to request an appeal at this stage. Individuals whose specialty recertification denial decision is not overturned by the appeal process may have to reapply and meet all of the current NCTRC Specialty Certification Standards.

The grounds for an appeal are limited to:

- Demonstrate that the *NCTRC Specialty Certification Standards* were not properly applied; and/or
- Provide information that was not presented previously and which sustains the minimum credits required for specialty recertification.

Appeal Instructions

General Instructions: All requests for specialty recertification appeals must be typed or printed on the NCTRC Specialty Recertification Appeal Application. Appellants should submit complete and accurate information. All materials submitted to the Standards Hearing Committee for review become the property of NCTRC and may not be returned. Appellants should retain a copy of the appeal application sent to NCTRC. All information submitted in an Appeal Application and in supporting appeal materials must be true and correct. If it is found that false or inaccurate information has been presented, the appellant's request for specialty recertification designation will be denied and the individual may be denied eligibility for future certification.

To verify professional experience: If an appellant's professional experience was not accepted in the review of a **specialty** recertification application, this may be appealed by providing official documentation of acceptable therapeutic recreation experience and the designated specialty area of service. The majority of professional experiences that are not accepted in review are denied because of questionable description of duties and responsibilities in therapeutic recreation, and inadequate information regarding the exact dates or total hours. Appellants must provide official documentation of duties, dates or hours through the following:

- official agency job descriptions and/or verification of job description,
- documentation from the agency regarding the exact beginning and end dates of the experience, the number of hours completed, and/or the nature of therapeutic recreation responsibilities completed at the agency.

All letters from the agency should be typed on official agency letterhead and signed by the immediate supervisor at the agency. If the supervisor is no longer employed at the agency, a written letter may be obtained from the supervisor at his or her current place of employment along with a letter from the original agency to verify that the supervisor was employed during the time of the appellant's professional experience.

To verify academic courses: If an academic course was not accepted towards specialty recertification requirements, the appellant must submit an official academic transcript to verify academic credits granted. Official course outlines must be submitted if the appellant wishes the course content to be evaluated based on the NCTRC Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and the designated specialty area of service. Please note that only official course outlines will be reviewed in an appeal to determine the exact content of courses in relation to the NCTRC Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and designated specialty area. Letters from college/university faculty members may be used to further explain outlines but will not be accepted in place of official outlines. Course catalog descriptions or program brochure descriptions do not generally provide sufficient information for review within an

appeal.

To verify continuing education units/credits: The appellant must submit official documentation to verify that acceptable credit has been granted and/or that content is relevant to therapeutic recreation knowledge as defined by the NCTRC Job Analysis Knowledge Areas and the designated specialty area. To verify that the type of credit is acceptable, the appellant must submit an original certificate or documentation from the continuing education credit sponsor which demonstrates that credit granted follows the guidelines of the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET). To verify content, submit the program brochure or official description of the session or program and a written statement by the appellant of how the content relates to the therapeutic recreation knowledge areas, the NCTRC Job Analysis and the designated specialty area of expertise. Official content descriptions and verification of legitimate continuing education credit should be provided from the sponsor of the continuing education credit.

Appeal review notice: NCTRC will ensure that applicants are certified according to NCTRC standards. As a result, when reviewing an Appeal Application, if an error has been made in regard to a fact about an applicant's credentials, the Standards Hearing Committee may correct the error, even when the error is not in favor of the applicant.

Appeal to the Standards Hearing Committee with Executive Director Discretion to Reverse Decision

Upon receipt of additional information, the Executive Director shall review the documentation submitted and has the discretion to determine whether the specialty recertification requirements have been met. The Executive Director shall either: (i) reverse the prior adverse decision and grant specialty recertification (notifying the appellant of the decision and terminating the appeal); or (ii) submit the additional documentation to the Standards Hearing Committee for consideration of the appeal.

Review and Decision of the Standards Hearing Committee: If the Executive Director does not reverse the denial of specialty recertification, the Executive Director shall forward the appellant's entire specialty recertification application and appeal documentation to the Standards Hearing Committee for review. The Standards Hearing Committee shall review the appeal. The scope of the Standards Hearing Committee's review is not limited to the decision prompting the appeal. The entire application for specialty recertification is subject to review. At any time during its review of the appeal, the Standards Hearing Committee may request additional information from the appellant. Following its review, the Standards Hearing Committee shall make any of the following determinations:

- That the adverse decision was correct and is affirmed;
- That the adverse decision of the staff is affirmed, but the basis for the adverse decision is modified by the Standards Hearing Committee;
- That the adverse decision was not correct and that the appellant is specialty recertified.

Within six weeks of the decision of the Standards Hearing Committee, NCTRC staff shall advise the appellant in writing of the Standards Hearing Committee's final decision regarding the appeal. The written notice shall describe specifically the decision of the Standards Hearing Committee, as well as any findings by the Committee modifying the appellant's specialty recertification credits.

Final Appeal to the NCTRC Board of Directors

A final appeal to the NCTRC Board of Directors is only available for decisions of the Standards Hearing Committee which are alleged to have been rendered in an arbitrary and capricious manner. No other ground for appeal is

available. All decisions by the Standards Hearing Committee, which are not alleged to be or proven to be arbitrary and capricious, are final. The appellant may appeal any decision of the Standards Hearing Committee which is alleged to have been rendered in an arbitrary and capricious manner to the NCTRC Board of Directors by submitting a written appeals statement along with the \$25.00 appeals filing fee within 30 days of receipt of the decision of the Standards Hearing Committee. NCTRC may file a written response to the appeal to the Board of Directors. The NCTRC Board of Directors, by majority vote, shall render a decision on the record, without oral hearing, although additional written documentation may be submitted to support or refute the allegation of arbitrary and capricious decision-making by the Standards Hearing Committee. The decision of the NCTRC Board of Directors shall be rendered in writing. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be transmitted to the individual by certified mail, return receipt requested or other verifiable method of delivery.

Recertification Extension

Extension of Recertification Due Date. NCTRC requires strict adherence to specialty recertification application deadline dates. In the event that an individual has completed the specialty recertification requirements but has missed the specialty recertification deadline date due to an extenuating circumstance or emergency beyond the person's control, a 30 day extension of the application deadline may be granted based on a case by case review of pertinent documentation regarding the situation. Official documentation must verify the occurrence of the circumstance and the documented dates must confirm that the conflict occurred immediately prior to the specialty recertification application due date. The specialty recertification application and all related continuing education materials must be submitted with the request for an extension. If the request for an extension is denied, individuals will need to reapply and meet all of the current NCTRC Specialty Certification Standards.

Extension of Recertification Cycle. In the case when a serious health condition or extreme personal emergency has prevented an individual from completing all specialty recertification requirements, a request for extension may be made in writing to the Standards Hearing Committee within 30 days of the specialty recertification application deadline. A detailed description of the serious health condition or extreme emergency must be accompanied by official documentation regarding the circumstance. The extension application and pertinent documentation will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Standards Hearing Committee. Once a decision is rendered notification will be mailed to the certificant from the NCTRC office. If the extension request is granted a specialty recertification application will be due one (1) year after the original specialty recertification due date. The specialty recertification application and all continuing education materials will be due at that time.

If an extension is granted for medical or health related issues, submission of an Authorization and Attestation form completed by the treating professional confirming fitness to practice will be required. This form may be submitted at the time the extension is granted, or when the specialty recertification application is submitted. The determination of active certification status will be based on the receipt of this form. **NCTRC reserves the right to withhold active certification status for those individuals who are unable to provide the signed Authorization and Attestation form at the time that the extension is granted.**

Appendix A

NCTRC FEES AND POLICIES

1. NCTRC certification fees are established by the Board of Directors and subject to change without notice. The current fees are effective as of April 2010.
2. The required fees must accompany each NCTRC application or the application will be returned.
3. Individuals may pay fees by credit card, personal check, money order, or cashier's check. Do not send cash. All checks should be made payable to "NCTRC".
4. Write your full name, address, and certification ID on each check, money order, or cashier's check.
5. If you pay by credit card, it is your responsibility to assure payment of the fee. If the credit card information you have submitted is rejected, you will be assessed \$20.00 for the rejected credit card. The subsequent payment must be submitted by either money order or cashier's check.
6. If you pay by personal check, it is your responsibility to assure payment of the fee until the check has cleared the bank. If a personal check is returned by a bank for any reason, the individual will be assessed \$50.00 for the returned personal check, plus the amount of the check. If a personal check is returned for any reason, the review of the application will be discontinued until such time as all fees have been received by NCTRC. Once an application is delayed because of a returned check, the date of receipt is set by the time all fees are paid and held for the next exam review deadline.
7. All fees must be in U.S. dollars. If an individual resides outside of the U.S., the fees must be sent by credit card, money order or cashier's check in U.S. dollars made payable to "NCTRC". There is an additional fee of \$25.00 U.S. dollars for submitting a check or money order drawn on a foreign bank. Postal Money orders will not be accepted from foreign countries.
8. Each applicant or exam registrant must submit individual payment for fees. Checks payable for more than one applicant will not be accepted.
9. All certification review fees paid to NCTRC are non-refundable, regardless of review decision or withdrawal of the application during the review process. A processing fee will be charged if the applicant requests to have their application returned prior to the review. The exam fee will be refunded if the applicant is not approved to sit for the exam. If an individual found eligible requests a withdrawal from the exam, 50% of the exam fee will be retained for administration cost and 50% will be refunded to the candidate. The exam refund will be made if the exam appointment is cancelled no later than noon of the second business day before the exam appointment. If you fail to arrive for your appointment or cancel without giving at least two business days notice, you will forfeit the entire examination fee and your ATT will be invalidated. Please review the certification standards for further exam information and instructions regarding withdrawals and exam cancellations.

NCTRC CERTIFICATION FEE SCHEDULE:

| | |
|---|----------|
| New Application for Professional Eligibility* | \$100.00 |
| New Application Prior to Degree Review fee* | \$125.00 |
| Returned application processing fee | \$25.00 |
| Pre-Application Coursework Review fee | \$35.00 |
| Continuing Education Pre-Approval Review fee | \$35.00 |

| | |
|---|----------|
| Exam Registration Fee* | \$300.00 |
| Annual Fee to Maintain Professional Eligibility | \$80.00 |
| Professional Eligibility Reinstatement Fee | \$25.00 |
| CTRS Annual Renewal Fee | \$80.00 |
| Reentry Application | \$80.00 |
| Specialty Certification Fees: | |
| • Initial Application Fee | \$100.00 |
| • Annual Renewal Fee | \$20.00 |
| • Recertification Fee | \$50.00 |
| CTRS Reinstatement Fee | |
| • for first year of inactivity | \$25.00 |
| • for years 2-5 of inactivity | \$50.00 |
| CTRS Recertification Document Return Fee | \$15.00 |
| CTRS Recertification Fee (postmarked after due date of May 1 or November 1) | \$50.00 |
| CTRS Replacement Pin | \$10.00 |
| CTRS Replacement Certification Card | \$10.00 |
| CTRS Replacement Certificate | \$10.00 |
| Fee for Bank Checks from Foreign Countries | \$25.00 |
| Fee for Returned Check | \$50.00 |
| Fee for Rejected Credit Card | \$20.00 |

*Notes: The total fee for new applicants applying for professional eligibility and exam registration is \$400.00. If you applying for eligibility prior to degree completion, the total fee required is \$425.00.

Appendix B

2007 NCTRC Job Analysis Job Tasks and Knowledge Areas for the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist

A benchmark for any profession is its ability to routinely monitor its own practice through an ongoing process of self-regulation. Paramount to this process is the establishment of a credentialing program that enabled the profession to safeguard consumers by stating who is competent to practice. The establishment of a valid job analysis is essential to the integrity of a credentialing program and an exam program.

In 2007, NCTRC completed its third comprehensive Job Analysis Study. The list of tasks below is the current tasks performed by the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. These job tasks represent the therapeutic recreation process. The knowledge base for therapeutic recreation practice forms the basis of the NCTRC exam content and is used to evaluate pre-service and continuing education for therapeutic recreation.

Job Tasks of the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist

Professional Roles and Responsibilities

1. Establish and maintain therapeutic relationship with person served
2. Create and maintain a safe and therapeutic environment
3. Maintain CTRS credential
4. Participate in in-service training and staff development
5. Maintain knowledge of current TR/RT trends, techniques, methods, issues, and professional and legal standards
6. Enhance professional competence through additional credentials and/or contribution to TR/RT field (e.g., professional presentations, research, attending conferences)
7. Adhere to professional standards of practice and code of ethics
8. Participate in quality improvement process (e.g., exit interviews, customer service satisfaction, peer reviews)
9. Participate in agency/professional committees

Assessment

10. Request and secure referrals from professionals or other sources
11. Obtain and review pertinent information about person served (e.g., records or charts, staff, support system)
12. Select and/or develop assessment methods based on needs of the person served and setting (e.g., interview, observation, task performance, established instruments)

13. Conduct assessments using selected methods to determine physical, social, affective, cognitive, leisure, and/or lifestyle functioning
14. Analyze and interpret results from assessments
15. Integrate, record, and disseminate results gathered to appropriate individuals (e.g., person served, treatment team)

Planning Interventions and/or Programs

16. Discuss results of assessment and involve the person served or appropriate others (e.g., parent or legal guardian, support system, treatment team, service providers) in the design of individualized intervention plan
17. Develop and document individualized intervention plan with goals, objectives, evaluation criteria, and discharge/transition plan
18. Develop and/or select interventions and approaches to achieve individual and/or group goals
19. Develop and/or select protocols for individual or group session
20. Utilize activity and/or task analysis prior to interventions/programs
21. Select adaptations, modifications and/or assistive technology

Implementing Interventions and/or Programs

22. Explain the purpose and outcomes of the intervention/program and steps to be followed to the person served
23. Implement individual and/or group sessions, protocols, and/or programs

24. Use leadership and facilitation techniques to maximize therapeutic benefit (e.g., role-modeling, reflective listening)
25. Monitor and address safety concerns throughout the intervention/program
26. Observe person served for response to intervention/program and note important data (e.g., interaction with others, group, or therapist)
27. Monitor effectiveness of individual and/or group intervention/program plans and make modifications as needed

Evaluate Outcomes of the Interventions and/or Programs

28. Evaluate changes in functioning of the person served
29. Determine effectiveness of individual intervention plan and adjust as needed
30. Revise individualized intervention plan as necessary with input from the person served and appropriate others (e.g., parent or legal guardian, support system, treatment team, service providers)
31. Evaluate individual's need for additional, alternative or termination of services
32. Determine effectiveness of protocols, modalities, and/or programs for targeted groups

Documenting Intervention Services

33. Record behavioral observations, progress, functioning, and intervention outcomes of the person served
34. Document unusual occurrences, accidents and incidents relating to risk management
35. Document protocols, modalities and/or program effectiveness

Working with Treatment and/or Service Teams

36. Provide information to team members concerning the range of available TR/RT services
37. Communicate information regarding person served to team members in a timely and appropriate manner (e.g., behavioral changes, functional status)
38. Coordinate or integrate intervention plan with other service providers for the person served (e.g., care planning)
39. Develop and provide collaborative services with other team members as necessary (e.g., co-treatment)

Organizing Programs

40. Maintain equipment and supply inventory
41. Plan and coordinate support services (e.g., transportation, housekeeping, dietary)
42. Maintain program budget and expense records
43. Develop and distribute schedules (e.g., programs, special events, programming changes)

Managing TR/RT Services

44. Comply with standards and regulations (e.g., government, credentialing, agency, professional)
45. Conduct an initial and/or on-going organizational needs assessment for TR/RT service delivery (e.g., populations served, internal and external resources)
46. Prepare and update comprehensive TR/RT written plan of operation (e.g., programs, risk management, policies and procedures)
47. Confirm that programs are consistent with agency mission and TR/RT Service philosophy and goals
48. Recruit, train, educate, supervise, and evaluate professionals, paraprofessionals and/or volunteers (e.g., plan in-service training, develop staffing schedules)
49. Provide staff development and mentorship
50. Develop, implement and/or maintain TR/RT internship program in accordance with legal requirements and professional guidelines
51. Prepare, implement, evaluate, and monitor TR/RT service annual budget
52. Support research programs or projects
53. Prepare and report quality improvement data
54. Write summary reports of TR/RT Services

Public Awareness and Advocacy

55. Establish and maintain network with organizations and advocates (e.g., community agencies, universities, allied health professions)
56. Advocate for rights for persons served (e.g., access, inclusion, independence, transportation)
57. Provide education to the community (e.g., explanations of purpose of program/interventions; initiating opportunities to expand community awareness of value of TR/RT; organization of TR/RT service)
58. Promote the agency, TR/RT services and the profession through marketing and public relations

Knowledge Areas for the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist

Foundational Knowledge

1. Theories of play, recreation and leisure
2. Social psychological aspects of play, recreation and leisure
3. Diversity factors (e.g., social, cultural, educational, language, spiritual, financial, age, attitude, geography)
4. Human growth and development throughout the life-span
5. Theories of human behavior and theories of behavior change
6. Leisure throughout lifespan
7. Leisure lifestyle development
8. Concepts and models of health and human services (e.g., medical model, community model, education model, psychosocial rehabilitation model, health and wellness model, person-centered model, International Classification of Functioning)
9. Cognition and related impairments (e.g., dementia, traumatic brain injury, developmental/learning disabilities)
10. Anatomy, physiology, and kinesiology and related impairments (e.g., impairments in musculoskeletal system, nervous system, circulatory system, respiratory system, endocrine and metabolic disorders, infectious diseases)
11. Senses and related impairments (e.g., vision, hearing)
12. Psychology and related impairments (e.g., mental health, behavior, addictions)
13. Normalization, inclusion, and least restrictive environment
14. Architectural barriers and accessibility
15. Societal attitudes (e.g., stereotypes)
16. Legislation (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Older Americans Act)
17. Relevant guidelines and standards (e.g., federal and state regulatory agencies)
18. Principles of group interaction, leadership, and safety
19. Principles of behavioral change (e.g., self-efficacy theory, experiential learning model)
20. Concepts of TR/RT (e.g., holistic approach, recreative experience, special/adaptive recreation, inclusive recreation, using recreation as a treatment modality)
21. Models of TR/RT service delivery (e.g., Leisure Ability model, Health Protection/Health Promotion model, TR Service Delivery model)
22. Practice settings (e.g., hospital, long-term care, community recreation, correctional facilities)
23. Standards of practice for the TR/RT profession
24. Code of ethics in the TR/RT field and accepted ethical practices with respect to culture, social, spiritual, and ethnic differences
25. Impact of impairment and/or treatment on the person served (e.g., side effects of medications, medical precautions)
26. Criteria for selection and/or development of assessment (e.g., purpose, reliability, validity, practicality, availability)
27. Implementation of assessment
28. Behavioral observations related to assessment
29. Interview techniques for assessment
30. Functional skills testing for assessment
31. Current TR/RT/leisure assessment instruments
32. Other inventories and questionnaires (e.g., standardized rating systems, developmental screening tests, MDS, FIM, GAF)
33. Other sources of assessment data (e.g., records or charts, staff, support system)
34. Interpretation of assessment and record of person served
35. Sensory assessment (e.g., vision, hearing, tactile)
36. Cognitive assessment (e.g., memory, problem solving, attention span, orientation, safety awareness)
37. Social assessment (e.g., communication/interactive skills, relationships)
38. Physical assessment (e.g., fitness, motor skills function)
39. Affective assessment (e.g., attitude toward self, expression)
40. Leisure assessment (e.g., barriers, interests, values, patterns/skills, knowledge)
41. Documentation of assessment, progress/functional status, discharge/transition plan of person served (e.g., SOAP, FIM)
42. Nature and diversity of recreation and leisure activities
43. Purpose and techniques of activity/task analysis
44. Leisure education/counseling
45. Selection of programs, activities and interventions to achieve the assessed needs of the person served

46. Activity modifications (e.g., assistive techniques, technology and adaptive devices, rule changes)
47. Modalities and/or interventions (e.g., therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy activities, leisure skill development, assertiveness training, stress management, social skills, community reintegration)
48. Facilitation techniques and/or approaches (e.g., behavior management, counseling skills)

Organization of Therapeutic Recreation/Recreation Therapy Service

49. Program design relative to population served
50. Type of service delivery systems (e.g., health, leisure services, education and human services)
51. Methods of writing measurable goals and behavioral objectives
52. Role and function of other health and human service professions and of interdisciplinary approaches
53. Documentation procedures for program accountability, and payment for services
54. Methods for interpretation of progress notes, observations, and assessment results of the person being served
55. Evaluating agency or TR/RT Service program
56. Quality improvement guidelines and techniques (e.g., utilization review, risk management, peer review, outcome monitoring)
57. Components of agency or TR/RT Service plan of operation
58. Personnel, intern, and volunteer supervision and management
59. Payment system (e.g., managed care, PPO, private contract, Medicare, Medicaid, DRG)

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Given the diversity and varied settings in which TR/RT services are practiced, it becomes a challenge to select terminology that is inclusive of the entire profession. The list provided here represents terms chosen to describe aspects of practice and the persons served. These terms are broad-based and can be applied to all settings and populations served. The intent here is to “include” rather than “exclude” any aspect of the profession.

Therapeutic Recreation/Recreation Therapy: all references to TR/RT in this document are intended to be used interchangeably.

Persons Served: a patient, client, consumer, participant or resident.

Individualized Intervention Plan: an individualized plan of care or intervention for a person served by a qualified TR/RT professional (CTRS) based on assessed strengths and needs, and includes goals, objectives and intervention strategies aimed at fostering desirable and necessary outcomes.

60. Facility and equipment management
61. Budgeting and fiscal responsibility

Advancement of the Profession

62. Historical development of TR/RT
63. Accreditation standards and regulations (e.g., JCAHO, CARF, CMS)
64. Professionalism: professional behavior and professional development
65. Requirements for TR/RT credentialing (e.g., certification, recertification, licensure)
66. Advocacy for persons served
67. Legislation and regulations pertaining to TR/RT
68. Professional standards and ethical guidelines pertaining to the TR/RT profession
69. Public relations, promotion and marketing of the TR/RT profession
70. Methods, resources and references for maintaining and upgrading professional competencies
71. Professional associations and organizations
72. Partnership between higher education and direct service providers to provide internships and to produce, understand and interpret research for advancement of the TR/RT profession
73. Value of continuing education and in-service training for the advancement of the TR/RT profession

Treatment/Service Teams: also referred to as “intervention team”, and “multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary team”. A treatment team is a group of qualified professionals who provide individual and collective treatment to address the needs of a specific individual receiving service.

Standards of Practice: statements of professional expectations for service delivery in order to assure systematic provision of recreation therapy services. Such statements are set by the organizations representing the specific profession.

Inclusion: a process in which individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in all community activities offered to people without disabilities. Inclusion requires providing the necessary framework for adaptations, accommodations and supports so that individuals can benefit equally from an experience.

Outcomes: observed changes in an individual’s health status and functional abilities as a result of services. Outcomes must be measurable, achievable, documented, meaningful, and linked to professional intervention.

Standards of Knowledge, Skills and Abilities for the CTRS:

1. possess knowledge of the theories and concepts of therapeutic recreation, leisure, social psychology, and human development as related to the nature and scope of health and human service delivery systems and the ability to integrate these in a variety of settings.
2. possess an essential knowledge of the diversity of the populations including diagnostic groups served within the therapeutic recreation process, including etiology, symptomatology, prognosis, treatment of conditions and related secondary complications. Possess a basic understanding of and ability to use medical terminology.
3. have a thorough understanding of the assessment process utilized within therapeutic recreation practice including, but not limited to, purpose of assessment, assessment domain (including cognitive, social, physical, affective, leisure, background information), assessment procedures (including behavioral observation, interview, functional skills testing, a general understanding of current TR/leisure assessment instruments, inventories and questionnaires and other sources of commonly used multidisciplinary assessment tools, including standardized measures), selection of instrumentation, general procedures for implementation and the interpretation of findings.
4. have a basic understanding of the published standards of practice for the profession of therapeutic recreation and the influence that such standards have on the program planning process.
5. possess detailed knowledge of the intervention planning process, including program or treatment plan design and development, programming considerations, types of programs, nature and scope of interventions, and selection of programs to achieve the assessed needs and desired outcomes of the person served.
6. possess basic knowledge related to the implementation of an individual intervention plan, including theory and application of modalities/interventions and facilitation techniques/approaches.
7. have a fundamental knowledge of methods for documenting and evaluating persons served, programs, and agencies.
8. possess a broad understanding of organizing and managing therapeutic recreation services including, but not limited to, the development of a written plan of operation and knowledge of external

- regulations, resource management, components of quality improvement, as well as basic understanding of staff/volunteer management.
9. be able to identify and understand the components of professional competency within the realm of therapeutic recreation practice, including requirements for certification, ethical practice, public relations, and the general advancement of the profession.
 10. possess fundamental knowledge of how the TR process is influenced by diversity and social environment.
 11. possess fundamental knowledge of assistive devices/equipment and activity modification techniques.
 12. possess fundamental knowledge of group interaction, leadership, and safety.