

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

Examination Information Bulletin



CERTIFIED PROPERTY MAINTENANCE AND HOUSING INSPECTOR (ID 61)
CERTIFIED ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (ID 72)
CERTIFIED CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER
CERTIFIED CODE ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATOR

PUBLISHED February 2, 2010

This edition supersedes all previous bulletin editions, and is valid only through the dates noted above.

About this bulletin:

Please read and understand this bulletin in its entirety prior to registering for an exam. The answers to most questions raised by candidates can be found in this document. This bulletin is a useful reference throughout your registration and examination process.



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**Information contained in this bulletin is deemed accurate as of the time of printing.
Contents are subject to change at any time.
For the most updated information, visit www.ace1.com.**

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Note: Certification and examination requirements, including registration/scheduling, dates, locations, fees, and references are subject to change. Please make sure that you have the most current information before registering for/scheduling any examination. For up-to-date information on certification and examinations, go to www.ace1.com.

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HOW DO I . . .

- schedule an exam?
Computer-based testing: visit www.pearsonvue.com/icc or call Pearson VUE at 1-800-275-8301
Paper-and-pencil testing: see pages 32-33 for the application, due six weeks prior to the exam
- renew my certification?
See the forms starting on page 31 for applicable renewal instructions
- request a duplicate wallet card or wall certificate?
Visit www.iccsafe.org/inspector for a request application
- review an exam I failed?
See page 14 for more information on the exam feedback and appeals process
- request special testing accommodations?
Computer-based testing: call Pearson VUE at 1-800-275-8301 and ask for special arrangements
Paper-and-pencil testing: call ICC at 1-888-422-7233 ext. 5227 to request an application
- make comments about an exam I took?
See page 14 for more information on the exam feedback and appeals process
- reschedule an exam?
Computer-based testing: call Pearson VUE at 1-800-275-8301 prior to your scheduled exam—see chart on page 23 for deadlines
Paper-and-pencil testing: visit www.iccsafe.org/inspector for the Fee Schedule for Optional Services form to fax or mail to ICC prior to your exam
- cancel an exam?
Computer-based testing: call Pearson VUE at 1-800-275-8301 prior to your scheduled exam—see chart on page 24 for deadlines
Paper-and-pencil testing: fax or mail a statement to AACE/Code Council, including a signature, stating you wish to cancel your exam, and are aware of the administrative fee (see page 28 for more information)
- find my exam code (ID)?
See page 30 for the exam outline listings in this bulletin
- know what I can take into the exam?
See page 18 for the Test Site Regulations section
- obtain the books for my exam?
Most references can be purchased at www.iccsafe.org/store; more information is found in the exam outline listings starting on page 30
- request a reciprocal certification?
See the forms section starting on page 31 for applicable certification requests

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You are welcome to use any of the checklists and summaries of information within this bulletin to familiarize yourself with the testing process, but be sure to read this bulletin in its entirety prior to scheduling your examination. You are responsible for following all policies and regulations found in this document, and not reading this bulletin does not relieve your responsibility for following all procedures herein.

General Information

The American Association of Code Enforcement

Incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1988, the American Association of Code Enforcement (AACE) began with representatives from California, Colorado, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Texas. The Association currently serves members and associates throughout the states with new chapters being formed every year. The only association of housing, property maintenance, and zoning officials in the United States, its members are employed by a city, town, parish, county, or state government for the enforcement of housing, property maintenance, or zoning ordinances intended to provide minimum standards for the protection of the public's health, safety, and welfare.

The Association was established for studying and advancing the science and practice of code enforcement through education, training, certification, and the exchange of ideas, information, and technology. Membership consists of dedicated professionals sharing the common interest of enhancing the safety of their communities through knowledge and application of recognized housing, property maintenance, zoning, and construction codes and standards.

The AACE Voluntary Certification Program

The American Association of Code Enforcement Certification Program was established in 1993 to encourage professionalism among code enforcement personnel through a comprehensive test of knowledge of codes, standards, and practices necessary for professional competence. The examinations are now being used both for screening of prospective employees and for merit raises for current employees.

The purpose of the program, as expressed in the Voluntary Certification Rules and Procedures, is to provide:

1. A mechanism for individuals to demonstrate their knowledge of various property maintenance, housing, construction, and zoning codes, standards, and practices, and
2. A mechanism that jurisdictions can use to partially evaluate individuals for knowledge of various property maintenance, housing, construction, and zoning codes, standards, and practices.

The AACE certification examinations are not designed to rank individuals from a high to a low competence or to determine the best qualified person for a job opening, and they are not designed as intelligence examinations to measure a person's intuitive knowledge and abilities. The examinations are instead designed to determine if an individual's knowledge of codes and legal aspects of codes administration meets or exceeds a prescribed level of competence. Passing a certification examination provides evidence that an individual possesses critical knowledge of relevant information necessary for competent practice of the profession.

The AACE examinations are continually edited and updated to reflect current codes and standards of practice. The key element in the examination validation process is the review of the examination questions by committees of practicing code enforcement personnel who are experts in each examination category.

Voluntary Certification Program Rules and Procedures

The AACE Voluntary Certification Program is governed by rules and standards which establish procedures for the application process and fees, examination process and scheduling, and appeal of examinations. A copy of the Voluntary Certification Program Rules and Procedures is available on request from AACE.

Examination Prerequisites

The examination is designed to measure practical knowledge required for competent professional practice. Most successful candidates have significant code enforcement experience. There are no specific education or experience prerequisites to registering for the examinations; however, candidates without related education or experience should not expect to be successful on the examinations.

Recognition of AACE Certification

The AACE Certification Program is based on voluntary participation. It is a highly esteemed professional credential. However, it carries no guarantee that these certificates will be accepted or recognized by a governmental jurisdiction or for any employment purposes. Contact your local jurisdiction for information on local requirements.

AACE confers all certificates; however, successful Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector candidates and Zoning Enforcement Officer candidates may apply to the International Code Council (the Code Council) for reciprocal certification for a nominal fee. See Appendix C for reciprocity applications. Contact the Code Council for further information at 1-888-ICC-SAFE (422-7233), ext. 5524.

Once individuals are certified, they may use their certification on business cards, advertisements, etc. Such notice should, however, include both the certification name and number in the following format: "AACE Certified Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector No.12345."

AACE and the Code Council (the exam development and administration contractor) protect the confidentiality of certification records and restrict access to these records solely to the candidate. Whether or not any individual is certified is a matter of public record once the candidate has been notified.

Change of Address

It is important that written notification of any change of an address is received by AACE from the candidate so that the most current information will be included in the roster of certified individuals. In addition, a current address on file is necessary to ensure that renewal information is accurately delivered. Send address changes to AACE Certification Services, 900 Montclair Road, Birmingham, AL 35213, or by fax at (205) 599-9897.

Examination Services

All examination and certification related services are provided for AACE by the Code Council. These services include exam registration, exam administration, printing of certificates and wallet cards, etc. A separate company, Pearson VUE, provides computer-based testing (CBT) exam administration services for the AACE exams.

Examination Administration

Two different methods are used to administer the AACE certification examinations. You have the option of using the traditional paper/pencil method or the computer-based testing (CBT) method. The examination questions and content are the same regardless of the method by which you choose to take your examination.

The time required for taking the exams is the same for both methods. However, the registration procedures, policies for retaking an exam, and time required for scoring are different for each method of examination administration. Please review carefully the information in this Bulletin on the method of examination administration you choose.

The benefits of the CBT method are the short registration time required before the examination, frequent administration dates, and the immediate scoring upon completion of the examination. Fees for CBT exams are the same as those for paper/pencil exams. Pearson VUE, the CBT exam administration agency, issues an official score report letter immediately upon completion of the examination at the test center. Paper/pencil score reporting can take up to six weeks. The certificate and wallet card are mailed by the Code Council to successful AACE candidates before the end of the month following the examination.

RECIPROCAL CERTIFICATIONS

Successful AACE exam candidates may obtain a reciprocal certificate for Code Council Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector and/or Code Council Zoning Inspector by paying an administrative fee for each certificate desired. See page 31 in this bulletin for applications. For questions, call ICC at 1-888-422-7233, ext. 5524.

Successful ICC exam candidates may obtain a reciprocal certificate for AACE Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector and/or AACE Zoning Enforcement Officer by paying an administrative fee for each certificate desired. See page 31 in this bulletin for applications. For questions, call AACE at 614-552-2633.

Steps to Achieving AACE Certification

Read and understand the bulletin, which contains all of the information you'll need throughout the pre- and post-exam process

NOTE: You will be taking the AACE Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector (61) and/or the AACE Zoning Enforcement exam (72). The exam ID is important because ICC also offers these exams with different IDs.

Determine which exam you want to take, and through which method (paper-and-pencil or computer-based testing)

Follow the registration requirements beginning on page 22 for the method by which you choose to test

Obtain the approved references for the exam, and study these references well in advance of the exam

Pass the exam. You will receive a wall certificate and wallet card 4-6 weeks after the end of the month in which you passed the exam. Code Enforcement Office and Code Enforcement Administrator require the completion of multiple exams; after passing the required exams, an application and fee must be submitted for the certificate.

AACE certification may have additional requirements that include, but are not limited to, passing multiple examinations and submitting additional documentation when required. Please be sure to thoroughly read the detailed information on those examinations you elect to take. For the most up-to-date requirements and detailed information on AACE certification examinations, go to www.aace1.com.

The following categories of certificate are available from AACE:

AACE Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector (Exam ID 61)

AACE Zoning Enforcement Officer (Exam ID 72)

AACE Code Enforcement Officer

1. Successfully complete the AACE Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector exam (ID 61).
2. Successfully complete the AACE Zoning Enforcement exam (ID 72).
3. Complete the application found in the back of this bulletin. Submit the application and fee to AACE.
4. To maintain this certification, both the Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector and the Zoning Enforcement Officer examination categories must be renewed every three years (see the back of this bulletin for renewal information).
5. Certified Code Enforcement Officers may use the initials “CCEO” on business cards following their name.

AACE Code Enforcement Administrator

1. Successfully complete *either* the AACE Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector exam (ID 61) *or* the AACE Zoning Enforcement exam (ID 72).
2. Successfully complete the Code Council (ID 01) Legal/Management exam.
 - A. Obtain information about this exam on the certification website at www.iccsafe.org/inspector, or see page 30 of this bulletin.
 - B. Register for and pass the Legal/Management exam.
3. Complete the application found in the back of this bulletin. Submit the application and fee to AACE.
4. To maintain this certification, both certification categories must be renewed every three years. Information on renewals can be found in the back of this bulletin and at www.iccsafe.org/renewal.
5. Certified Code Enforcement Administrators may use the initials “CCEA” on business cards following their name.

Administrative Rules and Procedures

Taking and Retaking Examinations

During any three (3) year period and for any one certification category, you may take the exam a total of six (6) times, if necessary, to pass the exam. In any six (6) month period, you may take an exam up to two (2) times, if necessary, to pass. You will be responsible for payment of the exam fee for every exam you take.

Taking the examination in one category has no effect on testing for the six-month period for another category. For example, if you take the Zoning Enforcement Officer examination and fail it, you would be allowed to take the Property Maintenance & Housing Inspector examination without regard to the six-month period for your Zoning Enforcement Officer examination.

Examination Scoring

Exams are developed and maintained by groups of subject matter experts (SME) during periodic meetings. These Examination Development Committee (EDC) meetings allow the SME group to participate in a process called “cut scoring,” which assigns a numeric value to each exam item. A “cut score” is determined by averaging the opinions of the SME group on a level of minimum acceptable competency for a particular exam, based on an analysis of the job tasks performed in the field.

The score for each examination is reported as a “scaled score,” with 75 as the minimum passing score. This means that everyone’s score has been standardized on a scale on which 75 is the minimum passing score. To ensure that the difficulty of this exam is equal to every other exam in this category, the number of questions that you will be required to answer correctly to achieve the scaled score of 75 may be more or less than a simple 75 percent of the questions on the exam. Your score, therefore, is based on the number of questions answered correctly relative to the difficulty level of the exam as compared to other exam forms.

For an example of this process:

On an elementary school math test, one form of the test contains problems such as “ $4 + 4 =$ ” and one form contains problems such as “ $369 * (82.36 - 4.399) / 28 =$.”

A student taking the second form would not be required to answer as many items correctly as a student taking the first form, as the difficulty level of the items on the second form would be greater.

Candidates who pass will be notified with the word “PASS,” and will not receive a numeric score. Those who fail will be given a numeric score and diagnostic information. Failing candidates will be provided with diagnostic information on their performance on major content areas of the exam. The diagnostic report cannot be used to calculate scores and is not to scale; it is a general indication only.

Cancellation of Scores

On rare occasions, circumstances may render examination scores invalid. AACE reserves the right to cancel or withhold any examination scores if, in its sole opinion, there is adequate reason to question their validity. Reasons are:

1. Doubts may be raised about the validity of examinees' scores because of suspected misconduct, including but not limited to, giving or receiving help; using unauthorized notes, books, or papers; removing examination materials or notes from the examination room; attempting to take an examination for someone else; or inappropriately taking more than two CBT examinations within a single six-month period. In such circumstances, examinees will be expected to cooperate in an investigation of their scores. Such examinees will be notified of procedures developed by AACE to ensure fairness.
2. Some scores may be rendered invalid because of circumstances beyond the examinee's control, such as faulty examination materials or mistiming. These situations will be investigated; when such occurrences result in cancellation of an examinee's scores, AACE will arrange for a makeup examination for the examinees concerned.
3. AACE has implemented procedures to minimize the potential of negative conditions at the examination site such as bad lighting, excessive noise, or uncomfortable temperature conditions. In unlikely cases where such conditions may occur, the required passing score is not modified or changed. If a candidate finds unfavorable conditions at the examination site, we recommend the candidate immediately notify the proctor.

Common Questions and Answers

Does AACE require a candidate to have a certain level of experience or education before taking an examination?

No. Most AACE examinations are open to all individuals with no prerequisite for experience or education. AACE certification should be used as one of several measures of an individual's qualifications when screening applicants for a position. Inspectors should possess the right mix of technical knowledge, education, and related experience. Because proper weighting of the relative importance of these three qualifications is a subjective decision, determining the emphasis of AACE certification is most appropriately performed at the local level by the building official. For this reason, AACE does not specify education or experience requirements for certification applicants.

What is the best way to prepare for an examination?

The best way to prepare for an examination is through the study of codes and standards. Online seminars, self-study workbooks, code commentaries, and textbooks may be helpful. Practice examinations for many categories are available for a fee from the Code Council at www.icccampus.org. These may be useful to those candidates who need to refresh their skills in taking exams. It is important to realize, though, that the difficulty level of the practice exams may not represent that of the actual Certification exam.

How often can I test?

There is no mandatory waiting period before retaking a failed exam. However, it is strongly recommended that you allow time to study the approved references before registering to test a second time.

When will I receive my results?

Electronic exams:

Results for examinations taken electronically are available immediately after completion of the examination.

Candidates will automatically receive an AACE wall certificate and wallet card within seven to nine weeks after they pass the examination. Some categories have additional requirements prior to receiving the full certification.

Paper-and-pencil exams:

Results for examinations taken by paper-and-pencil are mailed within three to four weeks of the exam date.

I didn't receive my pass letter or wallet card. Can I have another mailed to me?

Yes, but the item must be requested within 90 days from the date of the passed examination to have another mailed without a fee. If a resend of a pass letter or wallet card is requested after 90 days from the exam, a fee will be charged. For fees and other optional services, go to www.iccsafe.org/inspector.

What type of question format will be included in the examination?

Test questions are in four-option, multiple-choice format, with one answer on each question scored as correct. Due to the rigorous psychometric processes used in exam development, questions do not follow patterns (e.g., "the most common answer is 'B'").

Should I guess if I don't know the answer to a question?

There is no guessing penalty, so it is to your advantage to answer every question. Remember to base your answers on the listed references for each exam, not solely on long-time field practices.

Code Edition Information

Examinations are updated to the latest edition of the *International Codes*® effective January 1 of the year following the date of publication to allow time for candidates to become familiar with the new code provisions.

Candidate Records Policy

The General Education Provisions Act, Section 438, as amended, and the regulations promulgated for the enforcement of the act, found at 45 Federal Register 30911 as amended at 45 Federal Register 86296, provide that all AACE certification examination candidates have certain rights in relation to their educational records. To view the complete records policy, visit the Code Council website at www.iccsafe.org/inspector.

Feedback and Appeals Process

AACE has developed a two-step process for test-takers to comment on or challenge the results of their exam. These are:

- 1) ICC Certification & Testing staff review, and
- 2) appeal to Exam Development Committee.

The form for providing feedback and starting the appeals process is available at the conclusion of your exam at Pearson VUE (if testing via computer) or on the ICC website at www.iccsafe.org/inspector.

If you re-take a failed exam on which you have submitted an appeal, you will forfeit your appeal opportunity for that exam.

