

NBPHE Announces New CPH Eligibility Criteria

The National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE) board of directors is pleased to announce a new eligibility criteria for the Certified in Public Health (CPH) exam. Individuals who have **a bachelor's degree and at least five subsequent years' public health work experience** will be eligible to take the CPH exam.

This decision was made following the completion of a pilot test for this eligibility. The pilot test was conducted to determine whether individuals could acquire the foundational knowledge and skills needed to pass the CPH exam through work experience. Over 700 individuals applied to participate in the pilot study.

The CPH credential was created as an outcome of a movement to professionalize the field of public health. The thought leaders who initially envisioned the CPH credential intended it to be a credential for anyone who worked to improve public health, who identified themselves as a public health professional, and who possessed core knowledge of the field. Up to now, eligibility for the exam was restricted to current students enrolled in a Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) accredited school or program who had completed the public health core courses or individuals with a graduate degree who had completed the core courses from an accredited school or program and had at least 3 years of public health work experience. By expanding eligibility to public health professionals who meet the new eligibility requirements, the NBPHE is fulfilling one of the basic tenets of a profession: demonstration of a shared body of knowledge, through an exam-based certification process.

This is an important moment for public health, not only for employers who can begin to use the credential more broadly to select and reward employees, but also for individuals who can distinguish themselves as certified public health professionals.

The credentialing process for these newly eligible candidates will remain the same as the process for alumni of CEPH-accredited schools and programs of public health – a passing score on the CPH exam and recertification every two years focused on the demonstration of continued professional development.

We invite individuals who meet the new eligibility criteria to consider embarking on this path with us and encourage employers to promote this opportunity among its employees. For those interested in sitting for the CPH under the new requirements, more information can be found on the NBPHE website at www.nbphe.org.

Registration is now OPEN



Credentialing Public Health Leaders

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why wasn't this eligibility offered in the first place?

Public Health is a very diverse field. There was some original resistance to the idea from employers who typically did not hire employees with degrees in public health. The schools and programs were more likely to be early adopters. The decision was made to start with credentialing alumni, which was expanded in 2010 to allow students to sit for the CPH exam. In 2012, eligibility was further expanded to allow those who had taken the core courses in public health, plus work experience or another relevant degree.

Q. But why is the eligibility being offered now?

Over the past seven years, NBPHE has gained experience in administering a credential and has demonstrated the relevancy and utility of the certification for those graduates and students of CEPH accredited schools of public health and public health programs. NBPHE now has sufficient experience to take the next step in order to fulfill its original vision. Furthermore, if NBPHE were to apply for accreditation as a certification body, it would be required to offer an alternate path to eligibility.

Q. Are there other changes being considered?

NBPHE recently completed a job task analysis, which looked at the functions most commonly performed by public health professionals. The knowledge tested on the CPH exam may be modified in the future to reflect the findings of the job task analysis.

Q. Does NBPHE offer discounts for the CPH Exam?

Members of the following organizations are eligible for a discount on the CPH exam; [Army Public Health Center](#), [American Public Health Association](#), [Commissioned Officers Association](#), and the [Navy Nursing Corps](#).

NBPHE offers discounts for the CPH exam for several CEPH accredited schools and programs of public health. To find out more, please visit www.nbphe.org.