

Initial Certification: Eligibility Requirements

Individuals who have not previously taken or passed the Examination or whose CDCES credentials expired prior to 2020 must meet the requirements. To qualify for the Examination, the following must be met at the time of application and Examination:

1. Discipline**

- A. Licenses (current, active, unrestricted license from one of the United States or its territories):

- Clinical Psychologist
- Registered Nurse (includes Nurse Practitioners, CNS)
- Occupational Therapist
- Optometrist
- Pharmacist
- Physical Therapist
- Physician (M.D. or D.O.)
- Podiatrist

OR

- B. Registrations/Certifications

- Dietitian or dietitian nutritionist holding active registration with the Commission on Dietetic Registration
- PA holding active registration with the NCCPA
- Exercise physiologist holding active certification as an American College of Sports Medicine Certified Clinical Exercise Physiologist
- Health educator holding active certification as a Master Certified Health Education Specialist from the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing

OR

- C. Health care professional with a minimum of a master's degree in social work from a United States college or university accredited by a nationally recognized regional accrediting body.

To verify the program, an official transcript that indicates that an advanced degree in social work was awarded must be submitted with the Application for the Examination if selected for audit.

2. Professional Practice Experience

After meeting the Discipline requirement and before applying for the Examination, **both** of the following requirements must be met in the United States or its territories (Refer to Appendix I, [page 26](#), for accrual details.):

- A. Professional Practice in Discipline - minimum of two (2) years to the day of professional practice experience in the discipline under which the individual is applying for certification (examples: if an individual applies for

certification as a registered nurse, 2 years experience working/volunteering as a registered nurse is required; if an individual applies as a registered dietitian nutritionist, 2 years experience working/volunteering as a registered dietitian nutritionist is required).

Waiver: Individuals may claim a one (1) year waiver for one (1) of the two (2) years professional practice experience requirement for individuals with a master's degree or higher in a health-related field. Using this waiver, individuals would only need a minimum of one (1) year working in their discipline. (Master's degree would qualify as a waiver for the second year.)

AND

- B. DCE hour requirement - minimum of 1000* hours of DCE experience (accrued within 5 years prior to applying for certification) with a minimum of 20% (200 hours) of those hours accrued in the most recent year preceding application. Delivery method of DCE can be provided via face to face or electronic (e.g. telephone, internet, web-based conference calls, etc.).

In meeting the hourly requirement*, professional practice experience is defined as responsibilities, within the past 5 years, that include the direct provision of DCE, as defined by CBDCE. See Definition of Diabetes Care and Education, [page 4](#).

3. Continuing Education (CE)

After meeting the Discipline requirement and before applying for the Examination, the following continuing education requirement must be met:

CE requirement - minimum of 15 clock hours/CEUs of CE activities applicable to diabetes within the two (2) years prior to applying for certification and provided by or approved by a provider on the CBDCE list of Recognized Continuing Education Providers. See Continuing Education Guidelines, [page 27-page 28](#), for the details on this requirement.

4. Application Fee(s) Payment

**Unique Qualifications (UQ) Pathway

An alternative pathway for eligibility to become a CDCES – known as the UQ Pathway – is available for individuals providing diabetes education that do not qualify under the current list of disciplines that qualify for initial certification. This pathway is designed for health professionals holding an advanced degree in a health-related area/concentration from a United States college or university that is accredited by a nationally recognized regional accrediting body to pursue certification. This pathway has different eligibility requirements and requires pre-approval prior to applying for the Examination. The information for the UQ Pathway are available at www.cbdce.org.