

P E N N S Y L V A N I A

C E R T I F I C A T I O N B O A R D

CANDIDATE GUIDE

CERTIFIED RECOVERY SPECIALIST (CRS)

Pennsylvania Certification Board
298 S. Progress Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17109
717-540-4455 | 717-540-4458 – fax
info@pacertboard.org | www.pacertboard.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose of the Candidate Guide	3
Examination Content	3
Sample Questions	7
Sample Questions Answer Key	8
Taking the Examination	9
Examination Rules	9
Special Administrations	9
Admission to the Examination	9
Examination Dates	10
Scoring	10
Test Disclosure	10
Re-Testing	10
References	10

PURPOSE OF THE CANDIDATE GUIDE

The examination for Certified Recovery Specialists is an examination that tests knowledge and skills about the recovery process. The exam is based on current research in the field.

The purpose of the Candidate Guide is to provide you with guidance for the CRS examination process. By providing you with background information on examination domains and sample questions, your preparation for the exam can be enhanced.

EXAMINATION CONTENT

The 2014 Job Task Analysis for the CRS identified three performance domains. Within each performance domain there are several identified knowledge and skill areas that provide the basis for questions in the examination. This Candidate Guide contains detailed information on the domains, knowledge, and skill areas. The following is a list of the performance domains for the examination and the number of test questions in each.

RECOVERY SPECIALIST DOMAINS

Recovery Management
Education and Advocacy
Professional Ethics and Responsibility

NUMBER OF QUESTIONS

18
12
20

DOMAINS

Domain: Recovery Management

Task #1: Engage the individual and establish rapport

Knowledge of:

1. Empathetic and active listening
2. Culture of addiction
3. Recovery process and pathways to recovery
4. Personal strengths and limitations related to the facilitation of recovery support services
5. The role of resistance in addiction and recovery processes

Skill in:

1. Sharing compassion, empathy, respect, flexibility, and hope to all individuals, regardless of their degree of impairment, stage of recovery, pathways to recovery or level of acceptance in the treatment and recovery process
2. Matching different communication styles of persons from the culture of addiction
3. Communicating in a non-judgmental way
4. Recognizing addictive behavior

Task #2: Recognize signs and symptoms of addiction

Knowledge of:

1. Types of substances of abuse and other addictions
2. Behaviors related to addiction
3. Basic cultures, environments, terminology, and beliefs

Skill in:

1. Identifying signs and symptoms of intoxication, tolerance, and withdrawal
2. Identifying common behaviors that can interfere with the recovery process
3. Recognizing the cultural differences with regard to addiction

Task #3: Assist the individual to identify and prioritize strengths and needs.

Knowledge of:

1. Methods of identifying strengths and needs
2. Various strengths and needs related to recovery
3. Techniques that engage individuals to self-disclose

Skill in:

1. Engaging and communicating clearly and concisely with the individual
2. Adjusting communication style with that of the individual
3. Demonstrating a desire and willingness to elicit the individual's viewpoints in identifying their own strengths and needs
4. Respecting the individual's communication style

Task #4: Assist in the development and enhancement of the recovery plan.

Knowledge of:

1. Process of recovery
2. Different pathways to recovery
3. Recovery planning process
4. Effects of culture on the individual's beliefs and choices related to recovery
5. Recovery and community resources
6. Recovery capital

Skill in:

1. Demonstrating patience, persistence, and optimism in helping to establish and maintain the individual's motivation
2. Assisting an individual in organizing and prioritizing their thoughts and actions related to the recovery plan
3. Assisting in the development of a comprehensive recovery plan
4. Identifying resources for and overcoming barriers to achieve the recovery plan goals
5. Navigating the resources and systems needed to advance the recovery plan
6. Writing clearly and concisely using person-centered language

Task #5: Identify emergency or crisis situations and facilitate access to appropriate resources.

Knowledge of:

1. Various crisis and emergency situations
2. Community crisis and emergency resources
3. One's own personal and cultural biases and limitations

Skill in:

1. Identifying crisis and emergency situations
2. Knowing when to refer an individual in a crisis and/or emergency situation to appropriate services and support
3. Negotiating and connecting individuals with resources and navigating the systems

Domain: Education and Advocacy

Task #1: Educate the individual, family, and community about the disease of addiction and the recovery process.

Knowledge of:

1. The disease of addiction and the recovery process
2. Alcohol and other substances of abuse, thoughts, behaviors, and subcultures
3. Pathways to recovery including treatment options
4. Other educational resources within the community

Skill in:

1. Communicating, presenting, and sharing information
2. Openness and respect for various pathways to recovery
3. Using self-disclosure when appropriate

Task #2: Educate individuals and families about recovery support services within the recovery process.

Knowledge of:

1. Support and recovery groups in the local community
2. The history, value, and philosophy of specific mutual-aid groups
3. Alternative support resources

Skill in:

1. Communicating, active listening, and negotiating
2. Describing the group, their norms, and their purposes
3. Reviewing the potential benefits and limitations of available groups
4. Assisting in the selection of a group
5. Teaching and modeling behaviors for effective group participation

Task #3: Participate in advocacy to support recovery.

Knowledge of:

1. Purpose and importance of advocacy
2. Personal rights and responsibilities
3. Barriers and discriminatory practices related to the recovery process
4. Negotiation strategies
5. Appropriate use of assertiveness skills
6. Service systems and resources including local, state, and national recovery advocacy
7. Ethical standards as they relate to advocacy

Skill in:

1. Encouraging empowerment in others
2. Promoting confidence and self-efficacy
3. Role modeling skills to empower individuals to advocate for themselves
4. Negotiating and communicating
5. Connecting individuals with resources and navigating systems
6. Networking
7. Utilizing appropriate behaviors in support of advocacy efforts

Domain: Ethics and Responsibilities

Task #1: Conduct self in an ethical manner by adhering to codes of ethics and standards of practice.

Knowledge of:

1. Codes of ethics
2. Consequences of violating codes of ethics
3. Standards of behavior
4. Confidentiality
5. Overt and subtle types of stigma and discrimination
6. Professional and personal boundaries
7. Differentiation between personal recovery and professional role

Skill in:

1. Translating codes of ethics into appropriate behavior
2. Recognizing and maintaining professional and personal boundaries
3. Working with a culturally diverse population
4. Recognizing and addressing biases and behaviors in all settings
5. Communicating effectively both verbally
6. Maintaining confidentiality
7. Writing clearly and concisely using person-centered language

Task #2: Maintain confidentiality regarding information received during the facilitation of recovery support services.

Knowledge of:

1. Federal, state, and local confidentiality rules and regulations
2. Benefits and protections of confidentiality laws and regulations
3. Consequences of violating confidentiality
4. Reporting system requirements related to confidentiality

Skill in:

1. Interpreting and applying policies, procedures, and regulations
2. Communicating the protections, benefits, and consequences of confidentiality laws and regulations
3. Helping individuals navigate the systems as they pertain to confidentiality

Task #3: Continue personal growth through active participation in the recovery process.

Knowledge of:

1. Importance of maintaining personal recovery process
2. Critical components of personal recovery process
3. Personal strengths and limitations
4. Self-care

Skill in:

1. Recognizing the difference between personal recovery and that of others
2. Self-motivation towards personal growth
3. Identifying one's strengths and limitations to enhance personal recovery and wellness
4. Maintaining one's involvement in the recovery process

Task #4: Engage in continuing professional development relative to recovery support services.

Knowledge of:

1. Methods for evaluating personal training needs
2. Certification and credentialing requirements
3. Current resources in addiction and the recovery process

Skill in:

1. Assessing training and development needs
2. Selecting and accessing training programs
3. Applying practical and professional knowledge and experience

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The questions on the CRS examination were developed from the domains identified in the 2014 Job Analysis. Multiple sources were utilized in the development of questions for these exams. Each question is linked to one of the knowledge and skill areas identified in each domain.

Following are sample questions that are similar to those you will find in the CRS exam.

1. A good definition of denial is:

- A. a common defense mechanism.
- B. conscience lying.
- C. minimizing the amount you drank or used.

2. What are common signs of alcohol withdrawal syndrome?

- A. Body aches, disorientated, and agitated
- B. Tremors, sweating, mild agitation, anxiety, increased heart rate and blood pressure
- C. Increase heart rate, increase blood pressure, and cold sweats

3. The most commonly abused substance is:

- A. marijuana.
- B. nicotine.
- C. heroin.

4. Adolescents often resist treatment because of:

- A. peer pressure.
- B. a lack of education.
- C. the stigma of addiction.

5. A boundary violation is committed when an individual:

- A. develops a social relationship with the client after services end.
- B. accepts gifts from the individual receiving the services.
- C. all of the above.

6. What are the only exceptions to breaking confidentiality?

- A. The life of the client or someone else is at risk
- B. The person is diagnosed with HIV
- C. The client's mother/father asks for information

ANSWER KEY

Question 1	A	Recovery Management
Question 2	B	Recovery Management
Question 3	B	Education and Advocacy
Question 4	C	Education and Advocacy
Question 5	C	Ethics and Responsibility
Question 6	A	Ethics and Responsibility

TAKING THE EXAMINATION

The examination consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. One and a half (1.5) hours is provided for completion of the examination.

The CRS examination follows a 3-option multiple-choice format. Questions of this type begin with a stem, the premise statement, and are followed by three options. In answering the questions, candidates should read the stem and options carefully. They should then select the one best answer and fill in the letter on the answer sheet that corresponds to the best answer for the question.

The test measures the three major Performance Domains about the recovery process. Test questions are designed to assess knowledge as well as the candidate's ability to work with those in recovery from alcohol and other drug abuse. Successful candidates will draw on knowledge, analysis, and application to identify the one best option.

In taking the test, you may find it helpful to eliminate obviously incorrect responses after the first reading so as to increase the probability of selecting the best response. If you determine that there are two reasonable options, you should select the most plausible choice.

The questions in the examination are multiple choice with three (3) choices marked A, B, and C. There is only one correct choice for each question. Carefully read each question and all of the choices before making a selection. Choose the single **best** answer. Mark your answer on the answer sheet by blackening the circle under the letter of your choice.

EXAMINATION RULES

No books, papers, or other reference materials may be taken into the examination room. No examination materials, documents, or memoranda of any type may be taken from the room by any candidate.

The examination will be given only on the date and time noted on the confirmation email you will receive. If an emergency arises and you are unable to take the examination as scheduled, you must contact the PCB Office.

No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination period. The candidate should listen carefully to the directions given by the Proctor and read the directions carefully in the examination booklet.

SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIONS

Individuals with disabilities and/or religious obligations that require modifications in test administration may request specific procedure changes, in writing, to PCB, no fewer than 60 days prior to the scheduled test date. With the written request, the candidate must provide official documentation of the disability or religious issue. Candidates should contact PCB on what constitutes official documentation. PCB will offer appropriate modifications to its procedures when documentation supports the need for them.

ADMISSION TO THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

Upon fulfillment of the appropriate eligibility requirements and completion of the application process for CRS, you will be seated for the examination. PCB will send you a confirmation email confirming your enrollment approximately two (2) weeks prior to the examination date. This confirmation email will also

contain the reporting time, test time, location, contact person, and other relevant information.

Your confirmation email and a PHOTO IDENTIFICATION CARD (Work ID, Driver's License, etc.) must be presented for entrance to the examination.

EXAMINATION DATES

The CRS examination is administered on an as-needed basis. The available dates and location of the examination will be provided to you after your CRS application has been submitted to and approved by PCB.

SCORING

PCB will score all examinations and mail score reports to candidates. Scores will be broken down by category so that candidates can see areas of strength and weakness. This process takes approximately three to four weeks.

The passing point is fixed to assure that all candidates must achieve the same score to be granted certification. To achieve a passing score, candidates must correctly answer 37 questions out of 50 total questions.

TEST DISCLOSURE

If candidates wish to appeal their scores on the written test, they must submit a written request to PCB within 30 days of the postmark on the test score report. Candidates should be aware that test security and item banking procedures do not permit candidate's access to test questions, answer keys, or other secure materials.

RE-TESTING

Candidates who fail the test may re-test if they choose. Candidates must re-test at least one time in the 12-months following the date of the test they failed. All reasonable requests will be considered if a candidate is unable to re-test within the 12-month time frame. Such requests for additional time beyond the 12-months must be submitted in writing to PCB prior to the 12-month deadline.

REFERENCES

The following resources were used as the basis for most of the questions on the CRS examination. Consulting these references may be beneficial to you as you prepare for the exam. Please note that not all questions on the exam came from these references.

Bissell, L. and Royce, J. *Ethics for Addiction Professionals*. Hazelden, 1994.

Corey, G., Corey, M. and Callanan, P. *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Profession*. Brooks/Cole, 2003.

Curtis, O. *A Family Affair*. Brooks/Cole, 1999.

Galanter, M. and Kleber, H. *The American Psychiatric Publishing Textbook of Substance Abuse Treatment*. American Psychiatric Publishing, 2004.

Hanson, G. and Venturelli, P. *Drugs and Society*. Jones & Bartlett Publishers, 1998.

Inaba, D. and Cohen, W. *Uppers, Downers, AllArounders*. CNS Publications, 2004.

Join Together. *Advocacy with Anonymity*. 2006.

Join Together. *Ending Discrimination*. 2003.

Katherine, A. *Boundaries: Where You End and I Begin*. MJF Books, 1998.

Kinney, J. *Loosening the Grip*. McGraw-Hill, 2000.

Kuhn, C., Swartzwelder, S. and Wilson, W. *Buzzed*. W.W. Norton & Co., 2003.

Legal Action Center. *Confidentiality and Communication*. 2006.

Levinthal, C. *Drugs, Behavior and Modern Society*. Allyn & Bacon, 2002.

World Service Office, Inc. *Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text*.

National Institutes of Health & National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. *Alcohol: A Women's Health Issue*. 2003.

PA Recovery Organizations Alliance. *PRO-A Peer Support Mentor Curriculum*.

Ray, O. and Ksir, C. *Drugs, Society and Human Behavior*. McGraw-Hill, 2002.

Steinglass, P. *The Alcoholic Family*. BasicBooks, 1993.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. *Leadership Development in Substance Use Treatment and Recovery: Lessons Learned and Future Directions*. 2004.

Twerski, A. *Addictive Thinking: Understanding Self-Deception*. Hazelden, 1997.

White, W. *Let's Go Make Some History*. Johnson Institute, 2006.

White, W. *Slaying the Dragon*. Chestnut Health Systems, 1998.

White, W. and Kurtz, E. *Recovery*. Northeast ATTC, 2006.

White W., Kurtz, E. and Sanders, M. *Recovery Management*. Great Lakes ATTC, 2006.

White, W. and Popovits, R. *Critical Incidents*. Chestnut Health Systems, 2001.

Wilson, J.R. and Wilson, J.A. *Ad-dic-tion-ary*. Hazelden, 1992.

Woll, P. *Healing the Stigma of Addiction*. Great Lakes ATTC, 2005.

*2018 Pennsylvania Certification Board (PCB). All rights reserved. No part of this document may be disclosed or reproduced in any form without written authorization from PCB.
For more information, contact PCB, 298 S. Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109.*