General questions about the Code Council

Who develops the exams?

Code Council certification exams are developed and maintained by individuals currently certified and practicing in the field. These Exam Development Committee members are appointed by the Board for International Professional Standards, who oversees the National Certification program. Code Council staff facilitate committee meetings, but do not write exam questions.

Is Code Council certification the same as a license?

A license is a permit to work in a particular occupation, issued as a result of state or local legislation. Code Council certifications are voluntary certifications. Many jurisdictions require Code Council certification in their administrative regulations. Check with your state or local agency to find out if your state recognizes Code Council certifications.

Does the Code Council offer courses to help me pass an exam?

The Code Council does not offer courses specifically to help you pass an exam, but does offer courses and study references on the International Codes. The courses are not intended to serve as preparation to pass examinations nor do they ensure you will pass an examination.

How do I request a wall certificate?

Visit www.ICCsafe.org/inspector for a request application.

How do I renew my certification?

In most cases, you will need to have a certain number of continuing education credits (CEUs) to renew your certification. Visit www.ICCsafe.org/renewals to enter CEUs and complete the renewal process online.

How do I access information on my passed exams on the Code Council’s website?

Log into www.iccsafe.org with your email address on record with ICC; your zip code on record is your password. Click on “My ICC” and then “My Certifications” on the navigation bar.

Do I need to create an online account to renew my certification or do I have one on file already?

Try to log in with your email address and zip code on file first. If this does not bring up your account information and you currently hold a certification, please email certexam@iccsafe.org or call 888-422-7233 ext. 5524 for account assistance.
Questions about Scheduling

Can I sign up to test over the phone?

Yes, for computer-based testing. Telephone registration is not available for paper-and-pencil examinations.

How do I know if pre-approval is required for me to test?

CONTRACTORS: Contact the licensing agency or review the appropriate Examination Information Bulletin on the Code Council’s website at www.iccsafe.org/contractor.

How do I schedule a Computer-based exam?

For computer based testing, you must contact Pearson VUE at 1-800-275-8301 at least two business days prior to the time and date of your exam.

How do I schedule a paper and pencil exam?

CERTIFICATION: For paper-and-pencil examinations, schedule online at www.iccsafe.org/natcert or fill out and send in the paper application found in the Examination Information Bulletin.

CONTRACTOR: A registration application is required to be completed and forwarded to the Code Council with pre-payment. The application can be found on our website at www.iccsafe.org/contractor; some exams are available for online registration at this site as well.

How do I pay for my exam?

CERTIFICATION: Examination fees must be paid by credit card, debit card (issued through VISA or MasterCard) or electronic check at the time a reservation is made, NOT at the test center. Candidates who do not have or do not wish to use a credit card, debit card, or personal checking account may choose to prepay their examination fees using a voucher. Vouchers can be purchased online at www.pearsonvue.com/vouchers/pricelist/icccert.asp by credit card, either singly or in volume. To redeem a voucher as payment when scheduling a test, simply indicate “voucher” as the payment method and provide the voucher number. All vouchers are pre-paid, non-refundable, and non-returnable. Vouchers expire twelve (12) months from the date they are issued, and voucher expiration.

CONTRACTOR: Examination fees must be paid by credit card, debit card (issued through VISA or MasterCard) or electronic check at the time a reservation is made, NOT at the test center. Candidates who do not have or do not wish to use a credit card, debit card, or personal checking account may choose to prepay their examination fees using a voucher. Vouchers can be purchased from Pearson VUE by calling 1-800-275-8301.
How often can I test?

CERTIFICATION: For the first two exam attempts there is no waiting period; however, if the exam is failed the second time you must wait six months to register again.

CONTRACTOR: You must wait ten days between each time you test before you will be allowed to test again, unless indicated otherwise by the applicable licensing board. You may test as many times as needed until you pass the exam unless indicated otherwise by licensing board requirements. A licensing board may have specific retesting requirements. Before you register to retake an exam you should refer to the applicable state or jurisdictional Examination Information Bulletin by going to the Code Council’s website.

How do I reschedule an exam?

CERTIFICATION: To register to take a Code Council computer-based certification exam, visit Pearson VUE’s website at www.pearsonvue.com/icc or call Pearson VUE at 1-800-275-8301 (only for non-DBPR candidates). You must provide the Exam ID and Exam Title, whether registering online or by telephone.


CONTRACTORS: For computer-based testing through Pearson VUE, the Code Council’s computer-based testing vendor, you may schedule an examination online at www.pearsonvue.com/icc. Follow the directions under “Contractor/Trade Licensing.” You may also schedule an examination over the phone by contacting Pearson VUE at 1-877-234-6082, following the scheduling procedures listed in this bulletin.

CONTRACTORS: For paper-and-pencil testing, you will need to view the appropriate Examination Information Bulletin for specific information on rescheduling procedures.

How do I cancel an exam?

For both Computer-based and paper-and pencil testing: Call Pearson VUE at 1-800-275-8301 prior to your scheduled exam.

How many exams can I take at one time?

For computer-based exams, in most cases you may take two exams in one day, as long as each examination is only two hours in length. For paper-and-pencil exams, you may schedule two exams at one administration, but multiple exams must be scheduled for different starting times.

Can I use my VA Montgomery Bill benefits to pay the exam fees?

Many Code Council exams have been approved for VA reimbursement. To obtain more information on educational benefits for veterans and to submit an application online, visit or call 1-888-GIBILL(442-4551).
Who can see my candidate records?

All Code Council certification examination candidates have certain rights in relation to their educational records. To view the complete Certification Records Policy, visit the Code Council website at www.iccsafe.org/inspector.

Questions about test content and results

What exams are available?

Check the appropriate Examination Information Bulletin for the list of available exams.

How long are the exams?

The length and allowed time varies depending upon the subject matter. Examination information including time limit can be found in the applicable Examination Information Bulletin.

Are the exams open-book?

Most exams are open book. Examination information, including whether your exam is open- or closed-book, can be found in the applicable Examination Information Bulletin.

Can I just look up the answers in the book during the exam?

Because of the time constraints, you will not have time to look up all of the answers. For those answers you must look up, you must be very familiar with the references to avoid wasting time searching for information.

Where do I find my exam code (ID)?

Each Examination Information Bulletin will list the exams and the appropriate code. Use this ID code to register for exams.

Is the current test more or less difficult than prior tests, or future tests?

There are multiple forms of the ICC examinations. While these forms were developed from the same set of content specifications, the levels of difficulty of the forms will vary because different exam questions appear on different forms. Some of these questions by their nature (and designated in the cut-score) are more difficult than others, even though they pertain to the same section of the exam. It would be unfair to require a candidate taking a collection (form) of somewhat more difficult questions to answer as many questions correctly as a candidate who took an easier form. So, we use a statistical procedure known as scaling to correct for differences in test form difficulty.
What is a scaled score?

A scaled score transforms a raw test score (the number of test questions answered correctly) into other measurement units, called a scale score. However, please know that a scale score is not the number of questions answered correctly, nor the percentage of questions answered correctly.

Why scale the scores?

If we simply reported the total number of questions answered correctly (the raw score), there would be a different passing score for each form of the test (because of those differences in difficulty). This would be confusing to candidates. So, we convert these raw scores to a constant scale such that, say, the designated 75 continues as the minimum score required to pass regardless of the form administered, knowing the number of correct answers needed to pass varies from form to form and from year to year.

What is a passing score?

CERTIFICATION: A passing score is the score set by the ICC and/or/with the Exam Development Committee (EDC) as the minimum score needed to pass the exam. This score is technically called a scale score and is set as 75 for the National Certification exams.

CONTRACTOR: Most Contractor/Trades examinations require a candidate to answer at least 70 percent of their questions correctly in order to pass the exam. It is important that you carefully read the relevant bulletin or contact the licensing agency for information regarding their minimum passing requirement.

When will I get my results?

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

Paper-and-pencil exams: Results for examinations taken by paper-and-pencil are mailed within three to four weeks of the exam date. Pass results will also be posted to the Code Council website at www.iccsafe.org/certsearch in approximately the same time frame.

How do I request a duplicate pass letter or wallet card?

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.

What do the bar graphs on my score report mean?

Bar graphs are provided on score reports for failed candidates, and indicate a general level of knowledge within each content area. These graphs are not to scale, and should be used only for a guideline to point you to areas which need more study.
How do I review an exam I failed?

To review missed test questions, you must be within ten (10) points of a passing score. You must contact Pearson VUE to set up a time for your review, and submit payment to Pearson VUE at time of registration. You must schedule your review session within 90 days of your exam.

How do I make comments or feedback about an exam I took?

The Code Council has developed a three-step process for test-takers to comment on or challenge the results of their exam. These are: 1) ICC Certification & Testing staff review, 2) appeal to Exam Development Committee, and 3) appeal to the Board for International Professional Standards. The form for providing feedback and starting the appeals process is available at the conclusion of exam at Pearson VUE (if testing via computer) or on the ICC website at www.iccsafe.org/inspector.

Does anyone ever win a challenge?

Occasionally, a question is challenged by a candidate and found to be flawed. In this rare event, all candidates who were administered this question up to 90 days prior will be granted credit.

Can my exam score be cancelled?

The Code Council reserves the right to revoke or withhold any examination scores if, in its sole opinion, there is adequate reason to question their validity. Reasons are:

* Giving or receiving assistance with answers during testing
* Using unauthorized materials during testing
* Failing to abide by the rules presented or directions from the proctor(s)
* Attempting to, or removing examination materials or questions from the testing center.

Questions about the test center and accommodation.

When and where can I test?

Computer-testing is administered frequently at over 350 sites across the nation.

Paper-and-pencil examinations are administered on a limited basis. To get the most updated information, go to www.iccsafe.org/exams.

When are exams available?

Computer-based certification examinations are administered nationally, Tuesday through Saturday (exceptions noted below). Testing sessions are generally held at 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Some test centers are open daily, while others are open on specific days of the week. In some locations, exams are administered on a monthly basis.
Paper-and Pencil examinations are administered on a limited basis. To get the most updated information, go to www.iccsafe.org/exams.

How do I locate a test center?

To locate test sites in your area, visit the Pearson VUE website at www.pearsonvue.com/icc for an updated listing of sites. Be aware that test sites are subject to change.

If I have a problem during testing, such as a computer issue, what should I do?

Raise your hand and wait for the proctor to come to you. In most cases, computer issues are minor and can be fixed in a matter of seconds. If there is a larger issue that affects your exam, the Pearson VUE proctor will create an incident report for further investigation.

Why are the rules at the test site so strict?

Following these rules guarantees the security of examination materials, provides reliable test results, and increases the public’s trust of certified professionals.

What should I bring to the test site?

Reference(s) for the appropriate exam that are listed in this Examination Information Bulletin—no other reference material will be allowed into the testing center: Please make sure the reference(s):

* Are bound (either original bound book, three-ring binder, or stapled). Photocopies of copyrighted materials are not allowed.
* Have notes written in ink or highlighted in code sections only.
* Have permanently attached tabs (tabs that can’t be removed without destroying the page).

Magnifying glass
Eyeglasses, if necessary
Architects’ scale or rule
Battery-operated calculator that is:
* Nonprogrammable
* Not capable of storing examination information
* No ribbon or paper printing capabilities
Foreign language/English translation dictionaries, if needed

What should I leave at home?

- Any kind of ink (ballpoint, felt-tip, gel, etc.) pens, pencils (for computer-based tests), highlighters, writing paper, or briefcases
- Personal items such as purses, wallets, or watches—lockers are available at Pearson VUE for small items, but will not accommodate laptops, briefcases, or large purses or bags
- Calculators with print capability and/or that store formulas
- Copying, recording, or photo devices
- Cell phones, beepers, radios, MP3 players, and/or PDAs
What are proctors, and what do they do?

The test proctors have two main jobs: they give the examinations and make sure the exam materials at the test site are protected.

What if the weather’s bad?

To change or cancel your reservation without monetary penalty, you must notify Pearson VUE two business days before the time and date of your scheduled examination.

What if I can’t make it to my test?

For Computer-based exams, written verification and supporting documentation for excused absences must be submitted to the Pearson VUE Program Coordinator via fax or mail within fourteen (14) days of the original examination date.

For Paper-and-pencil exams, written verification and supporting documentation for excused absences must be submitted to the Code Council via fax or mail within fourteen (14) days of the original examination date.

How do I prepare for test day?

Does the Code Council require a candidate to have a certain level of experience or education before taking the exam?

No. Most Code Council examinations are open to all individuals with no prerequisite for experience or education. Code Council 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 Code Council certification is most appropriately performed at the local level by the building official. For this reason, the Code Council does not specify education or experience requirements for certification applicants for most categories.

What is the best way to prepare for an exam?

The best way to prepare for an examination is through the study of codes and standards. Code Council seminars, self-study workbooks, code commentaries, and textbooks may be helpful.

What are the references for the exam?

Examination information including references is listed in the applicable examination information bulletin.

Where do I obtain the books for my exam?

Reference materials for each exam are located in the corresponding exam information bulletin. Most reference materials can be purchased from the Code Council store.
What if I bring in the correct reference title but the wrong code year?

If your reference materials do not meet test site regulations (relating to tabs, pencil notes, etc.), **you will not be allowed to take these references into the exam room.** You will still be allowed to test, but without these materials.

What type of question format will be used in the exam?

Test questions are in four-option, multiple-choice format, with one answer on each question scored as correct.

When are the exams updated to the newest codes?

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.

How do I update my personal information?

How do I change my name or address?

All address changes should be mailed to the Code Council using a change of address form. It is important that you list your old address, new address, any updated phone numbers and your certification number(s).

What if I have special needs?

How do I request special testing accommodations?

If you need special arrangements for testing, please call 1-800-466-0450 to request special testing services. This telephone number is available for reservations Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. CST.