

# Candidate Application and Handbook



For the CMA (AAMA)  
Certification/Recertification  
Examination



A Publication of the Certifying Board of the  
American Association of Medical Assistants

# Candidate Application and Handbook



For the  
CMA (AAMA)  
Certification/Recertification  
Examination

*Published by the*

**Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants, Inc.**

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Chicago, IL 60606

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*The CMA (AAMA): Heath Care's Most Versatile Professional®*

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# About the examination

The Certifying Board does not discriminate among applicants as to age, sex, race, religion or national origin. Membership in the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) is not required. Policies of the AAMA Certifying Board and fees are subject to change without notice.

## Certification credential

The CMA (AAMA) credential represents a medical assistant who has been credentialed through the Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants. The credential is awarded to candidates who pass the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination. The credential must be recertified every five years by continuing education or reexamination to give evidence of continuing competency and knowledge, and thus better protect patients. The CMA (AAMA) must have current status in order to use the credential in connection with employment.

### Eligibility, documentation, and fees summary

Eligibility category	Required documentation	Fee (nonrefundable)
<b>Category 1</b> Completing student or recent graduate of a CAAHEP or ABHES medical assisting program	No documentation required. Your program completion—including a practicum—must be verified by your program director in order for you to receive your official scores.	\$125
<b>Category 2</b> Nonrecent graduate of a CAAHEP or ABHES medical assisting program	Official transcript	\$125 AAMA members \$250 nonmembers
<b>Category 3</b> CMA (AAMA) Recertificant	Proof of current provider level CPR certification and photocopy of CMA (AAMA) certificate	\$125 AAMA members \$250 nonmembers



The Certification Program of the Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) as a result of demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. The NCCA is the accrediting body of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE), formerly called the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA). The NCCA Standards were created to ensure that certification programs adhere to modern standards of practice for the certification industry.

## Applicant agreement

*By virtue of submitting an application for the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination, I certify what follows:*

I understand and am in compliance with the eligibility requirements for the CMA (AAMA) Exam. I have not served as an AAMA Certifying Board or an AAMA Task Force for Test Construction member or as a chief or assistant proctor for the CMA (AAMA) Exam within the 23-month period prior to the date of the CMA (AAMA) Exam for which I am applying.

The information supplied in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I acknowledge that the AAMA Certifying Board may refuse to accept this application and may decline to permit me to take the exam. Further, the AAMA Certifying Board may invalidate the scores on this exam if it receives evidence satisfactory to the AAMA that the statements made by me are not true and accurate or that I engaged in any inappropriate conduct before, during, or after the exam (such as giving or obtaining unauthorized information or aid).

I have read, understand, and will abide by the policies set forth in this *Candidate Application and Handbook*. I understand and consent to the fact that: (1) if I am in Eligibility Category 1, in order to be eligible to receive my scores, my program director must complete a form verifying my medical assisting program enrollment and that I completed no earlier than 30 days prior to the date that I took the exam all program requirements, including a practicum; (2) the information on this form and the exam results may be used for statistical and research purposes; (3) a list of applicants who pass the CMA (AAMA) Exam may be used by AAMA and state societies and local chapters for membership recruitment purposes; (4) the names and examination scores of initial certification candidates will be released to the officials of the medical assisting program from which each applicant graduated. (Applicants who do not want their name sent to an AAMA state and local affiliate, their medical assisting program, or any other party must instruct the Certifying Board by certified mail, no later than 10 days before taking the exam, to withhold such scores. Requests received after this time will not be honored.)

# Examination information and policies

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## Candidate application and handbook

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Keep this handbook as a resource for understanding the exam application process until you have received your scores for the exam.

Requirements and fees listed in this handbook are subject to change without notice.

## Initial CMA (AAMA) certification candidacy

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Initial candidates for the CMA (AAMA) Exam who graduate on or after January 1, 2010 have 60 months from the date of graduation to sit for and pass the exam. The candidate is allowed three exam attempts. If the candidate does not pass within the 60-month time frame, the candidate is no longer eligible for the CMA (AAMA) credential.

## Recertification of the CMA (AAMA) credential

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Effective January 1, 2010, all newly certified and recertifying CMAs (AAMA) will be current through the end of the calendar month of initial certification or most recent recertification for 60 months after initial certification or most recent recertification.

Those not recertifying on or before the expiration date of their credential will be considered as having an expired credential.

An individual whose credential has expired for more than 60 months forfeits the right to reactivate the credential by continuing education and must sit for the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination. Payment of a \$50 reactivation fee plus the recertification by examination fee will be required.

## Eligibility categories

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Applicants must qualify for one of the following eligibility categories:

### **Category 1. Completing student or recent graduate of a CAAHEP or ABHES medical assisting program**

**Completing students** may take the CMA (AAMA) Certification Examination no more than 30 days prior to completing their formal education and practicum in a medical assisting program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) or by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES).

**Recent graduates** are those who apply for the exam within 12 months of graduation from a medical assisting program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) or by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES).

### **Category 2. Nonrecent graduate of a CAAHEP or ABHES medical assisting program**

A candidate who applies for the exam later than 12 months after graduation from a CAAHEP or ABHES medical assisting program is a non-recent graduate.

### **Category 3. Recertificant**

The candidate must be a CMA (AAMA) applying for the CMA (AAMA) Exam to recertify his or her credential.

## CAAHEP and ABHES accreditation periods

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Candidates who graduate from a medical assisting program that is not CAAHEP or ABHES accredited on the date of graduation, but is accredited by CAAHEP or ABHES within 36 months of that date, are eligible to apply for the CMA (AAMA) Exam under category 1 or 2. The 12-month period for student/recent graduate fee eligibility begins on the date that the program is granted CAAHEP or ABHES accreditation.

## Ineligible candidates

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Applications from candidates who do not meet the stated eligibility categories will be canceled. A refund of the candidate fee, less a \$65 administrative fee, will be mailed within four to six weeks after the application has been reviewed.

## Required documentation

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**Completing students and recent graduates.** No documentation is necessary; however, your program director will be required to verify your program completion as stipulated by the CMA (AAMA) Exam application policies. The AAMA Certifying Board reserves the right to request an official transcript at any time.

**Nonrecent graduates.** Submit an official transcript that verifies your graduation from an accredited medical assisting program.

**Recertificant applicants.** Submit a photocopy of your CMA (AAMA) certificate and proof of current provider level CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) certification from an entity whose CPR certification course meets or exceeds the provider level course offered by the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association. You are exempt from this requirement if physical limitations prevent you from performing CPR; however, such limitations must be documented by a statement signed by a physician on official clinic letterhead or the physician's script pad.

## Verification of completing student/recent graduate program completion

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If you are a completing student or recent graduate, your program director will receive a form that must be completed to verify that you fulfilled all formal coursework requirements, including a practicum, and that you did not take the CMA (AAMA) Exam more than 30 days prior to the date that you fulfilled all program requirements.

*Program directors and their designees who negligently or fraudulently verify that an examinee has completed all program requirements as described in this application are subject to disciplinary sanctions by the Certifying Board or the American Medical Technologists [if the program director is a CMA (AAMA) or holds an AMT credential, respectively] and the Certifying Board may report the falsification(s) to the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs or the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools.*

## Candidate fee for examination application

The candidate fee must accompany your application. If complete payment for all current, outstanding, or past due fees is not received by the AAMA, you will not receive an exam scheduling permit, and you will not be able to schedule an exam session. Acceptance of payment by the AAMA does not imply exam eligibility.

- Fee payments are nonrefundable and are nontransferable to another candidate or to another 90-day testing period.
- **Personal checks will not be accepted.** Candidate fees must be paid by money order, credit or debit card, cashier/certified check or institution check.
- A \$25 service charge will be assessed to you for returned institution checks, declined credit cards, and credit card charge-backs. Your application will not be approved until these fees are successfully submitted.

## Ninety-day testing period

Each candidate is allowed a 90-day period in which to take the exam. Your 90-day testing period will be assigned based on the testing period start date you indicate on your application. The start date should be the earliest possible date that you wish to sit for the exam. Your 90-day testing period will be recorded on your test center scheduling permit.

The AAMA Certification Department reserves the right to assign a later testing period start date than selected by the candidate (e.g., if an application is received after the required due date, or if the candidate selected an inappropriate testing period start date).

## Application timelines and processing

Applications are due at least 90 days in advance of the first of the month in which your testing period start date begins. Refer to the following chart for assistance in determining when you should mail your application.

Preferred testing period start date in the month of	Application is due on	Mail application by
January	October 1 of prior year	September 20 of prior year
February	November 1 of prior year	October 20 of prior year
March	December 1 of prior year	November 20 of prior year
April	January 1 of same year	December 20 of prior year
May	February 1 of same year	January 20 of same year
June	March 1 of same year	February 20 of same year
July	April 1 of same year	March 20 of same year
August	May 1 of same year	April 20 of same year
September	June 1 of same year	May 20 of same year
October	July 1 of same year	June 20 of same year
November	August 1 of same year	July 20 of same year
December	September 1 of same year	August 20 of same year

## Acknowledgment of application

You will receive notification of your eligibility status from the AAMA Certification Department staff within 30 days of the date you mailed your application. If you do not receive notification within that time frame, please notify the AAMA.

## Permits for scheduling an exam appointment

Information about scheduling permits is provided under “Test center scheduling and policies.” Permits to schedule an exam appointment are mailed to candidates who are exam-eligible, have no outstanding payments, and have submitted all required documentation. Candidates who have not fulfilled all application requirements will not be able to schedule an exam and must reapply. Any outstanding fees must be received and processed prior to reapplication and payment for a later exam.

## Incomplete applications

If your application is incomplete, you will receive a letter explaining the deficiencies. Reasons for which your application may be incomplete include the following:

- Nonpayment of fees, insufficient fees, or a declined credit/debit card
- Missing official transcript (nonrecent graduates)
- Missing current provider level CPR verification (recertificants)
- Missing felony waiver or special accommodations request form and documentation (*if applicable*)

Failure to respond as requested will delay your testing period start date and may nullify your application so that you will need to reapply as well as pay the candidate fee again.

## Name and address

On your examination day, you must bring to the test center your scheduling permit and an unexpired, government-issued form of identification (ID) that includes both your photograph and signature (e.g., a driver’s license or passport). The name information on your application must exactly match the name on this ID. The only acceptable difference would be if a middle name, middle initial, or suffix appears on one document but not on the other.

The scheduling permit and all exam notices will be sent to the address you provide to the AAMA Certification Department. You are responsible for providing updates to your mailing address. The AAMA Certification Department is not responsible for correctly addressed items that, for any reason, are not delivered to you.

Fully registered candidates will receive a confirmation notice. You must carefully review your name and address on this notice and contact us immediately if corrections are necessary.

A \$25 administrative fee will be charged if the AAMA Certification Department must mail an additional scheduling permit to you. If express mailing is requested, those mailing fees will be added. All fees must be paid before an additional permit is mailed.

## Release of candidate/CMA (AAMA) information

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Certification status is a matter of public record and may be released. (Refer to the “Applicant agreement” for limited exceptions to the release of information.) The following information is not of public record, and cannot be divulged without the written permission of the applicant:

- Exam enrollment status
- Certification date
- Certificate number
- Exam score
- Number of exam attempts
- Exam eligibility category
- Number of recertifications
- Number of activities listed in the continuing education registry
- Personal information, such as contact information

## Special accommodations

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Disabled persons who require special provisions on exam day must submit a Request for Special Accommodations form (obtained from the AAMA) with the application, candidate fee, and written documentation of the following:

- A formal diagnosis by a skilled evaluator (e.g., a psychologist)
- The credentials and documentation of the expertise of the evaluator providing documentation referenced immediately above
- Specific findings in support of the diagnosis
- Current functional limitations
- Explanation of the specific requests for special accommodations

While the Certifying Board will make every effort to fulfill special accommodation requests, it reserves the right to deny or postpone requests which are not submitted as specified above or which, in the judgment of the Certifying Board, would jeopardize the security of the exam material or the integrity of scores derived from the exam.

Written notification will be provided to the candidate detailing the accommodations and any procedures that must be followed to ensure the test center can accommodate the stated needs on the test date.

## Grounds for denial of eligibility

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The following are grounds for denial of eligibility for the CMA (AAMA) credential, or for discipline of the CMA (AAMA):

- Obtaining or attempting to obtain certification or recertification of the CMA (AAMA) credential by fraud or deception.
- Knowingly assisting another to obtain or attempt to obtain certification or recertification by fraud or deception.
- Misstatement of material fact or failure to state a material fact in application for certification or recertification.
- Falsifying information required for admission to the CMA (AAMA) Examination, impersonating another examinee, or falsifying education or credentials.

- Providing or receiving unauthorized advice about examination content during the CMA (AAMA) Examination.
- Unauthorized possession or distribution of examination materials, including copying and reproducing examination questions.

Generally, individuals who have been found guilty of a felony, or pleaded guilty to a felony, are not eligible to take the CMA (AAMA) Exam. However, the Certifying Board may grant a waiver based upon mitigating circumstances. If you wish to request that the Certifying Board permit you to take the test, you must submit a Request for Waiver form (obtained from the AAMA) and written evidence which demonstrates that your felony conviction or plea should not prevent you from taking the CMA (AAMA) Exam. The Request for Waiver form must be submitted with the application, candidate fee, and written documentation that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- The age at which the crime was committed
- The circumstances surrounding the crime
- The nature of the crime committed
- The length of time since the conviction
- The individual’s criminal history since the conviction
- The individual’s current employment references
- The individual’s character references
- Other evidence demonstrating the individual’s ability to perform the professional responsibilities competently, and evidence that the individual does not pose a threat to the health or welfare of patients.

## Examination specifications

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The exam consists of 200 multiple-choice questions. Of these, 180 questions will be scored and 20 will be pretested. The pretest questions are included for evaluation and possible use as scored questions on future examinations. These pretest questions are randomly placed throughout the examination and cannot be identified by the candidates. A candidate’s score is based on the number of correct responses to scored questions only. The pretest questions are not counted towards a candidate’s score. (Refer to “Completing the test” for the length of the examination appointment.)

## Examination study suggestions

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Areas of knowledge and topics covered in the examination are listed in the *CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination Content Outline*, which can be found on the AAMA website at [www.aama-ntl.org](http://www.aama-ntl.org). The CMA (AAMA) Exam is based on the *Content Outline* which is developed in relation to the *AAMA 2007-2008 Occupational Analysis of the CMA (AAMA)*. It is recommended that examinees become familiar with the subject matter and topics listed in the *Content Outline*. Reviewing current books and publications that cover administrative and clinical content for medical assisting, and anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, laboratory, and health care law and ethics textbooks will help you prepare for the exam.

Study tips and practice questions to help you test your knowledge in the areas of anatomy and physiology and medical terminology can be found on the AAMA website.



## **Failure to appear for appointment**

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If you do not take the exam during your 90-day test period, or do not complete all required components of the exam, you will forfeit your entire candidate fee and must reapply for the exam.

## **Transfer to new testing period**

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For a \$65 fee, candidates may transfer (extend) their testing eligibility period to include the next immediately available 90-day testing period. Requests must be submitted in writing to the AAMA Certification Department at least 30 days prior to the end of the original testing period. Only one transfer is allowed and only for the originally enrolled candidate.

## **Request for an appeal**

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Exam applicants may appeal a decision of the AAMA Certification Department to the AAMA Certifying Board by submitting written evidence demonstrating a reasonable doubt in a determination of the Certification Department.

## **AAMA membership**

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Membership in the AAMA is not required for certification or recertification. If you fulfill the eligibility requirements and your membership dues are paid prior to or at the time of application for the exam, then you are eligible for the AAMA member rate.

To join, enroll online at [www.aama-ntl.org](http://www.aama-ntl.org) or call the AAMA Membership Department at 800/228-2262 or 312/899-1500.

## **AAMA contact information**

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Answers to questions about the certification process can be found on the AAMA website or you may contact the AAMA Certification Department:

**Website:** [www.aama-ntl.org](http://www.aama-ntl.org)

**E-mail:** [certification@aama-ntl.org](mailto:certification@aama-ntl.org)

**Phone:** 800/228-2262 or 312/899-1500

# Test center scheduling and policies

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## Your scheduling permit

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After your application has been approved, an orange scheduling permit that contains instructions for making an appointment for your exam will be mailed to you. Your candidate identification number (CIN) will be listed on the permit. The CIN number is a unique identifier that you will only use at the test center when you first log into the computer to begin your exam.

When you receive your scheduling permit, verify all information for accuracy. You may schedule an appointment to take the exam at your convenience Monday through Saturday during your 90-day test period recorded on your scheduling permit.

Contact the AAMA Certification Department immediately at 800/228-2262 if the name on your scheduling permit is misspelled or differs from your name as it appears on your identification. Name changes or corrections cannot be made less than 20 business days prior to your scheduled test appointment.

## Scheduling your test date

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You must have your scheduling permit before you contact Prometric to schedule your test appointment. You are solely responsible for making and keeping your scheduled appointment date. Make your appointment on the Prometric scheduling website at [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com) or by calling the phone number listed on your permit. When scheduling your appointment, remember the following:

- **Contact Prometric as soon as you receive the scheduling permit.** Prometric schedules test appointments on a first-come, first-served basis. The sooner you schedule your appointment, the more likely you will receive your preferred time and location. Do not wait until the last moment to attempt to schedule an appointment. If an appointment is not available within the testing period you will forfeit your candidate fee.
- **Refer to your scheduling permit when you make your appointment.** When you contact Prometric to schedule your test appointment, you will be asked to provide the information located in the box at the top of the scheduling permit. Prometric will provide you with the test date, time, location, telephone number, and your appointment confirmation number.
- **Confirm your test center location.** One week before your appointment, confirm your test center location via the Prometric website ([www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com)) or by contacting Prometric at the phone number listed on your permit. Call this number also if you need directions to your test center.

## Identification requirements for exam admittance

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On your examination day, you must bring to the test center your scheduling permit and an unexpired, government-issued form of identification that includes both your photograph and signature (e.g., a driver's license or passport). If your identification contains your photograph and not your signature, you may use another form of unexpired identification that contains your signature (e.g., an employee identification card or credit card) to supplement your photo-bearing, government-issued identification. The first and last names on your identification must exactly match the names on your permit. The only acceptable difference would be the presence of a middle name, middle initial, or suffix on one docu-

ment and its absence on the other. If you do not have acceptable forms of ID, you will not be allowed to test.

## Examination appointment changes/ Failure to appear

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You will be allowed to take only the examination for which you were deemed eligible; no changes in examination type may be made at the test center. Unscheduled candidates (walk-ins) will not be admitted to the test center.

Eligibility extensions are not granted. If you fail to schedule or to test during your 90-day period of eligibility, you will forfeit your candidate fee. If you choose to reapply at a later date, you must submit another application and the appropriate candidate fee.

If you wish to reschedule your examination appointment to another date or location, you must contact Prometric at the toll-free number, by noon Eastern Time at least two business days prior to your scheduled appointment. You may reschedule only for an appointment during your 90-day test period.

Prometric will charge you a \$45 rescheduling fee (subject to change) if you fail to appear for your scheduled appointment or provide less than two business days notice to reschedule.

## Test centers and conditions

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Prometric provides computer-based test services for academic assessment, professional licensure, and certification. All Prometric test centers are set up similarly. This enhances security and ensures the same standards for comfort and uniformity for all examinees. Prometric test centers provide the resources necessary for secure administration of the examination, including video and audio monitoring and recording, and use of digital cameras to record the identity of examinees.

## Cancellation due to bad weather or other emergencies

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In the event of bad weather, a natural disaster, or other emergency, the AAMA Certifying Board and Prometric will determine whether circumstances warrant cancellation and rescheduling of exams at a particular test center.

Examinations will not be canceled and rescheduled if the test center administrator is able to open the test center. Every attempt will be made to administer all examinations as scheduled. However, should examinations at a test center be canceled, all affected candidates will be contacted about rescheduling their examinations.

## Admission to the exam/Late arrival

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Arrive at the Prometric test center at least 30 minutes before your scheduled test time on your test date. If you arrive late, you may not be admitted. If you arrive more than 30 minutes after your scheduled test time, you will not be permitted to test. In that event, you must pay a fee to Prometric to reschedule your test. Your rescheduled test date must fall within your assigned testing period. A complete application and candidate fee are required to reapply for the examination if you do not test within the 90-day testing period.

Upon arrival at the test center, you must present the required identification, sign a test center log, be photographed, and store your personal belongings in your assigned locker. Test center staff will collect your

scheduling permit. You will be instructed to write your name and candidate identification number (CIN) on one of the laminated writing surfaces provided. Your scheduling permit will be retained at the test center administrator's station. You may request access to the permit during the examination if it becomes necessary for you to rewrite the CIN on the laminated writing surface. In addition to the laminated writing surfaces, you will be provided with dry-erase markers and an eraser. Test center staff will escort you to your assigned test station and provide brief instructions on the use of the computer equipment. You must enter your CIN to start the examination. You may then take a brief tutorial prior to starting the first test block.

## Test regulations

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Test center staff monitor all test sessions for the examination. You must follow the instructions of test center staff throughout the examination. Failure to do so may result in a determination of irregular behavior.

Test center staff members are not authorized to answer questions from candidates regarding examination content, test software, or scoring.

If staff observe you violating test administration rules or engaging in other forms of irregular behavior during the examination, the staff will not necessarily tell you of the observation at the time of the examination.

You may not bring any personal belongings into the test area, including, but not limited to the following:

- Mechanical or electronic devices (e.g., cellular telephones, personal digital assistants [PDAs], calculators, watches of any type, electronic paging devices, recording or filming devices, and radios)
- Outerwear (e.g., coats, jackets, headwear, or gloves)
- Book bags, backpacks, handbags, briefcases, or wallets
- Books, notes, written materials, or scratch paper
- Food, candy, gum, or beverages

If you bring personal items to the test center, you must store them in a designated locker outside the secure test area. You should keep in mind that the storage facilities are small and that all stored mechanical or electronic devices must be turned off. Personal items and their contents may be subject to inspection. Any materials that reasonably appear to be reproductions of any AAMA examination materials will be confiscated. Making notes of any kind during an examination, except on the materials provided by the test center for this purpose, is not permitted.

## Rules of conduct

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When you submit an application for the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination, you agree to abide by the following rules of conduct:

- You are the person named on the scheduling permit for the examination.
- You will not give, receive, or obtain any form of unauthorized assistance during the examination or your break.
- You will not have in your possession any formulas, study materials, notes, papers, or electronic devices during the examination.
- Before entering the test room, you will place any formulas, study materials, notes, or paper in your possession in a locker. All personal belongings, including cellular phones, your purse and/or wallet, pagers, and personal digital assistants (PDAs) must also be

placed in a locker before you enter the test room.

- You will not leave your test station for a break unless the break screen is visible on your monitor. It will be considered a violation of the rules of conduct if you indicate on the center log that your break screen is visible when it is not.
- You will not use a telephone or other communication device at any point during the examination, including breaks, for any purpose related to test content.
- You will not remove materials in any form (written, printed, recorded, or any other type) from the test center.
- All examination materials remain the property of the AAMA Certifying Board, and you will maintain confidentiality of the materials. You will not reproduce or attempt to reproduce examination materials through memorization or any other means. Also, you will not provide information relating to examination content that may give or attempt to give unfair advantage to individuals who may be taking the examination. This includes posting information regarding examination items and/or answers on the Internet.

If you violate these rules of conduct, you may be directed to leave the test center before you complete the examination. Evidence of violation of any test administration rule, including these rules of conduct, may result in disciplinary sanctions based on the *AAMA Disciplinary Policies and Procedures for the CMA (AAMA)*.

## Tutorial

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Before the examination begins, there will be an optional tutorial that reviews the administration of the examination on the computer and how to navigate through the examination. The maximum time allowed for the tutorial is 15 minutes. The time used for the tutorial is not counted as part of the examination time and does not affect the examination score.

## Completing the test

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Upon completion of the optional 15-minute tutorial, the exam will be administered in four 40-minute segments. You will have an optional 20-minute total for breaks between segments. Your test time will not be extended if you decline the tutorial or the optional break time. You will have 160 minutes to answer all the exam questions. The maximum time allowed for your examination appointment will be three hours and 15 minutes, which is a total of 195 minutes.

Once you begin the exam, the exam cannot be canceled or rescheduled unless a technical problem requires rescheduling. If a computer problem occurs during the test, you should notify test center staff immediately. In the rare event of a technical problem, the test software is designed to allow the test to restart at the point it was interrupted. In most cases, the test can be restarted at the point of interruption with no loss of test time. In the rare event of a technical problem occurring that requires your exam to be rescheduled, you will be allowed to test at a later date at no additional cost.

## Post-test survey

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After you have completed the exam you will have the opportunity to respond to a 10- to 20-question survey about the exam and the test conditions at your test center. You are not required to complete this survey if you do not have adequate time remaining in your 195-minute test period.

# Policies for examination scores, certification, recertification, and employer verification

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## Unofficial examination results

An *unofficial* pass/fail result will be provided to you immediately upon your completion of the exam. A final, *official* report of the scores you achieved will be mailed to you after your exam date and upon verification that you have fulfilled all application requirements.

## Official notification of scores

An *official* report of the score achieved and certification status (pass or fail) will be mailed 10 weeks after the exam date. The passing score reflects the minimum score that must be achieved to pass the exam. The Certifying Board establishes the minimum passing score for each examination based on universally accepted psychometric methodology and reserves the right to change the minimum passing score as appropriate.

Candidates who have fulfilled all application requirements are eligible to receive an official exam score report which includes the percentile rank in the General, Administrative, and Clinical content areas to help candidates interpret exam performance and identify areas of strength and weakness. The score report will not include performance on pretest questions and these questions will not be used to determine pass or fail status.

Candidates who pass the exam and receive official notification of their scores will be awarded the CMA (AAMA) credential.

## Withholding official score notification and CMA (AAMA) certification

In order to receive your official score notification, you must fulfill all CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination application requirements. (See “Eligibility categories” and “Required documentation.”)

You will be charged a \$35 processing fee (payable *only* by money order, credit or debit card, cashier or certified check, or institution check) if this documentation is submitted more than one month from the date you took the exam. Your scores will not be released to you and you will not receive your certification/recertification status if more than four months have elapsed since the date of your exam. You must then reapply for the exam and pay the candidate fee.

All exam candidates and CMA (AAMA) certificants are subject to the *AAMA Disciplinary Standards and Procedures for the CMA (AAMA)* which are available on the AAMA website. The AAMA Certifying Board reserves the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, violation of Certifying Board regulations is discovered. Candidates and program directors are expected to fully cooperate with any investigation.

## Verification of examination results

If you question your examination results and wish to have your exam re-scored, you must notify AAMA Certification Department staff in writing within 30 days from the date that you receive your official score notification. A \$75 fee (payable only by money order, credit or debit card, cashier or certified check, or institution check) must be enclosed with your request. Neither the content nor the answers for specific test items are released or disclosed. Incorrect responses will not be reported when requesting a review. A re-scoring only determines if the original result was correct or incorrect.

## Certificate and wallet card

Candidates who pass the examination and are provided with an official notification of their scores will receive a certificate and wallet card denoting their CMA (AAMA) certification status within approximately 10 weeks after their official scores are mailed. The candidate’s name will appear on the certificate and wallet card exactly as it appears on the examination application form. Contact the AAMA Certification Department if these items are not received after the 10-week processing period to avoid paying the standard fees—\$20 and \$5, respectively.

## Recertification requirements

To give evidence of continuing competency and knowledge and thus better protect patients, medical assistants who have been awarded the CMA (AAMA) credential are required to recertify every five years. Effective January 1, 2010, all newly certified and recertifying CMAs (AAMA) will be current through the end of the calendar month of initial certification or most recent recertification for 60 months after initial certification or most recent recertification. Current status is required in order to use the credential in connection with employment.

Obtain information about recertifying your CMA (AAMA) credential from the AAMA website at [www.aama-ntl.org](http://www.aama-ntl.org) or by calling 800/228-2262 and requesting a recertification information packet.

## Employer verification of certification status

Certification status is a matter of public record and may be released. Employers may verify the CMA (AAMA) certification status of current or potential medical assistant employees on the AAMA website at [www.aama-ntl.org](http://www.aama-ntl.org). CMAs (AAMA) comprise the majority of credentialed medical assistants in the work force today. Due to the reputation of the credential as being the gold standard for the profession, greater numbers of employers are preferring or even insisting that their medical assistants be CMA (AAMA) certified.

# Examination application steps

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## **Step 1. Verify that you are eligible for the exam**

Review eligibility categories 1, 2, or 3 to ensure that you are eligible for the exam.

## **Step 2. Gather your documentation**

Gather the appropriate documentation for your eligibility category as outlined under “Required documentation.”

## **Step 3. Review all examination policies and information**

When you submit your application you are certifying that you have reviewed and accept all provisions under “Application agreement” and that you will abide by all the policies set forth in this document, so it is important to read them thoroughly.

## **Step 4. Determine start date for 90-day testing period**

Select the date that you wish your 90-day testing period to begin. This will determine when you should apply for the examination. Refer to “Ninety-day testing period” and “Application timelines and processing.”

## **Step 5. Apply for the examination**

Complete the application form. Verify that you have written your first, middle, and last name as they appear on the government-issued photo ID you must bring to the test center. Mail the application fee with your candidate fee and include any documentation you gather in Step 2. Retain a photocopy of the completed application and documentation for your records. Do not send the *Handbook* with your application.

## **Step 6. Schedule your examination**

Schedule your examination appointment as soon as possible after receipt of your scheduling permit by visiting [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com). Refer to “Your scheduling permit” and “Scheduling your test date.”

## **Step 7. Study for the examination**

Refer to “Examination study suggestions.”

## **Step 8. Update your information on a timely basis**

Refer to “Name and address” and “Identification requirements for exam admittance.”

## **Step 9. Prepare for your examination day**

Thoroughly review the “Test center scheduling and policies,” so that your examination appointment goes smoothly.

## **Step 10. Complete the exam**

After you have completed your exam, you will receive an unofficial pass/fail result.

## **Step 11. Watch for your official score reports**

You’ll receive your official exam scores within 10 weeks of your examination date pending verification of program completion and/or fulfillment of all application requirements. Review “Policies for exam scores, certification, recertification, and employer verification.”

## **Step 12. Watch for your certificate**

If you pass, your certificate should arrive approximately 10 weeks after you receive your official scores. It is valid for a five-year period. Review “Recertification of the CMA (AAMA) credential.”

# Examination application

**Candidate:** You must read the *Candidate Application and Handbook* and accept all provisions under “Applicant agreement” before submitting this application.

**Program director:** Refer to policies under “Verification of completing student/recent graduate program completion” and “Withholding official score notification and CMA (AAMA) certification.”

**Please check any of the boxes that apply to you:**

- Have you ever been found guilty of a felony, or pleaded guilty to a felony? (*If so, contact AAMA for a Request for Waiver form.*)
- Are you requesting special accommodations? (*If so, contact AAMA for a Request for Special Accommodations form.*)
- Are you repeating this exam due to failing a previous examination?

**Eligibility category.** Select your category according to the instructions and complete the information for each category:

- Category 1. Completing student or recent graduate of a CAAHEP or ABHES medical assisting program. (*Complete A, B, C, and D below.*)
- Category 2. Nonrecent graduate of a CAAHEP or ABHES medical assisting program. (*Complete A, B, and C below.*)
- Category 3. CMA (AAMA) recertificant. (*Complete E below.*)

**A.** Program completion date including practicum (not graduation date): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year)

**B.** Institution name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Institution address, city, and state: \_\_\_\_\_

**C.** Accreditation code (*ask your program director for the code*): \_\_\_\_\_

**D.** Program director’s name and telephone number (*print*): \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Category 3 applicants only:**  
CMA (AAMA) certificate number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date certified: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year)

**Testing period start date.** The date that I want my 90-day testing period to begin is: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year)

**Processing period. Do not call** about the status of your application until at least 30 days have elapsed since you mailed your application. Doing so will only further delay application processing.

**Candidate Information.**

Social Security number: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle name or initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Your name will appear on your scheduling permit as listed above. Refer to “Identification requirements for exam admittance.”)*

Permanent address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cellular phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous last name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate fees. Check the appropriate box:**

- Completing student/recent graduate .....\$125
- AAMA member .....\$125
- AAMA nonmember .....\$250

Enclosed is my:

- Money order #: \_\_\_\_\_ \*
- Cashier’s/certified check #: \_\_\_\_\_ \*
- Institution check number #: \_\_\_\_\_ \*

*\*Make payable to the American Association of Medical Assistants or AAMA.*

Charge my credit/debit card checked below:

- AmEx     Visa     MC     Discover

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder name (print neatly): \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Personal checks will not be accepted. Applications that do not include proper payment may be returned and will delay your testing. A \$25 administrative fee will be assessed for returned checks, charge-backs or declined charge payments. Candidate fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable.*

**For office use only**

Rec’d \_\_\_\_\_  
Batch \_\_\_\_\_  
ID \_\_\_\_\_  
Order \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail completed application, documentation, and payment to:**

AAMA Certification  
7999 Eagle Way  
Chicago, IL 60678-1079  
*Use complete 9 digit ZIP code*