

**National Board of Public Health Examiners
2010 Certified in Public Health (CPH) Exam Facts**



Board Facts:

The National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE) was formed in fall 2005 as an independent organization to ensure that students and graduates from schools and programs of public health accredited by the Council on Education of Public Health (CEPH) have mastered the knowledge and skills relevant to contemporary public health. The NBPHE's charter is to develop, prepare, administer, and evaluate a voluntary certification exam. The NBPHE contracts with the National Board of Medical Examiners® (NBME®) for exam design, preparation, administration, scoring and reporting. The NBPHE includes designated representatives from APHA (2), APTR (2), ASPH (6), ASTHO (1), and NACCHO (1), and several at-large members. A full list of the NBPHE board of directors and member organizations is available at www.publichealthexam.org/about.cfm

Eligibility criteria for the 2011 CPH exam:

1. Public health alumni from a school or program accredited by CEPH (completed all requirements for graduation by December 31, 2010)
2. Public health students from any of the 79 schools or programs that have extended eligibility to their students; students must have completed or be concurrently enrolled in 21 academic hours, including applicable core courses in Biostatistics, Environmental Health Sciences, Epidemiology, Health Services/Policy Management, and Social and Behavioral Sciences, by December 31, 2010

The NBPHE automatically verifies the eligibility of all candidates. Deferrals and retakes are allowed.

Registration deadlines and fees:

Registration for all candidates must be completed online at www.publichealthexam.org. The registration system automatically calculates the appropriate registration fee.

Automatic self-registration online is not complete until full payment is made. The registration system can accept payment by check, money order, or credit card. All individual payments must be received by the NBPHE by midnight, EST on November 26, 2010.

Alumni Fees

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| \$475 USD regular | October 16 - November 14, 2010 |
| \$550 USD late | November 15 - Nov 26, 2010 |

Student Fees

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| \$425 USD regular | October 16 - November 14, 2010 |
| \$450 USD late | November 15 - Nov 26, 2010 |

2011 Exam Administration:

- The exam is offered over a three week period in February 2011 at multiple testing sites across the U.S. and around the world.
- Registrants choose their preferred test date and site after completing registration and upon notice that their Scheduling Permit is available.
- Candidates may take the CPH exam any day between February 4 – 26, 2011, based on test site availability.
- The February 2011 exam is the only CPH exam scheduled for 2011.

Score data and official award of CPH:

- Score reports will be available at the earliest in mid-April 2011.
- Student examinees will receive a provisional score report comparing their performance with the NBPHE passing standard for certification. Successful student examinees will not be officially recognized as CPH until the NBPHE has verified that all requirements for graduation have been met.
- Alumni examinees will receive a score report with the NBPHE certification decision.
- Academic institutions extending eligibility to their students will receive an individual score report for each student and an aggregate score report for 10+ students.
- All Deans and Directors will receive an aggregate score report for 10+ alumni who complete the 2011 exam; the report contains information on their graduates' relative scores in the discipline and core competency areas.

CPH Exam Successes to-Date

To-date, more than 2,100 people have registered for the CPH exam.

The exam consists of 200 multiple choice questions covering the core domains of public health (biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health, the social and behavioral sciences, and health policy and management) and the cross-cutting competency domains articulated by the ASPH Masters of Public Health competencies (public health biology, leadership, communications, diversity and culture, professionalism, program planning and systems thinking). The NBPHE collaborates with the NBME to train item writers from diverse public health disciplines and backgrounds and to administer the exam. The item bank is refreshed annually.

CPH professionals commit to their life-long learning and ongoing currency in public health by maintaining their CPH status. Maintenance of CPH Certification requires 50 hours of CPH continuing education to be reported every 2 years, and a reassessment experience to be completed in 10 years. For continuing education, NBPHE uses an approved-provider model. The re-assessment experience will not be the CPH 200-item examination but the details of what it will entail are still being discussed.

The CPH exam has been administered three times in August; in 2011 the exam will be moved to February at the request of academic institutions.

2008 Exam Facts:

The examination was thoroughly evaluated and performed very well. Test metrics included a reliability coefficient of 0.91 as estimated by KR-20 and a discrimination index of 0.31 as estimated by the biserial coefficient.

Examinees did relatively better on questions related to environmental health, health policy and management and the cross-cutting competencies than they did on biostatistics, epidemiology and the social and behavioral sciences. The passing rate for the 2008 exam was 84%.

2009 Exam Facts:

In recognition of the challenge of any new examination, examinees from 2008 who did not achieve a score sufficient to earn certification were invited to sit for the 2009 exam at a reduced fee. This will not be repeated. The examination was thoroughly evaluated and performed very well. The reliability coefficient was 0.93 and the mean discrimination index was 0.34. The passing rate for the 2009 exam was 74%.

2010 Exam Facts:

The 2010 CPH exam meets all psychometric standards, as it did in 2008 and 2009. Test metrics included a reliability coefficient of 0.90 and a discrimination index of 0.30. Nearly 300 students registered for the 2010 exam through the pilot early-exam program. The overall pass rate for the 2010 exam was 88%. Students performed well overall on the 2010 exam, although at a slightly lower level than alumni.

Motivations for CPH:

The primary reason people state for taking the exam is to increase the credibility of the public health profession; secondarily, they hope to increase their own credibility as public health professionals.

Support for CPH:

Public health employers are strongly urged to support and recognize CPH among their interviewees, hires, current employees, and trainees. Deans and program directors are strongly urged to promote the exam among their graduates and alumni. Based on activities of leading employers and educators, the NBPHE suggests the following:

Tips to Support the Certified in Public Health process (no cost to you):

1. Simply champion the exam; a note or 15” talk from leadership goes a long way to spark interest.
2. Recognize employees who become CPH, e.g. newsletters and staff meetings, public health events
3. Download and show the free monthly webinars from NBPHE (see schedule at bottom of <http://www.nbphe.org/about.cfm>)
4. Invite the NBPHE to make a presentation (or invite CPH employees or alumni to speak).
5. Nominate faculty, staff, employees, and partners as item writers.

Tips to Support the Certified in Public Health process (not quite so free):

1. Recognize and reward employees, including faculty and staff, who become CPH, e.g. preferential recruiting, hiring, promotions, salary increases, and kudos in newsletters and staff meetings.
2. Support maintenance fees and continuing education for CPH professionals.
3. Donate to the Foundation to Advance Public Health through Certification to recognize high scores in certain domains or to subsidize fees.
4. Join the growing number of employers who reimburse the registration fee to any employee who earns a score sufficient for certification.
5. Hold periodic raffles among students and graduates who register for the exam and reimburse the winners the costs of the exam.
6. Provide full or partial registration fee scholarships for students in financial hardship.
7. Reimburse all or part of the registration fee to any graduate who earns a score sufficient for certification.
8. Solicit donations from interested parties to support registration fee scholarships.
9. Prepare review materials or offer review sessions for students and graduates. The NBPHE offers three free study materials (see <http://www.nbphe.org/FAQs.cfm#SampleQs>)

Registration is easy, simply go to www.publichealthexam.org and follow the directions. Also on this site is information about the NBPHE, frequently asked questions, and other useful links.