



## **CERTIFIED PLASTIC SURGICAL NURSE (CPSN)/ RECERTIFICATION THROUGH CONTINUING EDUCATION**

### **Recertification**

You have decided to renew your certification by continuing nursing education rather than taking the examination. Recertification through continuing nursing education contact hours is accomplished by accumulating **45 contact hours** during the 3-year CPSN certification period. Contact hours do not have to be accumulated in all categories; however, a minimum of 2 contact hours must be specifically related to patient safety. Any combinations of the following activities are acceptable; however, a minimum of 30 contact hours must be earned in plastic surgical nursing.

Applications for renewal of your Certified Plastic Surgical Nurse (CPSN) credential by continuing nursing education must be received 30 days in advance of the certification expiration date. **Applications received within 30 days of expiration are subject to a late fee of \$100. Any applications received after this time can be automatically rejected at the discretion of the Board. There are no refunds.** A completed application, appropriate forms, supporting materials, and fee must be submitted at one time. Incomplete applications will be returned to the candidate. The decision that recertification requirements have been met will be based solely on the submitted material.

If recertification is approved, the applicant will be able to download credentials indicating certified status and expiration date.

If recertification is denied, applicants may apply to re-take the CPSN examination or they may appeal the ruling. If appeal is denied, applicants may apply to take the CPSN examination. If applicant does not meet renewal criteria and does not pass the examination, recertification will not be awarded.

Recertification by proof of 45 contact hours will be denied for any of the following reasons:

- Falsification of application.
- Misrepresentation.
- Failure to meet criteria for 45 contact hours of credit.
- Failure to meet criteria for 30 contact hours specific to Plastic Surgery
- Lack of current and unrestricted RN licensure.
- Failure to apply by deadline.
- Failure to supply requested additional material by deadline.
- Failure to meet work experience eligibility requirements.

### **Retired Status (CPSN-R)**

The Retired designation is intended both to recognize certified nurses' years of service as plastic surgical nurses and to acknowledge their dedication to having been certified.

Retirement from clinical practice can take place for many reasons; however, many nurses would like to stay connected to their certification. Retired status will also be granted to those RNs that have left Plastic Surgery, but wish to maintain their certification with a goal to return to the specialty.

The CPSN-R designation is renewable every 3 years by submitting your retirement request to the PSNCB and paying the designation fee. Please request the CPSN-R retirement status from the PSNCB National Office via email. Retired status is granted to those age 55 or older and have retired from nursing practice.

The CPSN-R may once again resume their CPSN credential as long as they have been practicing in Plastic Surgery for at least two years and can submit 45 hours of continuing education, with 30 hours specifically in plastic surgery per the Recertification Guidelines.

Certified Plastic Surgical Nurses are responsible for notifying the PSNCB National Office of any contact or address changes. CPSNs are also responsible for tracking their recertification dates.

If you have any questions concerning the recertification process, please contact the Plastic Surgical Nursing Certification Board at (978) 927-8330 or (877) 337-9315 or write to PSNCB, 500 Cummings Center, Suite 4400, Beverly, MA 01915.

### **Appeals Policy and Procedure**

Candidates who have been denied eligibility to sit for the exam, whose recertification is denied, and those whose certification is revoked have the right of appeal. Individuals wishing to request an appeal or reconsideration of a decision of the PSNCB must initiate the request for reconsideration within the time frame delineated in the reconsideration procedures.

1. The candidate shall be informed of the right of appeal at the time of application for certification or recertification.
2. The appeal must be submitted in writing via certified mail (or other traceable means) to the President of the Board within thirty days of notification of the action of the PSNCB. The request for reconsideration shall state the specific reasons for the appeal.
3. Any cost associated with the appeal process will be the responsibility of the individual making the appeal
4. The appeal shall be heard by a special committee composed of two certified nurses appointed by the President of the PSNCB and one member of the PSNCB Board. The special committee shall make a recommendation on the appeal to the Board. The decision of the Board shall be final.
5. The results of the special committee and ensuing Board action shall be documented. A permanent file of action by the special committee and the Board shall be established.
6. The decision of the Board shall be communicated in writing to the candidate within 2-4 weeks.
7. Failure of the appellant to request an appeal or appear before the special committee from the Board shall constitute a waiver of rights of appeal.

## **Recertification Fees**

**Recertification for ISPAN Members: \$200**

**Recertification for non-ISPAN Members: \$350**

**Returned Check: \$25**

**Recertifying 30-0 days before due date: \$100 late fee**

**Recertifying 15-0 days before due date: application may be rejected at discretion of the Board**

**There are no refunds.**

If you have any questions concerning the recertification process, please contact the Plastic Surgical Nursing Certification Board National Office

**PSNCB  
500 Cummings Center, Suite 4400  
Beverly, MA 01915  
Phone (978) 927-8330  
Toll Free (877) 337-9315  
Fax (978) 524-0498**

## **Non Discrimination Policy**

The PSNCB does not discriminate on the basis of physical handicap, race, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, or any other type of classification that is prohibited by law.

It does not discriminate among certification applicants on the basis of race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs, handicap, marital status, or national origin.

PSNCB includes a statement of non- discrimination in announcements of the certification and recertification programs.

PSNCB adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will not discriminate against any candidate who requires special accommodation in order to sit for the certification examination.

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECERTIFICATION BY CONTINUING EDUCATION

This handbook contains the instructions necessary for you to apply for CPSN renewal through continuing education. Please review all materials, before beginning your online application.

To recertify by continuing education, all candidates must meet the specified eligibility requirements and provide proof of 45 approved contact hours. Compliance with eligibility requirements related to work experience must be documented on the application. Proof of 45 contact hours are documented in five categories, one for each acceptable method of collecting contact hours. Continuing education certificates must be uploaded within each appropriate category. If you determine that you do not have a copy of the contact hour certificate, you are responsible for requesting a copy from the provider of the continuing education program. PSNCB will not obtain certificates for applicants or process incomplete applications.

A minimum of 30 of the 45 contact hours must be specifically related to plastic surgical nursing. Additionally, **a minimum of 2 contact hours must be specifically related to general patient safety.** This can be accumulated in any category and can include, but is not limited to the Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goals ([www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org)). Contact hours in plastic surgical nursing may be accumulated through any of the categories of continuing education activities provided the content is plastic surgical nursing.

To be acceptable for recertification, the contact hours awarded must be continuing education in nursing and be provided or approved by one of the following:

- The International Society of Plastic and Aesthetic Nurses (ISPAN)
- Organizations accredited by the American Nurses' Credentialing Center-Commission on Accreditation (ANCC-COA) the credentialing body of the American Nurses Association.
- The state board of nursing in California, which requires that the organization have approved provider status in their state if the continuing education activity is held IN THE STATE. Contact hours are accepted by those state boards of nursing if the licensee attends the activity OUTSIDE the state. Mandatory states are those states that require continuing education credit for re-licensure. Other than the above mentioned states, mandatory states accept contact hours from organizations that have accreditation status from the ANCC-COA or whose educational activities are approved by an organization with ANCC-COA accreditation status.
- The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)
- The Council of Continuing Education

Proof of 45 contact hours may be submitted from the following activities:

Category A: Plastic Surgical Programs (30 Hours Minimum): This group encompasses plastic surgical programs offering continuing education credit in nursing. These programs must be specific to plastic surgical nursing practice. To qualify, a program must indicate that a single continuing education unit equals 10 educational contact hours, or the program must use the recognized value of CERP (continuing education recognition point) in which one educational contact hour equals one CERP. (One CEU equals ten educational contact hours, which equal ten CERPs. CERPs may not be converted to CEUs). A copy of the certificate awarded must be submitted as proof of attendance. Credit will be given according to the number of contact hours awarded. CPSNs who present plastic surgical programs which are awarded continuing education credit may receive credit for the number of contact hours awarded for the presentation. **Up to, but no more than, 15 CME's (medical credits) may be used for the application. Healthcare programs specific to plastic surgery but not designed for nursing (i.e., Continuing Medical Education [CME]) may apply at the discretion of the PSNCB. CME course outline must be included with your application. Please note, journal articles must have been published within the three year recertification period.**

Category B: Academic Courses: This group encompasses programs that address the broad area of health care and nursing related courses offered by an accredited educational institution. It is not necessary that the course content be plastic surgical nursing concepts. If the applicant has been accepted into an accredited *Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program, Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN), or Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP)* he/she can apply all academic credit work toward the 15 general contact hours required for recertification unless specifically relating to Plastic Surgery. The 30 contact hours in Plastic Surgery are still required.

Category C: Professional Publications: This group encompasses the publication of materials relevant to plastic surgical nursing in a recognized professional journal, newsletter, or by a recognized publishing house. The format shall be a manuscript, research paper, book chapter, or book. Authorship or co-authorship of a book equals 15 contact hours. A book chapter, manuscript or article-paper equals 5 contact hours. A copy of the publication must be submitted as part of the application for recertification.

Category D: General Nursing and Health Care Programs: The group encompasses continuing education offerings that address a broad area of health care, general nursing, and continuing education activities planned to meet the individual's potential for professional growth. This includes journal articles (**journal articles must have been published within the three-year certification period**). A copy of the certificate awarded must be submitted as documentation.

# Commonly Asked Questions About Recertification

**1. I have returned to school to work on my BSN/MSN/DNP/PhD. Will courses I take while working on my degree meet the criteria for recertification?**

All of your courses will meet the criteria Category B: Academic Courses. **NOTE:** One semester credit equals 15 contact hours; one quarter credit equals 10 contact hours. To receive credit for any courses you take, you must provide an official transcript. These credits, unless specifically related to Plastic Surgery, will not count toward the 30 Plastic Surgery credit hours.

**2. Can I receive credit for a published abstract?**

No, but you may be able to earn contact hours for the presentation of your abstract. Many groups offering educational programs print program abstracts in a meeting publication or journal. These are not accepted as a publication, but the author may receive continuing education credit if it is awarded for the presentation of the abstract at an educational meeting. For example, if your abstract is accepted for the ISPAN Annual Meeting, it is printed in the PSN *Journal* and you are given time during the meeting to present the abstract. The session at the meeting is awarded nursing contact hours by ISPAN. You may receive the same number of contact hours as your audience for your presentation. If, however, you present an abstract at a meeting that only offers CME, you will not receive credit.

**3. I am the second author of a plastic surgical nursing article published in a recognized professional journal. Do I receive partial or full credit for publication?**

Yes, if listed as an author, you receive full credit. Authorship of an article/chapter that meets the specified criteria equals 5 contact hours.

**4. Do all plastic surgical nursing contact hours have to be awarded by ISPAN?**

No. However, ISPAN is an excellent resource for approved plastic surgical nursing educational program. In addition, ISPAN offers contact hours through continuing education articles for independent study. To use the credits from the ISPAN Annual Meeting for your recertification, the dates of the meeting must fall before the date your application is to be submitted. A late fee will be incurred if the ISPAN Annual Meeting falls within 30 days to your recertification expiration.

Other nursing groups also provide quality programs that may be related to plastic surgical nursing or fall in the general nursing category. The consumer of continuing education should carefully assess the nature of the source of continuing educational approval for any program. Programs approved for contact hours by an ANCC-COA provider unit such as ISPAN and state nurses' associations will always be an excellent choice.

**5. I sat for the PSNCB exam on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month and attended a continuing education program over the next 3 days. Now that I have passed the exam, will I be able to use the approved contact hours from that program for recertification?**

Yes. Approved programs attended within 30 days of the date the exam was taken and passed may be submitted. Programs attended prior to that time are not accepted.

**6. I submitted my CPSN recertification application in April, my certification expires in June. In May I attended an educational program awarding nursing contact hours. Can I use those contact hours for my next recertification cycle in 3 years?**

No. Contact hours earned during the period of your certification can be used only during the current recertification period.

**7. I have more contact hours of continuing education than the required amount. Should I list and provide evidence of all offerings I attended in case some contact hours are not accepted?**

Yes. List all the hours you have accumulated.

**8. I am also a CANS, can I use the same continuing education, if applicable, for both certifications?**

Yes. As long as the continuing education activity meets the criteria for both certifications, it can be submitted as part of both recertification materials. CPSN and CANS recertification packets should always be sent separately with copies of the activity included in both.

**9. What will happen if I am unable to meet the continuing education requirements for recertification?**

You may certify by taking the examination or lose your CPSN credential.

## SPECIAL DISABILITY ARRANGEMENTS

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, C-NET will provide special exam accommodations for any certification candidate with documentation of a diagnosed disability. There are several steps to this process. They must be completed as described to receive special accommodation(s) for a certification exam.

1. When completing the application for the certification exam you are applying for, enter "Testing Accommodation" in the space provided for "Exam Site" on page 1 of the application. As most accommodations require separate rooms, there is not a publicly listed exam date for you to request.
2. Please mail the application at least 10 weeks before you wish to sit for the exam. Submit your completed application with payment to:

Special Testing Department-Nursing  
C-NET  
35 Journal Square, Suite 901  
Jersey City, NJ 07306

Once your application is determined to be complete and eligible for the certification exam, we will contact you and forward the necessary documentation to begin the accommodation coordination process."

# RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

PSNCB recertification by continuing education is obtained by accumulating 45 contact hours with a minimum of 30 contact hours specific to plastic surgery during the three-year PSNCB certification period. Contact hours do not have to be accumulated in all categories; however, **a minimum of 2 contact hours must be specifically related to general patient safety.** Any combination of the following activities is acceptable.

The following is a brief description of the continuing education activities approved for contact hours.

**Category A: Plastic Surgical Programs:** This group encompasses Plastic Surgical programs offering continuing education credit in nursing. These programs must be specific to Plastic Surgical nursing practice. To qualify, a program must indicate that a single continuing education unit equals 10 educational contact hours, or the program must use the recognized value of CERP (continuing education recognition point) in which one educational contact hour equals one CERP. (One CEU equals ten educational contact hours, which equal ten CERPs. CERPs may not be converted to CEUs). A copy of the certificate awarded must be submitted as proof of attendance. Credit will be given according to the number of contact hours awarded. CPSNs who present Plastic Surgical programs which are awarded continuing education credit may receive credit for the number of contact hours awarded for the presentation (minimum of 30 contact hours required per three-year period). **Up to, but no more than, 15 CME's (medical credits) may be used to fulfill the Category A requirement. Healthcare programs specific to plastic surgery but not designed for nursing (i.e., Continuing Medical Education [CME]) may apply at the discretion of the PSNCB. CME course outline must be included with your application. Please note, journal articles must have been published within the three year recertification period.**

**Professional Publications** – This group encompasses the publication of content relevant to plastic surgical nursing. The content must be published in a recognized professional journal or newsletter or by a recognized publishing house. The format shall be an article, book and/or research paper. Authorship of a book/chapter equals 15 contact hours. An article/paper equals 5 contact hours.

**Plastic Surgical Presentations** – This group encompasses participation as an instructor in plastic surgical programs. The presentation may be delivered to professional nurses, other health care professionals or lay people. One educational presentation equals 3 contact hours. Contact hours will be awarded **ONLY** for initial presentation of any program.

**Category B: Academic Courses:** This group encompasses programs that address the broad area of health care and nursing related courses offered by an accredited educational institution. It is not necessary that the course content be Plastic Surgical nursing concepts. If the applicant has been accepted into an accredited *Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program, Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) program, or Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) program*, academic credits can be applied the 15 general contact hours required for recertification. **NOTE: One semester credit equals 15 contact hours; one quarter credit equals 10 contact hours. To receive credit for any courses you take, you must provide an official transcript.**

**Category C: Professional Publications:** This group encompasses the publication of materials relevant to Plastic Surgical nursing in a recognized professional journal, newsletter, or by a recognized publishing house. The format shall be a manuscript, research paper, book chapter, or book. Authorship or co-authorship of a book equals 15 contact hours. A book chapter, manuscript or article-paper equals 5 contact hours. A copy of the publication must be submitted as part of the application for recertification.

**Category D: General Nursing and Health Care Programs:** The group encompasses continuing education offerings that address a broad area of health care, general nursing, and continuing education activities planned to meet the individual's potential for professional growth. This includes journal articles **(journal articles must have been published within the three-year certification period)**. A copy of the certificate awarded must be submitted as documentation.