

NEHA Healthy Homes Specialist (HHS)



Candidate Information Brochure



HHS Credential

For as long as NEHA has existed, NEHA has strived to elevate the standing and respect accorded to those who practice environmental health. One of the mechanisms used by professional societies like NEHA to achieve such a goal is the one of credentialing. Through a professional credential, one evidences to both their employer and to the public they serve that they are competent to carry out the duties and tasks expected of them. Such a mark of distinction also serves the practitioner inasmuch as the effort expended to gain such a credential often leads to higher levels of individual compensation and regard, as it should. NEHA's mission is to advance you — pure and simple. Few professional fields are growing and changing as rapidly as environmental health. Attainment of the HHS credential demonstrates professional direction, achievement and the knowledge to carry out functions and duties of a technical nature in a responsible manner.

The HHS exam tests your understanding of the connection between health and housing, enabling you to take a holistic approach to identify and resolve problems that threaten the health and well-being of residents and was developed in partnership with the National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH). Please visit NEHA's web site for additional exam description and content at <http://www.neha.org/credential/HHS/index.htm>

Is the HHS Credential right for you?

If you are a professional in one of the groups below, you may be interested in attaining the Healthy Homes Specialist credential:

1. Individuals who have been certified or licensed as **lead risk assessors, radon measurement professionals, or mold professionals**—These individuals have developed a basic expertise in a specific environmental hazard in the home and are interested in expanding their capabilities and services.
2. **Registered Environmental Health Specialists** seeking to demonstrate their experience and expertise in housing.
3. **Public Health Nurses** seeking to document their expertise in healthy homes.
4. **Health department and housing agency staff** seeking to document their expertise in healthy homes or better position their agencies to receive U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Healthy Homes grants.
5. Licensed **pest management professionals** seeking to expand their services—Resolving pest problems using integrated pest management techniques essentially relies on a knowledge base similar that of the Healthy Homes Practitioner.
6. Certified **home inspectors** seeking to expand their business by adding healthy homes to their standard services.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to obtain the Healthy Homes Specialist credential, you must complete the Application for Healthy Homes Specialist (HHS) Credential and meet the following criteria:

1. Be at least 21 years old and;
2. Have five years of experience in housing, environmental health or public health

Completing the Application

Applications must be completed and returned to NEHA for review at least 4 weeks prior to the exam date. If an application is received less than 4 weeks prior to when an examination is being given, you may have to schedule the exam for another date.

A complete application should include:

1. Completed *NEHA Application for Health Homes Specialist Credential*
2. Work Experience Verification Form
3. Signed code of ethics
4. Signed professional conduct questions
5. Signed Statement of Affirmation
6. Appropriate fees
7. Third party review (applicable for foreign candidates only)

Exam Fees

All fees should accompany the *NEHA Application for Professional Credentials*.

	<u>Member Rate</u>	<u>Non-Member Rate</u>
Application fees:	\$50.00	\$85.00
Examination fees:	\$125.00	\$225.00
Pearson VUE fee (if applicable):	\$100.00	\$100.00

Exam Scheduling and Locations

Candidates can choose to schedule the HHS examination in several different ways:

1. National Healthy Homes Training Center provided by the National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH) offers the exam several times a year in different locations. Go to the NCHH's website for dates and locations for the exam at <http://www.nchh.org/Program/HealthyHomesTrainingCenter.aspx>.
2. Candidates can choose to take the exam on a computer through **Pearson VUE**. By choosing this option candidates can schedule the examination at their convenience at one of **Pearson VUE's** testing locations nationwide. To find a **Pearson VUE** testing center near you, please visit www.pearsonvue.com/neha. Taking the exam at **Pearson VUE** not only offers the candidate flexibility in scheduling the exam, but also allows the candidate to receive their unofficial scores immediately following the conclusion of the exam.
3. Special test sites may be arranged through NEHA in cooperation with its test vendor, PTI. In order to accommodate requests for special test sites, arrangements must be made a minimum of 4-6 weeks prior to the requested date. The fee to set up a special test site is \$350.00. For groups of 10 or more, the special test site fee is waived. Please complete the Special Test Site Request form (Appendix A) and return it to NEHA with your application.

Special Accommodations for Candidates with Disabilities or Impairments

NEHA is committed to ensuring that no individual is deprived of the opportunity to take a credentialing examination solely by reason of a disability or impairment. All test centers are fully accessible and compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

To make a request for special accommodations, you must complete the Accommodation Request Form and Documentation of Disability Related Needs Form including the specific diagnosis of your disability, medical records or other written proof of the diagnosis by an appropriate licensed professional, and the type of accommodation being requested. All forms and documentation must be returned to NEHA at least 8 weeks prior to the scheduled test date. To receive a copy of the form, please contact Credentialing@neha.org.

If the forms are not returned to NEHA within 8 weeks prior to the scheduled test date, your request for special accommodations may not be honored or may be delayed.

With respect to all matters related to testing accommodations, NEHA will only communicate with the candidate, professionals knowledgeable about the candidate's disability or impairment, and the candidate's authorized representative (if applicable).

Paper and Pencil Exams:

On test day please bring with you your photo identification (i.e. driver's license or passport) and sharpened #2 pencils.

FOR PEARSON VUE CANDIDATES: NEHA's test vendor, PTI, will send you an authorization email when your application is processed as approved. The email will have a Pearson VUE ID number and the Pearson VUE website to schedule a testing time.

On test day please bring your photo identification (i.e. driver's license or passport).

Scores

The NEHA HHS examination will report scores using scaled scores that range from 0 to 900 with a **passing score of 650**. The raw passing score is mathematically transformed so that the passing scaled score equals 650. This process is similar to the way one adjusts Celsius and Fahrenheit temperature scales. While the values may differ the temperatures are the same. For example, water boils at the same temperature regardless of the scale used.

Candidates who pass the examination will earn scaled scores of 650 and above, and those who fail will earn a scaled score between 0 and 649. A scaled score is NOT a percentage score. In summary, a scaled score is merely a transformation of a raw score. Scaling is done to report comparable results when forms and raw passing scores vary over time.

Your score will be based on the number of questions answered correctly. If you are unsure of the answer, it is better to guess. You will not be given credit for any question left blank.

Exam results will be released 4-6 weeks after the administration of the exam.

Credential Maintenance

Once you have obtained the HHS credential you must maintain it. To keep your credential in good standing, you must:

1. Earn a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education every two years; and
2. Submit renewal fees for your credential every two years (\$125.00 members; \$255.00 non-members).

NEHA's Credentialing Handbook

It is strongly recommended that you read NEHA's Credentialing Handbook: *Guide to Policies and Procedures for NEHA's Credentialing Programs*. This handbook, which can be downloaded from the NEHA website at www.neha.org, outlines all the policies you are expected to follow by being a NEHA credential holder. The handbook also outlines in further detail the procedures for applying for a credential, submitting continuing education, and maintaining your credential.

Exam Content Outline

The Healthy Homes Specialist Credential examination consists of 75 multiple-choice questions. Of the 75 questions, 10 questions are unscored, pilot items. Candidates will not be made aware of which questions are pilot items. You are given two (2) hours to complete the examination.

The following represents the exam content:

	Duties and Tasks	Final Weightings	Number of Items
A	Outreach, Identification, and Intake of Clients	12.00%	8
1	Identify Community Partners and Resources	2%	1
2	Promote Healthy Homes Concepts and Programs	2%	1
3	Define Target Population	2%	2
4	Determine Community Housing-Related Health Needs	2%	1
5	Screen Households for Eligibility	1%	1
6	Educate Stakeholders about Healthy Homes Concepts and Principles	3%	2
B	Interface with Household and/or Building Rep	20.00%	13
1	Orient Household to Program Process	2%	1
2	Obtain Confidentiality Agreements and Other Releases	1%	1
3	Perform Structured Interview (i.e. Survey)	1%	1
4	Perform Open-Ended Interview (Occupant-Specific)	3%	1
5	Record Occupant Observations About the Property	1%	1
6	Document Special/Unmet Needs	1%	1
7	Record Observations about Tenant and Building Representative Behavior	1%	1
8	Record Building History from the Building Representative	3%	1
9	Outline Risks and Liabilities to Building Representative	3%	2
10	Instruct Occupant and/or Building Representative on Short Term Corrective Actions	3%	2
11	Conduct Review and Recap Interview Activities	1%	1
C	Physical Environment Assessment	30.00%	19
1	Review Property Records	1%	1
2	Schedule a Site Visit	1%	1
3	Conduct an Exterior Walk-Through	3%	2
4	Determine an Interior Walk-Through Plan	3%	2
5	Assess Cleanliness and Cleanability	2%	1
6	Perform Assessment for Moisture Problems	4%	2
7	Inspect for Evidence of Pests	3%	2

	Duties and Tasks	Final Weightings	Number of Items
8	Conduct Safety Evaluation	3%	2
9	Assess Presence of Contaminants	4%	2
10	Assess Mechanical Ventilation Function	3%	2
11	Evaluate Thermal Conditions	3%	2
D	Synthesize Building and Client Findings and Provide Conclusions and Recommendations	15.00%	10
1	Analyze and Interpret Findings	7%	5
2	Create a List of Occupant and/or Building Representative Interventions	5%	3
3	Evaluate SOW of Physical Structures	3%	2
E	Implementation of Interventions	15.00%	10
1	Provide Intervention Resources to Occupants	5%	3
2	Monitor Occupant Participation	3%	2
3	Monitor Bid Process and Contracting	1%	1
4	Monitor Construction Process	2%	2
5	Execute Close-Out Procedures	4%	2
F	Evaluation of Project	8.00%	5
1	Conduct Follow-up Inspection	5%	3
2	Measure and Disseminate Program Results	3%	2
	Total	100.00%	65

Recommended Study References

1. Student materials from the Essentials for Healthy Homes Practitioners course, located at: <http://www.nchh.org/Program/HealthyHomesTrainingCenter/TrainingCourses/Essentials/CourseMaterials.aspx>.
2. *Housing Interventions and Health: A Review of the Evidence* located at: <http://www.nchh.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=2lvaEDNBldU%3d&tabid=229>
3. Student materials from Healthy Homes Assessment: Principles and Practice course, located at: <http://www.nchh.org/Training/HealthyHomesTrainingCenter/TrainingCourses/HHAPP/HHAPPStudentMaterials.aspx>.
4. The Pediatric Environmental Home Assessment training, located at: <http://inter.viewcentral.com/events/cust/catalog.aspx?cid=hhs&pid=1>
5. Healthy People 2020 Environmental Health Objectives (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), located at: <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/environmental-health/objectives> (scroll down to the Healthy Homes and Healthy Communities objectives)
6. American Housing Survey (U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development), located at: <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ahs.html>.
7. Institute of Medicine Report: *Clearing the Air: Asthma and Indoor Air Exposures*, located at: <http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309064961>.
8. Institute of Medicine Report: *Damp Indoor Spaces and Health*, located at: <http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309091934>.
9. Information on Lead poisoning and the Renovation, Repair and Painting rule, located at: <http://www2.epa.gov/lead>.
10. Information on Integrated Pest Management, located at: <http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/factsheets/ipm.htm>.
11. *Healthy Homes Issues: Residential Assessment*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Healthy Homes Initiative Background Information, Version 2, March 2006 located at: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC_12486.pdf.
12. *World Health Organization Guidelines for Indoor Air Quality, Dampness and Mold*, 2009. Located at: http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/43325/E92645.pdf.
13. *Healthy Homes Program Guidance Manual*, July 2012, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Located at: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=hpgm_final_ch1.pdf.
14. *Healthy Housing Reference Manual*, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006. Located at: http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/publications/books/housing/housing_ref_manual_2012.pdf.

Appendix A.

Organizer/Main Point of Contact Name:	
Meeting date(s):	
Testing location address:	
Date of Test:	
Approximate test time of day:	
Approximate # of test takers:	
Trainer Name(s):	
Proctor #1 (<i>name & address</i>):	
Proctor #1 Email and Phone Number	
Address to send test materials	
Proctor #2 (needed if >30 test takers):	

Test taker names: *This needs to be set no later than 4 weeks prior to test date*

1		13	
2		14	
3		15	
4		16	
5		17	
6		18	
7		19	
8		20	
9		21	
10		22	
11		23	
12		24	

Acknowledgement Statement

I, _____, acknowledge that this request to the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) for a special test site is only a request and not a binding agreement to provide such a test site. I also acknowledge that if there are fewer than 10 candidates testing for the HHS credential, a fee of \$350.00 will be incurred and must be paid in full prior to the setting up of the test site.

My signature below attests to my understanding and abiding to the above statement.

Signature

Date