NFPT
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINERS
A SUMMIT COMPANY

Certified Personal Trainer Certification Candidate Handbook

Your guide to NFPT-CPT certification – from application to renewal.

PHONE 800-729-6378
EMAIL info@nfpt.com
WEB www.nfpt.com

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CHAPTER 1

About NFPT

Introduction

National Federation of Professional Trainers (NFPT) has been certifying fitness trainers since 1988 and offers a foundational education and credential to those who seek personal fitness trainer employment.

This NFPT Personal Trainer Certification Handbook describes policy relating to certification exam development, eligibility, maintenance, and security procedures.

The terms "test candidate," "certificant," and "member" will be used throughout this Certification Handbook. To better understand these terms, here are the definitions for each as they apply to the NFPT Certification program:

- **Test Candidate:** this is someone who has completed the enrollment application (done online or in hardcopy) and who has attested to the eligibility requirements of the certification program (see Chapter 2, "Applying for Certification"). An individual with a "test candidate" status is eligible to schedule to take their NFPT Certified Personal Trainer exam or is someone who has made a first attempt on the exam but has not yet passed it and is still within the one (1) year eligibility time frame for scheduling a retake of the exam.
- **Certificant:** this is someone who has taken and successfully passed the NFPT-CPT exam, and who is currently certified as the result of passing the exam and meeting the on-going continuing education requirements. This term is interchangeable with the term "Certified Personal Trainer," or "Certified Trainer."
- **Member:** this is someone who belongs to the NFPT Organization as a certificant or former certificant and who receives benefits and resources of NFPT Education and other industry related NFPT partnerships. Upon becoming a certificant, you will receive a digital certificate in your portal account. Renewing your membership is part of the recertification process, in conjunction with the Continuing Education Credits (CECs) that are required to become recertified. You may pay the annual fee to continue to be a member of the NFPT Organization which provides you continued access to the NFPT Education and Resources through your NFPT member account.

Please take time to read and be familiar with the information in this handbook prior to applying for certification/test candidate status. NFPT certified trainers are required to adhere to the requirements in this handbook.

The NFPT Certified Personal Trainer (CPT) certification program is designed to qualify personal fitness trainers working with apparently healthy individuals or in small group settings. These trainers are individuals who demonstrate the understanding of fundamental exercise science principles for safe and effective fitness program design.

NFPT-CPT certificants are those who have successfully completed the required certification process which includes eligibility requirements and an assessment, in the form of written examination that verifies professional knowledge, skills and abilities that are required of a Certified Personal Trainer. NFPT certificants are bound by codes of conduct established by the NFPT Certification Council. The NFPT Certification Council has adopted the policies contained herein in order that it may further the credibility of the certification program and enhance the viability of the NFPT certificant in the fitness training industry and marketplace.

NFPT also offers several continuing education programs. Please see https://nfpt.com/continuing-education/ for more information.

Mission Statement

NFPT's mission is to advance the personal training profession through rigorous education and certification. Our objective is to provide incoming personal trainers with foundational health and exercise resources, ensuring they possess the competency to deliver safe and effective training to apparently healthy populations.

NFPT offers both education and certification for fitness professionals. As an agency that offers a professional certification program, we will continue to establish quality standards for fitness professionals and encourage ongoing professional development through recertification requirements.

NFPT educational programs are **optional and are not a requirement to take the certification exam**. NFPT's educational offerings are developed by the NFPT Education Department. More information on NFPT's optional training is available at https://nfpt.com/get-certified/#packages.

The NFPT Education Department acts independently to develop and/or review and approve quality fitness education that teaches fundamental fitness concepts and exercise science, explained in a comprehensive way that speaks to the entry-level trainer and fitness enthusiast alike. It is the intention of NFPT education to create an impact on understanding and implementing goal-oriented fitness training methods that gain positive results on the well-being of health-conscious individuals.

The NFPT-CPT certification program is overseen and monitored by the NFPT Certification Council. The Certification Council operates independently from the NFPT Education Department.

About NFPT-CPT Certification Governance

NFPT-CPT Certification is bound by the mission of its Certification Council to provide an industry recognized credential that assures at least minimal competency to all who employ NFPT Certified Personal Trainers. NFPT Certification will continue to act in furthering its purpose to certify fitness trainers in a manner that strives to assure safety, competency, and professionalism.

The NFPT Certification Council acts independently of the NFPT Education Department in that it specifically establishes assessment setting protocols and standards for certification and test eligibility, development, administration, security, reporting, and maintenance. The NFPT Governance documents prevent the undue influence of decision making between NFPT Certification and NFPT Education to ensure the integrity and independent functionality of these two departments. The NFPT Certification Council is responsible for:

- Establishing policy for the NFPT-CPT certification program.
- Oversight of test development and the establishment of testing procedures for the NFPT-CPT certification program.
- Establishing standards for initial certification and recertification of fitness trainers including establishing eligibility standards; policies for the development, administration, and scoring of the examination; compliance standards; and recertification requirements.
- Operating independently of all NFPT education programs.

Organizational Structure

NFPT is a division of Summit Professional Education, a provider of professional development and continuing education programs across multiple industries. The NFPT Certification Council operates independently of both NFPT's education programs and Summit Professional Education in all matters pertaining to certification policy, standards, exam development, and administration. This independence is maintained to ensure the integrity and credibility of the NFPT-CPT certification program.

What is Certification?

Certification is a voluntary process used to formally recognize specialized knowledge, skills, and experience. Certification establishes minimum standards of competency and offers recognition to those who have met those standards.

NFPT-CPT Scope of Practice

A personal trainer is a fitness professional who possesses the knowledge, skills and abilities for safe and effective exercise, fitness program design, instruction and assistance for the purpose of reaching personal health and fitness goals. A NFPT Personal Trainer Certification qualifies you to design and implement fitness training programs for apparently healthy individuals in one-on-one or small group settings. An apparently healthy individual includes those with no significant disease or physical condition or impairment which prevents them from engaging in physical fitness activity. A NFPT Certified Personal Trainer, CPT, shall perform the duties of a fitness professional within the barriers of a NFPT-CPT's scope of practice which may be performed in both in-person and online/virtual settings; thus providing the CPT with a prospective client base that is not confined by geographical location. Successful completion of the NFPT Personal Trainer Certification Examination demonstrates the understanding of fundamental exercise science principles, to include human anatomy and physiology, as well as the concepts of various fitness components, functional exercise and basic nutrition; knowledge which is applied for safe and effective fitness program design. As such, your scope of practice as an NFPT-CPT is as follows:

1. Having and maintaining a working knowledge of human anatomy and the concepts of functional exercise, basic nutrition and fundamental principles of exercise science.
2. An ability to design and execute individual and small group exercise fitness programs, tailored to the needs and attainable goals of the individual, apparently healthy client, in a safe and effective way and that takes in to consideration the needs and demands of the individuals' activities of daily living, as well

as cultural and environmental factors which may impact the performance and/or outcomes of the respective fitness program.

3. An ability to design and execute individual and small group exercise fitness programs, tailored to the needs and attainable goals of the individual, apparently healthy client, in a safe and effective way.
4. An understanding for the need and importance of screening and client assessment; proficiency in conducting these evaluations initially and progressively.
5. A desire to help clients reach their health and fitness goals through appropriate cardiovascular, flexibility and resistance exercise.
6. An ability to motivate others in an encouraging and uplifting way towards improving their overall fitness and health.
7. A dedication to maintaining personal integrity, client confidentiality and professional standards for best practice.
8. A dedication to self-improvement, self-awareness, continuous learning, personal growth and development with regard to personal health, fitness and mental capacity.

While personal trainers often assume multiple roles with their clients (e.g. life-coach, confidant, friend) there are roles for which personal trainers should avoid. For example, it is **NOT expected or appropriate for a personal trainer to:**

1. Give medical advice, physical therapy advice or attempt to make a medical diagnosis.
2. Provide body massage to clients, or any similar service that can be construed as inappropriate touch.
3. Serve as a psychological counselor to clients or become intimately involved in personal client relationships.
4. Have a romantic or inter-personal relationship with a client.
5. Push your own preferences for fitness goals on clients who do not seek out those same goals.
6. Allow your credentials, liability insurance and other trainer business standards/practices to become non-existent.

CHAPTER 2

Certification at a Glance

Before you begin, make sure to:

- Read the entire Certification Handbook
- Confirm you meet all eligibility requirements
- Choose your certification package (Exam Only, CPT Core, or CPT Pro)
- Submit your application

After your application is approved:

- Prepare for the exam using the content outline in this handbook
- Schedule your exam — NFPT will provide scheduling instructions by email
- Review recertification requirements in Chapter 5

Applying for Certification

Eligibility Requirements

All applicants must meet the following requirements before applying:

- **Age** - Applicants must be at least 18 years old
- **Education** - Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent (GED)
- **Code of Conduct** - Applicants must agree to adhere to the NFPT Codes of Conduct

All eligibility requirements are confirmed at the time of application. If eligibility cannot be verified, NFPT will contact the applicant to resolve the matter. Supporting documentation such as a driver's license or proof of education may be requested. Certification will not be awarded to any individual who does not meet all eligibility requirements and successfully pass the exam. Denied applicants may appeal under the Non-Disciplinary Appeals Policy in this handbook.

Professional Considerations

While not required for NFPT certification, CPR/AED certification is strongly recommended and is typically required by employers and liability insurance providers. NFPT recommends obtaining CPR/AED certification and liability insurance within the first three months of certification.

Nondiscrimination and Fairness

Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

The Certification Program does not discriminate against any applicant, candidate, or certificant on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identity, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law. This policy

governs all aspects of the credentialing cycle, including eligibility verification, exam scheduling, test administration, scoring, and disciplinary actions.

Psychometric Fairness and Equity

The Certification Council maintains fairness safeguards throughout the exam lifecycle:

- Bias-Free Item Review: Newly drafted exam questions undergo independent review by diverse Subject Matter Expert panels, working alongside Prometric, to confirm question language is accessible and free of regional or cultural bias.
- Standardized Testing Conditions: All candidates are held to identical security checkpoints and timing rules, regardless of whether they test via computer-based testing, Live Remote Proctoring, or paper-and-pencil administration.
- Statistical Performance Monitoring: Prometric's psychometric team performs differential item functioning (DIF) analyses to monitor for unintended statistical variance in item performance across demographic groups. Items flagged through this process are removed from scoring and reviewed before further use.
- Objective Scoring: Exam scoring, across all delivery modes, including scanned paper-and-pencil answer sheets, is executed against an established, criterion-referenced passing standard, based solely on candidate performance against entry-level competence benchmarks**.**

Eligibility Denial

NFPT reserves the right to deny applications based on unconfirmed or insufficient documentation. Denied applicants may appeal under the Non-Disciplinary Appeals Policy in this handbook.

Certification Fees

NFPT offers several certification packages, with optional education resources available separately or bundled. Visit www.nfpt.com to compare packages and pricing.

Resources for All Certification Candidates

Once your application is accepted, you will receive access to your NFPT Account, which includes:

- Exam scheduling and testing site information
- Guest authoring opportunities on the NFPT Blog
- Access to NFPT's Facebook and Instagram communities
- Personal Trainer Database listing (upon earning certification: appears in both the Find a Trainer search, showing your name, city, and zip code, and the Verify Your Trainer lookup, showing your name, expiration date, and city/state, with the option to add more)

Optional Education Resources

NFPT education materials are not required to sit for the exam but are available to support your preparation:

- **NFPT Personal Trainer Manual** — Comprehensive foundational education covering the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a successful personal trainer

- **NFPT Study Guide** — Chapter-by-chapter summary and practice questions based on the Manual
- **Practice Tests** — Developed separately from the actual exam; no practice questions appear on the NFPT-CPT exam. Designed to familiarize candidates with question format only.

NFPT's own educational resources are not the only or preferred route to certification.

For more information visit www.nfpt.com.

How to Apply

To apply, confirm you meet all eligibility requirements, then:

- Apply online at www.nfpt.com or call 800-729-6378
- Or mail a printed application with payment to: Summit Professional Education, Attn: NFPT, P.O. Box 931509, Atlanta, GA, 31193-1509

Payment by credit or debit card is required at the time of application. You will receive email confirmation within 24 hours of NFPT receiving your completed application.

Application Expiration

Applications expire one year from the initial application date. A one-time 60-day extension is available for a fee.

Refund Policy

Visit www.nfpt.com/terms-and-conditions for details on cancellations and refunds.

CHAPTER 3

Preparing for the Exam

The NFPT-CPT is a professional, assessment-based certification program developed from a Job Analysis study and research of industry practice. The information in this handbook applies only to the NFPT-CPT certification program. NFPT also offers specialty course exams that provide continuing education opportunities — for more information visit www.nfpt.com/shop.

Note: Both "exam" and "test" are used throughout this handbook to describe the NFPT-CPT assessment and may be used interchangeably.

Strategies for Taking Multiple Choice Exams

- Read each question carefully before selecting the single best response
- Pace yourself — it can help to answer the easiest questions first
- If unsure about an answer, make your best educated guess; your score is based on the total number of correct answers
- Response options are in random order, so looking for patterns won't help
- **Paper exams:** mark answers neatly and clearly in the correct space; erase any stray pencil marks
- **Computer-based exams:** you can easily flag and return to questions you've skipped

For additional test-taking tips visit https://nfpt.com/faqs/

Exam Description

The NFPT-CPT exam consists of 120 multiple choice questions. 100 of these questions are scored and 20

The NFPT-CPT exam consists of 120 multiple choice questions — 100 scored and 20 unscored pre-test items. Pre-test items are used to gather statistical data for future exam development and will not impact your result. You will not know which questions are scored during the exam. The exam is closed-book, proctored, and must be completed within 2 hours unless special accommodations have been arranged in advance.

A minimum score of 750 out of 1000 points is required to pass.

Exam Content Domains

The exam is divided into five content domains, weighted according to the results of the NFPT Job Task Analysis study:

Content Domain	% of Exam
Principles of Human Anatomy	20%
Principles of Human Physiology	20%

Fitness Components	23%
Training Program Development, Implementation, and Modification	32%
Professionalism and Communication Skills	5%
Total	**100%**

Studying for the Exam

Candidates are encouraged to use the content outline below to guide their exam preparation. The NFPT Certification Council does not endorse any third-party training programs and is not responsible for misinformation provided in any external educational program. NFPT education materials are optional.

1. Principles of Human Anatomy (20%)

A. Identify components of the following systems
- Muscular system
- Skeletal system
- Nervous system
- Respiratory system
- Circulatory system
- Endocrine system
- Digestive system
- Immune system

B. Identify types of joints (i.e., ball and socket, hinge)

C. Identify muscle types (i.e., skeletal, cardiac, smooth)

D. Identify skeletal muscle structure and components (e.g., motor unit, myofibril, sarcomere)

E. Identify planes of motion (i.e., frontal, sagittal, transverse) and relative anatomical positions (e.g., anterior, distal, lateral, medial)

2. Principles of Human Physiology (20%)

A. Recognize the function of body systems and how they interact
- Muscular system
- Skeletal system
- Nervous system
- Respiratory system
- Circulatory system
- Endocrine system
- Digestive system
- Immune system

B. Explain musculoskeletal biomechanics
- Planes of motion

- Joint movements
- Muscle movement and interactions (e.g., agonists, antagonists, synergists)

C. Differentiate between types and attributes of muscle fiber (i.e., Type I, Type IIa, Type IIb)
D. Differentiate between types and functions of muscle contractions (e.g., concentric, eccentric, isometric)
E. Identify neuromuscular recruitment patterns (e.g., contractile speed recruitment, depleting energy, immediate recruitment)
F. Identify proprioceptors and their functions (e.g., muscle spindle, stretch reflex)
G. Describe the metabolic processes of the body
    - Nutritional factors (e.g., deficiencies, macronutrients, micronutrients)
    - Energy systems (e.g., aerobic, anaerobic, ATP, lactic acid, metabolic oxidation)
    - Metabolic functions and their limitations (e.g., gluconeogenesis, protein synthesis/catabolism)
    - Additional factors that affect metabolic processes (e.g., age, gender, specific limitations/restrictions, sleep, somatotypes, stress)"

3. Fitness Components (23%)

A. Identify components of general fitness
    - Cardiorespiratory conditioning
    - Muscular endurance
    - Muscular strength
    - Flexibility
B. Apply basic training principles (e.g., FITT principle, overload, progressive adaptations) to fitness components
C. Identify primary physiological training mechanisms
    - Anaerobic (i.e., strength, power, hypertrophy)
    - Aerobic (e.g., cardiorespiratory conditioning and maintenance, endurance)
D. Identify training modalities, principles, and techniques for specific outcomes
    - Ballistic Training
    - Cardiorespiratory Conditioning
    - Cardiorespiratory Maintenance
    - Circuit Training
    - FITT Principle
    - Functional Training
    - High-Intensity Interval Training (HITT)
    - Overload Training Principle
    - Periodization
    - Plyometrics
    - Resistance Training
    - Specificity (S.A.I.D.)

4. Training Program Development, Implementation, and Modification (32%)

A. Conduct client consultation and assessment
    - Conduct screening (e.g., identify risk factors, identify programming considerations and goals) and collect appropriate documentation (e.g., informed consent, liability waiver, PAR-Q)
    - Conduct fitness assessments (e.g., performance and non-performance variables, contraindications, limitations and restrictions, special considerations/populations)
B. Analyze data from consultation and assessment to identify goals specific to client (e.g., general fitness, strength/hypertrophy, weight-loss)
C. Develop a safe and effective client training program based upon identified goals
    - Behavior and lifestyle change (e.g., dietary change, smoking cessation)
    - Application of modalities, principles, techniques, and variables (e.g., F.I.T.T., intensity, repetition ranges,

recovery, duration, flexibility)

D. Implement training program (e.g., introduce training tools, equipment, exercises, form, modalities)
E. Monitor workout performance (e.g., heart rate, rest periods, RPE)
F. Evaluate client progress, program effectiveness, and strategies for improvement
    - Non-performance variables (e.g., resting heart rate, heart rate, body composition) and behavioral changes
    - Performance variables against goals (e.g., cardiorespiratory condition, flexibility, muscle endurance, muscle strength)
    - Behavior change (e.g., sleep, stress, compliance, eating habits)

5. Professionalism and Communication Skills (5%)

A. Apply strategies for effective communication (e.g., conflict resolution, demonstration, feedback, problem solving, verbal and non-verbal communication)
B. Recognize scope of practice (e.g., conduct and ethics, confidentiality and privacy, professional boundaries)
C. Identify injury prevention and management techniques (e.g., emergency medical plan, exercise cessation, PRICE, proper warm-up and cool-down)

How the Exam was Developed

The exam has been developed and is regularly updated under a carefully developed and strictly executed process. This process is conducted under the approval and oversight of the NFPT Certification Council.

The NFPT's Education Department provides optional, independently researched education that is exclusively offered through NFPT. NFPT Education is offered to NFPT certification test candidates as one possible resource for training but is not a requirement of successful certification credentialing.

NFPT recommends using a number of sources for obtaining successful skill sets and acquiring foundational knowledge but recognizes that no one book or resource will assure appropriate skill sets of the personal training profession.

Exam Development and Validity

The NFPT-CPT exam is developed in accordance with nationally accepted best practices for certification programs, in partnership with Schroeder Measurement Technologies (SMT), a psychometric firm with expertise in credentialing and assessment.

The NFPT CPT exam is built on a rigorous, research-based development process to ensure it accurately reflects the knowledge and skills required for competent entry-level personal training practice.

1. **Job Analysis** — Every 7 years, NFPT conducts a Job Task Analysis study using a national survey of practicing personal trainers and health professionals. Results define the tasks and knowledge domains that form the foundation of the exam. A summary of the Job Analysis Study is found in Appendix [D].
2. **Validation** — A diverse Advisory Committee (AC) of no fewer than four (4) Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) reviews and approves all Job Analysis findings to ensure they represent the field as a whole.
3. **Item Writing and Review** — Trained SMEs on an Item Authoring Panel write exam questions aligned to the validated content domains, each supported by an approved reference. A separate Independent Review Panel of SMEs who did not write the questions reviews each one for accuracy, relevance,

difficulty, clarity, and bias before it is approved for use. No single SME takes part in every stage of the same exam development cycle.

4. **Exam Construction** — The final exam consists of 100 graded items and 20 ungraded pre-test items used for future exam development.
5. **Passing Standard** — A passing score is set for each exam version based on item difficulty, ensuring fairness and consistency across all candidates.
6. **Item Monitoring** — Exam questions are continuously monitored and updated, revised, or retired as needed.
7. **Ongoing Development** — The exam is reviewed annually. One new exam form is released each 12-18 months with two active forms.

Taking the Exam

Test Locations

The NFPT-CPT exam is available at approximately 500 computer-based testing (CBT) locations across the United States and internationally. Candidates may also choose remote or paper and pencil testing options (see below).

Test Day Requirements

Please review the following requirements carefully before your exam appointment. Non-compliance may result in rescheduling, score cancellation, or loss of future eligibility.

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment
- Bring a valid, government-issued photo ID (driver's license, passport, state ID, or military ID) and your eligibility confirmation letter
- Leave all personal items outside the exam room — including bags, phones, notes, and books
- Do not give or receive assistance of any kind during the exam

- No breaks are permitted during the exam unless approved in advance as an accommodation. Leaving the testing room before submitting your exam ends your exam session.

NFPT enforces strict security procedures at all testing sites to ensure a fair and consistent experience for every candidate.

Testing Options

A. Computer-Based Testing (CBT) - Available at approximately 500 locations in the U.S., Canada, and 18 English-speaking countries. Once your application is accepted, log in to your NFPT Account to find a nearby location and schedule your appointment. Scheduling at least 2 weeks in advance is recommended.
B. Remote Testing- Candidates may take the exam remotely from home with a live virtual proctor. To do so you will need:
    - A desktop or laptop computer with webcam access running Windows 8 or later
    - The ProProctor app installed at least one day before your exam
    - Your government-issued photo ID and Candidate Admissions letter ready for check-in

A. Paper & Pencil Testing- Available only when computer-based or remote testing is not viable, such as for candidates in correctional facilities, attendees of in-person workshops without access to computer testing, or as an approved accommodation. Paper and pencil testing must be pre-approved by NFPT and is administered by an NFPT-approved proctor at an approved partner fitness facility, school, or correctional facility. Exams must be ordered at least 3 weeks before the exam date, and rescheduling requires at least 10 days' notice. Contact NFPT at info@nfpt.com for more information.

Special Accommodations

NFPT is committed to equal access for all candidates and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Reasonable accommodations are available at no additional charge to candidates with documented disabilities.

Accommodations may include:

- **Flexible scheduling** — Extended or segmented testing sessions completed within a single test date
- **Flexible setting** — Individual or small group administration
- **Alternative answer recording** — Marking a test booklet, typing answers, or dictating responses to a proctor
- **Revised format** — Large-print booklet, Braille, or magnification devices
- **Auditory aids** — Recorded exam, narrator, or sign language interpretation
- **Assistive personnel** — Staff provided to record answers or read instructions

To request accommodations, candidates must submit the NFPT Accommodation Request Packet at least 30 days before their desired exam date. The packet is available in the candidate's NFPT Account portal, at https://nfpt.com/the-exam-and-process/, or by contacting info@nfpt.com or 800-729-6378. Supporting documentation may be a Licensed Professional Evaluation Form completed by a qualified professional, or official documentation of prior testing accommodations (such as an IEP, 504 Plan, or institutional approval letter) dated within the last five years. NFPT will confirm receipt within 2 business days and may request additional documentation if needed. A decision will be sent by email within 5 business days of receiving a complete packet. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis using objective medical or psychological documentation. An accommodation request does not extend the candidate's eligibility period. Score reports and certificates do not reveal if an exam was taken with accommodations. Approved accommodations will be provided at no cost to the candidate. Denied requests may be appealed under the Non-Disciplinary Appeals Policy in this handbook.

Rescheduling an Exam

Candidates may reschedule within their one-year eligibility period. Rescheduling requests must be submitted to NFPT by phone or email at least 5 days before the exam appointment. Requests made with less than 5 days' notice will incur a non-refundable fee.

Serious Incidents

NFPT may require a test candidate to reschedule, re-take or may otherwise revoke future exam eligibility if incidents occur or observations are made which do not adhere to the test candidate responsibilities. NFPT reserves the right to cancel test scores based on actions that prohibit any test candidate’s rights to consistent

and effective NFPT exam administration. If cancellation of test scores occurs as the direct or indirect result of the test candidate, NFPT will provide no refund and will require administrative retest fees if re-testing is permitted.

If an exam retake is necessary as the result of the actions of another test candidate or test administrator, NFPT will waive administrative retest fees only if the incident is documented and reported to NFPT by the test candidate within 48 hours of exam administration, or if, as the result of NFPT independent investigation, NFPT discovers an occurrence or incident whereby evidence supports that the actions of another have affected the outcome of the test scores.

Cheating

NFPT takes implications and suspicions of cheating very seriously. If agents of NFPT, SMT, Prometric, or any examination proctor or witness has informed or provided evidence of cheating, NFPT will research and act on the allegation immediately. If NFPT or an affiliated proctor and/or colleague observes any form of dishonest test taking, the candidate will be notified and given the opportunity to dispute such claims within the requirements of the NFPT Certification Council Complaints and Disciplinary Action policy.

If SMT/Prometric provides NFPT with an incident report describing identical response string data relating to another candidate who tested alongside the candidate in question, NFPT reserves the right to immediately cancel scores and disqualify candidates from future program eligibility. All allegations and subsequent disciplinary actions will be investigated in compliance with the NFPT Certification Council Complaints and Disciplinary Action policy, available at www.nfpt.com/certification/terms-and-conditions or by contacting NFPT.

After the Exam

Test Results

Candidates testing via CBT or Remote Testing will receive their results digitally immediately following the exam. Paper and pencil candidates will receive results within 2–3 weeks.

Passing candidates will receive an NFPT Certificate in their account. Numeric scores are not provided to passing candidates, as this exam is designed to distinguish competent from non-competent performance — not to rank candidates against one another.

Candidates who do not pass will receive a score report broken down by content domain to help guide further study.

Exam results are confidential and will not be released to any third party without written consent.

Delays in results may occasionally occur due to:

- Outstanding certification fees
- A test audit related to suspected cheating or improper administration
- A test discrepancy under review

Understanding Your Score

The established passing score for the exam reflects the minimum amount of knowledge a committee of subject matter experts have determined to be appropriate for certification. The passing score is set using the modified Angoff method, a widely accepted standard-setting process in which the committee reviews each exam question and judges how a minimally competent candidate would perform on it. This review and determination is made by a committee of CPT experts under the guidance of SMT/Prometric test experts and under the oversight of the NFPT Certification Council. Each candidate is evaluated against the established passing point. In other words, a candidate's ability to pass the exam depends on the amount of knowledge he/she displays and not on the performance of any other individuals taking the exam. Exams are not graded "on a curve." The exam is not intended to distinguish among scores above the passing point.

Re-Testing

Candidates who do not pass the NFPT-CPT exam may retest, with the exception of those found to have cheated or engaged in dishonest test-taking.

The exam may be taken up to two times within the one-year eligibility period. Please note that candidates must allow a minimum of 30 days from the date of a failed attempt before scheduling a retake. This waiting period is intended to allow adequate time for additional preparation. A retest fee is required for the second attempt. If a candidate does not pass on the second attempt, they must wait 18 months from their first exam date before reapplying to the program.

Rescoring Request

Candidates may request a hand rescore of their exam within five (5) days of receiving their results. Rescore requests must be submitted to info@nfpt.com with a fee. Results are returned within approximately two (2) weeks.

Test Appeals

Candidates who fail may appeal their score if they believe the outcome was negatively impacted by improper test administration, significant environmental conditions, or other disruptive circumstances. Candidates are encouraged to notify the proctor immediately if an issue arises, as documentation at the time of the incident strengthens any subsequent appeal.

Full appeals procedures are outlined in the Non-Disciplinary Appeals Policy section of this handbook.

CHAPTER 4

NFPT-CPT Designation and Certification Mark

Upon passing the examination and meeting all eligibility criteria, individuals are granted the Certified Personal Trainer credential. Certificants are authorized to use the "CPT" designation alongside their name (e.g., John Doe, CPT) and to display the official NFPT certification mark on professional materials to indicate certified status to clients, employers, and the public.

For proper use of the certification mark, view Appendix [C] of this document.

NFPT Code of Conduct

All NFPT candidates and certificants are required to uphold professional ethics and safety standards. Violations may result in disciplinary action, including revocation of certification, in accordance with the Certification Council's disciplinary policy.

All candidates and active certificants must strictly adhere to the following professional mandates. They are required to:

Core Professional Responsibilities

- Safe Program Delivery: Design and implement exercise protocols based on fundamental exercise science principles, utilizing structured initial screening and progressive evaluation for apparently healthy clients.
- Professional Boundaries and Privacy: Maintain strict client confidentiality and uphold professional boundaries regarding client-trainer relationships and allied healthcare referral networks.
- Business and Regulatory Standards: Conduct all business operations in accordance with industry best practices, professional liability parameters, and local, state, and federal laws.
- Document Truthfulness: Ensure all applications, declarations, and documentation submitted to the certification program are accurate, complete, and truthful.
- Intellectual Property Protection: Maintain absolute confidentiality regarding examination materials, test questions, and score reports. Divulging, sharing, or replicating exam content is strictly prohibited.
- Proper Trademark Usage: Adhere to the authorized usage guidelines for the CPT designation, certificate, and associated brand marks. Certification marks may only be displayed by actively certified individuals in good standing.

Explicit Ethical and Behavioral Prohibitions

To prevent public harm and maintain professional integrity, candidates and certificants are strictly prohibited from engaging in the following conduct. They must not:

- Exceed Scope of Practice: Knowingly provide services to individuals who are at risk or require clinical intervention without an explicit medical clearance and screening evaluation.
- Malpractice and Negligence: Engage in negligent, reckless, or unethical fitness instruction, or exhibit behavior that physically or mentally harms a client or the general public.

- Abuse and Exploitation: Engage in lewd, immoral, or inappropriate conduct, including sexual harassment, unwanted sexual advances, or any exploitation of the client-trainer relationship.
- Impairment in Practice: Practice under the influence of any substance, medication, or alcohol that causes physical or mental impairment or impedes the ability to safely execute training sessions.
- Professional Defamation: Engage in malicious, defamatory, or deceptive practices that undermine the professional standing of the fitness industry or the accredited credential.

Mandatory Felony Disclosure and Background Thresholds

Candidates and certificants hold a continuous, mandatory obligation to report any felony convictions to the Certification Coordinator within thirty (30) days of the occurrence or immediately upon application submission. Felonies are audited under the Disciplinary and Complaints Policy on a case-by-case basis against strict public safety criteria:

- Pre-Application Felony Lookback: A felony conviction occurring within seven (7) years prior to application submission constitutes automatic grounds for ineligibility if it involves a sexually based crime, violent offense, or the intent or actual use of a weapon to threaten or cause harm.
- Post-Credential Convictions: Any felony conviction occurring after application submission or certification award involving sexually based crimes, violent offenses, weapons, or the illegal sale, manufacture, or distribution of anabolic steroids or controlled substances constitutes grounds for immediate suspension or permanent revocation of the credential.

Candidates and certificants should report any conviction of a felony to the NFPT Certification Coordinator at HRDept@nfpt.com. Reports of felonies will be reviewed under the disciplinary and complaints policy on a case-by-case basis.

Investigative and Disciplinary Authority

The Certification Council holds ultimate, autonomous authority to investigate any credible evidence of public harm, ethical non-compliance, or professional misconduct. All formal complaints, disclosures, and investigations are processed by the Certification Coordinator in strict compliance with the Certification Council Complaints and Disciplinary Policy. The full policy is available in Appendix [A] of this handbook.

CHAPTER 5

Important Recertification Policy Updates

Effective **January 1, 2027**, we are implementing critical updates to our credentialing and renewal policies. Please review these changes carefully:

- **New 2-Year Recertification Cycle:** The recertification timeline is changing from one year to **two years**. Anyone earning or renewing a credential on or after January 1, 2027, will automatically transition to this new two-year schedule.
- **Updated CEC Requirement:** To renew under the new two-year cycle, you must complete and submit **4.0 Continuing Education Credits (CECs)**.
- **New 30-Day Renewal Grace Period:** For all renewals processed after January 1, 2027, the standard grace period to renew an expired credential is reduced to **30 days**. Failure to renew within 30 days will result in an immediate status lapse.

Legacy Exception for Existing Credential Holders:
If you earned your credential prior to January 1, 2027, we will honor your original **2-year grace period**. However, a final cutoff has been established: **all legacy 2-year grace periods will permanently expire on December 31, 2028**, regardless of your original expiration date.

Maintaining Your NFPT-CPT Certification

Purpose of Recertification

Earning your NFPT-CPT certification is just the beginning. To maintain your credential, NFPT requires annual recertification through continuing education and renewal fee payment. This ensures all NFPT-CPTs remain current in the evolving health and fitness field and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to professional development and client safety.

(The requirements below apply to renewals processed before January 1, 2027. See the policy update above for requirements beginning that date.)

Recertification Requirements

Maintaining your NFPT-CPT certification requires two things each year:

- **Annual Renewal Fee:** due each year on your certification anniversary date
- **Continuing Education Credits (CECs):** 2.0 CECs per certification year, beginning in year two

No CECs are required during your first year of certification.

Continuing Education Basics

CECs are earned through participation in fitness-related education and professional development activities. The credit calculation is simple:

1 hour of learning = 0.2 CECs | 10 total hours = 2.0 CECs

Eligible activities include but are not limited to:

- NFPT self-tests (available free every June and December)
- NFPT specialty or continuing education courses
- Approved continuing education provider courses and events
- CPR/AED or First Aid certification
- Other fitness, health, or business-related learning activities submitted for approval

CECs may not be rolled over or applied in advance to a future certification year.

Staying Current

NFPT will notify you by email approximately 60 days before your certification expiration date with instructions for renewal. You can manage your renewal, track your CECs, and access continuing education resources anytime through your NFPT Account at account.nfpt.com.

Continuing Competence Audits

To preserve the integrity of the credential, protect the public, and satisfy national accreditation standards, NFPT conducts compliance audits on 10% of all recertification applications submitted during each cycle. Candidates are selected at random. If selected for an audit, the certificant will receive an official Notice of Recertification Audit via email. The certificant's credential will be placed on a temporary administrative hold pending the outcome of the review.

Lapsed Certification

If you do not renew by your expiration date you may not use the NFPT-CPT credential until recertification is confirmed. Certification may be reinstated up to two years past the expiration date with payment of past-due fees and verification of CECs for the lapsed period. After two years, full reapplication and retesting are required. No exceptions are made.

For Complete Recertification Details

The NFPT Recertification Packet provides comprehensive information on all recertification requirements, CEC submission procedures, approved continuing education sources, and renewal instructions. The packet is available through your NFPT Account at account.nfpt.com or by contacting NFPT at info@nfpt.com or 800-729-6378.

CHAPTER 6

NFPT Certification Council Policies and Services

Non-Disciplinary Appeals

Candidates and certificants may appeal to the Certification Council regarding:

- NFPT's interpretation of policies, including eligibility or renewal determinations
- Alleged exam scoring or grading errors
- Alleged inappropriate exam administration procedures
- Testing conditions severe enough to disrupt the examination process

How to Submit an Appeal

1. **Document the issue** — If the incident occurred during the exam, notify the proctor immediately. While this is not required, it strengthens your appeal.
2. **Submit a written appea**l — Appeals must be submitted in writing within 30 days of receiving notice of the adverse decision.
3. **Include supporting documentation** — Provide any evidence or details relevant to your appeal.
4. **Await review** — The Certification Council will review your appeal within 30 days of receipt.
5. **Receive determination** — A final decision will be communicated within 10 business days of the Council's review.

Appeals may be submitted by email to info@nfpt.com, by mail to Summit Professional Education, ATTN: NFPT, 501 Union St, Ste 545, PMB 626120, Nashville, TN 37219-1876, or by phone at 800-729-6378.

The determination of the Certification Council is final.

Confidentiality

NFPT protects the confidential information of all candidates and certificants, including personal contact information, application status, exam results, and disciplinary matters. Confidential information is only released to the individual unless a signed release is provided or required by law.

The following information is not considered confidential: your name, city, state, and zip code (Find a Trainer search and profile), or your name, expiration date, and city/state (Verify Your Trainer lookup). Only actively certified trainers appear in either tool: lapsed, suspended, or revoked certifications are not displayed. Certificants may optionally add additional contact information to their public profile through their NFPT Account.

NFPT does not sell its mailing list. Trainers may opt out of email or mail communications at any time by emailing NFPT or calling 800-729-6378.

Confidentiality of Exam Results

Exam results are released to third parties only under the following circumstances:

- Upon request, NFPT will verify a certificant's current certification status, initial certification date, and expiration date
- NFPT will disclose information required by state or federal law, court orders, or military deployment requirements
- Any additional information requires the certificant's signed authorization

NFPT Professional Resources

NFPT offers a range of benefits and resources to certificants through their NFPT Account, including:

- Online renewal and CEC maintenance
- Exercise demonstration videos
- Access to NFPT educational materials
- Discounted trainer tools and resources

NFPT Administrative Operations

NFPT staff is available to assist with certification maintenance, policy questions, and trainer concerns.

Hours: 9am – 5pm Eastern Time

Holidays Observed: New Year's Eve/Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas (5 days)

Contact NFPT

Phone: 800-729-6378
Email: info@nfpt.com

NFPT
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINERS
A SUMMIT COMPANY

Complaints & Disciplinary Action Policy

PHONE 800-729-6378
EMAIL info@nfpt.com
WEB www.nfpt.com

Last Reviewed: May, 2026 / Next Review: May, 2027

NFPT Review Process and Disciplinary Action for Non-Compliance

The NFPT Certification Council will review and take appropriate action on all complaints and potential Code of Conduct violations involving NFPT certified personal trainers and test candidates. NFPT Certification serves to protect the interests of fitness consumers who receive services from NFPT certified trainers. All NFPT test candidates and certified trainers (herein referred to as "Members") are expected to uphold NFPT's professional and ethical standards as outlined in the NFPT Codes of Conduct in the Certification Handbook.

Complainants are not entitled to relief or damages as a result of this process. However, an NFPT Member found to be in violation of the Codes of Conduct may have their eligibility status or existing credential suspended or revoked by the NFPT Certification Council.

Definitions

Suspension — A temporary hold on a Member's test candidate eligibility, current certification, or recertification eligibility, pending resolution by the NFPT Certification Council. Suspension does not affect original certification or eligibility expiration dates. The Council has authority to change a suspension to a revocation if the Member cannot provide supporting documentation within a reasonable timeframe or if the alleged violation is substantiated.

Revocation — The cancellation of a Member's test candidate eligibility, current certification, or recertification eligibility. Upon revocation, the NFPT credential is immediately cancelled. The Certification Council may:

- Require a minimum one-year waiting period before the Member may reapply, subject to eligibility requirements in effect at that time. All re-application, testing, and administrative fees apply.
- Permanently revoke certification and exam eligibility with no opportunity for re-application.

How to File a Complaint

All complaints must be submitted in writing by emailing the NFPT Certification team at info@nfpt.com. To file a complaint:

1. Email a written description of the complaint to info@nfpt.com, including all relevant details and supporting documentation
2. NFPT will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 business days
3. All complainant information, including name, contact details, and employer information, will be kept strictly confidential

Anonymous complaints are accepted; however, they are more difficult to investigate and may limit the Council's ability to reach a conclusive determination.

Review and Investigation Process

The NFPT Certification Council will oversee all complaint investigations. The NFPT Certification Coordinator will serve as the point of contact for all communications between the complainant, the Member, and the Certification Council.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the NFPT Certification Coordinator will verify that the submission is complete and accurate. Additional information may be requested if needed. Within 5 business days of receipt, the complainant will be notified of acceptance, rejection, or a request for additional information, along with a complete copy of this policy.

Once a complaint is accepted, the NFPT Certification Coordinator will:

1. **Notify the Member** of the nature of the complaint, referencing the specific policy allegedly violated. The complainant's identity will remain confidential throughout the process.
2. **Allow 30 days for response** — the Member has 30 days from the date of notification to respond. Time extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis, but the Member must make contact within the 30-day window to request one.
3. **Investigate the complaint** using all available resources, which may include the complainant, the Member and their employer, third parties, NFPT administrative data, the NFPT Testing Vendor security representative, and social media where applicable.
4. **Review all documentation**, including any rebuttal provided by the Member, for the Council's consideration.

If the Member does not respond within the allotted timeframe and does not request an extension, the Certification Council may suspend the Member's status pending rebuttal, or permanently revoke the Member's status at the Council's discretion.

The Certification Council will convene at its next scheduled meeting, or within 30 days of the Member's response or non-response. The Member will be notified of the Council's decision within 15 days of that meeting.

Possible Outcomes

The NFPT Certification Council may take one of the following actions:

- **Dismiss the Complaint** — based on insufficient merit or insufficient supporting evidence
- **Note the Complaint** — finding a legitimate concern but no severity warranting disciplinary action; the complaint is noted in the Member's record for consideration in any future allegations
- **Suspend Status** — pending receipt of additional information from the Member
- **Revoke Status** — findings substantiate a violation; certification or eligibility is immediately revoked with no refund or reimbursement provided

In cases where disciplinary action is taken, the Certification Council Chair may also notify the complainant and, when applicable and identifiable, the Member's employer, to further protect fitness consumers.

Members whose certification is suspended or revoked must immediately remove all NFPT certification references from marketing materials and promotional content, in accordance with the Conditions of Use for the NFPT Certified Personal Trainer Designation found in the Certification Handbook. Members will also be immediately removed from NFPT's Certified Personal Trainer online registry.

Appeals

Members who wish to appeal a disciplinary decision may do so within 30 days of receiving notice of the Council's determination. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the NFPT Certification Council. Complete appeal procedures are outlined in the Non-Disciplinary Appeals Policy section of the NFPT Certification Handbook.

This is the complete Complaints and Disciplinary Action Policy of the National Federation of Professional Trainers, Inc. All investigations and disciplinary actions are conducted under the authority of the NFPT Certification Council.

Appendix B

NFPT
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINERS
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Annual Exam Performance Data

Updated annually by NFPT Certification. Data reflects the most recently completed certification year.

	2025
Total Candidates Tested	706
Number Passed	586
Pass Rate	83%
Number Currently Certified	2,871
Exam Forms Active	2
Most Recent Job Analysis	2024
Next Scheduled Job Analysis	2031, or earlier if industry changes warrant updates

Appendix C

Certification Mark Use Policy

The NFPT Certification Program owns and regulates specific trademarks, service marks, designations, and certification marks-including "NFPT-CPT" and "NFPT Certified Personal Trainer" (collectively referred to as the "Marks"). The Certification Council enforces strict policies governing the authorized use and systematic protection of these Marks to ensure public safety, prevent consumer confusion, and maintain the integrity of the credential.

Scope of Authorized Use

The right to display and utilize the Marks is a limited, non-transferable, revocable license granted exclusively to individuals who maintain active certification status.

- **Mandatory Representation**: Certificants must accurately identify their credential by placing the organizational acronym directly in front of the industry title (e.g., "NFPT-CPT" or "NFPT Certified Personal Trainer") to clearly distinguish their accredited achievement from non-accredited or alternative market offerings.
- **Co-Existence with Job Titles**: The Marks belong to the individual professional, not an employer. Certificants may use the NFPT-CPT designation to accompany a localized job title issued by an employer, provided the designation is used solely within the established professional scope of practice.
- **Branding Restrictions**: Active certificants may use official NFPT branding and logos on marketing literature, websites, and promotional materials. However, the Marks must never be associated with activities that are illegal, obscene, or that compromise the ethical standing of the profession.

Public Verification and Status Tracking

- **Find a Trainer Search:** The program maintains a secure, searchable public database that allows consumers, clients, and employers to search for certified trainers by zip code, returning a list of nearby trainers by distance. Individual trainer profiles display the trainer's name, city, and zip code.
- **Verify Your Trainer**: Consumers, clients, and employers may also look up a specific trainer by first and last name, returning the trainer's name, certification expiration date, and location (city and state).
- **Automatic Registry Updates:** Staff update both tools daily. Only individuals who meet all ongoing eligibility and recertification requirements appear as "Active" — lapsed, suspended, or revoked certificants are removed from display entirely rather than shown with a status label.

Mandate for Inactive, Suspended, or Revoked Status

The right to use the Marks terminates immediately upon any change in active status:

- **Lapsed or Inactive Status**: If a certification expires due to a failure to submit required Continuing Education Units (CEUs) or maintenance fees, the individual's profile is automatically removed from the

public registry. The individual must immediately cease and refrain from using the titles "NFPT-CPT," "NFPT Certified Personal Trainer," or any derivative phrases in private or public communication.

- **Suspended or Revoked Status**: Individuals subject to adverse disciplinary actions by the Certification Council receive a formal notice. They are required to immediately purge all NFPT certification marks, logos, and acronyms from their online assets, social media profiles, physical marketing literature, and business documentation.

Enforcement and Disciplinary Action

While fitness certifications are market-regulated rather than state-licensed, the assessment process used to award the Marks is a legally defensible property asset.

- **Administrative Audits**: The Certification Coordinator routinely monitors digital spaces and industry marketing to detect the unauthorized or fraudulent use of the Marks.
- **Formal Recourse**: Any unauthorized use of the Marks by uncertified, lapsed, suspended, or revoked individuals constitutes trademark infringement and a violation of the NFPT Codes of Conduct. The Certification Council will aggressively pursue violations through formal disciplinary proceedings—including permanent credential bars—and reserves the right to escalate persistent infractions to corporate legal counsel for cease-and-desist enforcement.

Appendix D

Summary of the 2024 NFPT-CPT Job Task Analysis Study

In 2024, the National Federation of Professional Trainers (NFPT) partnered with Prometric, an independent testing and assessment organization, to conduct a Job Task Analysis (JTA) study for the Certified Professional Trainer (CPT) examination. A job task analysis is a research process used to identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential to competent, safe performance in a profession — and it forms the foundation for a valid, defensible certification exam.

Purpose

The study was designed to confirm that the CPT exam reflects the actual knowledge and skills required of practicing personal trainers today, and to establish the content areas and weighting that guide exam development.

Method

A ten-member Task Force of practicing personal trainers, facilitated by Prometric, developed and refined a national survey covering five domains of practice. The survey was piloted, revised, and distributed to personal trainers nationwide in early 2024. Respondents rated the importance and frequency of 74 knowledge, skill, and ability (KSA) statements, evaluated how well each domain's content was covered, and recommended how exam content should be weighted across domains.

Results

A total of 794 personal trainers completed the survey, representing a broad cross-section of the profession by experience level, employment setting, education, and geographic region. All 74 KSA statements received importance ratings meeting the study's threshold for inclusion, confirming their relevance to competent practice. Respondents also indicated strong agreement that the survey content comprehensively covered each domain.

Outcome

Using these results, a Test Specifications Committee finalized the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be assessed on the CPT exam and established the percentage weight each domain receives on the test content outline:

Content Domain	% of Exam
1. Principles of Human Anatomy	20%
2. Principles of Human Physiology	20%

3. Fitness Components	23%
4. Training Program Development, Implementation, and Modification	32%
5. Professionalism and Communication Skills	5%
Total	**100%**

This blueprint ensures the CPT examination remains aligned with the current, real-world practice of personal training professionals. The full Job Task Analysis report, including detailed methodology and statistical findings, is available upon request.