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Format of medical certificate for job

Commercial Driver's License There are two parts to a Commercial Driver's License: the operator's license, issued by a state, and the operator's medical certification, issued by a certified medical examiner. Each state has its own criteria for issuance of a commercial driver's license, in addition to criteria set by federal law in 49 CFR Part 383. Medical certification (also known as "DOT card" or "medical examination") is a process to ensure all commercial motor vehicle operators meet certain minimum physical qualification standards to ensure safety of the driver and the traveling public. Medical certification can include a physical exam (including a vision exam), medical history, examination by specialists, and completion of forms. In most cases, it must be performed by an individual who is registered as a certified medical examiner. For issuance of interstate medical certification, it must be performed by an individual who is registered as a certified medical examiner on the FMCSA National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners. For more information on the general medical certification process, visit the FMCSA website. For commercial drivers with diabetes, the medical certification process varies depending on whether the driver is prescribed insulin Drivers who do not take insulin may complete the standard medical certification process by submitting for an examination with a certified medical examiner. There are no specific diabetes-related restrictions or limitations on drivers with non-insulin treated type 2 diabetes. However, the medical examiner has discretion to inquire about the driver's diabetes and diabetes management to ensure the driver can safely operate a commercial motor vehicle. Drivers who take insulin must complete a 2-step process. The first step is a diabetes evaluation by the driver's treating clinician. The second step is an examination by a certified medical examiner. Once both steps are complete, the certified medical examiner may issue the driver an interstate medical certificate. Dear Lifehacker, I'm thinking about switching jobs, but it'll be difficult for me to get a lot of work experience before I apply. I was thinking about getting a certification in my new field to help even the odds between me and other job applicants. Do certifications matter anymore? Can they really help me land a better job, or are they a waste of time and money?Sincerely, Test TakerDear Test Taker, Good question! In some circumstances, a professional certification can make all the difference between landing a job or not being considered for it at all. In others, it's not really useful and most hiring managers will look for experience or skill over a set of letters after your name. If you can't tell, it's not cut and dried, and the answer is a little complicated. Let's cut through the fog and help you understand when certs are really valuable and when they're just nice to have.First, Not All Certifications are Created Equally Some professional certifications require that you study hard and pass a test, others require that you have years of experience in a specific field before you can even apply to be considered. Before you decide that maybe getting a certification is your ticket to a career jump or a promotion, you need to determine whether or not the types of certifications that will get you ahead in your field are the ones that require skills, experience, or just a few classes.Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on your perspective), this can also tell you how valuable that certification is to a potential employer. Some certs are very much "pay a fee to take a test and get your cert," and those are probably the least valuable. Others require you pay to join a professional society first, then prove you have the relevant experience to be considered for the cert, then you get to pay again to take the test. Those certifications, where you have to demonstrate not just that you've studied a topic, but also that you have the knowledge and at least some experience to back it up, are likely the most valuable.Search for Certifications Useful in Your FieldThe first thing you should do is start looking at the people in the positions you'd like to aim for. See what certifications they have, and what it takes to earn them. See if there's a kind of certification "ladder" that can get you from where you are now to where you want to be. Whether it's a technology certification or a professional title, there's usually some series of stepping stones to help you get there. Here are some places to start your search:Check the job listings you're interested in. Whether you're surfing big job boards or company-specific openings, see whether their professional certifications along with their experience requirements. Many jobs—especially entry to middle-level ones—will list education as a substitute for experience because the company wants someone with applicable knowledge on day one that they don't necessarily have to train.Browse LinkedIn industry groups. LinkedIn's industry groups and pages can offer a ton of detail about the types of positions available in an industry and what it takes to fill them. Search for a group full of professionals in the field you want to move to, or even who share the same job title. See if any of them are talking about a specific cert, or just pipe up and ask if there are any certification programs for their profession. You'll get detailed responses and war stories, promise.Browse LinkedIn Company groups. Even if there are few professional certifications in the field you're interested in, there may be some certifications in the tools that field uses. They're often less valuable (since some companies may use different technologies or tools than others for the same jobs), but they can still offer you a leg up over the competition, especially if more companies use the same tools, hardware, or software than others. Look around at those job postings again and see what skills and technologies are often required for the job. Then head over to LinkedIn and search for that software package, or that hardware vendor. There may be a group for professionals certified in that application, or by a company for people certified in their hardware..Look for professional groups and societies for your field. Another great way to find out if there's an industry-standard education program for your field is to check in with any professional societies for people who do what you do. For example, when I was a project manager, the PMI, or Project Management Institute, offered a number of certifications for professionals in project and program management. Of course, you have to be a member to apply and test for those certifications, so looking for professional societies may be a great way to find out about those programs as well as get an inside track on what's required to get them.The Most Valuable Certifications are the Advanced OnesI used to work in a company that all but required its staff to earn new certifications every year or so, and even our entry-level desktop support technicians were urged to start with with certifications like CompTIA's A+ and Net+, very basic certs that prove you have a working knowledge of technology concepts. We were then encouraged to work their way up to things like the Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) program, or the Apple Certified Support Professional (ACSP) or Technical Coordinator (ACTC). You might think those lower level certs aren't tremendously valuable, and in fact unless you're applying for a job that requires them (or you're making a switch to technology as a career and want some training before you make the jump), they're really not—especially not as a replacement for real experience. However, they served as great stepping stones to get you into what's required to earn a certification: the training classes, studying, training materials, and ultimately, taking the test.It's those higher-level, industry and position-specific certifications that are the most valuable, and while the lower level ones shouldn't be dismissed, they don't make you stand out as much as they may have a few years ago. Will an A+ or a Net+ help you get the edge over someone else? Maybe, but someone else with experience or knowledge they can demonstrate in an interview can easily edge out someone with little more than a cert to their name. On the higher end though, some companies won't even consider a security professional that doesn't have a CISSP or a project manager without a PMP, so if you don't have it (or the experience required to get it), you're out of luck.That's the big takeaway here. The value of certifications goes up with the difficulty and experience required to get them. Several years ago, when competition for the same types of jobs was a bit thinner, you could potentially beat someone out with a few certifications under your belt in lieu of experience, especially if you were otherwise knowledgeable and had a real desire to learn (and it wouldn't help if you interviewed well). In some cases that may still be true, but these days people are coming to interviews with both experience and certifications, so it's not one or the other anymore.Start with the Certs that Matter for Your Career, and Train Up From ThereWe've talked about the relative value of various certifications up to this point, but just because a cert is low-level or has little competitive value doesn't mean you shouldn't get it if it's applicable to your career. This piece at Computeworld notes that even lower-level certs are still valuable if they're right for the type of job you're doing, and if they indicate that you're willing to learn and grow along your chosen career. So someone getting their start in IT, for example, should consider those base-level CompTIA certifications, and then move on to some of Microsoft's and Apple's entry-level certifications. If you're interested in networking, Cisco's certification program is considered one of the industry standards for networking technologies. If you're interested in Linux systems administration, you may look at Red Hat's certification program. Similarly, if your career doesn't involve technology at all, there's likely a series of certification programs you can explore as well.The easy certs that anyone can study for and take may not be the key to a better job on their own, but they're definitely the building blocks of a better career, if you're willing to stick to them. Remember, once you start training up, you can always move in different directions, so don't assume that you're stuck in one field or along one training path. Your stepping stones are there to give you flexibility and room to move around, not lock you into a specific career path.The Bottom Line: Yes, Certifications Can Help You Get a Job...As Long as They're The Right CertsAs with many things, which certifications you start with depends highly on the career you're interested in and the path you want to take. Many of them cost money, so we would encourage you to talk to your manager. Your company may be willing to pay for training classes and certification tests if it's in their interest to make you a more skilled and valuable employee—many companies do. If you're looking to make a change, keep the costs in mind, and see if you have any training options with your current company there too before you switch jobs or careers. Just don't walk away thinking that you'll be free of a boring career in basketweaving and ready for an exciting technology job if you spend a few bucks and pick up an A+ in your off time—it's not that easy.Ultimately, getting one or two certifications will prove you're capable of learning and retaining knowledge (or at least passing a test) but several under your belt shows that you're committed to a career path, well versed in it, and knowledgeable. As those certifications grow to require experience and dedication to earn, they're exponentially more valuable and prove that you're familiar with industry best practices, have worked in the field, and have retained your knowledge (especially if it's a cert that has to be renewed or kept up to date). So even if you don't think the low-level ones are useful, don't shy away from them—at best they're a slight differentiator, but at worst they're a stepping stone to greater things.Sincerely, Lifehacker Have a question or suggestion for Ask Lifehacker? Send it to tips+asklh@lifehacker.com.Photo by Kaplan International, Samuel Mann, and Axel Schwenke. A medical coding certificate program provides a quick, cost-effective option for students looking to enter the healthcare field. Medical coders help streamline the communication and record-keeping processes in the healthcare system. They translate physicians' notes, diagnoses, and procedures into medical codes and input them into patient record systems, streamlining the process for medical professionals to access and share information. The medical coding field offers many different careers, including those that require specialized knowledge and certifications. Coding certifications can lead to additional employment opportunities and higher earnings as well. According to the American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC), certified coders earn an average of close to \$14,000 more per year than those without certifications. This page outlines educational options and certifications available to coders, along with viable career pathways. What Is a Medical Coding Certificate? Students can complete a certificate in medical coding in 1-2 years. Programs include 18-30 credits, and students can often take medical coding classes online or on campus. Whether attending part or full time, students should keep in mind that medical coding coursework may be offered in a sequence, potentially influencing the length of a program. Many medical coding certificates are offered through community and technical colleges, although four-year institutions may have programs as well. Certificates are earned through educational institutions, while certifications come from professional organizations. Unlike a degree, a certificate program is designed to train learners for specific careers. Individuals with a medical coding certificate can enter the workforce in less time than learners who earn a degree in the field. Medical coding certificates are different from certifications. Certificates are earned through educational institutions, while certifications come from professional organizations, like the American Academy of Professional Coders. The cost for medical coding programs varies by program type and student status. Residence may also factor into the cost of enrollment, though many online coding certificates offer lump-sum tuition rates for students regardless of where they live. Per-credit tuition rates can benefit part-time learners who only take 1-2 classes at a time, while full-time learners can take heavier course loads to accelerate graduation times. Students can also complete medical coding training online. Featured Online Schools What Can You Do With a Medical Coding Certificate? Medical coding certificates train students to use standard coding languages—ideal for a job as a medical billing and coding specialist. The curriculum also introduces learners to medical records technologies and practices, medical data collection, and health information processes. This prepares students to work as health information technology associates or medical office administrators. Additional career options include medical records coordinator and claims coding specialist. Alongside professional opportunities, a medical certificate can be a pathway to continued education. Students can go on to pursue an undergraduate degree in disciplines like nursing or healthcare administration. While a medical coding certificate opens opportunities for entry-level careers in healthcare, insurance, and information technology, most employers also require a professional certification in medical coding to enter the field. What Kinds of Medical Coding Certifications Are There? The AAPC offers many unique certifications for aspiring medical coders. Some recognize coders in specific facilities, with others focusing on specific professions. The following sections explore available options, including information on costs and exam requirements. Certified Professional Coder The certified professional coder (CPC) certification tests professionals in their understanding of 17 areas of knowledge, including procedure, supply, and diagnosis codes. Successful candidates must complete the 150-question exam in less than 5 hours and 40 minutes and achieve a minimum of 70% correct responses. For preparation, applicants should possess anatomy, physiology, and medical terminology knowledge. Aspiring coders can take the CPC exam online for \$299 or in person for \$399. The AAPC provides a preparation course and practice exams. Certified Outpatient Coder The certified outpatient coder (COC) certification covers the requirements for coders in ambulatory surgical centers and hospital outpatient settings. Professionals with COC certification demonstrate medical terminology, anatomy, coding, billing, and compliance expertise. Candidates must complete the 150-question examination in less than 5 hours and 40 minutes with a minimum of 70% correct responses. Candidates need at least two years of coding experience and an AAPC membership to qualify. Most test-takers possess associate degrees, and applicants can take exam preparation courses and practice exams through the academy. The examination costs \$399, but AAPC members pay \$325 with one available free retake. Certified Inpatient Coder The certified inpatient coder (CIC) certification recognizes professional coders in inpatient hospitals and facilities. These coders possess knowledge about specialized inpatient diagnoses, procedures, rules, and payment methodologies and systems. For the exam, successful candidates need to complete 60 questions and 10 inpatient cases in less than 5 hours and 40 minutes with a minimum of 70% on the exam. Though applicants at any level can pursue the CIC certification, the AAPC recommends that each test-taker possesses an associate degree and a minimum of two years of coding experience. For support, the AAPC offers preparation courses and practice exams. Like the COC certification, the exam costs \$399 or \$325 for AAPC students and includes one free retake. Certified Risk Adjustment Coder The certified risk adjustment coder (CRC) certification acknowledges coders with extensive knowledge in charts and codes within the risk adjustment model. These professionals must understand the procedures, guidelines, and regulations of risk adjustment set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The exam features 150 questions. Candidates must complete the exam within 5 hours 40 minutes and achieve a minimum score of 70%. The AAPC recommends that each candidate possesses an associate degree and a minimum of two years of coding experience. They should also complete a risk adjustment coding course or a preparation course through the AAPC. AAPC members pay \$325 to take the exam and receive one free retake, while others pay \$399. Specialty Medical Coding Certifications The AAPC offers several specialized certifications for experienced coders who wish to demonstrate their expertise in certain disciplines. Each certification includes its own compliance guidelines, procedures, and coding requirements. Some of the options include ambulatory surgical center, emergency department, hematology and oncology, and evaluation and management certifications. Each exam includes 150 questions and must be completed in less than 5 hours and 40 minutes and with a minimum score of 70%. The AAPC recommends that candidates possess at least two years of professional coding experience and an associate degree, though specialized coding training or preparation courses can also help. To take these exams, candidates must possess an AAPC membership and pay \$299, which includes one free retake within a year after the first attempt. The academy also offers practice exams. Certified Medical Coding Specialist Developed by the American Medical Billing Association (AMBA), the certified medical coding specialist (CMCS) credential recognizes billing professionals who understand medical codes, coding guidelines, and procedures. The exam includes coding information from several medical settings and services, including surgery, radiology, anesthesia services. Test-takers must possess AMBA membership and pay \$325, which includes two free retakes. Test-takers then have 10 days to complete the exam online, during which they can use their books and notes to answer questions. For success, candidates need to achieve a minimum score of 80%. To qualify for the exam, candidates need either one year of coding experience, a completed training program, or another recognized certification. The AMBA provides a study guide for interested applicants for an additional \$199. What Kind of Salary Can I Earn With a Medical Coding Certificate? The salaries available to medical coding professionals depend on their employer, location, specialty, certification, and experience. While certificates can lead to significant wage ranges across the field, the following table includes Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data on nationwide career outlook, along with median salaries based on experience levels. Medical Records Technician Career Outlook Source: BLS Medical Coding Career Outlooks By Experience Source: Payscale Medical Coding Professional Organizations American Academy of Professional Coders The AAPC, founded in 1988, strives to improve the standards for the medical coding field and its professionals. The organization offers 28 certifications, along with access to education, networking, and career opportunities. American Health Information Management Association With roots dating back to 1928, AHIMA represents health information professionals around the world. The association seeks to promote the field, standardize ethics and practices, and empower health information professionals. Members receive access to professional training, certifications, publications, and career opportunities. American Medical Billing Association The AMBA aims to improve the standards and consistency of the medical billing profession. This association helps develop better practices by offering training, certifications, and networking events for aspiring medical coders and billers. Prospective medical coders should always keep accreditation in mind when choosing a medical coding program or certification. Accreditation can affect employment, continuing education, and financial aid. For best results, medical coders should ensure that their program received recognition from either the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education or the AAPC. Frequently Asked Questions What Is the Best Way to Become a Medical Coder? People can enter the medical coding field several ways, but most possess formal training or credentials. Medical coders can, for example, pursue degrees in healthcare administration or complete medical certifications through the AAPC. Depending on the employer and the field, candidates may need both certification and experience. Is a Medical Coding Certificate Worth It? Medical coding certificates are relatively short programs that have lasting benefits. The knowledge and skills gained through a medical coding certificate allow students to enter the in-demand field of medical records and health information technology. The value of a medical coding certificate also comes from opportunities for continued education and professional advancement. What Skills Do Medical Coders Need? Medical coders need a diverse skill set to find success in their daily work, but a few important skills stand out above the rest. Coders should possess strong attention to detail to ensure the accuracy of their work. They also need a solid understanding of medical terminology and policies. How Long Does it Take to Get Certified as a Medical Coder? The length of time required for a medical coding certification online depends on the specific credential. Some require only an examination, which can lead to certification in a day or two. Others require a minimum of two years of professional experience. Which Medical Coding Certification Is Best? The best medical coding certification varies depending on each person's individual interests and goals. According to the AAPC, the certified professional compliance officer certification leads to the most lucrative positions, with a median salary of over \$77,000. For those seeking job security, pursuing certifications that deal with elderly or cancer patients can lead to professional roles.

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