



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PTCB CERTIFICATION REQUIRED FOR PHARMACY TECHNICIAN EMPLOYMENT BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Requirement applies to pharmacy technicians employed at grade GS-6 and above.

WASHINGTON, DC— PTCB today announced that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requires Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) certification for VA pharmacy technicians employed at grade GS-6 and above. VA's decision came after formal recommendations from the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs and is reflected in the *VA Handbook 5005/15*.

The incorporation of these new requirements parallel certification standards within the private sector and demonstrate VA's commitment to improving patient safety and rewarding pharmacy technicians through increased pay and new career opportunities.

"The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) relies extensively on its cadre of pharmacy technicians to provide a world class pharmacy benefit to our nation's Veterans," said Michael Valentino, R.Ph., MHSA, VA Chief Consultant, Pharmacy Benefits Management. VA chose to adopt pharmacy technician certification for a number of reasons including: 1- certification will better equip technicians to perform their current duties, 2- certification will provide a platform upon which technicians can improve their skills to assume more complex duties, 3- in addition to education and experience requirements, certification gives VA pharmacy technicians a career ladder to progress to more demanding positions, thereby increasing job satisfaction and retention and 4- over time, emphasizing certification will raise the minimum skill sets required for technicians and will reduce variation in practice across the VA system."

"PTCB certification provides a solid foundation to support the pharmacy technician services of the VA as they work to serve our nation's Veterans," said Melissa Murer Corrigan, R.Ph., Executive Director and CEO of PTCB. "We applaud the VA for incorporating PTCB certification into the standards for the over 3,800 pharmacy technicians employed by the system."

VA pharmacy technicians practice across a variety of pharmacy settings. Their work includes inpatient hospital care, outpatient care, serving as pharmacy automation technicians, staffing phone advice lines, and working within the Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP), a service that provides mail order prescriptions to veterans using facilities with highly automated distribution systems at strategic locations throughout the country.

PTCB has certified over 370,000 technicians nationwide and is the only pharmacy technician certification endorsed by the American Pharmacists Association (APhA), the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP). PTCB's Pharmacy Technician Certification Examination (PTCE) is available year round at over 200 Pearson Professional Centers nationwide.

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About the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)

PTCB was established in January 1995 and is governed by five pharmacy organizations—the American Pharmacists Association (APhA), the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), the Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (ICHP), the Michigan Pharmacists Association (MPA) and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP). The goal of the PTCB national certification program is to enable pharmacy technicians to work more effectively with pharmacists to offer safe and effective patient care and service. PTCB contracts with Pearson VUE, the industry’s technology leader, as its computer-based testing vendor. PTCB draws upon the experience and expertise of its 15-year partner, Professional Examination Service (PES) for test development.

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Editor’s Note: This release contains corrected information from the earlier June 3, 2010 release.