

## REGULATIONS GOVERNING ADMISSION, ADVANCEMENT AND RECERTIFICATION\*

\* As amended by the Board of Governors at its meeting on November 10, 2008.

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### WORTH NOTING

The *Regulations Governing Admission, Advancement and Recertification*, formulated by the Membership Committee and approved by the Board of Governors, establish the specific procedures by which candidates are admitted, advanced, recertified and continued as affiliates of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE).

The Credentials Committee, one of the committees of ACHE, is assigned the responsibility to recommend to the Board of Governors the admission, advancement and recertification of applicants for Member or Fellow status, according to specific regulations and directives from the Board of Governors.

The Membership Committee serves as a resource committee for study and recommendations on special problems relating to the rules and regulations governing the eligibility, admission, advancement and recertification of Members, Fellows and Life Fellows.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF AFFILIATES

In full recognition of the responsibilities and obligations imposed by membership in ACHE, each affiliate of ACHE shall:

Abide by the *Code of Ethics*;

Pursue duties with diligence and faithfulness;

Perform executive functions without bias and in the best interest of the institution or agency served;

Avoid the commission of acts that would reflect negatively on personal character or that in any manner would be detrimental to ACHE, to the community, to the healthcare field or to the institution or agency;

Follow the recommendations of ACHE, so far as may be practical, in matters relating to the improvement of healthcare management;

Cooperate and assist in the conduct of studies and surveys undertaken or sponsored by ACHE by

furnishing information, opinions, or reports, or in such other manner as may be possible;

Prepare to qualify for advancement through a personal program of continuing education in healthcare management and executive skills; and

Make contributions of articles for publication on some phase of healthcare management or on related subjects.

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The eight categories of membership in the American College of Healthcare Executives are as follows: Members, Fellows, Life Fellows, Honorary Fellows, Student Associates, Faculty Associates, International Associates and Retired Affiliates.

- (a) Members. A candidate for Member who meets the standards, requirements and qualifications established in these Regulations shall be admitted to ACHE as a Member (see Section I).
- (b) Fellows. A Member may be advanced to the status of Fellow upon meeting such standards, requirements, and qualifications as established in these Regulations (see Section II). A Member who has passed the Board of Governors Examination will be referred to as a Fellow designate until he or she meets all other Fellow requirements.
- (c) Honorary Fellows. The Board of Governors may grant Honorary Fellowship to individuals who have rendered distinguished service in the healthcare field, or in related areas, and who would normally not be a member of ACHE.
- (d) Life Fellows. A Fellow may become a Life Fellow, at the sole discretion of the Board of Governors, after fulfilling such standards, requirements and qualifications as are formulated from time to time by the Board of Governors (see Section V.5.).
- (e) Faculty Associates. Any person who holds a full-time teaching position with an appointment in a

graduate or undergraduate program in health services administration may apply to become a Faculty Associate of ACHE.

- (f) Student Associates. Any person who is (1) either enrolled full-time or part-time in a four-year program in health services administration that leads to a baccalaureate degree; or is enrolled in a program in a related administrative field that leads to a baccalaureate degree; or is a graduate student enrolled in such a program; and (2) enrolled in a college or university that is at least regionally accredited may apply to become a Student Associate of ACHE. The program director must attest to the student's enrollment status and graduation date, or the student must provide other official proof of enrollment from the university. Student Associate status is limited to five years.
- (g) International Associates. Any person, who holds a healthcare management position or a related position that would provide experience to qualify for a healthcare management position in foreign countries, not including members of the uniformed services, may apply to become an International Associate of ACHE.
- (h) Retired Affiliates. Any Member or Fellow who has retired but does not meet the requirements for Life Status may apply to become a Retired Affiliate of ACHE regardless of his or her category of membership or number of years as an affiliate.

Sections I through IV hereof govern admission, advancement and recertification of Members and Fellows.

## **I. MEMBERS**

### **A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- 1. FORMS. A candidate for admission to ACHE as a Member must submit a formal application on forms prescribed by ACHE.
- 2. DATES. The application may be submitted at any time throughout the year. Recommendations for admission to ACHE are processed on a continuing year-round basis. Formal admission ceremonies are conducted only at the annual Convocation.
- 3. EDUCATION. The applicant shall provide information about formal education and such other data as may be requested by ACHE.

## **B. APPLICANTS HOLDING BACCALAUREATE OR POST BACCALAUREATE DEGREES**

An applicant who has earned a baccalaureate or post baccalaureate degree from a college or university that (a) is accredited by the regional accrediting association in the U.S. approved by the U.S. Department of Education, or (b) holds membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, or (c) is accredited by the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation may qualify if:

- 1. INTEREST AND COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION. The applicant expresses an interest in and commitment to the profession of healthcare management; and
- 2. OTHER. The applicant in other respects meets the eligibility requirements prescribed by ACHE.

## **C. ESSENTIAL DATES**

- 1. APPLICATION. All technical requirements for admission must exist:
  - a. At the time the application is filed; and
  - b. At the time the application is considered.

## **II. FELLOW**

### **A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- 1. FORMS. A candidate for Fellow must submit a formal application on forms prescribed by ACHE.
- 2. DEADLINE DATE. Applications may be submitted anytime during the year. However, the application should be received by the date announced by ACHE before the candidate will be allowed to take the Board of Governors Examination in Healthcare Management.
- 3. REFERENCES, PARTICIPATION, LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION. The candidate must submit evidence of:
  - a. High moral character and ethical conduct. Each candidate must furnish three references, all of whom shall be Fellows of ACHE;
  - b. Active participation in healthcare management, professional and education activities. A candidate is expected to participate in a total of 40 hours of continuing education credit over the

most recent five-year period, no less than 12 hours of which must be Category I credit (see Interpretations 4,5); and

c. Fulfillment of “Responsibilities of Affiliates,” as listed in the *Regulations Governing Admission, Advancement and Recertification*.

4. OTHER. Meet all the other requirements prescribed by ACHE.

## **B. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

A candidate may submit an application for Fellow status and may sit for the Board of Governors Exam following:

- a. A post-baccalaureate degree plus two years’ healthcare management experience (see Interpretation 1); or
- b. Bachelor’s degree candidates must have eight years’ healthcare management experience by December 31, 2008. Effective January 1, 2009, a post-baccalaureate degree will be required.

## **C. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**

To complete advancement to Fellow, a candidate must:

1. LONGEVITY. Have been a Member (including past tenure as a Diplomate) in good standing for at least three years (see Interpretation 8); and:
2. EDUCATION.
  - a. A post baccalaureate degree plus five years’ healthcare management experience (see Interpretations 1, 2)
3. POSITION. Be engaged in a healthcare management position (see Interpretations 1, 2); and
4. ORGANIZATION. Be employed by an acceptable healthcare parent or subsidiary organization or program or acceptable organization or program influencing the operations, growth and development of organizations, services and/or programs of the health delivery system (see Interpretation 3); and

5. EXAMINATIONS. Complete satisfactorily the Board of Governors Examination in Healthcare Management. The candidate must be authorized by ACHE to take the Examination to proceed with advancement to Fellow.

## **C. ESSENTIAL DATES**

Affiliates who were Diplomates as of December 31, 2006, have until January 1, 2010 to meet the Fellow requirements. After this date they will lose their Fellow designate status and must reapply to advance to Fellow status.

## **III. FELLOW RECERTIFICATION**

### **A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

An individual granted Fellow status may retain such status for three years, at which time said status may be renewed via the recertification process. Any application for recertification must be submitted after two years of Fellow status or recertification of Fellow status.

1. FORMS. A Fellow must submit a formal application on forms prescribed by ACHE.
2. DEADLINE DATE. The application must be received by the date announced by ACHE prior to the end of the third calendar year following advancement to Fellow or recertification of Fellow status.
3. OTHER. The Fellow must submit adequate evidence of fulfillment of applicable sections of “Responsibilities of Affiliates,” as listed in the *Regulations Governing Admission, Advancement and Recertification*.

### **B. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**

To complete recertification at the Fellow level, a Fellow must provide sufficient documentation and evidence of completing one of the following alternatives since the last advancement or recertification date.

1. CONTINUING EDUCATION. Fellows applying for recertification are expected to have a total of 24 hours of continuing education since the last advancement or recertification, no less than half of which must be Category I credit.

Fellows must also show evidence of participation in healthcare and community/civic affairs, although no specific number of hours is required (see Interpretations 4, 5).

2. **BOARD OF GOVERNORS EXAMINATION IN HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT.** Successfully complete the Board of Governors Examination in Healthcare Management.

Fellows must also show evidence of participation in healthcare and community/civic affairs, although no specific number of hours is required (see Interpretations 4, 5).

#### **C. ESSENTIAL DATES**

All technical requirements for recertification at the Fellow level must exist at the time the application for recertification is filed.

#### **D. FAILURE TO RECERTIFY**

Upon an individual's failure to achieve recertification in a timely fashion, as set forth herein, he or she shall be reclassified as a Member of ACHE until all of the forgoing recertification requirements are met.

#### **E. WAIVER OF RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATES AGE 60 OR MORE**

Mandatory recertification candidates age 60 or more may request a waiver of recertification. This waiver is offered on a one-time, five-year basis upon request of the candidate. If after that five-year period the mandatory recertification candidate has not retired or met the recertification requirements, the candidate will be reclassified to Member status.

#### **F. WAIVER OF RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED**

Mandatory recertification candidates who are unemployed may request a waiver of recertification requirements during the period of their unemployment. This waiver is available for up to a two-year period. After the waiver period, if the Fellow has not met the recertification requirements, the Fellow will be reclassified to Member status.

### **IV. INTERPRETATIONS**

#### **1. POSITION ELIGIBILITY**

##### **a. POSTGRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS.**

Postgraduate fellowships or residencies in the practice world that relate to "assistant to" position descriptions and provide support to decision making may be eligible as healthcare management positions. Students in post baccalaureate programs may apply for Member status if they have completed their didactic work and must only complete field experience to graduate. Experience attained during a post didactic residency or fellowship may be applied as healthcare management experience for advancement to Fellow.

##### **b. POSITION-PERMANENT PART-TIME.**

Permanent part-time positions, based on job descriptions and at least a three-day, full-day work week, may be eligible for purposes of admission and advancement.

##### **c. UNEMPLOYED EXECUTIVES.** Unemployed affiliates will be allowed to advance provided they sign a form attesting that they are actively seeking employment in the healthcare field. The form will be valid for three years, keeping it within the three-year validity of the advancement application.

##### **d. UNIFORM SERVICES AFFILIATES.** A healthcare executive who is a member of the uniformed services is considered to be employed in a healthcare management position, even when an assignment does not include a healthcare management function, and may be considered eligible for admission and advancement.

#### **2. RELATED HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT**

**ACTIVITY.** Individuals in related healthcare management activity are eligible for admission and advancement within ACHE. Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to, attorneys practicing healthcare law, consultants working with healthcare organizations, faculty in healthcare administration programs and executives within supplier organizations to the healthcare field.

#### **3. ORGANIZATION ACCEPTABILITY.** Acceptability is determined on the basis of the organization's

or program's function and mission related to the provision of healthcare services. Organizations whose primary missions include direct patient or client care services are acceptable in keeping with the other provisions of these regulations. Organizations or programs whose primary missions include activities that influence the growth, development, or operations of healthcare organizations—such as healthcare associations, healthcare consulting firms and healthcare management or holding companies, among others—are acceptable. Nonhealthcare organizations are acceptable if the candidate's program is a healthcare delivery component of the organization or a component that influences the growth, development or operations of healthcare organizations. Examples include educational programs in healthcare management, clinics, regulatory agencies and general management consulting companies with a discrete healthcare consulting practice, among others.

4. PARTICIPATION. The candidate must present evidence of:
  - a. Participation in the affairs of ACHE or other community, state, regional or nationally recognized activities in the health field—denoting interest and contribution in the specialized area of health services;
  - b. Service as a professional, leadership potential, and the capacity and devotion to further and improve management as a profession; and
  - c. Significant participation in local, state, regional or national health affairs with any of a variety of recognized essential groups or agencies for the purpose of improving and advancing healthcare.
5. CONTINUING EDUCATION. It is mandatory that every candidate be concerned with and give evidence of continued personal growth and development through a program of continuing education designed to enhance management effectiveness and to broaden potential for contribution in a variety of professional endeavors related to the field of health. The candidate must present evidence of continuing education by registration as a participant or service as a faculty member in programs of

continuing or postgraduate education offered by ACHE, universities or colleges, healthcare associations or other professional organizations or educational groups that afford exposure to learning in areas of knowledge applicable to management in the health field.

- a. FOR ADVANCEMENT AND RECERTIFICATION. As of the date of admission, advancement or recertification of current status, as applicable, a candidate is expected to participate in the required amount of contact hours of Category I and Category II continuing education.

A contact hour for face-to-face programs is defined as 60 minutes of instructional time, and excludes time allotted to meals, breaks and other time not dedicated to instruction. A contact hour for self-directed programs is defined on the basis of equivalency of the particular program type to face-to-face programs. Consideration is given to the level of participant effort required and effectiveness of the learning methodology.

CATEGORY I PROGRAMS:

- i. Any face-to-face continuing education programs, seminars, institutes, Congresses or conferences conducted by ACHE.
- ii. Certain specifically designated self-directed educational programs offered by ACHE.

CATEGORY II PROGRAMS:

- i. All other face-to-face continuing education programs conducted or sponsored by any organization qualified to provide educational programming in management.
- ii. ACHE will consider awarding Category II credit for pre-approved, interactive, self-directed educational programs conducted or sponsored by any organization qualified to provide educational programming in management.

All Category II programs, except the self-directed programs, will be reviewed by the Credentials Committee at the time of advancement or recertification application review. The committee will review program

title, program provider and program length in contact hours for appropriateness.

To obtain credit for the self-directed programs, individuals must contact ACHE for pre-approval to determine if the program meets ACHE standard for self-directed Category II credit.

b. OTHER.

(1) GENERAL. The requirement of continuing education for purposes of advancement and recertification including attendance at Category I education programs is applied uniformly and no waiver can be made based on formal academic education programs in lieu of the currently required attendance at Category I education programs, except as may be applicable for specific recertification purposes.

(2) ACCEPTABLE EXPERIENCE/EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS. The present criteria for an eligible position and for longevity of position will be maintained as well as the criteria for continuing education; thus, pursuit of a doctoral program is not acceptable as management experience time, nor position, nor does it fulfill the requirement of a personal program of continuing education.

(3) COMPANY-SPONSORED CONTINUING EDUCATION. Attendance at company-sponsored education programs does not fulfill the criteria for attendance at Category II education programs unless the program is presented by an external organization and meets the Credentials Committee criteria relative to program title, program provider and program length in contact hours for appropriateness.

6. ADMISSION OR ADVANCEMENT BY EXAMINATION. Under no circumstances will the Board of Governors Examination requirement be waived.

7. DATE OF ADVANCEMENT. Candidates who meet all requirements for advancement to the status Fellow will be granted Fellow status immediately. ACHE shall provide a certificate

attesting to such candidate's advancement to the status of Fellow.

8. ELIGIBLE LONGEVITY. Periods of inactive status may not be used in computing the length of time a member has held a certain membership status.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

1. IDENTIFICATION—KEY AND DESIGNATIONS

a. Fellows may wear the official key of ACHE.

b. Fellows are encouraged to use the designation "FACHE" following their names on official stationery, articles for publication, and on other appropriate occasions, and may use the FACHE mark in accordance with the policies of ACHE. Members are not privileged to use this designation or mark, nor any similar designation or mark.

c. Life Fellows are permitted to use the designation "LFACHE" following their names. Retired Fellows are permitted to use the designation "FACHE(R)" following their names.

d. If a Fellow is suspended, expelled or for any other reason is no longer a member, the key shall be returned, and the use of the related designation and mark shall be discontinued.

2. ACHE YEAR. The ACHE year begins with adjournment of the Council of Regents annual meeting. Length of time an affiliate is deemed to have held a certain membership status in ACHE is based on the date on which the applicant was admitted, advanced or recertified.

3. ANNUAL DUES. Assessment of dues for new Members will be on the basis of 1/12th of the annual dues per month, effective the first of the month following the month in which Member status is conferred. Fellow dues become effective January 1 following the year in which Fellow status is granted.

4. WAIVER OF DUES FOR UNEMPLOYED AFFILIATES.

An unemployed affiliate (Member or Fellow) who is actively seeking employment as a healthcare executive—and who is not working in any paid capacity with a healthcare

organization—may, upon request, have dues waived while continuing to hold the same affiliate status for up to two years past the current year for which dues have been paid. This unemplyed dues waiver will be available only after the affiliate has paid consecutive full years of dues within the last two years.

5. LIFE STATUS. A Fellow who has 25 years of membership at the Member, Fellow and/or Retired status levels may request this privilege at his or her personal discretion upon retirement. Conferral of Life status is not automatic nor retroactive.

The Bylaws of ACHE authorize conferral of Life status under the policies approved by the Board of Governors. A Fellow may, of course, continue active status without regard to age. Life status (which is an active status) provides for continuation of all rights and privileges of ACHE (except that of being eligible to serve as a Governor or Regent or as an elected Officer) without payment of dues, provided that the Board of Governors may assess appropriate administrative fees payable by Life Fellows for materials and services provided to them, at their option, by ACHE. The purpose of Life status is to recognize the loyalty and support Fellows who reach retirement and no longer are involved with earning income from an eligible healthcare management position.

Any Fellow who has suffered a permanent disability and is unable to work full time is eligible for Life status, regardless of years of service.

6. ACTIVE/FORMER AFFILIATES
  - a. GENERAL. An affiliate shall be deemed active if he or she has paid all applicable dues and meets the standards, requirements and qualifications for his or her category of membership as set forth in these *Regulations Governing Admission, Advancement and Recertification* and the *Bylaws* of ACHE. Affiliates who do not meet the foregoing requirements are no longer affiliates of ACHE. In instances where the affiliate leaves the field of healthcare management, or for other valid reasons does not prefer to maintain active status, a request to be dropped may be made, while dues are in a paid condition, to the Board of Governors (see Interpretation 7). This request

may be made only while the affiliate is in good standing with paid dues.

## 7. REINSTATEMENT

- a. FORMER AFFILIATES—GENERALLY. Reinstatement to active status may be requested and may be granted when the former affiliate meets the applicable standards, requirements and qualifications for membership as set forth in these *Regulations Governing Admission, Advancement and Recertification* and the *Bylaws* of ACHE. If a former affiliate has not been active for the last five years, he or she may not reinstate and must reapply for admission to ACHE.
- b. DUES. Former affiliates may reinstate upon payment of prorated current year dues based on months in active status.
- c. PRIOR EXPULSION BY ETHICS ACTION. An individual who is expelled for ethical reasons may reapply to become a Member if the individual so wishes. ACHE shall handle, on an individual basis without obligation to reinstate an individual at a former level, such reapplications of admission from individuals who are expelled for ethical reasons.
- d. ETHICS COMMITTEE REVIEW. Where the affiliate discontinued his/her membership “under a cloud” of potential action by the Ethics Committee, or where the applicant was previously suspended for ethical reasons, the Ethics Committee will review the reinstatement request or application for membership and make a recommendation to support or deny reinstatement or admission. In the case where the affiliate was previously expelled, the Ethics Committee will first review the application for membership and make a recommendation to support or deny admission to the Board of Governors based on the applicant’s ethical conduct up to the time of the Ethics Committee review of the application.

8. GUIDANCE FOR ADVANCEMENT AND RECERTIFICATION. The relevant ACHE publication provides general guidance on advancement and recertification.

9. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION. Requests for information regarding any of the matters mentioned in this document may be directed to:

Division of Membership  
American College of Healthcare Executives  
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One North Franklin Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3529  
(312) 424-9400