



Certification Handbook

Certified Ayurvedic Health Counselor (CAHC)

Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner (CAP)

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PART ONE – INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

A. Purpose of the NAMACB Certification Handbook

The *NAMACB Certification Handbook* serves as the principal source of information for applicants seeking certification as an Ayurvedic Health Counselor or an Ayurvedic Practitioner. Among other things, it provides detailed information about certification requirements of the NAMA Certification Board (NAMACB), including eligibility requirements, application procedures, fees, exam registration, exam content, exam administration, the policy on accommodations for candidates who meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and professional ethics and disciplinary procedures.

NAMACB reserves the right to revise the handbook without notice at any time. Although the NAMACB strives to give applicants and certificate holders as much advanced notice as possible when policies and procedures change, it is the responsibility of the applicant to be fully informed about the current rules for applying for and maintaining certification. Please check the NAMACB website at www.namacb.org for any changes to NAMACB policies, requirements or forms that may have been made after this handbook was published.

B. Mission of NAMA and NAMACB

Founded in 1998, The National Ayurvedic Medical Association (NAMA) is a national organization representing the Ayurvedic profession in the United States. NAMA's mission is to preserve, protect, improve and promote the philosophy, knowledge, science and practice of Ayurveda for the benefit of humanity. More information on NAMA can be found at www.ayurvedanama.org.

To further its mission, NAMA established the NAMA Certification Board (NAMACB) in 2017 to:

- Develop and revise as needed standards, policies, and procedures for certifying Ayurvedic professionals;
- Process and review certification applications; and
- Oversee the administration of certification exams and
- Issue the certification credential.

The members of the NAMACB are appointed by the NAMA board of directors. While the NAMACB is housed within NAMA, it has autonomy in decision-making for all essential certification policies, procedures and activities.

The mission of the NAMA Certification Board is:

To promote the health and well-being of the public, ensure public safety, and advance the professional practice of Ayurvedic medicine by establishing and promoting nationally recognized Ayurvedic professional certification credentials that reflect evidence-informed standards of competence.

Currently, the NAMA Certification Board certifies the following two categories of Ayurvedic professionals:

- Ayurvedic Health Counselor
- Ayurvedic Practitioner

Certifications in development (Dates TBD):

- Ayurvedic Doctor

NAMACB certification means that a candidate has demonstrated the entry-level competencies for her/his category of practice by completing a NAMA-approved course of study and passing a rigorous certification exam, and is engaged in ongoing self-development as a professional through continuing education and other activities.

C. Non-Discrimination Policy

The NAMA Certification Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs, handicap, marital status, national origin or ancestry.

D. Code of Ethics

All professionals applying for certification who have been certified by the NAMA Certification Board must be committed to responsible and ethical practice, to supporting the development of the profession, and to their own professional growth. Applicants for certification and certified professionals agree to be bound by the NAMACB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. Refer to Appendix C of this handbook for the NAMACB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

E. About Certification and Licensure

Certification is a form of self-regulation by a profession. Generally, it is a voluntary program to evaluate practitioners in a particular profession or business that is provided by either (i) a private, nonprofit organization, or (ii) an autonomous component within a private nonprofit—as is the case with NAMACB. Certification is usually granted for a limited period of time and must be renewed.

Licensure is the process whereby a governmental unit (national, state or local) grants an individual permission to pursue an occupation or carry out a business subject to governmental regulation. Those who practice without a license or whose conduct violates a jurisdiction's licensing law may risk punishment, though many U.S. states now tacitly allow unlicensed healthcare practitioners—such as homeopaths and Ayurvedic professionals—to practice. In some states, there are “health freedom laws” that give legal status to unlicensed professionals, provided they comply with the provisions of the law.

It is important to note that certification in a professional field is not the same as licensure, and does not in any way indicate a legal right to practice a profession. Ayurvedic medicine is not yet a licensed profession in any U.S. jurisdiction, and NAMACB certification neither guarantees the ability to acquire a professional license nor even the right practice. For these reasons, it is important to use the correct terminology when referring to NAMACB certification or any license to practice issued by a U.S. jurisdiction. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of NAMACB-certified professionals to be aware of any legal constraints that may impact their ability to practice within a particular jurisdiction.

F. Benefits of NAMACB Certification

Earning NAMACB certification represents a significant professional achievement. As an emerging healthcare profession in the U.S., Ayurvedic medicine is not yet widely recognized. NAMACB certification is the first well-established credentialing process for Ayurvedic medicine in the U.S.; as such, it provides one of the few means by which clients, healthcare entities, government agencies and others can determine whether individual professionals are qualified.

NAMACB certification allows you to join NAMA as a Professional Member and be listed in the Find a Professional Directory on the NAMA website, which provides client and professional referrals. The Directory is a valuable resource for those seeking an Ayurvedic professional who is NAMACB-certified. NAMACB-certified professionals may also use the appropriate NAMACB certification mark in printed and electronic media, and may publicly display their certificate.

NAMACB certification also opens up significant opportunities for involvement in the profession; among other things. Again, only NAMACB-certified professionals are eligible for NAMA Professional Membership. NAMA Professional Members may:

- Run for and serve on the NAMA Board of Directors;
- Serve on NAMA committees, task forces and panels; and
- Participate in national board examination development activities.

G. Use of the Certification Mark

The following are certification marks issued by the NAMACB:

Ayurvedic Health Counselor



Ayurvedic Practitioner



Use of the NAMACB certification marks is limited to those individuals who are NAMACB-certified in good standing. Each NAMACB-certified professional is authorized to use only the certification mark that represents the credential s/he has been awarded and continues to maintain, and is responsible for using and displaying the certification mark in accordance with NAMACB's Policy on the Use of the NAMACB Certification Credential and Service Mark—see Appendix B.

H. Contacting the NAMACB

Most information needed by applicants is readily available on the NAMACB website www.namacb.org. The website contains information that will assist applicants and candidates in moving through the application and examination processes. Applicants are encouraged to take advantage of the many resources available on the NAMACB website, and to contact NAMACB staff with specific questions if they cannot find the information they need.

NAMACB staff may be reached by phone at (213) 628-6291 or namacb@ayurvedanama.org. It is the policy of the NAMACB that email and voicemail messages will be answered within 72 hours. All correspondence and document hard copies may be mailed to: 8605 Santa Monica Blvd, #46789, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

PART TWO –APPLICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

It is important to note that eligibility requirements (e.g., educational requirements) to become authorized to take the certification exam and certification requirements (e.g., passing a certification exam)—which must be fulfilled before certification can be awarded—are two different elements in the certification process.

Once your application is approved and you have been issued an Authorization to Test email, you will not be required to meet any new **eligibility** requirements that may be adopted following the date when your application is approved.

A. Steps in Achieving Initial Certification via Examination

The following summarizes the steps from submitting an application to becoming an Ayurvedic certified professional.

1. The applicant submits a certification application and non-refundable application fee of \$75 and required supporting documentation;¹
2. The NAMACB reviews the application and documentation and determines whether the applicant is **eligible** to take the certification exam for the category of professional for which the applicant applied.
3. If the applicant is eligible to take the certification exam, the NAMACB issues an “Authorization to Test” email to the applicant, who is now a **candidate** for certification.
4. The candidate then pays the remaining exam fee and schedules a time to take the certification exam (see PART FOUR, A-D); and
5. If the candidate passes the exam, the NAMACB issues the certification credential.

B. General Application Submission Information

To apply, an applicant must first complete the online certification application form, which can be done by visiting www.namacb.org. Required application fee of \$75 may either be paid online using a credit card or by check mailed to the NAMACB. A completed application (including any required supporting documents) must be submitted in order to be reviewed by NAMACB for eligibility to sit for the certification examination. As a condition of applying, the applicant must authorize NAMACB to obtain additional

¹ If the candidate is from a non-NAMA recognized school, the exam application fee is \$125. NAMA recognized schools' programs have been reviewed and are recognized by NAMA as providing training at the Professional Membership level and meet or exceed NAMA's educational competencies. See www.ayurvedanama.org/educational-program-listings.

information, if necessary, from third parties to determine eligibility for certification. Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring that NAMACB receives all required documentation and fees.

All documents that have a signature line requirement may only be signed manually or digitally.

Note that submission of an application does not guarantee that an applicant is eligible to take an examination. Each applicant must meet all eligibility requirements for the type of certification being sought.

C. Eligibility Requirements

To become eligible to take the applicable exam the candidates must meet the following requirements:

Ayurvedic Health Counselor

- Graduate from a U.S. based qualifying program* that is at least 600 hours and meets the Educational Requirements as laid out in the AHC Educational Outline for Competencies available at www.namacb.org
- Provide proof of education that meets the eligibility requirements above.
- Payment of \$300 due at time of registration.

Ayurvedic Practitioner

- Graduate from a U.S. based qualifying program* that is at least 1,500 hours and meets the Educational Requirements as laid out in the AP Educational Outline for Competencies available at www.namacb.org
- Provide proof of education that meets the eligibility requirements above.
- Payment of \$375 due at time of registration.

* BAMS graduates residing in the U.S. qualify to apply for any of the NAMACB Exams

D. Document Guidelines

The following rules apply to all supporting documents submitted as part of the certification application:

1. The application form and supporting documents must contain the applicant's name as it appears on legal documents, such as a driver's license or passport. Supporting documents that do not contain the applicant's name exactly as it appears on legal documents may not be

matched with the correct person or application. Except for very minor variations (e.g., “Jon” for “Jonathan”), the NAMACB will not accept supporting documents with a name that is different from the name on the application form unless evidence of a legal name change is provided.

2. Applicants are responsible for maintaining a copy of all documents submitted to the NAMACB as part of the application.
3. If mailing hard copies of documents, the applicant should use a mail service such as USPS, UPS or FedEx that can track whether they have been successfully delivered. The NAMACB is not responsible for lost or undelivered documents.
4. All supporting documents must have been created in English or be accompanied by an official, literal English translation.
5. Documents submitted as part of the application will be retained in NAMACB’s files and will not be returned. Make sure to copy all documents before sending them to NAMACB.
6. Do not send irreplaceable originals of certificates, diplomas, or other documents; notarized photocopies of these documents are acceptable. However, official academic transcripts must be sent directly from the applicant’s school to the NAMACB.
7. The NAMACB requires all documents to be accurate and truthful. Falsification, misrepresentation or omission of any material fact required on the application or during the certification process are grounds for denial of the application, as well as for denial or revocation of certification.

The NAMACB verifies the authenticity of all documents, including foreign and/or translated education documents, before determining an applicant’s eligibility to take the exam. Since this verification process takes time, applicants who are using documentation from outside the United States or documentation that is translated from another language are encouraged to apply well in advance of the date they wish to take examination. Submission of an application does not automatically guarantee eligibility to take an examination on any particular date.

E. Application Timeframes

The NAMACB informs an applicant within a week of receipt of the application. If the application is incomplete, NAMACB will contact the applicant regarding any information and/or documentation that is missing and is needed to complete the application. The NAMACB holds all properly identified documents that arrive before the actual application and fee payment is received for a period of up to six months.

Applicants have one-year from the time they submit their application and \$75 fee to submit all required documentation and take the exam. If the applicant fails to submit all required documentation and take the exam within one-year, the application lapses and all fees are forfeited.

Applicants should allow one to three weeks for NAMACB staff to review completed applications and generate the Authorization to Test email if the applicant meets the eligibility requirements. Actual processing time may vary significantly in individual cases. Applicants have one-year from the date their application is submitted in which to achieve initial certification. After one year, if the applicant has not achieved certification, they must reapply as a new applicant subject to all certification requirements in place at that time.

If a participant is not successful in achieving certification on their first attempt, they must wait a three-month period before taking the exam again. There is no limit to the number of times a candidate may take a NAMA certification exam within the four-year period after their first unsuccessful attempt. However, they must honor the three-month period between each exam attempt. After the four-year period has passed since initial attempt for NAMACB examination, the candidate will not be given any subsequent opportunities to retake the exam in question, and thus may not reapply to take the exam.

F. Health and Legal Status Information for All Applicants

The application contains several questions about the applicant's current health, legal status and history. Applicants are required to respond to all questions completely and truthfully, and to provide additional information if necessary. If an applicant answers "yes" to any of the legal or health status questions, an applicant must provide related documentation. All records maintained by NAMACB are confidential and will be released only through written request of an applicant or as required by law. Prior legal or health status issues may not necessarily disqualify a candidate from obtaining NAMACB certification. If the circumstances do not appear to compromise the applicant's ability to practice and relevant documentation has been received, the application will move forward in the eligibility process. In a case where a determination cannot be made by NAMACB staff, an application will be forwarded to the NAMACB Eligibility Committee.

PART THREE – CERTIFICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Name Change

If the applicant's/certificate holder's name has changed, the NAMACB must be informed in writing. Notification of the name change must include:

1. Name Change Request Form available at www.namacb.org;
2. A notarized copy of the court order or other document authorizing or verifying the name change (i.e., marriage license, divorce decree, etc.); and
3. A notarized copy of a government issued photo ID (i.e., driver's license, passport) containing the new name.

If a certificate holder wishes to replace her/his current certificate with a new certificate containing the name change, s/he must return the current certificate along with payment of the certificate replacement fee.

B. Accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The NAMACB provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations in accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) for individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodation. The ADA defines a person with a disability as an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Problems such as English as a second language, test anxiety or slow reading without an identified underlying physical or mental deficit, or failure to achieve a desired outcome, are generally not covered by the ADA.

If you have a documented disability recognized under the ADA and require testing accommodations, you must:

1. At the time you submit your NAMACB application and prior to scheduling a testing appointment indicate that you are requesting testing accommodations. You must submit the Special Accommodations Request (SAR) form and the supporting documentation. The process is not complete until you have submitted all materials. You will not be allowed to schedule a testing appointment until the NAMACB has reviewed and made a decision regarding your SAR, which takes approximately 30 days from the date that NAMACB receives all required materials.

Please note: Testing accommodations cannot be added to a previously scheduled testing appointment. If you schedule a testing appointment before the approval of testing accommodations, you will be required to reschedule the appointment.

2. Submit the following documents via mail, email or fax:
 - a. Special Accommodations Request (SAR) Form (which can be found at www.namacb.org), describing the disability and the specific need for accommodations. Accommodations requested should reflect the identified disability.
 - b. Current Evaluation Report (within the past five years) from the appropriate licensed professional. The document must be on official letterhead, and include the professional's credentials, signature, address, and telephone number. The licensed professional should have a "professional/clinical relationship" with the candidate, having treated and/or consulted with the candidate within the last five (5) years. Based on the type of disability, some documentation may be outdated or inadequate in scope or content; in such cases, NAMACB may request an updated report. The report should include the following information:
 - The specific diagnostic procedures or tests administered.
 - The results of the diagnostic procedures and/or tests and a comprehensive interpretation of the results.
 - The specific diagnosis of the disability, with an accompanying description of the examinee's limitations due to the disability.
 - A summary of the complete evaluation with recommendations for the specific accommodations.

Upon receipt of these materials, NAMACB will determine whether they are sufficient for making a decision regarding examination accommodations. If they are insufficient, NAMACB will inform the applicant of what additional materials must be submitted. If they are sufficient, NAMACB will inform the applicant of its decision regarding accommodations, and also will inform the testing service (KRYTERION, Inc.) of which accommodations to provide.

Note that KRYTERION needs a minimum of 30 days advanced notice of any special accommodations to be provided at a testing site, so applicants are encouraged to request accommodations at the time they apply to take the certification exam. NAMACB has sole discretion to determine the sufficiency of materials submitted and whether accommodations will be provided.

C. Disciplinary Action and Reporting

The NAMACB seeks to protect the public interest by establishing and maintaining the highest ethical and competency standards. In the event that an applicant for certification has a record of prior disciplinary action, the NAMACB Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel (EDRP) will review the matter, and has the discretion to deny the application. Disciplinary action that will be reviewed by the EDRP includes, but is not limited to:

1. Misrepresentation of any item on the application.
2. Conviction of a criminal felony that may indicate lack of moral fitness to practice a healthcare profession/healing art.
3. Having been judged liable in a judicial or administrative proceeding based upon allegations relating to professional competence or other conduct related to a healthcare profession/healing art.
4. Currently facing a limitation, suspension, or revocation of a license to practice a healthcare profession in any U.S. state or jurisdiction, or action based upon a violation of a federal or state law or regulation that relates to a health-related profession.

The Certified professional agrees to abide by the NAMACB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, and may be disciplined by NAMACB in the event that they violate this code; see Appendix C for information on NAMACB's disciplinary policies and procedures. In cases where final disciplinary action has been imposed by the Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel on a NAMACB-certified professional, the professional's name and sanction will be made public via the NAMACB website. Information regarding final disciplinary actions taken by the EDRP will be reported to regulatory agencies, as may be appropriate. In the case of a voluntary surrender of a certificate by a certificate holder, NAMACB may communicate the fact and date of the resignation to regulatory agencies, as may be appropriate. In addition to disclosures required by law, NAMACB reserves the right to disclose final disciplinary actions to any regulatory agency, employers, insurers and the general public to protect the public interest.

D. Confidentiality

The NAMACB respects the privacy of applicants, candidates and certificate holders. All materials submitted or received in connection with applications and exam scores are held in confidence, and will only be released (i) upon permission from the applicant, candidate or certificate holder, or (ii) as required by law, including disclosure to governmental agencies upon appropriate written request.

E. The NAMACB Registry of Certified Professionals

As noted above, NAMACB maintains, via the NAMA website, a directory of Certified NAMA Professional Members; the Directory is accessible by the public and contains the following information:

1. Name
2. Professional contact information
3. Type of certification
4. Original certification date
5. Date of most recent recertification

F. Copies of Submitted Applications

Individuals may request in writing a copy of their application and any supporting materials they submitted; however, NAMACB will not release memoranda, correspondence or other documents pertaining to an application unless required to do so by law. There is a charge for this copy service (see Apx. A, Sec. A., Application Fee).

G. Authorizing an Agent

Applicants, candidates and certificate holders who wish to authorize another person to serve as their agent in contacting NAMACB must submit a signed and notarized request in writing. For security reasons, all individuals who contact NAMACB will be asked for identifying information before NAMACB releases any personal information.

H. Exam Results and Certification Verification Form

Professionals who wish to have their official exam results and/or certification verification sent to an outside entity must submit an Exam Results and Certification Verification Form to the NAMACB along with the certification verification fee. The form can be found on the NAMACB website, www.namacb.org; normally, it takes 7 to 10 business days to process a request.

I. Eligibility Decision Appeal Process

The NAMACB will deny an application to take the certification exam from an applicant who does not meet NAMACB's published eligibility requirements. An applicant who fails to meet the eligibility requirements for certification is notified in writing by email, and is informed of the reason(s) for the denial. An applicant may appeal a decision to deny if s/he believes the decision is mistaken.

To initiate the appeal process, an applicant must submit a written appeal letter along with any supporting documentation within 30 days of the notification of denial of the

application; the appeal letter should state with specificity why the applicant believes s/he does, in fact, meet the eligibility requirements. As a first step in the appeal process, the NAMACB director (or designee) will review the appeal letter and documentation for any potential inaccuracies and/or miscalculations in determining the applicant's eligibility. If based on this review the denial is reversed, the applicant will be allowed to continue in the certification process.

If the denial of the application is upheld based on NAMACB's eligibility requirements, the appeal will be presented to the NAMACB Eligibility Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Eligibility Committee will review the candidate's appeal, qualifications, documentation and any other pertinent materials, and will make a determination on the applicant's eligibility for certification. The Eligibility Committee may, at its discretion, refer the matter to the full NAMACB Board of Directors for its review and decision. The applicant will be notified in writing of the decision within 30 days of the meeting, and the reason(s) for the denial will be provided. The decision of the Eligibility Committee (or Board of Directors, if applicable) is final and cannot be appealed.

J. Issuing the Certification

A candidate is not considered certified—and may not represent or advertise NAMACB certification—until he or she has received official notification from the NAMACB of having been certified. Processing of the certification takes four to six weeks once all of the documentation and examination requirements are fulfilled.

When certification is awarded, candidates will receive a NAMACB certificate suitable for framing, and a letter specifying the date the candidate passed the exam (i.e., the actual certification date), as well as information on how to access and display the NAMACB certification service mark. This letter will also contain the official certification expiration certification renewal fee and when it is due. The candidate's certification number is contained on her/his NAMACB certificate.

It is critical that the certified professional make note of her/his certification date. Her/his certification date is the date that determines when her/his certification renewal fee is due.²

K. Maintaining Certification

² For example, if one's certification date is July 1, 2020, then one's certification renewal fee is due no later than July 1, 2021, July 1, 2022, etc. NAMA Professional Members have their certification renewal fee paid through their NAMA dues.

NAMACB certification is granted for a 1-year period from the certified professional's certification date. Once an individual is board certified, they may choose to become a NAMA Professional Member or a Certified Non-Member³ ⁴. The professional's certification date becomes their NAMA Professional Membership dues date, or certification renewal fee date.

The certified professional will be sent a reminder to renew 30 days and again 7 days prior to their renewal due date. It is incumbent upon the professional to ensure that their account is maintained with an active email address.

To maintain certification, the certified professional must pay their NAMA Professional Membership dues or certification renewal fee by their certification date no later than the professional's certification date starting in year two, **and** meet NAMACB's biennial continuing education requirement (see below). There is no grace period for either.

The purpose of the continuing education requirement is to ensure that professionals certified by NAMACB maintain continued professional competency by regularly engaging in professional development activities.

If a NAMA Professional Member leaves Professional Membership, then they must pay their certification renewal fee the next time it is due.

NAMACB follows the Professional Ayurvedic Continuing Education (PACE) cycle. A PACE cycle is a two-year period starting January 1 of an even year to December 31 of the following odd year.

The following are the NAMACB's biennial continuing education requirements.

- **Certified Professionals** are required to complete 30 credits every two years, with the following distribution of credits:
 - Ethics Quiz (Required): 2 credits
 - Topics in Ayurveda: 28 credits maximum
 - Topics in Sister Sciences: 15 credits maximum
 - Topics in Wellness: 10 credits maximum
 - Teaching in Ayurveda: 20 credits maximum
 - Volunteer Service: 28 credits maximum
 - Publishing Peer-Reviewed Article in Ayurveda: 15 credits maximum

³ A Certified Non-Member is a board certified Ayurvedic professional who is not a NAMA Professional Member.

⁴ If the newly certified professional chooses to become a NAMA Professional Member, he or she must pay his or her NAMA Professional Member dues within 45 days of his or her certification date or the newly certified professional reverts to Certified Non-Member and loses any first year dues discount offered by NAMA.

- Publishing General Articles in Ayurveda: 5 credits maximum
- Publishing Textbook in Ayurveda: 28 credits maximum
- Publishing Non-Textbook in Ayurveda: 15 credits maximum
- Publishing Chapter in Textbook: 10 credits maximum
- Publishing Chapter in Non-Textbook: 5 credits maximum

Note that one credit is equivalent to one clock-hour of continuing education, with some exceptions.

More detailed information on how certified professionals may satisfy the NAMACB continuing education requirements for recertification is available on the NAMACB website, www.namacb.org/maintain-certification.

L. Change of Personal Information

NAMACB-certified professionals are required to notify NAMACB of any changes to their personal information as published on the NAMACB website or otherwise provided to the public as soon as they have knowledge of such changes. The NAMACB only posts contact information provided by certified professionals on the NAMACB Directory of Certified Professionals and is not responsible for incorrect information. Note that certified professional may also choose not to have their contact information made available on the Directory.

M. Expiration of Eligibility to Sit for Certification Exam

A candidate has unlimited attempts to pass the certification examination within three years of the issuance of the Authorization to Test email. If a candidate fails the certification exam, he or she must wait at least three months before retaking the exam. If a candidate fails to achieve certification within the four-year time period, his or her eligibility lapses.

N. Denial of Eligibility to Sit for Certification Exam

The candidate must notify the NAMACB of any legal action or investigation by a licensing board or other legal entity. As noted earlier, NAMACB may deny permission to take the certification exam for any of the following reasons:

1. Misrepresentation of any item on the application.
2. Conviction of a criminal felony that may indicate lack of moral fitness to practice a healthcare profession/healing art.
3. Having been judged liable in a judicial or administrative proceeding based upon allegations relating to professional competence or other conduct related to a healthcare profession/healing art.

4. Currently facing a limitation, suspension, or revocation of a license to practice healthcare in any United States state or jurisdiction, or action based upon a violation of a federal or state law or regulation that relates to a health-related profession.

O. Conversion from an Ayurvedic Health Counselor Certification to an Ayurvedic Practitioner Certification

An NAMACB-certified Ayurvedic Health Counselor who subsequently completes additional training at the Ayurvedic Practitioner level may apply to take the Ayurvedic Practitioner Certification Exam. In the event that the person passes the exam, he or she will relinquish her NAMACB-certified Ayurvedic Health Counselor status and will be granted NAMACB-certified Ayurvedic Practitioner status in its stead, including the right to use the Ayurvedic Practitioner Certification Mark. An application form for this purpose can be downloaded from the NAMACB website, and provide proof from the school of training at the Ayurvedic Practitioner level. (Note that an individual who has let their Ayurvedic Health Counselor certification lapse will be required to submit the full application for Ayurvedic Practitioner Certification, including all required documentation.) This will also apply to those moving from Ayurvedic Practitioner up to Ayurvedic Doctor.

PART FOUR – EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

A. Authorization to Test

Once the NAMACB has completed the review of a certification application and has approved the applicant to take the certification exam, the NAMACB issues an “Authorization to Test” email informing the applicant that s/he is now a candidate for certification. NAMACB provides information on how register to take the certification exam using NAMACB’s online system—the NAMACB Webassessor Scheduling System (which is maintained by the KRYTERION, Inc., the certification testing service). As noted above, candidates have unlimited attempts to pass the certification exam over the course of four years, and to satisfy any other conditions of certification in effect at the time the exam is taken. The four-year period starts as of the date of the Authorization to Test email.

B. Test Taker Account

For a candidate to register to take the certification exam, s/he must create a Test Taker Account using the Webassessor Scheduling System. Once the Test Taker Account is created, the candidate may access, via the Webassessor system, information on

available locations and times for taking the exam, schedule the exam at a time and location that is convenient for the candidate, and pay the required fee to take the exam.

Upon registering to take an exam, the Webassessor system automatically sends to the candidate an email communication that contains a “Test Authorization Code”; this code is required to take the exam at the location and time selected by the candidate. The email also contains information on how to reschedule and/or cancel the exam appointment, should that be necessary.

C. Exam Locations and Times

The NAMACB has arranged with KRYTERION, Inc., a certification testing service, to administer the NAMACB certification exams. KRYTERION has testing centers located throughout the United States and abroad and an online proctoring system. Information on testing centers and times is available through the Webassessor Scheduling System.

D. Examination Preparation and Study Guide

Like certification exams in other professional fields, the NAMACB certification exam is demanding, and candidates are advised to thoroughly prepare for the exam well in advance of taking it. NAMACB has developed a study guide (“NAMACB Certification Exam Study Guide”) that covers both the Ayurvedic Health Counselor and Ayurvedic Practitioner Certification Exams. The study guide outlines the examination content and includes a bibliography of suggested resources; a PDF of the study guide can be downloaded from www.namacb.org/exam-study-guides

E. Computer Delivery of Exam

NAMACB certification examinations are delivered at KRYTERION testing centers via computer terminals supplied by KRYTERION; no skills other than those typically associated with computer use are needed take the exam. The candidate will receive a brief orientation to the testing environment prior to the start of the exam.

The computer program allows candidates to page through the exam one item at a time, return to previous questions, and change responses, if desired. The program can return to unanswered items with the click of a button. A clock is always visible on the screen, indicating the time remaining for the exam. The computer automatically terminates the examination at the end of the specified time limit for the exam.

F. Procedures at the Examination Site

1. Checking In

Candidates must arrive at the KRYTERION testing center at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam for purposes of checking in and orientation. At the time of arrival, the candidate must provide the exam proctor with the following:

- The “Test Taker Authorization Code” contained in the Authorization to Test email. The proctor cannot allow the candidate to take the exam without the Test Taker Authorization Code.
- Two (2) forms of current identification: a primary (photo) ID and a secondary ID:
 - Primary forms of photo identification include:
 - Government (local, state, province or country) issued driver’s license or identification card
 - Passport
 - Military identification
 - National identification card
 - Secondary forms of identification include:
 - Bank debit or credit card
 - Employee identification card
 - Student identification card
 - Membership card in an organization or business

The first and last name on the pieces of identification must be the same as the first and last name on the application form (note that minor variations, such as “Jon” instead of “Jonathan,” or the use of a middle name is acceptable if it is clear that the ID pertains to the applicant).

2. No Shows and Cancellations

The candidate may cancel or reschedule a test session at an onsite test center up to 72 hours (3 days) in advance. Please note that under all circumstances the initial application fee of \$75 is non-refundable. Test fees, vouchers or coupons used to pay for the exam will not be refunded for sessions cancelled within 72 hours.

G. Special Accommodations

It is the candidate’s responsibility to request any special accommodations in accordance with NAMACB policies and procedures; see the section above—“Accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)”—for more information. If a candidate is approved to for special accommodations, NAMACB will inform the testing service (KRYTERION, Inc.) directly regarding the accommodations to be provided at the testing site location on the date the exam is scheduled.

H. Security

KRYTERION exam administration and security standards are designed to ensure that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, and that the integrity of the exam is protected. The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- Examinations are proprietary. No cameras, tape recorders, watches, cell phones or other electronic devices may be on the candidate's person during the exam, and failure to observe this policy will result in dismissal from the examination.
- No guests, visitors or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.

I. Personal Belongings

Generally speaking, no personal items, valuables, or weapons may be brought into the testing room, and applicants are encouraged to leave as many of the personal belongings they normally carry at home or in their car. Coats and hats (other than religious or ceremonial headwear) must be left outside the testing room. You will be provided a space to securely store any personal items such as keys, wallets, purses, watches and turned-off cell phones during the exam administration, but you will not have access to these items until after the examination is completed. Once you have placed all personal items into the storage space, you will be asked to turn out any pockets on clothing to ensure they are empty.

Test Takers who are wearing external eyewear are required to present the eyewear to an onsite proctor for physical examination to ensure the eyewear does not have embedded technology such as a camera, microphone, cellular technology, etc. The eyewear will be returned upon completion of the inspection

If any non-allowed personal items are observed in the testing room after the examination is started, the exam administration will be immediately stopped, and the candidate will forfeit the exam fee and may, depending on the circumstances, be prohibited from subsequently retaking the exam.

J. Severe Weather and Other Emergencies

In the event of severe weather, unforeseen emergencies or other circumstances that may necessitate cancellation of the exam, NAMACB and KRYTERION will determine whether to cancel the examination administration at a particular testing center. The examination will not be rescheduled if the testing center is able to open or if an alternate convenient test location is available. If there is any question about the possibility of a

cancellation, contact the KRYTERION Support Team at (800) 403-6199 for information. Should an examination be cancelled, candidates scheduled for that site will receive notification regarding rescheduling the examination date. Additional examination fees will not be incurred if your exam is cancelled by NAMACB or KRYTERION.

K. Translators

Translators are not available or permitted at any testing center.

L. Childcare

Childcare is not provided at any testing center.

M. Clothing

Candidates are advised to wear clothing that will be comfortable for various temperature conditions at the testing center.

N. Examination Restrictions

The following examination restrictions apply:

- Pencils will be provided during check-in.
- At the start of the exam, you will be provided with three blank sheets of scratch paper to use during the examination, unless otherwise noted on the sign-in roster for a particular candidate; all sheets of scratch paper are numbered and initialed by the proctor. During the exam, you may request additional scratch paper, if needed. You must return every sheet of scratch paper to the proctor at the completion of testing or your exam will not be processed. Scratch paper is shredded immediately following the end of the exam.
- No documents or notes of any kind may be brought into or removed from the testing center.
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Eating, drinking, and smoking are not permitted at any time in the testing center.
- You may take a break whenever you wish, but you will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks.

O. Misconduct

KRYTERION proctors observe candidates during the exam. If you engage in misconduct during the examination, you may be required to immediately stop work on the exam and leave the testing center, in which case your exam will not be processed, your results will not be reported, and the examination fees will not be refunded. The following are examples of misconduct:

- Giving or receiving assistance of any kind to or from another Test Taker during the test session.
- Using any prohibited test aids (e.g., study guides not permitted by the test sponsor).
- Attempting to take the test for someone else.
- Attempting to remove scratch paper from the testing center.
- Talking in the test area during the test session.
- Distracting or disturbing other Test Takers in any way during the test session, or being abusive or otherwise uncooperative.
- Tampering with the operation of the computer or attempting to use it for any purpose other than taking the test.
- Using unauthorized personal items during the test session (e.g. portable electronic devices such as a cell phone or tablet, etc.).
- Any other action that may compromise the integrity of the exam.

P. Nondisclosure Agreement

All candidates are required to sign a nondisclosure agreement prior to taking the exam, and are prohibited from recording exam content in any format and from discussing or otherwise disseminating to any other person, organization, or entity information about the NAMACB exam questions. Candidates who violate the security of the exam will have their exam terminated, and will be subject to the NAMACB Disciplinary Policy. Should a violation come to light after a candidate is certified, the NAMACB has discretion to revoke certification status.

Q. Cancellation of Exam Scores

NAMACB reserves the right, at its discretion, to cancel any examination score if, in the sole opinion of NAMACB, there is adequate reason to question its validity. In such a case, NAMACB may, at its sole discretion: 1) offer the individual an opportunity to take the examination again at no additional fee; 2) offer the individual an opportunity to take the examination with the individual being responsible for any test related fees; or 3) review the matter in accordance with the NAMACB Disciplinary Policy.

R. Examination Results

The official examination results (pass/fail) will be emailed to candidates. Candidates who fail the exam are provided feedback about their performance in relation to the passing standard, as well as any guidance about limitations in interpreting and using that feedback.

S. Examination Content Complaints

Candidates may submit concerns, alleged errors regarding specific questions, and/or comments about specific aspects of the examination content in writing to NAMACB within 30 days of taking the exam. Please be as specific as possible when challenging a question(s) for the committee to review. The written complaint must include candidate's name, address, test date and location, type of examination, and a description of the specific examination question(s) or concern(s). Candidates may also file an incident report with the proctor at the testing center or notify the proctor about the area of concern. If filing an incident report, the candidate must submit the report number in all correspondence with NAMACB. Failing an examination alone is not sufficient grounds to submit an appeal.

Complaints will be presented to the NAMACB Examination Committee for a final determination. If a question that is reviewed is found to be flawed, the candidate's exam will be rescored. The candidate will be notified in writing within 45 days of any resulting action of the inquiry. No information regarding the specific question will be discussed with candidates. The NAMACB never releases copies of examinations or individual exam questions. It is important to refrain from discussing content of the exam questions with anyone other than with the NAMACB, since that would be a violation of the non-disclosure agreement.

If a candidate is not satisfied with the decision of the Examination Committee, the candidate may appeal the Pass/Fail status decision by sending a letter directly to the NAMACB describing the rationale for filing the appeal. The NAMACB must receive the examination appeal within 30 days of the candidate's receipt of Examination Committee's decision. The NAMACB Board of Directors will review the appeal request at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The candidate will be notified of the Board's decision within 30 days after the board meeting at which the appeal was considered.

T. Rules Regarding Retakes

Candidates who fail the NAMACB examination and wish to retake it must wait at least three months from the previous test date. Candidates will not be allowed to reschedule their examination prior to the three-month period for any reason. The NAMACB encourages candidates to obtain remedial education prior to retaking the exam.

There is no limit to the number of times a candidate may take a NAMA certification exam after their first unsuccessful attempt within the four-year period during which the Authorization to Test email is valid.

Retakes for exams are discounted from the original exam price (see prices below).

APPENDIX A: CERTIFICATION APPLICATION & CANDIDATE FEE SCHEDULE

A. Exam Fees

The fee to review an applicant's eligibility for certification is due when the application is submitted to NAMACB. All application fees are payable in United States dollars (\$) and are non-refundable, either by check or by credit card.

Graduates of NAMA recognized programs

Ayurvedic Health Counselor: \$375

- \$75 Non-refundable application fee to determine eligibility to sit for the exam
- \$300 Upon confirmation of eligibility, fee to schedule the exam

Ayurvedic Practitioner: \$450

- \$75 Non-refundable application fee to determine eligibility to sit for the exam
- \$375 Upon confirmation of eligibility, fee to schedule the exam

Ayurvedic Doctor:

- \$75 Non-refundable application fee to determine eligibility to sit for the exam
- \$450 Part One and Part Two purchased together; upon confirmation of eligibility, fee to schedule the exam; or
- \$125 Part Two only; upon confirmation of eligibility, fee to schedule the exam

Graduates of non-NAMA recognized programs

Ayurvedic Health Counselor: \$500

- \$75 Non-refundable application fee
- \$125 Non-refundable fee to review applicant's NAMACB non-NAMA recognized program form
- \$300 Upon confirmation of eligibility, fee to schedule the exam

Ayurvedic Practitioner: \$575

- \$75 Non-refundable application fee to determine eligibility to sit for the exam
- \$125 Non-refundable fee to review applicant's NAMACB non-NAMA recognized program form
- \$375 Upon confirmation of eligibility, fee to schedule the exam

Ayurvedic Doctor

- \$75 Non-refundable application fee
- \$125 Non-refundable fee to review applicant's NAMACB non-NAMA recognized program form
- \$450 Part One and Part Two purchased together; upon confirmation of eligibility, fee to schedule the exam; or
- \$125 Part Two only; upon confirmation of eligibility, fee to schedule the exam

Examination results are kept indefinitely for individuals who attain NAMACB certification, whether or not they maintain active certification status. For individuals who have taken the certification exam but who, for whatever reason, have not achieved certification or have let their certification lapse, NAMACB maintains exam results for a period of eight (8) years.

- Returned Check Fee: \$35
- Duplicate Certificate or ID Card Fee: \$30
- Fee for Copy of Records: \$15
- Submission of an Appeal (either for an eligibility decision or an exam issue): No Charge
- Certification renewal fee every year: \$50. (NAMA Professional Members' certification renewal fee is included with their membership dues. Certification renewal fee is waived in initial year of certification.)

Please note that all fees are subject to change without notice, and that the above information reflects fees in effect at the time this handbook was last updated. Check www.namacb.org for up-to-date fee information.

B. Refunds

Refunds will not be made for:

1. Absence from an examination administration for which the candidate registered.

2. Failure to properly reschedule or cancel testing appointment.
3. Involvement in cheating or fraud at any point in the application/certification process.
4. No refunds of any kind will be issued once an application has expired.

C. Forfeiture of Certification Fees

In the event of a fraudulent application, submission of fraudulent documents, introduction of fraud at any point in the application process, or cheating on any NAMACB examination, NAMACB reserves the right to withhold all submitted fees to offset any administrative or legal costs associated with the investigation and/or adjudication of the case.

APPENDIX B: POLICY ON THE USE OF THE NAMACB CERTIFICATION CREDENTIAL AND SERVICE MARK

The NAMACB professional certification is an important professional credential for Ayurvedic medicine professionals, and a significant indication of professional attainment. NAMACB has developed the certification credentials for the Ayurvedic Health Counselor and Ayurvedic Practitioner designations—as well as their respective service marks—so that the public, healthcare practitioners, healthcare organizations, governmental agencies, and other individuals and entities can readily identify Ayurvedic professionals who have attained certification status. To maintain the integrity of the certification credentials and service marks, NAMACB has adopted the following requirements for their use in promotional and other published materials.

A. Active Certification Status

An Ayurvedic professional who is NAMACB-certified and is in good standing is considered to have active certification status. S/he is allowed to:

- Refer to herself/himself as an “NAMACB-certified” Ayurvedic professional.
- Use the certification credential appropriate to her/his designation (i.e., Certified Ayurvedic Health Counselor or Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner) after her/his name and generally in any published materials.
- Display the following NAMACB-Certified Ayurvedic professional service marks (a copy of which NAMACB supplies upon granting certification):



Note that NAMACB has established the following requirements for the display of the NAMACB-Certified Ayurvedic professional service mark:

- The typeface used may not be altered.
- If printed in color, the colors used may not be altered from the color pallet used in the service marks supplied by the NAMACB.
- Nothing can be added to the service mark design such as a patterned background.

To remain in good standing, a certified professional must keep her/his certification active. Recertification requires payment of the certification renewal fee no later than the certified professional's certification renewal date **and** submitting all continuing education

requirements into the certified professional's account before the end of the PACE cycle December 31 of an odd year, 11:59 PM, Pacific Time. There is no grace period for either.

B. Lapsed, Inactive, and Terminated Status

1. Lapsed Status

In the event that a certified professional misses her/his certification renewal fee payment date, or misses submitting all required continuing education requirements into the certified professional's account by the end of the PACE cycle, the certification is moved to "lapsed" status, and the certified professional is required to adhere to the following policy to reactivate her/his certification.

a. Lapsed Status Terms:

1. A certified professional whose status has lapsed must return to active status within three (3) years of her/his last active certification expiration date or her/his NAMACB certification is terminated.
2. To return to active status within the 3-year window, the certified professional must provide evidence of completing continuing education and pay fees according to the table below (note that required fees and continuing education credits are not pro-rated).
3. If a certified professional is in lapsed status s/he may no longer refer to herself/himself as "NAMACB-certified," may no longer utilize the NAMACB logo, and may no longer publicly display her/his certificate.
4. Fee and Continuing Education Required Before Returning to Active Status

As stated above, a certified professional can fall into lapsed status by missing her/his certification renewal fee payment date, or not submitting all required continuing education requirements into her/his account by the end of the PACE cycle.

Because there is no grace period for either paying certification renewal fees or completing required CE, lapse period are as follows:

Lapse Period	Day(s)
Year-1	1-365
Year-2	366-730
Year-3	731-1,095

b. How to Return to Active Status

The certified professional who wishes to reactivate her/his lapsed certificate must (i) contact staff at namacb@ayurvedanama.org to learn one’s specific requirements of reactivation (ii) pay the required fee, and/or (iii) submit the required documentation for continuing education credits as applicable. Active status will be tied to the original certification date of the certificate holder.

If the professional falls into lapse status, then there is a \$50 penalty fee for each year lapsed. The penalty fee accumulates for each year lapsed. The certification renewal fee continues to accumulate for each year lapsed. To return to active status, all penalty fees and outstanding certification renewal fees must be paid, and all outstanding CE credits must be completed and submitted.

2. Inactive Status

A NAMACB-certified professional who is experiencing a serious, life-affecting circumstance and is not practicing as a board certified Ayurvedic professional may qualify for inactive status by meeting the qualifications below. Inactive professionals may return to active status at any time during the inactive period, provided all current recertification requirements are submitted to your account.

a. Inactive Status Qualifications

1. Reasons accepted for inactive status include circumstances such as personal and family medical issues, financial issues, etc.
2. A certified professional who wishes to apply for inactive status please contact staff at namacb@ayurvedanama.org for the link to the online application.

b. Inactive Status Terms

1. Certified professionals who are granted inactive status may not practice as a NAMACB board certified Ayurvedic professional during the inactive period.

2. During inactive status, the inactive professional loses all benefits and services of NAMACB certification including the use of the term “NAMACB-certified”, posting of the NAMACB service mark, posting of their NAMACB certificate, etc. NAMACB will, however, continue to send the same communications that are sent to certified professionals with active status.
3. Inactive status is valid for a period of up to two (2) years and may be renewed for one (1) additional two-year period. Contact staff at namacb@ayurvedanama.org to reapply. If inactive status is not renewed after two years or if certification is not renewed within four (4) years, the certification lapses, and the lapsed certification policy is applicable.

c. How to Return to Active Status

To return to active status, the certified professional must:

1. Pay any applicable Certification Renewal Fee(s).
2. Complete all necessary CE as applicable.

3. Terminated Status

A certified practitioner may face termination based upon:

- A disciplinary action; or
- Voluntarily surrendering her/his certification in response to a complaint; or
- Been in lapsed status for a period of more than three years.

A certified practitioner whose NAMACB certification was terminated based upon being in lapsed status for a period of more than three years must take and pass the certification exam to return to active status and pay the reinstatement application and examination fees.

A certified professional whose NAMACB certification was terminated based on a disciplinary action or due to voluntarily surrendering his or her certification in response to a complaint may apply to have his or her certification reinstated after a period of two years has elapsed.

a. Reinstatement Requirements:

1. The applicant must be free and clear of any and all disciplinary actions in the state(s) where he or she is practicing or has practiced.
2. Submission of a reinstatement application that (i) explains in detail the steps that the applicant has taken to address the prior complaint/disciplinary action, and (ii) explains to NAMACB's satisfaction why the issues underlying the original complaint/disciplinary action no longer apply. Granting reinstatement is solely at NAMACB's discretion.
3. Payment of the reinstatement fee and the regular recertification fee.
4. Completion of the continuing education required of a lapsed certified professional in the third year of lapsed status.
5. An applicant whose certification has been terminated for more than three years must take and pass the certification examination.

APPENDIX C: CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A. Introduction

All patients are entitled to expect high standards of practice and conduct from their Ayurvedic professionals. Essential elements of these standards are professional competence, good relationships with patients and colleagues, and observance of professional ethical obligations.

In the light of the above, this Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct has been established and will be regularly reviewed and updated by NAMACB to provide guidance for Ayurvedic professionals and protection for their patients. It also serves to explain to people outside the profession the high standards under which an Ayurvedic professional operates.

By becoming a board certified professional, the Ayurvedic professional agrees to be bound by this code. The NAMACB Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel has been entrusted with the task of monitoring any ethically unacceptable behavior that breaches this code and reflects negatively on the practice of Ayurveda or on NAMACB. Any allegations against board certified professionals will be examined by the NAMACB Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel, which will recommend a course of action to the NAMA Board for final disposition of the claims.

This Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct cannot list every possible situation that an Ayurvedic professional may face in practice. It therefore aims to provide general guidelines that clarify the minimum requirements for meeting the accepted standards of ethical conduct that Ayurvedic professionals should apply in their practice to ensure that the public interest and the needs of their patients come first at all times. In addition to protecting the well-being of patients and the public, the purpose of this code is to promote the well-being of the Ayurvedic professional, his or her colleagues, and the profession itself. An Ayurvedic professional's ability to follow these principles will demonstrate his or her level of competence and fitness to practice.

For additional guidance or clarity, board certified professionals are advised to consult the NAMACB Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel.

B. General Duties and Responsibilities of Ayurvedic Professionals

Patients expect that they can entrust their well-being to their Ayurvedic professionals. In order to justify that expectation, Ayurvedic professionals have a duty to maintain high standards of practice and care and to show utmost respect for life in all its aspects.

Board certified professionals are therefore expected to observe the following standards of behavior:

- Always practice in compliance with the philosophy and principles of Ayurveda
- Put the well-being of their patients before all other considerations
- Cultivate and promote their own personal development, well-being, and self-respect alongside their patients' welfare
- Be responsible for maintaining their own health and well-being
- Be honest and trustworthy and never abuse their professional position
- Cause no harm to patients and protect them from any risk of harm
- Treat all patients equally, regardless of their religion, nationality, race, culture, sex, politics, disability, sexual orientation, or social standing
- Respect the dignity, individuality, and privacy of patients
- Listen attentively to patients and respect their point of view
- Take the time to explain their findings and treatments to patients and to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that patients understand what they've been told
- Respect the right of patients to take part in decisions about their care and actively involve them in their Ayurvedic plan
- Respect the autonomy of patients and encourage their freedom of choice
- Ensure that their personal beliefs do not interfere with the care that they provide to their patients
- Respect and protect confidential information
- Recognize and always work within the limits of their professional competence
- Refer every patient whose condition is beyond their expertise to an appropriate health care practitioner or to a primary care doctor
- Be willing to consult and cooperate with colleagues both within the field of Ayurveda and in other health care disciplines
- Respond promptly and constructively to any criticism or complaint from any source
- Continue to update their professional knowledge and skills in accordance with standards currently being developed
- Make no claim for the cure of any specific illness or disease
- Refrain from using any titles or descriptions suggesting medical, academic, or educational qualifications that have not been officially acquired
- Comply with all applicable state and federal laws that affect their practice

Ayurvedic professionals must be familiar with all laws or regulations relevant to the practice of Ayurveda in the locality of their practice and to remain aware of any legal changes that may affect their practice.

C. Relationship with Patients

The relationship between an Ayurvedic professional and the patient is a professional relationship based on trust. To establish and maintain that trust, the professional must be polite, considerate, and honest. Good communication is paramount and requires the professional to listen attentively to patients, respect their point of view, and refrain from allowing his or her own beliefs and values to adversely influence the therapeutic relationship.

1. Consent

The Ayurvedic professional must respect the right of patients to be fully involved in decisions about their care. Patients are entitled to accept or refuse the professional's advice or treatment.

Before examining or treating a patient, the Ayurvedic professional must ensure that there has been informed consent to such activity. Informed consent occurs when communications between the Ayurvedic professional and the patient result in the patient's authorization or agreement to the specific activity being proposed (or the consent of the patient's health care surrogate if the patient lacks decision-making capacity, or declines to participate in decision making). Conversations regarding informed consent and the patient's decision should be documented in some manner in the patient record. As part of the informed consent, the Ayurvedic professional should assess the patient's ability to understand the information presented and make an independent, voluntary decision. The Ayurvedic professional should present relevant information accurately and sensitively, and with respect to the patient's preferences for receiving health care information. The Ayurvedic professional should advise the patient of (a) the diagnosis (when known); (b) the nature and purpose of the proposed activity; (c) the burdens, risks and expected benefits of the proposed activity; and (d) options to the proposed activity (including foregoing treatment).

Ayurvedic professional must understand and follow the informed consent laws of the state(s) in which they practice. Consent of a parent or legal guardian may be required prior to the treatment of a minor or developmentally disabled individual. Additionally, it may be necessary for the parent or the legally authorized guardian to be present throughout any examination or treatment.

2. Maintaining Trust

Trust in a patient-practitioner relationship is an essential part of the healing process. To establish and maintain trust, the Ayurvedic professional must:

- Be courteous and truthful
- Respect the privacy and dignity of patients
- Respect patients' right to decline to take part in teaching or research, and ensure that a patient's refusal to participate does not adversely affect the patient-practitioner relationship
- Respect the right of patients to a second opinion
- Ensure that patients have clear information about his or her practice arrangements and how they can contact him or her.

Other important aspects of establishing and maintaining trust are ethical boundaries, confidentiality, and good communication:

a. Ethical Boundaries

Professionals must not allow their personal relationships to undermine the trust that patients place in them. They may be called upon to treat someone who is a friend, or a client may become their friend. This is acceptable, provided both parties maintain a clear distinction between the social and the professional relationship.

In particular, Ayurvedic professionals must never use their professional position to establish or pursue a sexual relationship with a patient or someone close to the patient. If a professional realizes that he or she is becoming romantically or sexually involved with a patient, the professional relationship should be ended and the patient should be referred to an alternative source of appropriate care.

Practitioners must ensure that their behavior in dealing with patients is professional at all times and not open to misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Gestures, behavior, unnecessary physical contact, verbal suggestion, or innuendo can easily be construed as abusive or harassing.

If a patient shows signs of becoming inappropriately involved with his or her Ayurvedic care provider, that provider should discourage the patient's involvement and, if necessary, end the professional relationship. It may be in the Ayurvedic professional's best interest to report such matters to the NAMACB Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel or to seek advice from a colleague, while maintaining the anonymity of the patient.

Professionals whose patients are required to undress for examination or treatments must show regard for their patients' bodily privacy and must also demonstrate concern for patient dignity and comfort by keeping enough clean gowns or blankets on hand for every patient.

b. Confidentiality

The relationship of trust that underlies all health care requires that professionals observe the rules of confidentiality in their dealings with patients. Unless professionals do this, patients will be reluctant to give them the information needed to provide good care.

All information, medical or otherwise, concerning a patient is confidential. This duty of confidentiality, which survives a patient's death, also extends to anyone whom professionals may employ in their practice. Such information may be released only with the explicit consent of the patient. Confidential information must not be revealed even to members of the patient's family, except when it concerns a person who lacks sufficient decision-making capacity, in which case, the information should be shared with the patient's parent or guardian.

In some cases, the patient's right to confidentiality may conflict with the professional's overarching ethical and legal obligations. State and federal reporting laws as well as widely accepted codes of practice for health care define specific circumstances in which this right may be outweighed by the professional's commitment to the patient's well-being or to public health and safety. These include:

- Situations that involve child abuse⁵
- Cases in which patients clearly present a danger to themselves or others⁶

In circumstances where a breach of confidentiality may be warranted and legally permissible, the professional must first make every reasonable effort to mitigate those circumstances without violating patient confidentiality. For instance, the professional should try to persuade patients who are engaging in hazardous behavior to change that behavior and to voluntarily disclose it to others who may be affected by it as well as to third parties who can support the patient's efforts toward behavioral change. In particular, adolescents with certain personal issues (e.g., substance abuse, mental

⁵ All states require notification of child protection services in such cases.

⁶ While all states require professionals to take action when others are at risk of being harmed by the patient, the specifics of the professional's obligation vary from state to state; in circumstances where the risk of harm applies to the patient, many states allow disclosure of confidential information, but few require it.

health concerns) that state and federal law deem confidential but that pose a serious threat to their well-being should be strongly urged to disclose those issues to their parents or guardian. If these efforts to maintain confidentiality fail, the professional should alert the appropriate persons after first seeking legal advice. The professional must be able, if necessary, to justify his or her actions.

The limits of confidentiality imposed by reporting laws should be included in a professional's patient consent form. In the case of a minor or intellectually disabled adult, the limits of confidentiality should be explained in language that he or she can understand.

When professionals are required or asked to give evidence or disclose patient information to a court or other tribunal, they should do so with care. Whatever evidence they share, they must speak from an independent and impartial perspective.

c. Good Communication

Good communication between professionals and their patients is essential for effective care and relationships of trust. Good communication requires the following:

- Listening attentively to your patients and respecting their views and beliefs
- Giving patients all possible information about their condition and your treatment plan in language they can understand
- Sharing information with a patient's partner, close relatives, or caregivers, if the patient has given the professional consent. When a patient lacks the capacity to give consent, professionals should share the information with those close to the patient that need or want to know, except when professionals have reason to believe that the patient would object if able to do so.

If a person under the professional's care has suffered harm as a result of his or her actions or recommendations, the professional should act immediately to take responsibility and provide an explanation.

If the patient is an adult who lacks the capacity to understand the situation, the explanation should be given to a person with responsibility for the patient, unless the professional has reason to believe the patient would object to the disclosure. In the case of children, the situation should be explained honestly to those with parental responsibility and to the child, if the child has the maturity to understand the issues.

D. Relationship with Colleagues

1. Communication with Other Health Care Practitioners

Professionals should work in cooperation with other health care practitioners, such as primary care physicians, specialists, and psychotherapists, to obtain best results for each individual patient. At times this may simply be a matter of communication between two professionals regarding their mutual care of the patient, or if the patient's condition is outside the Ayurvedic professional's competence, he or she may want to refer the patient to another health care practitioner.

Although Ayurvedic treatment may at times reduce the requirement for conventional medication or its dosage, the prescriptions issued by medical doctors must never be changed without the patient's consulting the provider who prescribed the medication.

When communication with another health care practitioner is indicated, Ayurvedic professionals should inform their patient of the reasons for this and discuss the matter. Whatever the type of communication with the other health care practitioners (e.g., telephone call, fax, letter), a record of it should be made and kept in the patient's file or a file dedicated to professional case correspondence. A copy of these records should be made available to the patient on request.

If an Ayurvedic professional's patient decides to transfer to another health care practitioner, the professional who first treated the patient must share all records and details of treatment, including herbs used, with the practitioner taking over care, after the patient has given consent.

An Ayurvedic professional must never attempt to persuade other practitioners' patients to seek his or her services. If professionals treat the patient of another health care provider because of holiday, illness or any other reason, they must not attempt to solicit the patient, either directly or by default, to continue treatment with them.

2. Honorable Conduct

Professionals must at all times conduct themselves in an honorable manner in their relations with colleagues and other health care practitioners. It is inappropriate to openly criticize treatment prescribed or administered by another health care provider. Differences of opinion are to be expected, and opinions should always be presented in an unambiguous and tactful manner.

Professionals must not undermine a patient's trust in the care or treatment they receive, or in the judgment of those treating them, by voicing malicious or unfounded criticism of colleagues. If professionals hear such criticism from patients or colleagues, they must

act with the utmost discretion and professionalism and be extremely cautious about voicing any critical opinion, even if they hold such views.

If professionals have evidence or are reliably informed that another practitioner's conduct, health, or professional work poses a threat to patients, they have a responsibility to act to protect patients' safety. Professionals are advised to report any such concerns to the NAMACB Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel or, if necessary, to a relevant legal authority.

E. Relationship with the Public

1. Honorable Conduct

Professionals must conduct themselves at all times in an honorable manner in their relationship with the public. Public communication may include advertising, contact through the media (e.g., newspapers and other publications, television, radio, the Worldwide Web) and through public talks and individual discussions with enquirers. In all these instances, professionals are required to conduct themselves in a manner congruent with this Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and to avoid making misleading claims about curing disease or in any way implying abilities beyond their competence.

2. Advertising

Professionals should provide patients, colleagues, and other professionals with good quality, factual information about their professional qualifications, the services they provide, and their practice arrangements. Professionals should do this in a way that puts patients first and sustains their trust.

Professionals must not mislead a patient into believing that they are a medical doctor, unless they are legally recognized as such within the country in which they practice. If professionals possess doctorates in other subjects, they must make it clear that, while they are entitled to use the doctor title, they are not a medical doctor.

F. Health Problems of Professionals

The interests and safety of clients must come first at all times. If professionals know that they have a serious illness, which they could transmit to patients, or that their judgment or performance could be significantly affected by a condition or illness or its treatment, then they must seek and follow advice from a consultant in occupational health or another suitably qualified colleague on whether, and in what ways, they should modify their clinical practice. Professionals should not rely on their own assessment of the risk they pose to patients.

These caveats also apply to professionals who have become dependent on alcohol or any other drug, prescribed or otherwise, to an extent that may affect their practice.

G. Practice Management

If professionals work alone in their own home or other premises, they should be aware of the need for caution, particularly when seeing a patient for the first time. It may be necessary sometimes to take sensible precautions, such as asking another person to be on the premises during a session.

1. Staff

Professionals must ensure that their staff is capable of performing the tasks for which they are employed. Professionals are responsible for the actions of their staff, including students or colleagues. Staff should be aware of the relevant parts of this Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct that relate to their activity within practice where they are employed.

2. Treatment

At the outset of a consultation, professionals need to be clear about the cost of the consultation and the possible cost and duration of any treatments.

All herbal remedies should come with clear instructions on how the patient should use them and when they should be taken. Herbs should be clearly labeled with the content, the patient's name, and the practitioner's name and contact details.

Professionals must keep accurate, comprehensive, easily understood, and legible case notes that include the following details:

- Patient's name, address, date of birth, and telephone number
- Date of each consultation
- Presenting symptoms
- Relevant medical and family history
- Clinical findings
- Record of the patient's consent to treatment
- Treatments and advice given on initial and subsequent visits
- Details of the patient's progress

Professionals serve as custodian of their patients' records. In practices where they work with colleagues, they should enter into an agreement on the ownership and hence the responsibility for these records. On no account should records be transferred to another

practice without the authorization of the patient. A request for such transfer should be dealt with promptly.

Patient records must be kept secure and confidential at all times.

If the professional retires or otherwise ceases practicing at any particular address, appropriate arrangements must be made for the safe custody of records.

H. Financial and Commercial Dealings

1. Financial Dealings

When a patient consults a professional, he or she is entering into a contractual relationship. Professionals must be honest and open in any financial arrangements with patients. In particular, they should set their fees and disclose their billing practices in a way that avoids bringing themselves or the profession into disrepute.

Their fee structure must be clearly defined and available to review if requested and should be available to the patient prior to the appointment.

If a patient does not pay a fee, professionals still have a duty to apply the standard of care expected of an Ayurvedic professional.

Professionals must not exploit patients' vulnerability or lack of medical knowledge when making charges for treatment or services. Professionals must not encourage their patients to give, lend, or bequeath money or gifts that will directly or indirectly benefit them.

Professionals must not put pressure on patients or their families to make donations to other people or organizations.

Professionals must be honest in financial and commercial dealings with employers, insurers, and other organizations or individuals. They must keep sound financial records and comply with all relevant legislation.

2. Commercial Activities

Professionals must make a clear distinction between their practice and any commercial activity in which they may be involved. Professionals must ensure that none of their business affairs influence the care of the patients.

To promote a product to patients solely for the purpose of making a profit is highly unethical. If professionals sell or recommend any product or service to a patient, they must be satisfied that it will benefit the patient and that they are appropriately qualified to make such a recommendation.

Before selling or recommending a product or service, professionals must disclose to the patient whether they have a financial interest in that product or service. Professionals must ensure that they can differentiate between the prescribing of a product and the marketing of a product.

I. Infringement of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Infringement of this Code of Ethics may render professionals liable to disciplinary action with subsequent loss of the privileges and benefits of board certification, as applicable.

J. Procedures for Disciplinary Action Against NAMACB-Certified Professionals

1. Introduction

The NAMACB grants a certification credential to Ayurvedic professionals who meet NAMACB's certification qualifications. Ensuring responsible and ethical behavior on the part of NAMACB-certified Ayurvedic professionals is at the heart of establishing Ayurvedic medicine as a recognized and respected profession, one that is of service and benefit to the public. To support responsible and ethical behavior, NAMACB has adopted the NAMA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and this policy document, "Procedures for Disciplinary Action against NAMACB-Certified Professionals." The Procedures document sets forth the steps that NAMACB takes whenever a complaint is filed against an NAMACB-certified Ayurvedic professional or someone who is in the process of applying for certification alleging a violation of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct that calls into question the fitness of the individual to practice a medical art.

2. Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel

The Ethics and Disciplinary Review Panel of the NAMACB (the "EDRP") is the body authorized under this policy to evaluate complaints against Ayurvedic certified professionals and to impose sanctions as may be warranted by the situation. The EDRP is composed of three to five members; the specific number is established by the NAMACB Board of Directors (the "Board"). Individual EDRP members are appointed by the NAMACB Board President for staggered, renewable, three-year terms, and no more than one Board member may serve on the EDRP. The majority of EDRP members must be NAMACB certified Ayurvedic professionals. Any EDRP member who may have a conflict of interest in connection with a complaint is required to recuse himself/herself in accordance with NAMACB policies.

3. Disciplinary Process

a. Initiation of a Complaint

A “Complaint” arises when it appears that alleged actions of an Ayurvedic professional may violate the requirements of the Code of Ethics and Professional. Such information commonly comes to the attention of NAMACB in the following ways:

- A formal, signed complaint is submitted by an individual on the NAMACB Complaint Form. NAMACB does not investigate anonymous complaints.
- A report from a governmental agency, educational institution, or other organization.
- An application for certification or recertification.
- A receipt of information by NAMACB staff from another source.
- A notice from an Ayurvedic professional or Ayurvedic professional training program pursuant to a reporting requirement.

Generally, NAMACB will not process a complaint that pertains to actions or events that took place more than three years prior to the date the complaint is filed with NAMACB; however, it reserves the right to do so.

b. Confidentiality

While NAMACB will not investigate anonymous complaints, NAMACB will withhold the name of a complainant from the person who is the subject of the complaint if the complainant is in a situation where there is an ongoing relationship or some other problematic circumstance that may entail the possibility of retribution or other adverse consequences.

If a complainant is concerned about the possibility of retribution or some other adverse consequence if her/his name is revealed to the person who is the subject of the complaint, then s/he should discuss this matter with the NAMACB director (or designee), who will consult with the chair of the EDRP on issues of confidentiality. Unless required to do so by applicable law or regulation, NAMACB will not reveal the name of a complainant if s/he believes that there may be retribution or other adverse consequences. If NAMACB believes that a complaint cannot be properly investigated if a complainant’s name is kept confidential, then NAMACB has the discretion to decline to investigate a complaint. In its efforts to balance fairness for both the complainant and the subject of a complaint, NAMACB may choose to only investigate an anonymous complaint if it is corroborated by a subsequent complaint or other information.

While NAMACB is committed to keeping the names of complainants confidential where there is the possibility of retribution or other adverse consequences if names are revealed—and will do everything it can to maintain confidentiality under these

circumstances—NAMACB cannot guarantee confidentiality where the nature of a complaint may indicate to the complainant or some other party the identity of the person who lodged the complaint. Additionally, NAMACB is committed to keeping the name of a subject of a complaint confidential while the investigation and review of a complaint is underway, unless applicable law or regulation requires otherwise.

c. Preliminary Staff Review

Whenever a formal Complaint is received by NAMACB, the chair of the EDRP and the NAMACB director (or her/his designee) will conduct a preliminary review of the matter. If the director (or designee) and the chair of the EDRP determine that (1) the matter is frivolous or inconsequential; (2) the Complaint contains unreliable or insufficient information; or (3) the matter is not within the scope of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct or NAMACB’s jurisdiction, then no further action will be taken and the Complaint will be dismissed.

The director (or designee) shall notify a complainant of the dismissal of a Complaint. If the Complaint appears to fall within the scope of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, then the director or designee will proceed with further investigation of the Complaint, in consultation with the chair of the EDRP.

The EDRP sends its findings and recommendations to the NAMACB regarding any necessary actions to be taken or dismissal of the complaint to the NAMACB. The NAMACB will then vote on the recommendation and take appropriate action in communicating to the appropriate parties. If the NAMACB decides there was no action by the Complaint Subject that falls within the scope of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, the Complaint is dismissed with written notice to the Complaint Subject and to the Complainant(s). If the NAMACB makes a determination that the actions did fall within the Grounds for Disciplinary Action, a sanction will be imposed. The NAMACB will issue its decision in writing to the Complaint Subject. The NAMACB member who is on the EDRP shall not have a vote on the decision. If the EDRP decides that it has insufficient information to issue a final decision, the EDRP may request further information.

d. Notice to and Response from the Person who is the Subject of the Complaint

Upon the decision by the director (or designee) and the chair of the EDRP to further investigate a Complaint, the individual that is the subject of the Complaint (“Complaint Subject”) is sent and/or emailed a written notice and communications are followed-up as may be necessary. The Complaint Subject will have forty-five (45) days from receipt of the notice to submit a written response to the Complaint and/or present any additional

evidence and information that supports the Complaint Subject's position, and may at her/his option request an opportunity to speak with the EDRP via electronic communication. Failure by a Complaint Subject to respond to the notice of a Complaint within the forty-five (45) days will be sufficient grounds to impose sanctions. The director (or designee) may extend the period for the Complaint Subject's response upon submission of a timely written request containing a reasonable explanation of the need for an extension.

e. Investigation by Staff

Any aspect of the Complaint that is potentially relevant may be investigated by the director (or designee) to clarify, expand, and/or corroborate the Complaint. During the course of her/his investigation, the director (or designee)—in consultation with the chair of the EDRP—may seek assistance from legal counsel, independent investigators, and any other appropriate individuals or organizations, including a complainant. All investigations are conducted objectively and without prejudice. During an investigation, confidentiality is maintained to the extent possible.

f. Review by the EDRP

Upon completion of the investigation, the director (or designee) submits the Complaint, along with the supporting documentation and its findings, to the EDRP. Complaints will be considered without hearings, trial-type proceedings, witnesses, cross-examinations, or the application of formal legal rules of evidence and hearsay. However, the Complaint Subject may request an opportunity to communicate with the EDRP via electronic communication. Decisions of the EDRP are based on the written record and any information offered orally by the Complaint Subject.

If the EDRP decides there was no action by the Complaint Subject that falls within the scope of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, the Complaint is dismissed with written notice to the Complaint Subject and to the Complainant(s). If the EDRP makes a determination that the actions did fall within the Grounds for Disciplinary Action and imposes a sanction, the EDRP will forward its recommendation to the NAMACB who will issue its decision in writing to the Complaint Subject. The NAMACB board member who is on the EDRP shall not have a vote on the decision. If the EDRP decides that it has insufficient information to issue a final decision, the EDRP **may** request further information.

4. Sanctions

The NAMACB may impose any sanctions it deems appropriate with respect to an NAMACB-certified Ayurvedic professional, including:

1. Refusal to grant certification
2. Suspension of certification for a specific period of time
3. Revocation of certification status
4. Conditions for gaining or maintaining certification status including remedial education or service relevant to the nature of the Complaint
5. Written reprimand (i.e., formal expression of disapproval retained in the Complaint Subject's file but not publicly announced)
6. Censure (i.e., formal expression of disapproval that is publicly announced)
7. Probation pending completion of specified conditions such as monitoring, counseling, and/or remedial education
8. Any other conditions or sanctions, at the sole discretion of the EDRP.

In the event of suspension or revocation of certification status, the Complaint Subject must return his or her certificate to NAMACB within thirty (30) days of notice of the sanction. If the certificate is lost or misplaced, the Complaint Subject must submit a signed and sworn statement to that effect.

5. Voluntary Surrender of NAMACB Certification

An individual who is the subject of a Complaint may voluntarily surrender her/his certification credential at any time before the EDRP renders a final decision, or s/he may withdraw her/his application for certification. Upon surrender or withdrawal, the Complaint will be dismissed without any further action by the EDRP. NAMACB may communicate with any regulatory agency or other appropriate party concerning the circumstances that led to the surrender or withdrawal. Voluntary surrender of certification or withdrawal of an application for certification in response to a Complaint renders a Complaint Subject ineligible for certification for a period of at least two (2) years and ineligible for an appeal of the matter.

6. Appeal Process

A Complaint Subject may appeal a final decision of the EDRP to the NAMACB Board of Directors in writing within thirty (30) days of receipt of the decision. If the decision of the EDRP is not appealed within thirty (30) days, the action of the EDRP is final.

A member of the Board who also serves on the EDRP will not participate in the consideration of any appeal. Board members who may have a conflict of interest with respect to the Complaint Subject who submitted the appeal will recuse themselves in accordance with NAMACB policies.

The Board will review the written record (including a summary of any oral information provided by the Complainant) to determine whether the decision was inappropriate because of (1) material errors of fact that provided the basis for the decision, or (2)

failure of the EDRP or staff to follow published criteria, policies, or procedures. The Board will not conduct further investigations or reevaluate the decision as to whether actions fell within the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. The Board's decision affirms, modifies, remands, or overrules the EDRP's decision. The Board will notify the Complaint Subject of its decision in writing. Unless remanded, the decision of the Board is final and may not be appealed.

7. Notice to Complainant and Publication

The NAMACB director (or designee) will notify the Complainant of NAMACB's final determination regarding the Complaint.

The sanctions of censure, probation, suspension, and revocation—and any voluntary surrender of certification—shall be published in any manner and for any period of time deemed appropriate by NAMACB, including but not limited to notification in NAMACB publications and on the NAMACB website. NAMACB may disclose any sanction or action taken, at its sole discretion, in any way it deems appropriate or necessary to any governmental agency, employer, school, insurer, or individual.

Thanks to the APA upon whose work this code is based.