

## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

### **1. What credentials are offered by the ONCB?**

ONCB offers the ONC<sup>®</sup> credential to registered nurses who pass the basic examination. A nurse practitioner credential (ONP-C<sup>®</sup>) is awarded to successful candidates on the NP examination.

### **2. How are the exams developed?**

A role delineation survey is sent to hundreds of orthopaedic nurses (both certified and non-certified) every 5-6 years to help describe the patient populations and health conditions they commonly address. Members of the ONCB Test Committee use survey results to define the examination blueprints; that is, the results determine the examination topics and the weight given to each one on the test. For example, over 30% of the questions on the ONC<sup>®</sup> examination address some aspect of degenerative disease. In addition, approximately 25% of the questions on this examination deal with pain management. Please see the Web site for blueprints for each exam.

### **3. Who is eligible to take the ONC<sup>®</sup> exam?**

The eligible examinee is a registered nurse who has been licensed and practicing for at least 2 years, AND who has a minimum of 1000 practice hours as a RN in orthopaedic practice within the past 3 years.

### **4. Do you have exams for LPNs, ortho techs, and nursing assistants?**

ONCB does not currently have examinations for these disciplines, but board members regularly re-evaluate the need for these examinations.

### **5. Who is eligible to take the nurse practitioner (ONP-C<sup>®</sup>) exam?**

The eligible nurse practitioner (NP) examinee must have 3 years' practice as a registered nurse and hold a master's degree with qualification for APN licensure in the candidate's state of practice. In addition, the examinee must meet a practice hour requirement in the NP role: 1500 hours for the APN who currently holds the ONC<sup>®</sup> credential, and 2500 hours for the non-ONC.

### **6. What do the exams cost?**

ONC<sup>®</sup> candidates \$290 NAON members, \$405 non-members for online application  
NP candidates \$340 NAON members, \$455 non-members for online application  
Paper applications are an additional \$25.

### **7. What is the passing score for the exams?**

The passing standard is determined by the Test Committee and is based on the number of items answered correctly (raw score). For the ONC examination, the current passing score is 97 (of 135 scored items). For the ONP-C examination, the current passing score is 99 (of 135 scored items). The raw scores are provided on the score report received by candidates at the conclusion of the examination.

8. How many people pass the ONC exam on the first attempt?

Approximately 75% of candidates pass the ONC® examination on their first attempt.

9. How many questions are on the exams?

All examinations have 150 items; 135 items are scored, and 15 are unscored pilot questions. Candidates are allowed 3 hours to complete the exams.

10. When do I get the results of my exam?

All exam candidates receive a printed score report at the test center immediately following completion of the examination.

11. Are review courses available for the exams?

NAON offers review courses for all exams. Review courses may be offered at the Annual Congress and can be scheduled for other locations/dates. Information about review courses can be obtained through the NAON web site ([www.orthonurse.org](http://www.orthonurse.org)); click on the “Education” tab to locate a listing of orthopaedic review courses.

12. Does the cost of the review course include the exam fee?

The cost of the review course does NOT include the exam fee. Candidates should register separately for the examination through ONCB’s test agency AMP/PSI as described in the *Candidate Handbook*.

13. Are scholarships available for the ONC exam?

ONCB offers at least two scholarships annually for the ONC examination only. Up to one-half of the awards can be given to non-NAON members. Application deadline is uniformly January 1 of each year, and applicants are notified of the board’s decision in February. See the ONCB Web site for an application and additional information. Scholarships are not offered currently for the NP examination.

14. What review materials are available to prepare for the exam?

The *Core Curriculum for Orthopaedic Nursing* is the most commonly used study resource for the ONC examination. Other NAON products also are used as study resources and are available on the NAON Web site ([www.orthonurse.org](http://www.orthonurse.org)). ONCB offers online practice modules that contain 50 questions to simulate the testing experience. See the ONCB Web site ([www.oncb.org](http://www.oncb.org) – “E-Store”) for a link to the module. In addition, ONCB offers a FREE web-based educational session with test-taking strategies that may be helpful for persons with test anxiety or limited experience with multiple-choice testing (<http://oncb.org/lets-talk-test/>).

15. Do you publish the names of new certificants?

Yes, names of new certificants are published in *Orthopaedic Nursing*, official journal of NAON, and on the ONCB Web site.

16. How can my employer or a potential employer verify my certification?

An employer or potential employer can verify your certification on the ONCB web site ([www.oncb.org](http://www.oncb.org) > Verify Certification). This link provides the certificant's name, credential and date earned, and credential expiration date.

17. When does my certification expire?

Certifications expire uniformly on the fifth occurrence of June 30 AFTER the nurse has been certified for 1 year. For example, the credential expiration date will be June 30, 2018, for a candidate who passed the examination on May 18, 2013. The credential expiration date will be June 30, 2019, for a candidate who passed the examination on October 5, 2013.

18. How do I recertify?

Candidates may recertify by taking the test or by obtaining a designated number of contact hours in continuing nursing education. For the ONC, 100 total contact hours are required; at least 70 of those must be in orthopaedic nursing. For APN certificants, 125 total contact hours are required; at least 100 of those must be in orthopaedic nursing.

19. What is the difference between Category A and Category B contact hours?

Category A hours generally address clinical orthopaedic topics. Acceptable topics typically appear in the *Core Curriculum for Orthopaedic Nursing*, though this is not an inclusive reference. Category B hours address general nursing topics (e.g., patient education, nurse staffing issues).

20. What can I do if my certification expires?

If a certificant's credential expired within the last 2 years, he or she may be eligible for the reactivation option. Check the ONCB Web site for more information on reactivation. Reactivation may be used only once, and is not possible for a nurse whose credential expired more than 2 years ago.

21. Does ONCB offer an option for nurses who cannot recertify because of illness, disability, or responsibilities as caregiver for a family member?

ONCB offers inactive certification for a 5-year period to nurses who can recertify for these reasons. Check the ONCB Web site for more information on inactive certification.

22. Does ONCB offer a designation for retired nurses?

ONCB offers indefinite retired designation for a nurse who no longer practices. Check the ONCB Web site for more information about retired certification.

23. How can I volunteer to work with ONCB as an Ambassador or committee member?

Call the ONCB office (888-561-6622) or check the ONCB Web site for a Willingness to Serve form. Recertification Committee vacancies are filled in late summer/early fall of each year. Ambassador forms are accepted at any time of the year.