



Certified Manager of Voucher Operations (CMVO)

Certification Guide

Copyright © 2016 National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
630 I Street, Northwest
Washington, DC 20001

This guide reflects the current policies and practices as of July 2016. All policies and procedures are subject to change. If you require additional information, please visit the NAHRO website or contact NAHRO Certification™ staff.

NAHRO Certification
630 I ST NW
Washington, DC 20001
Toll Free: 877.866.2476, Fax: 202.289.8181
www.nahro.org/certification
E-mail: certification@nahro.org

Blake Pavlik
Director, NAHRO Certification™
Toll Free: 877.866.2476
Direct: 202.580.7229
E-mail: bpavlik@nahro.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Page</u>
I.	Welcome	4
II.	Overview	
•	Background	5
•	Credentialing/Certification	5
•	CMVO Credential Program	6
•	CMVO Assessment Board Members	7
•	Description, Eligibility and Requirements	8
•	Recertification or Maintenance Requirements	9
III.	Registration for the CMVO Certification Examination	
•	Important Points for Registration	10
•	Completing Your Registration Form	10
•	Payment – If Online	11
•	Payment – If By Fax or Mail	11
•	Exam Dates	11
•	Registration Fees	11
•	Retake Fees	11
•	Special Arrangements for Disabled/Handicapped Candidates	12
•	Cancellation	12
IV.	NAHRO Code of Professional Conduct	13
V.	Taking the Examination	
•	Admission to the Exam Location	15
•	At the Exam Location	15
VI.	Examination Results	
•	Required Passing Score	17
•	Scoring and Results Letter	17
•	Verification of Exam Scores and Analysis	17
•	Cancellation of Scores	17
•	Ethical, Fair, Exam Administration	18
•	If You Retake the Examination	18
•	Appeals	18
•	If You Have a Concern	19
VII.	General Exam Taking Information	
•	Suggestions to Help You Prepare for the Examination	20
•	Suggestions to Help You Do Your Best When Taking the Examination	22
VIII.	Knowledge, Skills and Abilities: Question Areas by Category	
•	Job Analysis Summary	25
•	Job Analysis Questionnaire	26
IX.	Sample Questions	31
X.	Additional Resources	32

Chapter I

Welcome

Welcome!

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) established the requirement of a certification exam for the NAHRO Certified Manager of Voucher Operations (CMVO) in March 2012. The CMVO is part of NAHRO Certification™ which is a portfolio of 11 certifications for the Affordable Housing and Community Development Industry. There are four categories of certification including: Commissioner, Specialist, Operations Manager, and Management Executive.

This Guide is designed to provide candidates with information about CMVO requirements, to help candidates determine their course of study and preparation for the examination, to provide examination information procedures, and to provide practice sample questions.

All certification candidates may access this complimentary copy of the CMVO Certification Guide on the NAHRO website at www.nahro.org/cmvo.

Thank you for choosing to proclaim your excellence and add value to your organization through the NAHRO Certification™ Program.

Chapter II Overview

Background

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), established in 1933, is the professional membership organization representing housing and community development agencies, policy-makers and practitioners throughout the United States.

NAHRO members administer policies and programs primarily originating from Legislation of the United States Congress and administered by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The NAHRO Mission promotes both professional development and advocacy for housing and redevelopment programs in local communities. NAHRO informs, educates and assists its members in understanding and implementing HUD directives and initiatives. In addition to compliance issues, NAHRO programs seek to facilitate the ethical, efficient, and effective administration and delivery of programs and resources at the local level.

The overall NAHRO mission, and that of its members, is to create affordable housing and safe communities that enhance the quality of life for all citizens, primarily those with low and moderate incomes.

NAHRO was created by an affiliation of local officials with a common concern for the nation's housing. Their actions resulted in the U.S. Housing Act of 1937, which was the first legislation that committed the federal government to assist communities with building low- and moderate-income housing and to redevelop declining areas.

Since that time, NAHRO has continually taken an active role in developing key housing and community development legislation including the Housing Act of 1949, and the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998.

NAHRO members are professional managers and administrators of Federal and state housing programs and other financial methods to improve the availability of affordable housing and healthy communities. As a result, they have specialized knowledge and skills in technical and qualitative aspects of general business and government programs.

Credentialing/Certification

The purposes of credentialing/certification are to recognize capabilities, provide uniform professional attainment qualifications, and offer continuing education seminars to improve the level of performance for practitioners.

NAHRO has always promoted professional development and credentialing and continues to expand professional development programs for the industry. In 2003, NAHRO's Board of Governors passed a resolution to initiate, develop, and

implement the NAHRO certification and credentialing program. The resolution identified four categories of certification.

- Certified Specialist
- Certified Operations Manager
- Certified Management Executive
- Commissioner Certification

For all of NAHRO's categories, individual credentialing currently serves as a voluntary designation that represents professional recognition to employers, housing service providers, colleagues and staff, product and service vendors, and the general public.

The use of NAHRO's designation on business cards, letterhead, stationery, office plaques, and lapel pins represents an individual's professional achievement.

Attainment of a credential/certification acknowledges expertise, improves career opportunities, serves as support and documentation for employment promotion and compensation, increases proficiencies through preparation and study, affords continuing education and training, provides a certificate of accomplishment in the field (which is similar to a diploma), and enhances personal and professional self-esteem.

CMVO Certification Program

NAHRO's Certified Manager of Voucher Operations is a major extension of an important purpose of the association: to develop and maintain the highest standards of professional performance for those engaged in housing and community development programs. The CMVO establishes national criteria and sets standards for those individuals who are conducting property and asset management responsibilities at their agencies, or those who wish to aspire to those positions.

The NAHRO CMVO Certification is designed to assess a candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities to serve in the capacity of property manager of local housing and community development organizations. A candidate must receive a passing score on the CMVO certification examination, and meet the other requirements in order to attain the CMVO. It is achieved through classroom seminars, internet based courses, examination, as well as experience in the affordable housing and community development environment.

The Board of Ethics and Credentialing Trustees (BECT) is NAHRO's certifying body and is responsible for the governance of all certifications, including the policies and practices related to certification. The Board is composed of industry practitioners and commissioners who are recognized by the public and their peers for proven service to the profession.

The CMVO Assessment Board is responsible for conducting job analysis, item development and review, and revision/maintenance of the exam including areas related to scores. The CMVO Assessment Board is currently composed of four NAHRO professionals/practitioners who are recognized leaders in the industry.

CMVO Assessment Board Members:

Ms. Rebecca L. Craig CMVO, PHM
Retired, Chief Operations Officer
Fresno Housing Authority
Fresno, California

Mr. James M. Evans, CMVO
Managing Director
Metro Baltimore Quadel
Baltimore, Maryland

Ms. Margaret Jones, CMVO
Assisted Housing Director
Tampa Housing Authority
Tampa, Florida

Mr. Mark Thiele, CMVO, NCC, CS-PHM, CME (Assessment Board Chair)
Vice President - Housing Choice Vouchers
Houston Housing Authority
Houston, Texas

NAHRO Certification™ staff administers the program. Consultants, including practicing psychometricians, have been retained to assist with the continual review and maintenance of the CMVO Certification Examination.

Description, Eligibility and Requirements

The CMVO Certification Examination consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. Any person submitting a complete registration and fee is eligible to take the CMVO Examination. However, obtaining the CMVO Credential requires additional elements (see chart below). Membership in NAHRO is not required. Examinations are scheduled on a regular basis throughout the United States. Please note that the CMVO is evolving and requirements may change.

CMVO REQUIREMENTS	
Candidates with Less than 7 Years of Experience	Candidates with 7 or More Years of Experience
<p>1. Must have or completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School Diploma or Equivalent • Six Months Experience Working at an Agency <p>Successful completion of the following:</p> <p>1. 1.95 NAHRO CEUs or equivalent in High Performance Management education. AND 5.2 NAHRO CEUs or equivalent in Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) education.</p>	<p>1. Must have or completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School Diploma or Equivalent • Six Months Experience Working at an Agency
2. 0.5 CEUs or equivalent in ethics training related to the affordable/assisted housing and community revitalization and development industry.	
3. Passing Grade on the Final Comprehensive Exam	
4. Completion of Certification Application	

NAHRO's CMVO was developed to:

- Objectively measure the important knowledge, skills, and abilities required of a competent and effective voucher manager.
- Foster uniform standards for measuring such knowledge, skills, and abilities. The breadth and depth of coverage and the passing scores for the Examination are set at levels to ensure that candidates possess at least the minimum degree of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform property manager responsibilities, including supervising staff, and to adhere to the highest standards of professional ethical conduct.

Recertification or Maintenance Requirements

All NAHRO Certifications require a recertification or maintenance component. Please check the NAHRO website at www.nahro.org/certification for the most up-to-date information related to recertification.

NAHRO requires individuals to fulfill recertification activities/education for a multitude of reasons. Recertification is necessary, since rules and requirements in the housing and redevelopment industry can change. It is necessary for all individuals to refresh their knowledge.

NAHRO was developed to encourage continuing professional development and to promote learning of all individuals in the housing and redevelopment industry. Recertification embraces the goal of having individuals develop as a professional.

Current recertification requirements are 1.95 NAHRO Continuing Education Units (CEUs) or equivalent every three years. One hour of appropriate education = 0.1 CEU. More information is at www.nahro.org/ceus

Chapter III

Registration for the CMVO Certification Examination

Important Points for Registration

1. Register as early as possible.
2. Register carefully. Use the registration form provided by NAHRO Certification™. This form must be completed accurately and neatly to facilitate rapid and efficient processing. If hand written, please block print the candidate name.
3. Register fully. Check to be certain that your registration form is complete.
4. Enclose the correct payment. Please enclose payment for the full cost. NAHRO Certification™. also accepts credit card payments. Do not send cash. Fees are stated in the registration materials. Please note that full payment is required before the examination result is released.
5. Keep this Guide. It contains information you may need after registering. Carefully read this Guide, all forms, NAHRO website information, and communication sent to you. If you correspond with us, please be sure to give your name and all other identifying information as entered on your registration form.

Completing Your Registration Form

It is very important that your registration form be completed carefully and accurately. The information you provide on this form will be used to communicate with you. You may complete your registration form online at www.NAHRO.org under the Professional Development section. You may also download a registration form from the website. Please read the following instructions before completing your registration form.

- Print your name, title, organization and address. Make sure you have included your NAHRO identification number, if you know it.
- Print your e-mail address clearly.
- Print clearly the event for which you are registering. The exam fees are listed on the web site <http://www.nahro.org/certification-exams> or call NAHRO at 877.866.2476 for additional information.

- If special services are required, include a description with the registration and indicate the nature of your request.

Payment - If Online

Simply click on the certification examination of your choice, select the register online option, and complete the information required. Please note that only credit card payment will be accepted for online registration.

Payment – If By Fax or Mail

Check or money order for the fee should be made payable to The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). Do not send cash. Mail or Fax credit card information for the fee and the registration form to:

NAHRO Certification™
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
P.O. Box 90487
Washington, D.C. 20090

If you use a credit card, include this information on your registration form and fax to NAHRO at 202.289.8181.

Exam Dates

The CMVO Examination will be given at the exam locations on the dates posted on the NAHRO web site <http://www.nahro.org/certification-exams> or in our promotional materials.

Registration Fees

All appropriate fees for the examination must accompany the registration form.

Retake Fees

If you fail to achieve a passing score on the examination, you may retake the examination. An additional fee will be assessed for each retake.

Accommodations for Disabled Candidates

If you have a visual, sensory, or other disability that would prevent you from taking the CMVO Examination under standard conditions, you may request special accommodation. NAHRO will honor all reasonable accommodations at no extra charge to the registrant. Any request for translation services will be honored. However, the cost of these services will be the responsibility of the registrant.

Submit your request in writing, specifying the conditions you need, when you send your registration form to NAHRO (there is a space provided on the form for this information). After your registration form and exam fees are received, NAHRO will contact you confirming the arrangements, including the date, time, and location for the special exam administration, if required.

Cancellation

Written notice of cancellation is required and must be received prior to the examination. If your cancellation is received at least 20 business days prior to the start of the course, NAHRO will credit the full fee amount toward another exam, which you must attend/take within one year of your cancellation to avoid forfeiting the fee, or provide you with a full refund (at your option). In the event that you cancel without at least 20 business days' notice and do not wish to have your fee credited towards another exam (under the terms specified above), a \$75 cancellation fee will be retained from your registration fee to cover administration costs.

Chapter IV

NAHRO Code of Professional Conduct

The mission of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) is to make available resources for its members and others who provide decent, safe, affordable housing and viable communities that enhance the quality of life for all Americans, especially those of low- and moderate-income by:

- Ensuring that housing and community development professionals have the leadership skills, education, information and tools to serve communities in a rapidly changing environment;
- Advocating for appropriate laws, adequate funding levels and responsible public policies that address the needs of the people served; are financially and programmatically viable for our industry; are flexible, reduce regulatory burdens and promote local decision-making;
- Fostering the highest standards of ethical behavior, service, and accountability to ensure the public trust.

NAHRO is committed to help create a nation in which all people have decent, safe and affordable housing and economic opportunity in viable, sustainable communities.

Therefore, each NAHRO individual member or associate, allied individual member, and those certified through one of NAHRO's Credentialing programs, which may include anyone serving as a commissioner, member of any other type of governing and/or policy making body, as well as an organization's executive and operational staff, will adhere to a Code of Professional Conduct that supports this mission, and pledges to:

- Promote the public trust through advocacy for the responsible administration of housing and community development programs.
- Perform governance and work responsibilities with the highest degree of integrity and professionalism, in order to merit the respect of the beneficiaries of the programs, elected officials, and the general public.
- Promote and encourage the highest level of ethics and integrity within the industry.
- Serve the public with dedication, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness.
- Exercise diligence, objectivity, and honesty in executing professional responsibilities.
- Continually strive for personal professional excellence, encourage and support associates in their professional efforts.

- Avoid any activities that conflict with official duties and not accept directly or indirectly any fee, rebate, commission, discount, gratuity, or other benefit, whether monetary or otherwise, for the professional discharge of duties except an authorized established salary, expenses, and benefits.
- Avoid misuse or misrepresentation of any of NAHRO's comprehensive certifications.
- Immediately report known violations of this Code of Professional Conduct to the Chief Executive Officer of NAHRO.

This Code of Professional Conduct has been adopted to promote and maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. Adherence to this Code is required for continued NAHRO individual membership and associate status and/or retention of any comprehensive credential achieved through NAHRO. Adopted by the NAHRO Board of Governors on March 17, 2013.

Certification Candidates and anyone sitting for a Certification Exam must attest:

“I have read and understood the NAHRO Code of Professional Conduct and I acknowledge that adherence to its principles, both in letter and in spirit, is essential to maintaining the public trust. I further acknowledge that the credential/certification for which I am a candidate connotes professionalism and high ethical standards as well as competency. Accordingly, I will at all times abide by and fully comply, both in letter and spirit, with the NAHRO Code of Professional Conduct (as such Code may be amended or modified from time to time). I further acknowledge and agree that, if NAHRO, under its then applicable procedures relating to such matters, determines that I have materially violated any provision of the NAHRO Code of Professional Conduct, the credential/certification held by me may be suspended or permanently revoked by NAHRO. I hereby waive any and all suits, claims, demands, and rights of action that may arise in connection with any such suspension or revocation and agree that I will not assert any claim, suit, demand, or action in connection therewith against either NAHRO, or any of its officers, members of its Board of Governors, members of its Board of Ethics and Credentialing Trustees or any subcommittee thereof, or any of NAHRO's employees or agents.”

Chapter V

Taking the Examination

Admission to the Exam Location

To be admitted to the exam location, a participant must have some form of photo identification bearing his/her signature and a recent photograph. Examples of acceptable forms of identification include a driver's license, employee ID card, or passport. Social Security card, draft card, library card, credit card, etc. are not acceptable. The exam proctor will check identification for each participant.

A participant will be admitted to the exam location only if his/her name is on the examination attendance roster/sign-in sheet. Space and materials permitting, NAHRO will allow an individual to register on-site for the examination. Examination results will not be released until full payment of the fee is made to NAHRO.

At the Exam Location

The following procedures are observed at every exam location:

- The examination will be administered only on the day and at the time scheduled. Please be prompt. Participants will not be admitted to an examination room after the session has begun.
- Candidates should have several sharpened No. 2 (medium-soft) pencils with erasers to mark answers. A pencil sharpener is permitted, and mechanical pencils are acceptable. Pencils with extremely soft lead, colored pencils, or pens may not be used.
- You have two (2) hours in which to complete the examination. The proctor will indicate time remaining at the 30-, 15-, and 10-minute milestones during the exam session. You will not be permitted to continue the examination beyond the established time limits.
- Items such as books, dictionaries, notes or papers of any kind may not be referenced during the exam. A quiet calculator is permissible, if applicable. Electronics such as phones, tablets, laptop computers, or other types of electronic devices are not permitted to be used during the exam and must be turned off and not in plain sight.
- Visitors are not permitted to enter the examination room.

- Scratch work may be done in the exam booklet. Scratch paper is not permitted in the exam room. The exam booklet, answer form, notes, calculations, and any other distributed exam materials may not be taken by the candidates from the exam room.
- If you must leave the room during the examination, you must obtain permission from the exam proctor. You will not be permitted to make up the time you lose.
- The proctor has the authority and responsibility to dismiss any candidate from the exam for inappropriate behavior. Listen carefully to all instructions from the exam proctor. A proctor may dismiss you from the examination for reasons such as:
 - If your admission to the exam location is unauthorized.
 - If you create a disturbance or give or receive help with the exam.
 - If you attempt to remove exam materials or notes from the examination room.
 - If you impersonate another candidate.

Chapter VI Examination Results

To be certified by NAHRO as a Certified Manager of Voucher operations (CMVO), you must pass the CMVO Certification Examination. In addition, you must accept and adhere to NAHRO's Code of Professional Conduct (included in this Guide).

Required Passing Score

In order to become a NAHRO CMVO, candidates must meet the minimum examination score requirement as established by NAHRO's CMVO Assessment Board and the NAHRO Board of Ethics and Credentialing Trustees. There are 50 multiple choice questions on the exam. **All examination scores are kept confidential.**

Scoring and Results Letter

Your results are confidential and are scored at NAHRO. Scores are determined by the number of questions answered correctly. Any unanswered question or multiple answers to a question will be marked incorrect.

All examinees will receive a results letter stating the point score achieved on the exam. This letter will be mailed to the address provided by the examinee in his/her exam booklet approximately four weeks after the examination. Please note that full payment is required before the examination result is released. In order to protect the confidentiality of the exam, no information on exam results is ever given over the phone or e-mail.

Verification of Exam Scores and Analysis

Any individual who did not achieve the minimum passing score may request a rescoring and/or score analysis report. These requests must be made in writing to NAHRO within 30 days of the date on the exam results letter. Please note that score analysis is only available to individuals that were unsuccessful on the exam.

Cancellation of Scores

After taking the examination, if you decide for any reason that you do not want your examination scored you must do one of two things: 1) Tell the exam proctor before you leave the exam room, and leave with the proctor a signed letter requesting your score be cancelled; or 2) After leaving the examination room, fax to 202-289-8181 or email to certification@nahro.org a signed letter requesting your score be cancelled. Be certain to sign your request letter; unsigned requests will not be honored. Your request must reach NAHRO by standard close of business one business day after the exam.

Ethical, Fair Exam Administration

Because NAHRO Certification™ is concerned that valid scores are reported, doubts that are raised about the validity of candidates' scores will be thoroughly investigated. For example, some scores may be rendered invalid because of circumstances beyond the candidate's control, such as gross mistiming of the exam period or a prolonged distraction during the examination period, such as a fire alarm. When such circumstances are discovered, the NAHRO Washington, D C office will be notified. NAHRO Certification™ will arrange a free make-up exam for the candidate(s) at their earliest convenience.

NAHRO Certification™ reserves the right to cancel the scores for any candidate discovered engaging in any kind of misconduct including, but not limited to, giving or receiving help; using books, notes, papers, or other aids; attempting to take the examination for someone else; or removing exam materials or notes from the examination room.

If You Retake the Examination

If you decide to take the exam again, you should be aware that without any change in your level of knowledge, skill or abilities your exam score may increase or decrease slightly. These slight changes may be caused by something as simple as the way you feel on the day of the exam. It is a reality that some people do experience some degree of fear and discomfort with examinations and this can influence your successful completion of the examination. To increase the probability of improving your score, it is advisable to increase your knowledge, skills, and abilities by considering seminars and training in the areas that need improvement in order to build your confidence.

Appeals

Any person who is denied a credential shall have the right to appeal to the NAHRO Board of Ethics and Credentialing Trustees.

If You Have a Concern

If you have a concern or wish to make a comment about exam facilities and/or supervision, examination content, or any other matter related to the examination program, please write to NAHRO Certification™ at the following addresses:

Director, NAHRO Certification
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
630 I St., NW
Washington, DC 20001

OR email certification@nahro.org

In all correspondence, please be sure to give your name and address. If your questions or comments concern a exam you have already taken, you should also include the name of the exam, the date you took it, and the location of your exam center. NAHRO will investigate each complaint and respond to your comments within a reasonable length of time.

Chapter VII

General Exam Taking Information

Taking exams of any kind is hard for some people and easy for others. The reason is not always how much one knows about the content of the examination. Some people have mastered exam-taking skills, while others are unfamiliar with examination methods and are afraid of examination in general. Proper preparation for an examination is the best way to overcome such problems.

You should begin using this Guide in advance of the CMVO Certification Examination. It is strongly recommended that you carefully study the information in the Guide, review the sample questions, and review the Resources identified in the Guide before you take the examination.

If you try to cram, you may do poorly because you will have tried to gather too much information in too short a time, and you probably will not have mastered the information or successful examination approach. Cramming can also lead to worry and nervousness, which can keep you from doing your best.

It should be kept in mind that the purpose of this Guide is to acquaint you with the format of the CMVO Certification Examination and with the Body of Knowledge the NAHRO Operations Manager Assessment Board determined as knowledge, skills and abilities in function areas you may be expected to have in both preparation for the examination and to effectively serve the roll and responsibility at the property manager level within an industry organization. Also, the Guide can help you to become aware of gaps in your knowledge and areas where you need to improve your knowledge, skills and abilities. However, the Guide is not a substitute for training and experience at an executive or senior management level position.

Suggestions to help you prepare for the examination:

Study Alone

Studying alone will help you concentrate on the material in this Guide. If you have any questions, make a list and ask colleagues, peers or other knowledgeable and effective managers you know. Once you have reviewed the guide, you may wish to study with others who are preparing for the examination.

Study for Uninterrupted Periods

Reserve time for an uninterrupted study session. This allows you to focus more effectively on the material at hand without any distractions that may interfere with your concentration.

□ ***Understand How to Handle the Different Types and Format of Questions on the Exam***

Some questions involve key words like: not, except, least, first; and some questions have two parts followed by a list of possible answers. The discussion of sample exam questions later in this Guide should help you deal with the kinds of questions you will be asked. Practice handling these various questions so that they will not give you trouble during the exam.

□ ***Get More Information on Your Weak Subject Areas***

The examination is based on knowledge, skills and abilities in six categories or domains. The exam questions directly exam the candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities in these areas. **See Chapter VIII** for this Summary of Important Certified Manager of Voucher operations Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.

If you think that you lack sufficient experience in any particular area, you might try to learn more about that area by talking to an experienced colleague/peer and discuss the situations within that area of responsibility. Another option is to attend training in that specific area.

□ ***Discuss the Sample Exam and Review with Others Who Are Studying for Certification***

After studying the materials in this Guide and working on the sample questions, it might be helpful to get together with other people who are preparing for the CMVO Certification Examination. Discuss in a group the questions or exercises that you have found difficult to handle. Some people may not be troubled by the same things you are. They may be helpful to you, and you may be helpful to them. The group also might discuss the range of problems arising in a property manager job, including one that supervises staff, and the results of different courses of action in dealing with each problem. This practice might help people in the group improve their problem-solving skills in the affordable housing and community development environment. These skills are important both on the examination and on the job.

□ ***Make a Final Review of the Guide and Your Notes***

A final review will refresh your memory on points you may have forgotten. Select the most important points of your final review, and do not try to read the Guide from start to finish again. Such a read-through should not be necessary if you have adequately prepared up to this time.

Suggestions to help you do your best when taking the examination

□ *Arrive at the Exam Rested and Try to Arrive Early*

Get a good night's rest. Most people do their best work when they are well rested. Arrive early at the exam location. By arriving early, you will avoid any nervousness that may be caused by a last-minute rush. Sometimes the exam center must change the room where the examination is given. If you arrive early, you will have time to go to the new location. If there should be any other problems, you will have time to go to the front/information desk and ask where the NAHRO examination is being held.

□ *Listen to and Read Instructions Carefully*

Carefully listen and read the instructions in the Certification Guide. This booklet contains instructions which you should review before beginning the examination. Your proctor may also give instructions. Your examination will not accurately show your knowledge, abilities and skills if you fail to follow instructions. For example, on the examination you must be sure to mark your answers on the examination answer scantron sheet provided, if you want to get credit for correct answers.

□ *Give One Answer to Each Question*

Select the one best answer from the available responses for each question. Following each multiple-choice question, there are four possible responses labeled A, B, C, and D. Select the response that best answers the question. Any unanswered question or multiple answers to a question will be marked incorrect.

Use the Scantron Answer Form. All responses must be marked on the answer form. Use your pencil to completely fill in the corresponding answer space on your answer form (see example below, the NAHRO office is in Washington D.C.). If you change an answer, be sure that your original mark is erased completely.

1. In what city is the national NAHRO office located?

- A. New York, New York
- B. Los Angeles, California
- C. Chicago, Illinois
- D. Washington, D.C.

Sample Answer

A B C D

□ ***Answer the Exam Questions that You Are Sure of First***

It is wise to answer questions you are sure of first then, if time permits, go back and attempt the more difficult questions and make the best possible guess at the correct answers. Skip the more difficult questions on your first pass through the exam. Put a check mark or circle by these questions in your exam booklet so that you can find them quickly when you go back through the exam.

Be sure to go over your entire answer sheet when finished, if time permits. If you skip questions in the examination booklet that you will revisit, assure yourself that you are skipping the answer line on the scan sheet. It is best to check yourself every five or so questions. "I am answering number 5 in the booklet and recording my answer on line 5 of the scan sheet etc"

□ ***Pace Yourself***

Work as steadily, quickly, and methodically as you can. Also, do not spend a lot of time on a few exam questions and then be forced to rush through the rest. Rushing could cause you to make many mistakes. Do not spend too much time on any one question. Identify difficult questions, and return to those later. If you have time remaining, review all of the answers prior to concluding the exam.

Check your watch from time to time to decide whether you are giving yourself enough time to finish. On the other hand, if you have done most of the exam in far less than the time allowed, you may not be reading the materials carefully enough or giving yourself enough time to consider your answer.

□ ***Try Not to Let Yourself Get Distracted***

If someone near you constantly taps a pencil on his or her desk, or makes other sounds that bother you, try to ignore the irritation and concentrate on the task before you. If the distraction is extreme, approach the proctor to resolve the issue.

□ ***Do Not Waste Time Fighting the Exam***

If you do not like the way some questions are worded and would state them differently, do not waste time in a mental argument with the exam. Answer the question as well as you can and go on to the next question.

□ ***Do Not Panic During the Exam***

If you do not know the answers to some exam questions or how to handle a particular problem posed by the exam question situation, do the best you can. No one is expected to get a perfect score. If you get upset, you will only hurt your ability to think clearly about the task.

□ ***Use All of the Time Available***

If you finish before time is up for the examination, and you have sincerely followed the above instructions and believe you have done your best, you might review the scan sheet to make sure you answered all the questions and your marks on the scan sheet are clear. However, research has demonstrated that if you go back to "check over your work", and begin to question how you answered questions, you are most probably changing right answers to wrong answers by second guessing yourself. Be careful.

Chapter VIII

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities: Question Areas by Category

The CMVO Certification Examination is based on knowledge, skills and abilities in six areas of the body of knowledge for voucher manager position levels in the affordable housing and community development industry. The CMVO Job Analysis was conducted in May 2015. It was sent to Directors, Managers, and Deputy, Associate and Assistant voucher managers. Additionally, HCV and Section 8 Supervisors received the survey as well as Executive Directors/CEOs.

Exam development, validation, and analysis is an evolutionary process. NAHRO and the Operations Assessment Board will continue to analyze each item of the examination to assure the highest level of fairness and quality.

Job Analysis Summary/Domains

- Administrative Management
- Compliance
- Ethics
- Customer Service
- Program Management
- Technical Knowledge

Knowledge, Skills & Ability

- Understands the tasks, processes, and regulations necessary to successfully operate and manage an HCV Program, including homeownership and family self-sufficiency
- Focuses on effectively supervising and managing personnel
- Places emphasis on the practice of professional ethical conduct

The competencies, or the knowledge, skills and abilities, of the CMVO demonstrate that an individual understands voucher management in the housing environment. The individual has demonstrated oral and written communication skills and ability to problem-solve and prioritize day-to-day activities and longer range plans. This person understands the regulation, laws, and proper protocols for HA termination. He/she has knowledge of and practices Fair Housing personally and assures that staff adhere to these laws. This individual understands the importance of and agrees to adhere to the highest standard of professional ethical conduct.

While it is possible that candidates may not have experience in some of the knowledge, skills and ability categories, candidates should recognize and be aware that this certification is designed without regard to the size of agency, geographic location, or

specific program activity in which an individual may be presently engaged. A candidate may choose to further their career by working toward the CMVO credential at his/her own pace. NAHRO's Certification Programs are designed to support professionals in the housing and community development industry to move into their level of desired career achievement.

The multiple-choice examination consists of 50 multiple-choice questions that cover the main areas of the role and responsibilities of the voucher manager. As identified in this chapter, NAHRO conducted a detailed national Job Analysis study to determine the common responsibilities of property management in the public and assisted housing environment, regardless of the location or size of their housing authorities or the nature of their client populations. The examination is based only on those areas of knowledge, skill and ability a large majority of professionals reported to be essential responsibilities that these professionals perform.

Job Analysis Questionnaire

The NAHRO Operations Assessment Board developed the following questionnaire and distributed to active practitioners in voucher management positions. The results from this survey helped to form and support the development of the CMVO Examination. Job tasks were listed per category/domain. Survey participants were asked to rank the item as being: 1) Least Important; 2) Somewhat Important; 3) Important; 4) Very Important; or 5) Extremely Important. The following items were ranked as some version of Important and form the basis for the exam.

Items/Tasks

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT:

- Interview and hire staff
- Monitor staff to ensure compliance with policies
- Maintain knowledge of policies and regulations and landlord/tenant laws
- Assess and monitor work load, administrative support systems and internal reporting relationships
- Develop and implement solutions or recommendations which have been adopted for problem study, develop new systems, policies and/or programs for the purpose of implementation
- Formulate and implement operating policies, procedures, objectives and budgets
- Assure deficiencies in program outcomes are addressed by developing alternative policies or procedures to correct problem areas
- Develop criteria, processes and procedures to measure program outcomes
- Ensure that all department staff receive proper training and instruction.
- Ensure utilization of EIV and all required functions related therein. Ensure EIV security and monitor EIV reports

- Approve requests for hardship waivers, reasonable accommodations and program extensions to meet the needs of the consumers
- Coordinate all aspects of termination of assistance
- Implement and/or maintain a secure records management system
- Oversee all monitoring and auditing of program components
- Prepare monthly re-examination assignments for coordinators
- Prepare/oversee/monitor responses to inquiries from applicants, stakeholders, political offices, and HUD
- Create and implement new media (digital, technology based) for Section 8, devote attention to objectives. Ensure goals are met or exceeded
- Assist with strategic planning for programs
- Coordinate training and development plans
- Gather and report necessary program data on specified timelines
- Identify procedural breakdowns and contribute recommendations for improvements in controls and operating efficiency
- Oversee and manage Section 8 financial transactions, ensuring accuracy and compliance with HUD regulations
- Prepare annual and 5 year strategic plans
- Review and approve trial and final HAP and UAP check runs
- Supervise preparation and analysis of written reports summarizing findings and recommendations to increase program efficiency and effectiveness
- Write grant proposals, prepare applications for additional funding, track progress and budget, and assist with the planning process
- Supervise and assist staff with special programs including but not limited to: FSS, Shelter + Care, Family Unification, Mainstream, VASH, Support Housing Initiative Act (SHIA), Project Based Section 8, Tax Credit projects and Transition House programs
- Research, prepare reports and respond to relevant Congressional, federal, state and local inquiries and audit reviews
- Present the agency's position publically, assist in the preparation of publicity activities
- Devote appropriate attention to action plan objectives as assigned, ensuring that such goals are met or exceeded
- Follow up on late recertifications
- Facilitate planning and decision-making with federal, state, and local agency providers to meet the needs of our consumers
- Supervise to ensure the accuracy of HUD 50058s
- Collaborate with other groups and committees
- Identify best practices
- Develop training materials.
- Monitor repayment agreements, billing and payments, and budget expenditures
- Approve payouts for FSS escrow disbursements

COMPLIANCE:

- Address audit and SEMAP findings, conduct SEMAP quality control file reviews, maintain SEMAP documentation
- Analyze program utilization, assess program performance in meeting statutory and regulatory program requirements, and resolve compliance issues with program administration
- Ensure operational compliance with relevant regulations and standards, and ensure data accuracy
- Implement and maintain a quality control system
- Insure effective utilization and PIC reporting, process transmission of PIC information
- Maintain confidentiality of records
- Monitor and develop procedures for statutory, regulatory, policy and procedural compliance
- Review and monitor client files for completeness, HUD compliance, and accuracy of HAP and UAP. Formulate Section 8 operating budget compliance, plus statutory, regulatory, policy and procedural compliance
- Review and monitor HQS inspections and enforcement
- Monitor voucher issuance

CUSTOMER SERVICE:

- Assure that prospective and current property owners receive information related to the rules and procedures of HCV
- Represent the housing authority and act as a liaison with community groups
- Respond to requests for information, meetings, and inquiries concerning the assisted housing programs
- Supervise and provide resolution of resident and owner complaints and problems in a professional, tactful and courteous manner

ETHICS:

- Maintain program integrity
- Represent agency with integrity and assure that staff are fully trained/aware of the importance of appropriate ethical conduct and subsequent consequences for unethical conduct.
- Conduct program fraud investigations
- Operate HCV program to legal, ethical and professional standards
- Promote tenant integrity principles
- Ensure that funds, property and other assets are safeguarded against waste, loss, unauthorized use or misappropriation

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT:

- Complete VMS each month
- Evaluate financial indicators that affect program performance and performs ongoing HAP budget analysis
- Maintain optimal leasing
- Maintain program performance standards
- Monitor income targeting goals
- Monitor program turnover and utilization rates
- Monitor voucher utilization, HAP payments, Administrative Fees, etc.
- Oversee administration of waiting lists
- Prepare the Section Eight Management Assessment Program certification report
- Review and sign Housing Assistance Payments contracts
- Analyze rental market areas and rent burdens
- Review and approve reasonable accommodation requests
- Review and respond to fair housing complaints and reasonable accommodation requests
- Review, develop, and approve correspondence.
- Conduct and/or assure that group briefing sessions for new clients and landlords are conducted
- Conduct and/or assure that initial, annual and interim certifications are conducted
- Perform HQS inspections
- Determine initial & continued eligibility for program participants
- Develop, review and monitor utility allowance schedules
- Ensure HQS inspections are conducted on all assisted units
- Ensure that the negotiation of leases and contracts is consistent with federal, state and local regulations
- Ensure that vouchers are issued
- Oversee, initiate and review inspection reports for assigned area to assure HUD protocols and standards are being met.
- Process annual and interim recertifications
- Process rent increases
- Responsible for participant files both electronic and paper
- Responsible for eligibility functions and waiting list functions
- Review and modify payment standards for the program
- Review and process terminations
- Supervise annual and interim reexaminations of clients, verifying information, calculating rents, updating files and adjusting HAP and UAP accordingly
- Verify applicant and resident eligibility
- Approve applicant files for eligibility
- Approve, review and monitor portability
- Complete HUD Tool monthly

- Conduct and/or assure that criminal background checks are conducted properly
- Conduct and/or assure that annual studies of local rental housing rates are conducted
- Educate applicant and participant on housing search
- Prepare program progress reports and forecast annual program goals
- Process collections of unreported income
- Compile and make-available a listing (or listings) of available rental property
- Prepare orientation packets & participates in orientation for new program participants as needed
- Advise Senior Management on all matters affected by program changes and assists in preparing proposals for discussion and Board approval
- Respond timely to public inquiries verbally and in writing and make referrals to social agencies
- Respond to owner complaints
- Comment on proposed regulations to internal and external stakeholders
- Coordinate activities of the department with other authority departments, public agencies, private sector, including financial institutions
- Develop and monitor work plans consistent with staff job descriptions
- Investigates program violations and administrative processes leading to participant termination
- Oversee special programs and funding including but not limited to: FSS, Shelter + Care, Family Unification, Mainstream, VASH, Support Housing Initiative Act (SHIA), Project Based Section 8, Tax Credit projects and Transition House programs
- Explain variances and promote cost-containment measures
- Manage contractors

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE:

- Attend professional meetings, seminars and conferences to keep abreast of new trends, activities and concepts in HCV
- Resolve (or coordinate with IT) issues software/database systems relating to program compliance and efficiencies, computer application and hardware related issues. Maintain proficiency in the use of relevant computer hardware and software applications.
- Serve as a hearing officer for informal reviews and hearings
- Ensure staff is trained on software/database systems
- Study impact on ongoing and proposed measures including, but not limited to, measurement and evaluation of workflow in section 8, costs and time studies, quality control studies on operations, services and/or procedures. Gather, collect and classify information about internal and external resources

Chapter IX Sample Questions

1. According to HUD, which of the following must be adopted by the Housing Authority board and establishes local policies for administration of the voucher program?
 - A. Admission and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP).
 - B. The Administrative Plan.
 - C. The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
 - D. The Bylaws.

2. A voucher was issued to an individual who was income eligible, but did not qualify for the preference that was claimed. What is the best way to address this problem?
 - A. Allow the client to continue their housing search and lease if the unit can be approved.
 - B. Recind the voucher from the client and return the client to the waiting list.
 - C. Reprimand the employee who made the mistake for failure to follow agency policies and procedures.
 - D. Waive the preference requirements and allow the client to lease if they find an approvable unit.

3. Which of the following is most likely to result in positive outcomes in an environment in which funding has become increasingly restricted?
 - A. Focusing on traditional functions.
 - B. Increasing multi-tasking.
 - C. Identifying and implementing best practices.
 - D. Reducing functions.

**Answers
Page 35**

Chapter X Additional Resources

The following resources should be not be considered a comprehensive listing of materials to prepare for the exam but as a reference to what a CMVO may require or refer to for success in the position. Each candidate should prepare per their own experience and education needs.

In addition, knowledge of current and standard management theory and practice is helpful to a voucher manager in executing their responsibilities and may be considered in exam questions.

Training Courses and Resource Manuals

Basic and advanced program knowledge can be obtained by attending training courses and seminars. CMVO candidates may find that the knowledge gained by attending HCV program and management courses offered by any of the following organizations or other providers useful as they prepare for the CMVO exam:

- Nan McKay and Associates
- National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)
- National Center for Housing Management (NCHM)
- The Nelrod Company
- Quadel Consulting and Training

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)

All HUD programs are governed by Title 24 of the CFR. The housing choice voucher program is governed by the following parts:

Section	Subject
Part 1	Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs
Part 5 Subpart A	Generally Applicable Definitions and General Requirements
Part 5 Subpart B	Disclosure and Verification of Social Security Numbers and EIN's
Part 5 Subpart D	Definitions for Section 8, HCV and public housing programs
Part 5 Subpart E	Restrictions on assistance to non-citizens
Part 5 Subpart F	Definitions of family income, assets, allowances, and deductions
Part 5 Subpart G	Physical Condition Standards and Inspection Requirements

Part 5 Subpart H	Uniform Financial Reporting Standards
Part 5 Subpart I	Preventing Crime in Federally Assisted Housing – Denying Admission and Terminating Tenancy for Criminal Activity or Alcohol Abuse
Part 5 Subpart J	Access to Criminal Records and Information
Part 5 Subpart K	Application Submission Requirements
Part 5 Subpart L	Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence or Stalking (VAWA)
Part 8	Nondiscrimination Based on Handicap in Federally Assisted Programs and Activities of HUD
Part 35 Subpart A	Disclosure of Known Lead-based Paint Hazards Upon Sale or Lease of Residential Property
Part 35 Subpart B	General Lead-based Paint Requirements and Definitions
Part 35 Subpart M	Tenant-based Rental Assistance
Part 100	Discriminatory Conduct Under the Fair Housing Act
Part 903	PHA Plans
Part 908	Electronic data transmission requirements
Part 982	Housing Choice Voucher Tenant-Based Program Policies
Part 983	Project-Based Voucher Program Policies
Part 985	Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP)

Annual Publication of the CFR

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is an annual codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available as an electronic publication, free of charge, or as a paper publication, by full set subscription or individual copy purchase, from the Superintendent of Documents, or at any Federal Depository Library. The annual edition of the CFR can be located at: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR>

Electronic Updates to the CFR

The Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (e-CFR) is a regularly updated, unofficial editorial compilation of CFR material and Federal Register amendments produced by the National Archives and Records Administration's Office of the Federal Register (OFR) and the Government Publishing Office. The eCFR can be located at: <http://www.ecfr.gov> and select "Title 24 – Housing and Urban Development"

PIH Notices

HUD often issues policy updates through PIH Notices. PHAs are required to follow the guidance provided in PIH Notices. PIH Notices can be found at:
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/publications/notices

The image shows a screenshot of a HUD notice titled "U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Public and Indian Housing". The notice is dated June 06, 2016, and is titled "Notice PIH 2016-09 (HA)". It is issued to "Directors of HUD Regional and Field Offices of Public Housing; PIH Program Center Coordinators; Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) Administering Housing Choice Voucher Programs". The notice states: "Expires: This Notice remains effective until amended, superseded, or rescinded". There are also "Cross References" listed: "HUD PIH Notices: 2015-6; 2012-42; 2012-4; 2011-65; 2011-3; 2008-43; 2007-4; 2004-15".

Callout boxes highlight the following information:

- Look for PIH Notices that affect the **Housing Choice Voucher Program**
- Pay close attention to the **dates** that the notice is issued, when it expires and the **cross referenced notices** and regulations

HUD Guidebook

The Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook is to advise to PHAs and other organizations providing services to PHAs, regarding the administration of the tenant-based subsidy programs. It includes an historical review of the tenant-based rental assistance programs, discusses program requirements in detail, and provides helpful administrative practices currently used by PHAs that operate the program. The HCV Guidebook can be located at:
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/forms/guidebook

Federal Register Notices

Regulatory changes are published in the Federal Register. As a convenience, HUD provides a listing of Federal Register Notices that affect HUD programs for a period of 90 days. That filtered list can be located at:
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/hudclips/fr
Full copies of the Federal Register (covering all branches of the Federal Government) can be located at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/>

HUD Office of Housing Choice Vouchers

HUD has created a homepage for the Office of Housing Choice Vouchers. This page contains recent and relevant information about the HCV program, including notices, admin fee rates, archived webcasts, a link to the forecasting tool and other useful information. The Office of Housing Choice Vouchers can be located at:
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv

NAHRO Certification
630 I ST NW
Washington, DC 20001
Toll Free: 877.866.2476, Fax: 202.289.8181
www.nahro.org/certification
E-mail: certification@nahro.org

Sample Question Answers

1. B
2. B
3. A