Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM)

Discipline Policy
(October 5, 2010)

INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM) is the official certifying body for the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). AHIMA is a not-for-profit, professional membership association, whose mission is:

“To be the professional community that improves healthcare by advancing best practices and standards for health information management and the trusted source for education, research, and professional credentialing.”

The CCHIIM mission specifies:

“Through certification, CCHIIM assures the competency of professionals practicing health informatics and information management worldwide.”

In order for a candidate to obtain an AHIMA credential, all candidates must comply with the CCHIIM standards for initial certification and complete the CCHIIM certification process, which consists of the following: 1) Meeting or exceeding all education and experience eligibility requirements established by CCHIIM for the respective credential; 2) paying all published fees, as applicable, for the respective credential; and 3) passing the certification examination for the respective credential.

All individuals currently certified by AHIMA must demonstrate an ongoing professional commitment to the health informatics and information management (HIIM) domains,

Further, the AHIMA Code of Ethics applies to AHIMA members and credentialed professionals who are not members.

Thus, all appeals related to certification examination eligibility, certification exam performance, and recertification (certification maintenance), as well as all complaints related to potential ethics violations regarding misconduct that involve currently certified individuals (i.e., certificants), irrespective of AHIMA membership status, may be subject to discipline action administered by the CCHIIM.

AUTHORITY

CCHIIM shall serve as the final decision-making body and sole authority with regards to administering discipline to AHIMA certificants resulting from:
1. All appeals with respect to certification examination eligibility, examination performance, and recertification (certification maintenance), in accordance with the CCHIIM Operating Code and CCHIIM Appeals policies and procedures; and

2. All initial complaints and subsequent appeals with respect to AHIMA certificant misconduct, in accordance with the CCHIIM Operating Code and AHIMA Professional Ethics Committee (PEC) policies and procedures.

**ASSIGNMENT**

**CCHIIM Appeals Committee** – CCHIIM assigns the CCHIIM Appeals Committee the responsibility to investigate appeals with respect to certification exam eligibility, examination performance, and recertification (certification maintenance), in accordance with the CCHIIM Operating Code and the CCHIIM Appeals policies and procedures.

**AHIMA PEC** – CCHIIM assigns the AHIMA Professional Ethics Committee (PEC) the responsibility to: 1) Investigate complaints and subsequent appeals, on behalf of CCHIIM, into complaints regarding alleged AHIMA certificant misconduct; and 2) recommend disciplinary action (as defined below) to CCHIIM, resulting from an aforementioned investigation regarding a complaint alleging AHIMA certificant misconduct, for final consideration and decision-making, in accordance with the CCHIIM Operating Code, CCHIIM Discipline policy, and AHIMA PEC policies and procedures.

**DEFINITIONS**

CCHIIM disciplinary actions include:

- **Probation**: A directive to allow for correction of behavior specified in Principle 5 of the Code. It may include mandatory participation in remedial programs (e.g., education, professional counseling, and peer assistance). Failure to successfully complete these programs may result in other disciplinary action being taken. It carries no loss of certification status, but may result in removal from any CCHIIM-designated committee, taskforce, workgroup, exam development team, or other assignment. Time frame--specified time to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

- **Censure**: A written reprimand expressing disapproval of conduct. It carries no loss of certification status, but may result in removal from any CCHIIM-designated committee, taskforce, workgroup, exam development team, or other assignment. Time frame--not applicable.

- **Suspension of Credential**: Temporary loss of credential and all benefits and privileges for a specified period of time. It may include mandatory participation in remedial programs (e.g., education, professional counseling, and peer assistance). At the end of the specified suspension period, certification benefits and privileges are automatically restored. Time frame--specified time to be decided on a case-by-case basis.
• **Revocation of Credential**: Loss of certification status and removal from CCHIIM registry; loss of all benefits and privileges. Upon revocation, the former credentialed practitioner shall return the certification identification card to CCHIIM. Time frame--Specified time for reapplication to be decided on a case-by-case basis, but, at minimum, current recertification requirements would need to be met. A credential will not be issued until CCHIIM determines that the reasons for revocation have been removed.

**DECISION RIGHTS**

**CCHIIM Appeals Committee** – CCHIIM will have the final decision-making responsibility and sole authority with regards to all appeals, when applicable, with respect to certification exam eligibility, examination performance, and recertification (certification maintenance), in accordance with the CCHIIM Operating Code and the CCHIIM Appeals policies and procedures.

**AHIMA PEC** – CCHIIM will have the final decision-making responsibility and sole authority to consider all recommendations received by the AHIMA PEC for discipline of an AHIMA certificant through probation, censure, suspension, or revocation of credentials, in accordance with the CCHIIM Operating Code, CCHIIM Discipline policy, and AHIMA PEC policies and procedures, as further described below:

ACCEPT – acceptance of the disciplinary recommendation from the AHIMA PEC requires a majority vote of all Commissioners present during a meeting, subject to the establishment of quorum.

MODIFY – revising a disciplinary recommendation from the AHIMA PEC requires a two-thirds vote of all Commissioners present during a meeting, subject to the establishment of quorum.

REJECT – rejection of a disciplinary recommendation from the AHIMA PEC requires a unanimous vote of all Commissioners present during a meeting, subject to quorum.

**NOTIFICATION**

The AHIMA certificant will be notified of any decision / disciplinary action by CCHIIM within thirty (30) calendar days of the CCHIIM meeting where the decision / disciplinary action was rendered, or within thirty (30) calendar days after an in-person meeting of the Commission, or as soon thereafter as is practical.

**REINSTatement / REAPPLICATION**

Unless otherwise ordered through an administrative determination, an individual whose eligibility, certification, or recertification (certification maintenance) status has been disciplined by the CCHIIM may apply for reinstatement under procedures set forth from time to time by the CCHIIM. Action on all reinstatement / reapplications for an AHIMA credential shall be at the sole discretion of the CCHIIM.
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

In the interest of protecting the public and the integrity of the profession regarding individuals subject to discipline by the CCHIIM, the CCHIIM shall have the authority, and reserves the explicit right to:

1. Remove the name of the individual from any official CCHIIM listing of AHIMA certificants; and

2. Provide information regarding the disciplined individual to the agency(ies) responsible for professional / occupational regulation within their state of practice, employers, other professional certification or credentialing organizations, as well as to any third-party payer who financially support or supports the individual involved, such as:
   - Name
   - Contact address, city, and state
   - Place of employment
   - Date of disposition of disciplinary action
   - Discipline imposed by the CCHIIM

3. Publish the following information available through CCHIIM / AHIMA online and print publications and press releases:
   - Name
   - Contact address, city, and state
   - Date of disposition of disciplinary action
   - Discipline imposed by the CCHIIM

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