

ANCC CERTIFICATION

HOW TO DISPLAY YOUR CREDENTIALS

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA), provides individuals and organizations throughout the nursing profession with the resources they need to achieve practice excellence. ANCC's internationally renowned credentialing programs certify nurses in specialty practice areas; recognize healthcare organizations for promoting safe, positive work environments through the Magnet Recognition Program® and the Pathway to Excellence® Program; and accredit providers of continuing nursing education. In addition, ANCC's Institute for Credentialing Innovation® provides leading-edge information and education services and products to support its core credentialing programs.

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How to Display Your Credentials



The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) is the first and only nurse credentialing organization to become ISO 9001:2008 certified.



COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
ABOUT DISPLAYING YOUR CREDENTIALS
IN THE PROPER ORDER

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Why Do We Need a Standard Way to List Credentials?

Having a standard way ensures that everyone, including nurses, healthcare providers, consumers, third-party payers, and government officials, understands the significance and value of credentials.

What Is the Preferred Order of Credentials?

The preferred order is

- >> highest earned degree
- >> licensure
- >> state designations or requirements
- >> national certifications
- >> awards and honors
- >> other recognitions

Why Is This Order Recommended?

The education degree comes first because it is a “permanent” credential, meaning it cannot be taken away except under extreme circumstances. The next two credentials (licensure and state designations/requirements) are required for you to practice. National certification is sometimes voluntary, and awards, honors, and other recognitions are always voluntary.

What Are Examples of Credentials?

Educational degrees include doctoral degrees (PhD, DrPH, DNS, EdD, DNP), master’s degrees (MSN, MS, MA), bachelor’s degrees (BS, BSN, BA), and associate degrees (AD, ADN).

Licensure credentials include RN and LPN.

State designations or requirements recognize authority to practice at a more advanced level in that state and include APRN (Advanced Practice Registered Nurse), NP (Nurse Practitioner), and CNS (Clinical Nurse Specialist).

National certification, which is awarded through accredited certifying bodies such as the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), includes RN-BC (Registered Nurse-Board Certified) and FNP-BC (Family Nurse Practitioner-Board Certified).

Awards and honors recognize outstanding achievements in nursing such as FAAN (Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing).

Other certifications include non-nursing certifications that recognize additional skills. One example is the EMT-Basic/EMT, awarded by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians.

What Credentials Do I Have to Use?

On legal documents such as prescriptions and notes on medical records, you must use the credentials required by your state for your area of practice, for example, Susan Jones, RN, or Joyce Smith, APRN.

In professional endeavors such as speaking, writing for publication, or providing testimony before a legislative body, use all your relevant credentials. Note that journals sometimes order credentials differently, and it is acceptable to conform to their style.

What If I Have More Than One of the Same Type of Credential?

List the highest education degree first, for example, Michael Anderson, PhD, MSN. In most cases, one degree is enough, but if your second degree is in another relevant field, you may choose to list it. For example, a nurse executive might choose Nancy Gordon, MBA, MSN, RN. Note that the highest non-nursing degree is listed first followed by the highest nursing degree. A nurse who has a master’s in a non-nursing field might choose Anne Peterson, MEd, BSN, RN. If you have a doctorate and a master’s degree, omit your baccalaureate degree.

Multiple nursing certifications may be listed in the order you prefer, but consider listing them either in order of relevance to your practice or in the order they were obtained, with the most recent first. Always list non-nursing certifications last.

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