



American Horticultural Therapy Association®

Horticultural Therapist – Board Certified (HT-BC) 2026 Recertification Renewal Handbook



Preface

As you begin the process of renewal of your certification, the American Horticultural Therapy Association (AHTA) honors your commitment to the profession of horticultural therapy. By engaging in continuing education, you strengthen the profession and help ensure its impact for present and future generations.

Purpose

The HT-BC Recertification Renewal Handbook is designed to provide the Horticultural Therapist – Board Certified (HT-BC) with guidelines to assist in maintaining and renewing certification with the AHTA.

Table of Contents

Contents

Preface	2
Purpose	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Introduction	4
Section I: Recertification	5
Option 1: Continuing Education	5
Option 2: Reexamination	6
Extension of Recertification	6
Denial and Appeals	7
Section II: Knowledge Areas	8
Section III: Continuing Education Categories	9
Conferences, Workshops, Courses, Independent Learning.	9
Publications	9
Presentations	10
Professional Services	10
Not Approved for Continuing Education.....	11
Section IV: Application Process and Fees.....	12
Application Process	12
Application Fees.....	12
Section V: Contact Information.....	13
Section VI: Approved Providers	14
Section VII: Scenarios.....	15
Section VIII: Frequently Asked Questions	16
Section IX: Definition of Terms.....	18

Introduction

The AHTA recognizes and certifies horticultural therapists through a credentialing program. The designation HT-BC ensures professional competencies have been achieved based on standardized academic requirements and professional experience.

The certificant is committed to developing and maintaining professional standards for individuals who practice horticultural therapy. The mission of the AHTA credentialing program is to ensure professional competence is maintained by board certified horticultural therapists.

Continuing education programs not only provide certified horticultural therapists with the opportunity to develop additional knowledge and skills. They also serve to:

- Establish standards for professional knowledge, skills, and practice.
- Assure consumers that professionals have met standards of practice.
- Meet the needs of employers, practitioners, and the public to identify individuals with certain knowledge and skills.
- Demonstrates an individual's commitment to a profession.

Section I: Recertification

The board-certified horticultural therapist who is awarded the credential HT-BC is responsible for maintaining current knowledge, skills, and abilities in the practice of horticultural therapy.

The 5-year recertification period begins the day the certificant is awarded certification and ends the last day of the fifth year. The recertification date remains the same for each 5-year cycle.

If the conditions for recertification are not completed by the last day of the 5-year cycle, certification will expire. Once certification expires, the horticultural therapist must pass the HT-BC exam to become board certified again.

Recertification Options

1. Continuing Education
 - a. Complete 50 CE credits within the 5-year period of certification.
 - b. A minimum of 3 CE hours must be in ethics.
2. Reexamination.
 - a. A passing score on the HT-BC exam.

Option 1: Continuing Education

Certified horticultural therapists may choose to maintain certification through continuing education. The continuing education program must demonstrate the educational value to enhancing the HT-BC's professional skills beyond the core curriculum for horticultural therapy education. All continuing education must be completed within the 5-year recertification period and by the last day of the 5-year cycle.

Allied healthcare professionals who are also board-certified horticultural therapists may submit to the AHTA continuing education credits submitted for recertification of their primary designated certification or licensure.

A record of continuing education credits must be submitted with the AHTA recertification application at the time of renewal. Continuing education credit is defined as: 1 CE credit is 50 minutes of instruction.

Approved Provider Credit

Continuing education credits completed through an AHTA approved provider are automatically approved to meet the HT-BC recertification requirements. Course and program titles must be directly related to the current AHTA Job Task Analysis identified knowledge areas (reference Section VI: Approved Providers for a list of providers).

Note: Applicants completing continuing education earned at workshops, webinars, conferences, etc. that are completed through programs NOT approved as an AHTA provider should be prepared to submit documentation upon request by the AHTA at the time of renewal.

Audit of Continuing Education Credit

Certificants should maintain documentation of continuing education for at least 1 year past the 5-year recertification cycle to comply with random audits. Certificants must comply with the random audit if requested by the AHTA. There will be a percentage of recertification applications audited each year.

Option 2: Reexamination

The certificant will be required to take and pass the current certification exam for the HT-BC. The certificant must register and take the exam within 6 months of the end of their 5-year renewal cycle. The exam fee is in addition to the recertification renewal fees.

Extension of Recertification

Certificants may request an extension to the renewal date and/or the recertification cycle due to extenuating circumstance or emergency.

Renewal date: If the certificant has met all the recertification requirements but is unable to meet the renewal date, a certificant may request a 60-day extension to submit all required materials or an application for reexamination. The certificant must submit the request in writing, along with documentation regarding the circumstance and verification that the circumstance occurred within the time frame immediately leading up to the renewal date to the AHTA. The 60-day extension request is due 30 days prior to the renewal date.

Recertification cycle: In the event that a certificant has not completed all recertification requirements within the 5-year cycle due to a serious health condition, military deployment, financial circumstances, or a personal emergency, an extension may be granted on a case-by-case basis. The certificant must submit the request along with documentation verifying personal circumstance and submit this in writing to the AHTA within 30 days of the recertification renewal date. If an extension is granted, the certificant will have up to 1 year from the date of extension to complete and submit all required recertification materials or retake the certification exam.

Denial and Appeals

Board certified horticultural therapists whose recertification is denied by the AHTA may appeal the decision within thirty (30) days of notification of the decision.

1. The AHTA Executive Committee serves as the AHTA Certification Appeals Board.
2. Appeals must be in writing and sent electronically to the AHTA Office. Appeals should state the reason for the appeal and state the basis of the appeal.
3. Certificants filing an appeal will be advised when an appeal review has been scheduled. Should the Appeals Board decide that there are grounds for an appeal, the appeal will be submitted to the AHTA Professional Credentialing Review Board for reconsideration.
4. Any decision made by the AHTA Certification Appeals Board at that time will stand. The AHTA Office will notify the appellant by letter and include a summary of the decision.

Section II: Knowledge Areas

The knowledge areas are fundamental to performing the tasks in each identified domain of the current AHTA Job Task Analysis. The knowledge areas essential to perform the job of a horticultural therapist are identified as:

- Plant Sciences
- Human Sciences
- Horticultural Therapy/Therapeutic Horticulture
- Professionalism and Scholarship

In addition, the AHTA requires 3 CE credits in ethics. Ethics is identified under the Professionalism and Scholarship Knowledge Area of the current AHTA Job Task Analysis.

Section III: Continuing Education Categories

Conferences, Workshops, Courses, Independent Learning.

Credits may be given for professional events, academic coursework, webinars, and self-study courses. All academic coursework must reflect a grade of C- or above. Content must align with the domain focus areas identified in the current AHTA Job Task analysis.

Description	Documentation	Credit Amount	Maximum Allowable Credit
Horticultural Therapy Conferences, Workshops, and/or Webinars	Certificate of Completion	1 credit per 50 minutes	50
Conferences, Workshops, and/or Webinars from other knowledge related areas	Certificate of Completion	1 credit per 50 minutes	50
Academic Course(s)	Official transcript	10 credits per 1 quarter 15 credits per 1 semester	45
Self-Study Course	Certificate of Completion	As approved by provider	20

Publications

An individual publication may be given credit only once even if published multiple times. Continuing education submitted in the category Journal Research must be published in a peer reviewed publication and report on horticultural therapy/therapeutic horticulture as a clinical intervention. Book and book chapters must reflect a horticultural therapy/therapeutic horticulture topic related to the current AHTA Job Task Analysis.

Description	Documentation	Credit Amount	Maximum Allowable Credit
Journal Research (author or co-author)	Published title page and reference	10 per article	20

Book Book Chapter	Written summary, APA Citation, published title page, copyright page	40 per book 10 per chapter	40
Book Review	Copy of review	3 per review	9

Presentations

Presentations may be in the form of seminars, symposia, conferences, workshops, or webinars. The HT-BC may be a guest lecturer, primary presenter, or panel participant. Credit will not be given for repeat or multiple presentations of the same material. Content must align with the domain focus areas identified in the current AHTA Job Task Analysis.

Description	Documentation	Credit Amount	Maximum Allowable Credit
Presentations	Written summary, proof of presentation	2 credits per 50 minutes	10
Poster Presentation	Written summary, proof of presentation	1 credit per poster	5

Professional Services

Credit may be given for professional services contributing to the field of horticultural therapy in the capacity of an internship supervisor or board director.

Description	Documentation	Credit Amount	Maximum Allowable Credit
Internship supervision	Copy of signed Intern Performance Report	2 credits per intern	6

Board of Director service	Verification of time from Officer or Association Director	1 credit per year of service	5
---------------------------	---	------------------------------	---

Not Approved for Continuing Education

The following trainings not accepted for continuing education credit include but are not limited to:

- CPR
- First Aid
- Infectious Disease Control
- Life Saving activity or other skill-based courses for employment requirements

Intervention skill sessions/courses will be accepted only when the majority of the focus is on using horticulture as the therapeutic process.

Section IV: Application Process and Fees

Application Process

1. Certificants must complete the Recertification Renewal Application for HT-BC using the online form and pay the renewal fees. Payment is due at the time of application.
2. The complete renewal application and materials are due 1 month prior to the end of the existing period of certification.
3. Certificants renewing by continuing education are required to maintain a record of continuing education credits and must submit a completed record at the time of application for recertification.
4. Certificants renewing by reexamination must take and pass the HT-BC exam within 6 months of application for recertification. Reference the HT-BC Exam Handbook for information about registering for the exam.

Application Fees

Fees are based on your recertification renewal status and all fees are nonrefundable.

Continuing Education Option:

Fee Type	Price
Annual Maintenance Fee	\$50.00 USD
Extension Fee	\$75.00 USD

Reexamination Option:

Fee Type	Price
HT-BC Exam Fee	\$450.00 USD (AHTA Members) \$595.00 USD (Non-members)
Extension Fee	\$75.00 USD

Section V: Contact Information

For further information, inquiries may be directed to the AHTA Office at info@ahta.org.

Section VI: Approved Providers

All continuing education must align with the current AHTA Job Task Analysis. Any academic courses or continuing education course taken for HT-BC recertification must be beyond the initial horticultural therapy education program, required core curriculum, and should expand your skill or knowledge-based competency as a clinician and member of the horticultural therapy profession.

An academic course completed at an accredited institute of higher learning is *automatically* approved by the AHTA.

A continuing education program sponsored by any of the following accrediting organizations, their regional and/or state affiliates, and/or providers approved by the organization is *automatically* approved by the AHTA in fulfillment of the continuing education requirement for the HT-BC recertification.

The AHTA will accept continuing education completed in support of other professional certification or licensure with any of the following accrediting organizations.

Approved providers offering continuing education programs:

- [American Horticultural Therapy Association](#)
- [American Society for Horticultural Science](#)
- [American Society of Landscape Architects](#)
- [American Institute of Floral Designers](#)
- [Soil Science Society of America](#)
- [Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification](#)
- [American Occupational Therapy Association](#)
- [American Physical Therapy Association](#)
- [National Association of Social Workers](#)
- [National Board for Certified Counselors](#)
- [American Counseling Association](#)
- [The Certification Board for Music Therapies](#)
- [American Therapeutic Recreation Association](#)

Section VII: Scenarios

Allied healthcare professionals who are also board-certified horticultural therapists may submit to the AHTA continuing education credits submitted for recertification of their primary designated certification or licensure; the CE must be related to the current AHTA Job Task Analysis.

The following are several examples:

Occupational Therapist/HT-BC

- Wrote a chapter on horticultural therapy for an occupational therapy textbook = 10 CE credits
- Authored article on horticultural therapy for peer-reviewed periodical = 10 CE credits
- Attended one day of the AHTA conference = 6 CE credits
- Attended 3 – one day occupational therapy conferences = 18 CE credits
- Presented horticultural therapy workshop at two conferences = 4 CE credits
- Ethics online course = 3 CE credits

Mental Health Clinician/HT-BC

- Academic coursework in horticulture knowledge = 15 CE credits
- Attended two days of the AHTA conferences = 12 CE credits
- Attended one annual mental health conference = 12 CE credits
- Presented Horticultural Therapy and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder at AHTA conference = 1 CE credit
- Supervised two horticultural therapy interns = 4 CE credits
- Online course in advanced therapeutic knowledge-counseling = 3 CE credits
- Ethics online course = 3 CE credits

Horticulturalist/Landscape Designer/HT-BC

- Academic coursework in specialized disability groups and counseling techniques = 40 CE credits
- Conducted a horticultural therapy workshop for an ASLA group = 8 CE credits
- Ethics workshop = 3 CE credits

BA/MA in Business marketing-fundraising/HT-BC

- Academic coursework in medical aspects of disability groups = 15 CE credits
- Academic coursework in horticultural knowledge = 15 CE credits
- Attended the AHTA conference = 12 CE credits
- AHTA Board of Director service = 3 CE credits
- Supervised one intern = 2 CE credits
- Ethics conference presentation = 3 CE credits

Section VIII: Frequently Asked Questions

How often must my HT-BC credential be renewed?

Certification as a Horticultural Therapist (HT-BC) must be renewed every 5-years on the anniversary of the month of your original certification. Your recertification renewal application must be submitted by the end of the preceding month.

How do I submit my continuing education with my recertification application?

The continuing education record is part of the recertification application. Maintain a record of your completed continuing education over the 5-year period and fill in the form at the time you submit your HT-BC Recertification Renewal Application.

How do I renew my HT-BC certification?

There are two options for recertification renewal: continuing education and reexamination.

If I decide to take the exam to renew my certification, what do I need to do?

Reference the HT-BC Certification Exam Handbook for instructions on how to register to take the exam.

What qualifies as continuing education in the Ethics focus area?

Continuing education training in ethics must relate to your role as an HT-BC and expand upon your training and education. The continuing education program must indicate approval in fulfillment of ethics content and credit.

How will I know whether a workshop, online seminar, self-study program, or academic course can be counted as a CE?

All continuing education must align with the current AHTA Job Task Analysis. All continuing education for recertification must be beyond the required core curriculum in plant science and human science and the horticultural therapy coursework and serve to enhance your knowledge and job skills as a horticultural therapy clinician in addition to your contribution to the field as a Supervisor, Presenter, Writer, Researcher and/or Educator. [Reference Section I – Continuing Education Option](#) for additional information

If I accumulate more than 50 CE credits within my 5-year recertification period, can I apply the excess for credit in my next 5-year period recertification of my HT-BC?

No, all Continuing Education must be completed during the 5-year renewal period. The whole purpose of continuing education is to guarantee that HT-BC's have current knowledge of the field, techniques, research, etc.

May I specialize in an area of horticultural therapy, accumulating all 50 CEs in one knowledge area or through one professional activity?

Yes. However, some professional activities do have limitations on the number of CE credits that can be applied per 5-year recertification period. Reference [Section III: Continuing Education Categories](#) for information.

What happens if I miss my recertification renewal deadline?

If you miss filing your HT-BC recertification application, you must inform the AHTA Office. If you enrolled in a course in time for you to complete it before the filing date but did not receive documentation before you submitted your HT-BC recertification application, inform the AHTA office.

If you have not completed the required 50 CE credits and have not requested an extension, your HT-BC status will be placed on suspension.

See [Section I under Extension of Recertification](#) for additional information.

What is an approved provider and where do I find that information?

An approved provider is a professional accrediting organization or their regional and/or state affiliates. [Reference Section VI: Approved Providers.](#)

I still need some more information; can someone help me?

Yes, you may send your inquiry via e-mail to the AHTA Office. You will receive a response within 10 business days, depending on the content of your inquiry.

Section IX: Definition of Terms

AHTA Standards of Practice: The approved guidelines that define the expected techniques and procedures for horticultural therapy interventions with individuals experiencing a range of psychological, medical, or educational conditions.

Allied healthcare professionals: Allied health encompasses a broad group of health professionals who have advanced training, certification, and/or licensure to provide a wide range of services in connection with health care systems in a variety of settings.

Appellant: The person making an appeal.

Approved Provider: An organization, institution, or association that is approved by the AHTA to award CE credit to the certificant for participation in the training and/or course.

Audit: A random review of an individual's continuing education record conducted by the AHTA.

BC: Board certified

Book author: A certificant who has written a book/chapter or book/chapter published by a 3rd party.

Book Editor: A certificant who has edited a book/chapter or a book/chapter published by a 3rd party.

Certificant: A board-certified horticultural therapist who gains certain rights consistent with certification.

Certification Exam: A standardized examination used to measure comprehensiveness of the AHTA HT-BC Certification Domains.

Certificate of Attendance: A document/certificate signed by the Continuing Education Provider that provides proof of attendance at the continuing education event.

Certificate of Completion: A document/certificate signed by the Continuing Education Provider that provides written verification of the title, date, and length of the continuing education option.

Conferences: A formal meeting for presentation and discussion of ideas and processes. Conference formats may be in person or online.

Continuing education credit: One CE credit is 50 minutes of instruction.

Continuing education: Continuing education is an all-encompassing term within a broad spectrum of post-secondary learning activities and programs designed to educate and expand skills and/or knowledge.

Continuing education options: In addition to in-person programs and professional activities, continuing education may include self-study and research publications.

Documentation: Records and information required by the AHTA in case of an audit of recertification credits.

Ethics: The principles of conduct governing an individual or a group.

HIPPA: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a federal law that required the creation of national standards to protect sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge.

HT-BC: Horticultural Therapist – Board Certified.

Internship supervision: Internship supervision must align with the supervisor's requirements and responsibilities identified in the AHTA Internship Handbook.

Job Analysis Knowledge Areas: Knowledge areas are aligned with the current AHTA Job Analysis. Knowledge areas are required for competent performance by horticultural therapists.

Late fee: The cost assessed by the AHTA charged to the certificant for an overdue recertification application.

Official transcript: A sealed document from the registrar of an educational institution that serves as proof of successful completion of academic work.

Peer-reviewed professional publication: A publication supported by an editorial board to conduct a blind review of articles submitted for publication.

Professional publications: Professional publications include peer-reviewed journals, books, and review of professional publications related to horticultural therapy.

Proof of Presentation: A document that demonstrates proof of presentation at the continuing education event.

Recertification: The process of completing the requirements for recertification either through continuing education or reexamination, completing the recertification renewal application, and submission of all required materials resulting in the awarding of the credential HT-BC.

Recertification cycle: The 5-year recertification period begins the day the certificant is awarded certification and ends the last day of the fifth year.

Self-study: A course taken online or through home study from an AHTA approved provider.

Seminar: A meeting for discussion or training purposes.

Symposia: A conference or meeting to discuss a particular subject, or a collection of essays or papers on a particular subject by a number of contributors.

Verification of Time: Written documentation of horticultural therapy-related service in the form of volunteering time to a board.

Webinar: Participation in an interactive educational seminar conducted via online methods. Webinars may be live or pre-recorded.

Written Summary: A summary describing the participation in the continuing education event as a presenter or poster presentation.

Workshop: Participation in a process-based event to gain experience in the material presented. Workshops typically have 20% didactic material and involve 80% experiential components.