

TECHNICIAN HANDBOOK



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NATE CERTIFICATION


To become NATE certified, a technician would need to take and pass both the Core and a specialty exam. The Knowledge Areas of Technician Expertise (KATE's) are outlines of the information covered in each exam. The KATEs are available on www.natex.org. They should be used as reference materials while preparing for the NATE.

NATE's goal is to make exams readily available to technicians. Exams are offered on-demand by approved NATE Testing Organizations. Local NATE testing organizations can be found by using the "Locate a Testing Organization" tool on www.natex.org.

ELIGIBILITY FOR NATE CERTIFICATE OR CERTIFICATION EXAMS

Anyone interested in obtaining NATE Certification may take the tests, provided they have contacted and made arrangements with the Testing Organization.

The NATE exams assess the candidates' applied knowledge and experience, both are necessary to pass the NATE exams. There are no formal educational requirements for certification, but NATE suggests that candidates have some formal training or work experience.



Below is the suggested work experience a technician should have prior to taking the NATE certification exams.

- Ready-to-Work Certificate Exam: Entry-level to 6 months
- Heating and Cooling Support Technician Certificate Exam: 6 months to 1 year
- Core, Installation, or Service Certification Exams: 2 years
- Senior Level Efficiency Analyst Certification Exam: 5 years

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct must be signed before a candidate can take a NATE exam.

As a professional NATE certified technician in the fields of HVACR, I agree to the following:

- I will deal with clients, consumers, and other professionals and professional organizations fairly and in a timely manner
- I will provide safe and quality services to clients and consumers
- I will maintain and improve my technical competence through continuing education, peer counseling and interaction with other professionals in my prescribed field
- I will act in a manner free of bias with regard to religion, ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, or disability.
- I will not misrepresent or permit misrepresentation of my qualifications or the qualifications of my associates
- Will have regard for the environment and for public safety, health, and the well-being of our clients.
- I understand that the NATE certificate, logo, and marks are property of North American Technician Excellence (NATE) and must be surrendered upon request.
- I will uphold and follow all policies and procedures required by the Candidate's Handbook
- I will not knowingly violate safety-related regulations, warning, or instructions set forth by OSHA, recognized safety standards, or codes.

EXAM AGREEMENT STATEMENT

Upon completion of your exam you are required to sign your answer card agreeing to the statement below:

“By signing and submitting this form, I affirm that the test I received was sealed when received, opened and then resealed by myself, and the answers marked on the answer sheet are my own. I also affirm that I will not discuss any aspect of the exam after the test session. I understand that if I should become certified, the certificate is the property of NATE and I must surrender it if certification is revoked. I agree to abide by the certification eligibility requirements and the NATE Code of Conduct.”

TEST SESSION TYPES

Paper and Pencil Test Sessions:

- NATE suggests that you arrive at least 30 minutes before the scheduled exam time
- Each candidate must have a photo ID to present to the Proctor. No one will be allowed to take a NATE exam without it.

- Payment may be collected at this time, if other arrangements have not been made. Candidates pay the testing organizations directly for the exams.
- Please be prepared to shut off all electronic devices and to leave them in a safe area designated by the proctor.
- For paper and pencil tests please bring several #2 pencils.
- You may bring a non-programmable calculator into the testing area.
- The proctor will read an introduction to the testing group, there will be time for questions and answers concerning the exam and they will inform candidates how much time has been allotted for each test.
- Each candidate will receive an unopened and sealed test packet, please read the cover and make sure it contains the correct test you registered for.
- The proctor will tell you when to open the packet, print legibly when completing the name, NATE ID, and booklet serial number on the answer card.
- Complete a demographic form. You only need to complete this form once, regardless of how many exams. Remember to print legibly.
- The proctor will then tell the candidates to start the tests.
- You will be asked to place your test, answer card, test survey, original envelope, demographic form and any scrap paper into the return envelope and seal it. You and the proctor will sign the envelope after sealing the envelope.
- If you are taking more than one exam, take a short break and begin again.
- The proctor will return all examination materials back to the NATE within 48 hours. Your exam results will generally be available within two weeks of your test session by logging into your myNATE account at www.myNATE.org. You will receive an email when NATE has received your session and another email when your results are available.

Online Test Sessions:

- NATE suggests that you arrive at least 30 minutes before the scheduled exam time.
- Each candidate **MUST** have a photo ID to present to the Proctor. No one will be allowed to take a NATE exam without it.
- Payment may be collected at this time, if other arrangements have not been made. Candidates pay the testing organizations directly for the exams.
- The candidate may bring a non-programmable calculator into the testing area.
- The proctor will tell the time allotted for each test.
- The proctor will then tell the candidates to start the tests.
- After the examination completion, the test results will be immediately available on your screen.
- The website will take an overnight reset to update with your new certifications.
- Your results will immediately be available on myNATE after the session has been completed.
- If you are taking more than one exam, take a short break and then begin again.

ALLOTTED SESSION TIMES

The time limit for each exam is listed below. These times must be adhered to at all times. Test session times will be audited. TOs may hold more than one testing session in a single day.

- Ready-to-Work Certificate Exam: 1.5 hours
- Heating and Cooling Support Certificate Exam: 2.5 hours
- Core: 1.5 hours
- Installation or Service specialty exams: 2.5 hours
- Ground Source Heat Pump Installer – 2 hours
- HVAC Performance Verifier: 2.5 hours
- Senior Level Efficiency Analyst: 4 hours

TEST RESULTS

Online Test Sessions: You can access your test results immediately on myNATE.

Paper and Pencil Test Sessions: You can access your test results online after NATE has received, processed, and scored your exam session. Typically this takes about 2 weeks after your session, depending on shipping times.

You can access your results online at myNATE (www.myNATE.org) by creating a myNATE login using your last name and the activation code you received by email when you were registered for the exam session. For online exams, you will receive this email as soon as your proctor sets up a session. For paper exams, you will receive this email as soon as NATE has processed your exam session. Select “First Time User?” then select either the paper based or online based exam activation type. Then enter your activation code and last name, and click “Find my Information”. Finish filling in the fields on that page, then click register and follow the directions in the verification email you will receive.

Authorization for Release of Pass/Fail to a Third Party

If you are required to have your exam results to a third party, please complete the “Share Results Attestation” on your myNATE profile. Agreeing to this attestation allows your proctor to view your results and will allow NATE to release your results to your employer.

Passing NATE Exams

When you have earned NATE certification you will receive a NATE patch, a wallet card, a certificate, and a chevron reflecting the certification specialty for which you tested. The patch and chevron are sent to you by mail if you have provided NATE with a mailing address either on your demographic form or on myNATE. Your certificate and wallet card are emailed to you if you provided NATE with a valid email address either on your demographic form or on myNATE. Any additional patches and chevrons or physical copies of your wallet card and certificate can be ordered at the NATE Online Store.

Failing NATE Exams

If you fail the Core (if required) or specialty test, certification is not awarded. If you have a Core without a Specialty or a Specialty without a Core, those test credits are good for two years.

VETERANS INFORMATION

The Veterans Administration (VA) provides a stipend to veterans for testing. Failed tests are also eligible for payment. The VA pays only for the test and not any other expenses associated with obtaining a license or certification. Contact your local VA office for more information.

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

Testing Organizations must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (amended 1991) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (amended 1990). If candidates have special needs, they must fill out the Request for Non-Standard Test Accommodations, and submit it to NATE at least 45 days before the test session is scheduled. This will allow the NATE staff time to confirm that special accommodations are required and to notify the Testing Organization and Proctor of the required accommodation(s). NATE will consult with the Testing Organization as to the best way to meet the needs of the candidate. The form is available online on www.natex.org.

RECERTIFICATION

Renewing your certification is a requirement to continue to be NATE certified. Knowledge in the HVAC/R Industry changes constantly and advancements in engineering require you continually update your knowledge and information about the industry.

When to Recertify


NATE requires recertification every two years for the installation, service, and senior specialties. The Ground Source Heat Pump Installer needs to be renewed every three years following the IGSHPA renewal process. The HVAC Performance Verifier needs to be renewed every three years. The NATE certificate exams, Ready-to-Work and Heating and Cooling Support Technician, are not certifications, and do not expire.

How to Recertify

- NATE certifications must be renewed every two years.
- Renewal requires either submitting 16 continuing education hours (CEHs) every two years, or retaking the specialty exam only, before the end of the two-year certification period.
- If submitting continuing education hours (CEHs) to recertify, a payment of \$25 for the first specialty, plus \$5 for each different specialty is required. Payment can be made on NATE's online store at www.natex.org.
- Review CEHs recorded by logging in to myNATE or calling 877-420-6283 for assistance.
- Certifications must be within one year of the original expiration date in order to recertify. Despite the early renewal of certifications, technicians must wait to earn continuing education training until they are in their next certification period.
- When renewing multiple certifications, all the certification dates will be changed to match the date of the most immediate expiring certification. For example, if you renewed an AC Service certification expiring September 2018 and a Gas Heating Certification expiring December 2018 together, both would have their new certification dates changed to September 2018, with both having an expiration date of September 2018.
- The Ground Source Heat Pump Installer certification is renewed by following IGSHPA's renewal process. You do not need to separately renew that certification with NATE; you can include it as part of your IGSHPA renewal.

EXPIRED CERTIFICATIONS

If a certification is not renewed prior to the expiration date printed on the certificate and wallet card, then it is considered expired and is no longer active. It is the technicians' responsibility to know when their certification(s) is about to expire.



If your certification expires, you have a 120 day grace period in which you can still recertify using either of the two methods described above. If your certification remains expired past the 120 day grace period, then you would only be able to become certified again by restarting the process by taking and passing the Core and a specialty exam.

Anyone whose certifications have expired are no longer NATE-certified and cannot represent themselves as such. Anyone with an expired certification who represents themselves as NATE-certified is behaving in a fraudulent and unethical fashion. These technicians may be denied future NATE certification and subject to legal action.

RECOGNIZED TRAINING PROVIDER PROGRAM

NATE has established the NATE-Recognized Provider Training Program which recognizes training content aligned with the KATEs, as a way to help technicians track Continuing Education Hours (CEHs). Be sure to verify with your instructor that the course has been approved to give credit to your specialty before attending classes.

To view training providers in your area, go to www.natex.org, use the “Locate a Training Organization” tool. You can then search your area for training providers by entering your zip code.

When you attend a NATE recognized class, please provide your NATE ID and name to the instructor. Without this information, the instructor will be unable to add you to a class roster to submit to NATE. You are responsible for having your NATE ID number when attending classes. It is also recommended you obtain a Certificate of Completion or other similar documentation in the event that the training provider does not submit an attendance roster to NATE.

NON-RECOGNIZED COURSES

NATE can also accept training courses that are not registered with NATE. You can submit courses through the “Pending Credits” tab on your myNATE profile. Once you have selected that tab, click the “Submit Training” button and select the “Unapproved” type. Please complete the submission form and attach documentation of your attendance. Once reviewed and approved by NATE staff, these hours will be added to your tracked total. NATE does not track these hours automatically, and in order to have your hours approved, NATE requires you to provide a Certificate of Attendance or other form of documentation from the training provider. NATE will not accept self-attestation for courses.

The documentation must have your name, class hours, training provider, contact information and a description of the course (if not self-evident from the title of the course) to be accepted.

Remember, you are responsible for maintaining this documentation.

You can check to see which courses NATE has already tracked for you by clicking on the “Course History” tab on your myNATE page.

APPEALS

A candidate may request an appeal for issues concerning their certifications status including but not limited to:

- Exam Pass/Fail
- Denial of certification/recertification
- Denial of continuing education hours submissions

Denial of certification and/or recertification by testing is based on the passing score of the exam. If the candidate requests a review in writing, then their exams will be reviewed.

A candidate may request continuing education hours be reviewed if they are denied for any reason. All appeals should be submitted in writing to NATE. If sending by email, please use the askNATE@natex.org email address.

COMPLAINTS


NATE may receive complaints about testing organizations, proctors, candidates, and/or the contractors who employ those candidates, for any number of reasons. Each complaint is reviewed after receiving the complaint in writing. The party complained about is given the opportunity to answer the complaint. After review of the information from both entities, NATE makes a decision based on the evidence presented and the request received. The decision can be:

- No action taken
- Removal/Suspension of Certification
- Removal/Suspension of a Testing Organization or Proctor
- Removal/Suspension of the contractor from the locator system

SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

In the event NATE receives a request for the suspension/revocation of an individual's certification, NATE will follow the following process:

1. NATE will require a formal written request for suspension and/or revocation. The request must detail the reasons for the request, including the facts and circumstances of any alleged improper conduct on the part of the certified individual.
2. NATE will review and acknowledge receipt of the request within 30 days of receipt.
3. NATE will inform the certified individual in writing of the nature of the request and of any allegations of improper conduct made by the complainant, and allow the certified individual 30 days to respond in writing to the request.
4. Copies of all written communication and supporting documentation will be provided to the certified individual.
5. If the certified individual does not respond within the allotted time frame, the certification will automatically be suspended/revoked per the requested complaint. The certified individual and the complainant will be notified in writing of the suspension/revocation.
6. If the certified individual provides a response within the allotted time frame, NATE will review the response and determine whether there is a sufficient basis for further consideration of the request.

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- 7.** NATE will establish a subcommittee of the NATE Technical Committee to review suspension/revocation requests based on technical negligence. No individual on the subcommittee will reside or provide services to consumers in the same geographic area in which a party to the process resides or provides services to the consumer. Complaints based on violations of the code of conduct or other ethical violations will be reviewed by NATE management staff.
 - 8.** The decision to suspend/revoke the certification of the certified individual for technical complaints will be made by the Technical Committee Subcommittee based solely on the written response of the certified individual, the written information supplied by the complainant and review of the knowledge area of the certification to be suspended/revoked. The decision to suspend/revoke the certification of the certified individual for ethical complaints will be made by NATE management staff.
 - 9.** The decisions made by the Technical Committee Subcommittee or NATE management staff will be provided in writing to the certified individual and the complainant within 30 days of receiving a response from the certification holder. The decision by the Technical Committee subcommittee and/or NATE management staff will be considered final unless the certified individual appeals as shown below.
 - 10.** The decision by the Technical Committee or NATE management staff may be appealed to the NATE Board of Trustees at a regular scheduled Board meeting. Board meetings are held twice a year in the spring and fall. Any decision rendered by the NATE Board of Trustees will be considered final and will be provided in writing to the certified individual and the complainant within 30 days of the decision made at the regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting. The complainant and certified individual may appear at the regular Board of Trustees meeting, at their own expense. Please note that for technical based complaints, the Board of Trustees will only review the decision on procedural grounds.

NATE ONLINE STORE

Technicians can purchase patches and chevrons and copies of their certificates and wallet cards. Please visit the store for other NATE products such as hats, shirts, decals, etc.

If you have question after reading these guidelines, please call the NATE office at 1-877-420-6283.