

Handbook for the  
**In-house Counsel  
Certification Program**



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## Introduction

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The ACC Credentialing Institute (“ACCCI”) is the credentialing arm of the Association of Corporate Counsel (“ACC”). ACCCI’s inaugural offering is the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program (“Program”). The Program confers the ACC In-house Counsel Certified (“ICC”) designation.

For purposes of this handbook, a “candidate” is an individual who has applied to ACCCI for the Program, but who has not yet met all of the requirements to obtain the ICC designation.

## Governance

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### Certification Commission

The ACC Certification Commission serves as a technical advisory committee for the certifying activities of ACCCI. The Commission is responsible for ensuring the quality and impartiality of the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program, which is designed to meet the highest standards in the industry.

The Commission oversees all technical aspects of the Program. Its responsibilities include review and approval of such aspects as eligibility, assessment specifications and scoring, certification maintenance criteria, and consideration of appeals and complaints.

The Commission comprises members who have extensive corporate counsel experience from industries and organizations around the world. Commission members do not receive financial compensation for their service on the Commission. Commission members are reimbursed for their fair and reasonable expenses that are directly related to Commission business.

## Program Overview

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### Value of the In-house Counsel Certification Program

The Program confers the ICC designation. The ICC designation is intended to signify that the holder has the essential skills relevant to the in-house practice of law and that the holder, through training and assessment, has demonstrated proficiency across **three core areas**: stakeholder relationships, law department management, and legal services.

### Certification Curriculum

The Program’s training schedule and curriculum are located online at [www.acc.com/certification](http://www.acc.com/certification). Please note that ACCCI reserves the right to modify program content at its discretion.

### Fees

Tuition and fees for the Program are noted online at [www.acc.com/certification](http://www.acc.com/certification).

### Payment Methods

The Program currently accepts all major credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express) and electronic funds transfers.

Payment must be in U.S. currency and made payable to the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC). Electronic funds transfers should be sent to the specific bank account designated by ACC. If payment (and/or refunds) is made by wire, there are associated fees. All payments should be accompanied by proper documentation.

### Electronic Funds Transfer

If you wish to pay by electronic funds transfer please contact:

Edward Sharrer, Senior Controller  
Association of Corporate Counsel  
[e.sharrer@acc.com](mailto:e.sharrer@acc.com)  
+1 202-293-4103 ext. 312

# Applying for the Certification Program

Applicants to the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program must select the specific “training event” that they wish to attend. For a list of training events please visit the ACCCI website, [www.acc.com/certification](http://www.acc.com/certification).

## Minimum Eligibility Requirements

The ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program is open to licensed attorneys who either a) are currently employed as in-house counsel (no minimum experience required), or b) previously have been employed as in-house counsel (for a minimum of one year).

An in-house counsel is an individual who is engaged in the active practice of law employed by an organization in either the private or public sector, does not have regulatory, enforcement or policymaking responsibilities nor works in an institution with such authority, and does not hold himself/herself out to the public for the practice of law.

The following are ineligible for the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program:

- Individuals whose responsibility may include selling or providing services to individuals or organizations who are not their employer. This would include individuals who work for companies that provide legal services such as headhunters, contract attorneys, law firms, and temporary agencies.
- Individuals whose responsibilities include sales, marketing and business development in the legal market.

**It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure he/she meets these minimum eligibility requirements prior to applying for and submitting payment to the Program. If ACCCI subsequently determines that any of the eligibility requirements had not been met at the time of application, the applicant may forfeit related fees (see *Refunds*).**

## Application Process

To apply for the Program, please follow the below process—

- 1) Review this handbook carefully and verify eligibility.
- 2) Visit [www.acc.com/certification](http://www.acc.com/certification) and navigate to the relevant event registration page.
- 3) Select the training event you wish to attend, and carefully review date and location information.
- 4) Complete the application, including the required waivers and consents.
- 5) Submit payment for the Program.
- 6) You will be enrolled in the Program, subject to space availability and verification of your eligibility.

## Application Deadlines

Applications to attend a training event will be accepted and processed on a rolling basis, until the start of the training event. No individual may attend a training event prior to submitting a completed application (see *Refunds*).

## Incomplete Applications

Those who submit incomplete applications will receive an e-mail outlining what information is missing and when it is due. The missing information must be submitted prior to attending a training event. No individual may attend a training event prior to submitting a completed application (see *Refunds*).

## Application Denials

An application will not be accepted, and/or a Candidate's authorization to participate in the Program may be revoked for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- Failure to meet the minimum eligibility requirements (see *Minimum Eligibility Requirements*).
- Application is incomplete (see *Incomplete Applications*).

- Application is not submitted by the corresponding deadline (see *Application Deadlines*).
- Failure to comply with an audit (see *Application Audits*).
- Falsification of information on the application.
- Misrepresentation of work experience or other information on the application.
- Violation of testing procedures (see *Conduct Requirements*).

Applicants and Candidates who submit falsified or misrepresented information, or who fail to comply with an audit or violate testing procedures, forfeit all fees (see *Refunds*).

## Application Audits

ACCCI reserves the right to audit applications to the Program at any point. Candidates will be responsible for providing the requested supporting documentation to verify their education, experience, and/or license to practice law. ACCCI will not contact employers or educational institutions to obtain verification documentation on a Candidate's behalf. Failure to comply with the audit, and/or falsification or misrepresentation of requested information, will result in denial of the application and/or revocation of the enrollment in the Program. Candidates subject to audit will be notified by e-mail and will have 10 business days to respond. Once selected for audit, Candidates will be required to satisfy the audit requirements before being able to continue with the certification process. Failure to comply with the audit will result in forfeiting all fees (see *Refunds*). Additionally, a Candidate who does not comply with the audit will be subject to audit if applying for any future offerings of ACCCI.

## Appeals Provisions

Applicants who are denied authorization to participate in the Program will be notified via e-mail at the address on file with ACCCI. It is each applicant's responsibility to ensure that his/her email address is up-to-date. Applicants may appeal the decision to ACCCI.

The appeal must:

- be in writing,
- include the specific reason for the appeal,
- be accompanied by evidence or other pertinent information refuting the original decision,
- be sent no later than 10 business days after the date on the denial notification, and
- be sent via e-mail to [certification@acc.com](mailto:certification@acc.com)

## Medical or Personal Emergencies

For purposes of the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program, medical or personal emergencies are defined as unplanned events affecting the Candidate or immediate family member(s) (spouse, child or parent), which arise within five days of a training event's scheduled start date, and prevent the Candidate from attending or rescheduling the training event.

An event that can be anticipated is not considered a medical or personal emergency. A Candidate's inability to attend a training event due to work commitments or insufficient or inappropriate preparation is not considered a personal emergency.

Candidates with medical or personal emergencies within five days prior to a training event's scheduled start date may request a tuition credit. Such credit may be applied to a future training event or other program offered by ACCCI, and must be used within one year of the date the credit is issued or such credit shall become invalid. In the unlikely event no training event or other program is offered within a year of the credit being issued, a Candidate shall receive a full refund of the tuition. A tuition credit request must be submitted to [certification@acc.com](mailto:certification@acc.com) no later than 10 days after a training event's scheduled start date, and must include supporting documentation as to the nature of the medical or personal emergency. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## No-Show Candidates

For purposes of the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program, “no-show” candidates are defined as those who do not appear for a training event on that training event’s scheduled start date. No-show candidates forfeit all program fees.

## Reasonable Accommodations for Testing

ACCCI reaffirms ACC’s policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, orientation, age, or disability. If you require reasonable accommodation, please contact [certification@acc.com](mailto:certification@acc.com) at the time that you submit your application to the Program.

## Refund Policy

Refunds are provided as follows:

- An applicant determined<sup>1</sup> ineligible for certification prior to attending a training event will receive a full refund, less a USD\$150.00 processing fee.
- An applicant who attends a training event but is subsequently determined to be ineligible for certification will not be refunded.
- Where an application is submitted too late to attend a training event, or is incomplete by the start of the training event, the applicant may request a credit of the tuition paid. Such credit may be applied to a future training event or other program offered by ACCCI and must be used within one year of the date the credit is issued or such credit shall become invalid. In the unlikely event no training event or program is offered within a year of the credit being issued, the applicant shall receive a full refund of the tuition. A tuition credit request must be submitted to [certification@acc.com](mailto:certification@acc.com) no later than 10 days after a training event’s scheduled start date. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. In the event the applicant fails to request a credit, no credit or refund will be given.
- Candidates with medical or personal emergencies within five days prior to a training event’s scheduled start date may request a credit of tuition paid. Such

credit may be applied to a future training event or other program offered by ACCCI and must be used within one year of the date the credit is issued or such credit shall become invalid. In the unlikely event no training event or other program is offered within a year of the credit being issued, a Candidate shall receive a full refund of the tuition. A tuition credit request must be submitted to [certification@acc.com](mailto:certification@acc.com) no later than 10 days after a training event’s scheduled start date, and must include supporting documentation as to the nature of the medical or personal emergency. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. In the event the Candidate fails to request a credit, no credit or refund will be given.

- Unless otherwise provided in this handbook, an applicant who cancels his/her participation 30 days or more prior to a training event’s scheduled start will receive a full refund, less a USD\$150.00 processing fee. Any cancellation made less than 30 days prior to a training event’s scheduled start will be eligible for a credit. Such credit may be applied to a future training event or other program offered by ACCCI and must be used within one year of the date the credit is issued or such credit shall become invalid. In the unlikely event no training event or other program is offered within a year of the credit being issued, the applicant shall receive a full refund of the tuition. A tuition credit request must be submitted to [certification@acc.com](mailto:certification@acc.com) no later than 10 days after a training event’s scheduled start date. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. In the event the applicant fails to request a credit, no credit or refund will be given.

Refunds will **not** be provided under circumstances including, but not limited to, the following:

- Applicants and Candidates who submit falsified or misrepresented information, or who fail to comply with an audit or violate testing procedures, will not be issued a refund or credit.
- Candidates who do not appear for a training event on that training event’s scheduled start date will not be issued a refund or credit.

<sup>1</sup>It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure he/she meets the minimum eligibility requirements prior to applying and submitting payment. However, ACCCI reserves the right to verify eligibility.



# Taking the Final Assessment

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## Evaluation Criteria

Candidates will be evaluated through daily in-class exercises, and through a final assessment at the completion of training. The in-class exercises are designed to assess Candidates' proficiency in the subject matter being instructed.

## Final Assessment Duration and Format

The final assessment will be administered online, either through InReach—ACCCI's learning management system vendor—or through other such vendor that ACCCI may designate. Candidates will have up to two hours to complete the final assessment.

## Conduct Requirements

All candidates are expected to conduct themselves professionally, appropriately, and ethically during training events and assessments.

Irregularities observed, or identified by subsequent analysis of your answers on the assessment, may result in your removal from participation in the assessment or invalidation of your score. Irregularities include, but are not limited to, misconduct or creating a disturbance, giving or receiving unauthorized information or aid to or from other assessment takers, or attempting to remove materials from the testing room. ACCCI reserves the right to investigate each incident of irregularity.

Prior to taking the assessment, you will be asked to confirm your agreement that you will not disclose, reproduce or in any way distribute assessment items.

Testing center conduct rules include, but are not limited to:

- Late arrivals will not be admitted.
- The use of audible beepers, mobile phones or memory-capable devices are prohibited in the testing room.
- No breaks are scheduled during the assessment. Candidates who have to leave the testing room to take a

break will not be given extra time on the assessments.

- All assessments are monitored and may be recorded in both audio and video format.
- Other assessments will be administered at the same time you are taking the assessment. You may hear typing on keyboards, coughing, or people entering and exiting the testing room.

## Inclement Weather & Local or National Emergencies

If there is severe weather or a local or national emergency near the testing center, go to [www.acc.com/certification](http://www.acc.com/certification) for updates on closures or delays. ACCCI will use its best efforts to notify Candidates at the email address they have on file with ACCCI in the event of a closure or delay.

# Assessment Results

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## How the Assessment is Scored

The final assessment for the Program is designed to identify Candidates with proficiency in the skills and competencies that are essential to the successful in-house practice of law.

Your performance on the assessment will be measured against a predetermined standard. The standard for this Program is demonstration of the skills and competencies that can be reasonably expected of early- to mid-career in-house counsel and are based on global best practices. Your performance will not be measured against the performance of the other individuals taking the assessment. This means that if everyone who takes the assessment meets the skills and competencies standard, everyone will pass.

## Receiving Your Results

ACCCI will attempt to provide pass/did not pass decisions within one day of completing the final assessment, but in no event later than 10 days after a Candidate completes the assessment. Candidates who pass the assessment will receive an official congratulatory letter and credential certificate acknowledging his or her successful completion of the certification process.



## Request for Rescoring

If you do not achieve a passing score, you may ask that your final assessment be rescored to verify the reported score. If you do request a rescore, you will not receive your entire assessment, the correct answers to your incorrect questions, nor your original incorrect responses; the only information you will receive is your score and a “did not pass” decision.

Rescore requests must be made in writing and must be accompanied by a payment in the amount of USD\$50. Requests for rescoring will be accepted up to 30 days after the date that the notice of “did not pass” was sent to the Candidate. Assessment rescoring will be processed and sent approximately 30 days after the receipt of the request. The results of your assessment rescore are final.

## Retaking the Assessment

Candidates who do not pass can retake the assessment only by repeating the Program. Under such circumstances, Candidates must complete a new application, meet all eligibility requirements in effect when the application is submitted, and pay applicable fees.

## Revocation of Certification

Certification may be revoked under circumstances including, but not limited to, the following:

- Falsification of information on the application form.
- Misrepresentation of work experience or other information on the application form.
- Violation of testing procedures (see *Conduct Requirements*).
- Failure to meet certification maintenance requirements (see *Certification Maintenance Requirements*).

## Verification of Certification

The names of all professionals holding the ACC In-house Counsel Certified (ICC) designation will be publically displayed on the ACCCI website in a manner prescribed by ACCCI for purpose of verification of the professional's good standing.

## Digital Badge

The digital badge allows certificants to electronically display their earned and verified credential. Information on how to access and display the digital badge is sent via e-mail to qualified Candidates following the release of their final assessment results.

Professionals holding the ICC designation are encouraged to share their digital badge on social networking sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook. The digital badge can also be added to resumes and e-mail signatures, making it easy for potential employers to instantly verify a certificant's credential.

## Using Your Credential

Professionals who have met the certification standards defined by the ACCCI and who maintain their credentials through the certification maintenance process are authorized to use the credential's designation.

Adding the credential to your professional profile will draw special attention to your achievement, and to the time and discipline involved in pursuing and attaining your goal. You may include your credential on business cards, in resumes, on your personal web pages (e.g., LinkedIn or Facebook), in bylines for articles or blog posts, and in e-mail signatures.

Protect the integrity of your credential by following these guidelines:

- Do not use your credential until you have received your final assessment results.
- Where you use your credential with your name, place the designation immediately after your name or post-graduate degree (e.g., Ph.D.).
- You may use your credential in promotional text (e.g., “Jane Smith has satisfied the requirements for the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program prescribed by the ACC Credentialing Institute.”).
- You may use your credential in a digital badge provided by the ACC Credentialing Institute that will allow others to verify your credential.
- If your certification has expired, immediately discontinue using the credential.



## Certification Maintenance

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The ICC designation is valid for one year from the month that a Candidate passes the final assessment of the In-house Counsel Certification Program. After the first year, ICC credential-holders maintain certification by engaging in continuing legal professional development (CLPD) activities related to the skills and competencies noted in the certification program's curriculum.

Currently, 14 hours of CLPD are required annually to maintain the ICC designation. CLPD hours must be distributed across the following areas:

- Stakeholder relationships, two hours
- Law department management, two hours
- Legal services, two hours
- Ethics, two hours
- Electives in substantive areas of law, six hours

To count towards maintenance of the certification, CLPD hours must be earned through a training provider that has been approved by ACCCI.

In addition, to maintain certification, you must be a licensed attorney and must satisfy all other eligibility requirements in effect at the time that you originally applied for certification.

## ACC Credentialing Institute—Privacy Policy

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All participants in the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program must abide by ACCCI's Privacy Policy as found on its website, [www.acc.com/certification](http://www.acc.com/certification).

### Confidentiality

Performance on assessments shall remain confidential unless otherwise stipulated by the assessment taker or as required by law. ACCCI reserves the right to disclose the name of individuals holding certifications to the public. ACCCI will not disclose the names of individuals who do not pass the assessments. Specific details about Candidates or their assessment performance shall remain confidential unless otherwise stipulated by the assessment taker or as required by law. The names of all professionals holding the ACC In-house Counsel Certified (ICC) designation will be publically displayed on the ACCCI website in a manner prescribed by ACCCI for purpose of verification of the professional's good standing.

## ACC Credentialing Institute—Terms of Use

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All participants in the ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program must abide by ACCCI's Terms of Use as found on its website, [www.acc.com/certification](http://www.acc.com/certification).





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