Contacts

All questions about certification as a Portable Sanitation Apprentice or Portable Sanitation Professional should be directed to:

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Portable Sanitation Certification Candidate Guide and Information

This Handbook will provide you with the necessary information regarding scheduling your Certified Portable Sanitation Apprentice or Certified Portable Sanitation Professional Examination. It is intended to be an overview of the most important information candidates will require to become authorized to test and to complete the certification exam. For detailed program information, guidelines, and procedures, please refer to the PSAI Certification Program Manual.

Introduction
The PSAI Certification Commission (the “CC”) has among its responsibilities the certification of apprentices and professionals in the portable sanitation industry.

The certification program for professionals was introduced in 1992. Beginning in 2014 the CC began a five-year process of updating the original program and expanding it to include two levels of credentials for frontline staff working in the portable sanitation industry. Frontline staff include people directly responsible for:

- the transportation and logistics of placing portable sanitation equipment
- servicing and maintaining portable sanitation equipment
- health and safety around portable sanitation in the field
- recordkeeping relevant to portable sanitation functions
- professional demeanor and conduct while carrying out functions related to portable sanitation services

The levels of credential offered by the PSAI CC are:

- the Certified Portable Sanitation Apprentice (CPSA) designation for frontline staff with less than 2,000 hours of verified experience, and
- the Certified Portable Sanitation Professional (CPSP) designation for frontline staff with 2,000 or more hours of verified experience

The expanded program was introduced in March 2019 and is now in effect.

Eligibility to Test
To request authorization to take the test (ATT), candidates must establish an individual account in the PSAI database, demonstrate eligibility, and pay the appropriate fee. Eligibility criteria include:

- Valid driver’s license
- Ability to read, speak, and write the English language
- Physical strength and agility to perform the tasks
- Commitment to upholding the PSAI professional Code of Ethics

If you are seeking certification at the request of your employer, your company may designate someone internally to assist you with the process of obtaining your ATT. If your company does not have such a person, or if you are seeking the ATT on your own, follow the instructions on https://www.psai.org/page/AboutCertification2
Test Development
The PSAI CC is responsible to develop, administer, score, establish and monitor validity evidence related to the defensibility of the examination. The test you will take has been created over a period of years, based on a process that determined:

- The duties for which frontline staff are generally responsible;
- The frequency those duties are carried out; and
- The relative importance of those duties for success in the job

Thus, the examination is a measure of frontline staff-related competency. The purpose of the examination is to make sure that candidates understand and can capably perform the duties required of them. To ensure the exam is, in fact, accomplishing this goal the CC has thoroughly beta tested each exam item and monitors its performance on the exam. When items are no longer current or are not performing well (e.g., many examinees are getting them wrong, or a high percentage of those who get the item wrong share a common trait) the item is removed from the exam and replaced with a new item.

The CPSA/CPSP Examination Overview
Whether you are seeking CSPA or CPSP designation, you will take the same examination. Although it is does not ask questions specific to any state law or regulation, it has been designed in a manner that can assist states with their assessment of your competence as well.

In cooperation with the Ontario Association of Septic Industry Services (OASIS), a version of the exam has been developed that replaces exam items that are aligned with US law with those of the province of Ontario. This form of the exam will be used for examinees from Ontario taking the test remotely. The US version of the exam will be used within the United States, regardless of the origin of the examinee.

The CPSA/CPSP examination consists of 60 questions written in English. They may include multiple choice, true/false, matching, and short answer items. Candidates are allowed 90 minutes to complete the exam questions.

Examination Time Allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination Stages</th>
<th>Time Allocation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Review of Candidate Identification</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer-Based Tutorial (when applicable)</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-Examination Survey</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Time to be Allocated</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 hours</strong></td>
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You will need to allow 2 hours total to take the exam. This allows enough time for you to check in, familiarize yourself with the computer-based exam tool (if applicable), receive instructions for completion of the exam, answer questions, and complete the post-test evaluation.

If you are taking the examination at a PSAI-sponsored event, the examination will be administered via a pencil and paper format. If you are taking the exam remotely, it will be administered via computer.

**This is a closed book exam.** Cell phones, smart watches, calculators, books, papers, notes and recording devices are not allowed in the testing room. If you arrive with any of these things, you must give them to the examiner for safekeeping during the exam and get them back only after the testing materials have been returned. The test results of any examinee found to be in possession of a cell phone, smart watch, calculator, book, paper, notes, or other recording device will be invalid, and the examinee will not be allowed to retake the exam for at least one year.
Statement of Nondiscrimination
The CC and the PSAI do not and shall not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status in its implementation of its Certification Program.

Confidentiality
Information about candidates for testing and their examination results are considered confidential. All examination records of CPSA/CPSP certification candidates are the property of the PSAI and will not be released to anyone without written authorization.

Test questions and other materials used to create the examination (except for test content outlines or reference lists) must be kept secure and confidential. Anyone found to be compromising the exam questions by disclosing them to anyone outside the exam environment will be subject to the PSAI’s Certification Program Disciplinary Guidelines as outlined in the PSAI Certification Program Manual, legal proceedings, or both.

Preparing for the Exam
There are many ways to prepare for the exam. Most important is to review the content areas in Appendix A of this handbook and become comfortable that you are aware of how to properly execute the tasks listed. You should also review the sample questions in Appendix B to familiarize yourself with the formats of questions you may find on the exam.

PSAI and other providers offer courses that can help you prepare. Unlike the original PSAI certification program, the current examination has not been developed on the basis of content in a particular training course or courses. Therefore, there is no guarantee that material covered in the courses will be on the test, nor is there a certainty that every item on the exam will have been covered in a training course.

However, the PSAI Basic Service Technician Training Series has been created using the content outline in Appendix A and should provide good background to help candidates prepare for the exam. This outline is also available to other providers and they, too, may offer training courses that can be helpful.

You should be aware, however, that no training course developers – including those designing courses offered by the PSAI – have had access to the exam questions.

Examination
After you have received notification of authorization to test (ATT), you or your company representative may schedule an examination by one of the following methods.

1. Test at a PSAI event by notifying the PSAI of your intent to attend the testing session there. To do this email info@psai.org or call +1-952-854-8300 and provide your ATT number.
2. Test at a remote site. To do this refer to the PSAI Certification Program Manual for requirements regarding setting up a remote site and designating a site examiner.

You must schedule your examination in advance and receive confirmation from the PSAI that you are on the list for a specific testing session. To ensure adequate test administration, no same day registration will be available.

Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs
The PSAI will make allowances for all documented requests for special testing conditions that do not conflict with the eligibility requirements for the credentials. You must notify PSAI personnel by email at least 30 days prior to your scheduled exam appointment. Disability requests must be supported by an original letter from a recognized health care provider or educator and be signed by a health or education professional. The PSAI will review each request and provide appropriate accommodations. The decision will be included in the notice of eligibility/registration approval sent back to you.
On the Day of Your Examination
On the day of your examination appointment, report to the examination room 15 minutes before your scheduled testing time.

When you arrive at the test room, you should check in with the Site Examiner.

To gain admission to the examination, you need to present government-issued identification that includes a current photograph and your signature.

Acceptable forms of identification include a current:

1. Driver’s License with photograph
2. State Identification card with photograph
3. Passport
4. Military identification card with photograph

Employment ID cards, student ID cards and any type of temporary identification are NOT acceptable as primary identification. Candidates are prohibited from misrepresenting their identities or falsifying information to obtain admission to the examination.

You will be required to fill out the Sign In/Out Log sheet before and after your examination.

NOTE: Be on time for your exam. If you are late you will not be admitted to the testing room and your fee will be forfeited.

Cancellation and Re-Scheduling
To change or cancel your examination reservation without monetary penalty, you must notify the PSAI by phone at least three (3) business days before your scheduled examination. If you call (+1-952-854-8300) or email (info@psai.org) at least three (3) business days before your scheduled examination, the fee from your first reservation will be applied to your new reservation. If you fail to cancel and are a no-show, you will forfeit the full examination fee for the cancellation reservation and you must pay another fee for a new reservation.

Since unexpected situations occasionally occur, the PSAI will consider excusing an absence from a scheduled examination in certain situations. Contact the PSAI immediately if one of these situations occurs:

- Illness of yourself or a member of your immediate family
- Death in the family
- Disabling traffic accident
- Emergency military duty
- Weather emergency

The decision of the PSAI will be final regarding whether a no show absence is excused and whether you must pay the fee again to reschedule.

Security
The PSAI and the CC maintain examination administration and security standards that are designed to assure that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. Please note:

- Examinations are proprietary. Cameras, notes, tape recorders, pagers, mobile phones, smart watches, calculators and papers are NOT allowed.
- No guests, visitors, or family members are allowed in the testing room.
- No personal items, valuables, or weapons are allowed in the room.
- You are responsible for any items left outside the room.
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
• Eating, drinking, or smoking will not be allowed in the testing area.
• Candidates must return all items at the end of the examination to the site examiner.
• When a candidate break is necessary, (e.g., a trip to the water fountain or the restroom), candidates may leave one at a time. Time continues uninterrupted during such time.

Misconduct
Misconduct will not be tolerated. Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- behavior that is violent or disruptive
- incidents and allegations of cheating including giving or receiving help, use of books notes or other aids,
- recording examination questions in any manner whatsoever,
- using mobile phones, etc.

Individuals who engage in misconduct may be dismissed from the examination. Your scores will not be reported and you will forfeit your examination fee. All incidents will be reported to the CC and be subject to the disciplinary process described in the Certification Program Manual.

Copyrighted Examination Questions
All examination questions are the copyrighted property of the PSAI. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject you to serve civil and criminal penalties.

Demo Test
If you are taking the test at a site that is using the computer-based exam, there will be a demo test that will allow you to become familiar with the testing software and its features. The time you use for this demo test is not counted as part of your examination time or score.

Candidate Comments
After you complete your exam, you will be asked to take a short survey. On the survey you can make comments regarding the exam experience overall. You can also provide feedback on any items/questions that you like.

Once you leave the test center, if you still have comments you may forward your written comments to the PSAI’s CC. All comments should be sent to info@psai.org no later than five business days after the close of the examination window.

Exam Results
When candidates complete the examination, they will receive a score report marked “pass” or “fail” within five business days. To protect candidates’ privacy and to maintain the confidentiality of results, the PSAI does not give score information over the telephone.

At your request, and with permission in writing, the PSAI will transmit the results of your exam to your state licensing board or other interested party. There may be a small additional fee for this service.

Failing
Candidates who fail the examination will receive diagnostic information relating to the general knowledge domains covered on the examination that require further attention as well as information about retesting. If you fail the examination you will be required to wait 60 calendar days before retaking the examination. To retest, you must pay the retest fee at the time of registration.
Appendix A – Exam Content Outline

Knowledge Domain 1: Transportation and Logistics (30% of exam items)

A. Preparation for Transporting Equipment

1. Define the relevant considerations for safely transporting loads consisting of: portable restrooms, enclosed restroom/shower/laundry trailers, and haulers/carrying/transport trailers to ensure that they are addressed prior to departure and risk of accident or injury is mitigated.
2. Implement safe loading procedures to prevent personal injury and equipment damage.
3. Employ approved techniques for securing equipment prior to transport so that the process of transportation preserves the equipment's integrity and reduces risk to other drivers.
4. Visually inspect equipment to be transported, evaluate load security, and use remedial procedures to further secure questionable loads to reduce risk of loose items creating a road hazard.
5. Ensure contents are secured in all equipment being transported to prevent loss or debris on the highway creating hazards for drivers and the environment.
6. Assess the vehicle for overloads and loads with poorly balanced weight and employ corrective action prior to departure to prevent unbalanced loads from fostering rollover conditions.

B. Operation of Tank Vehicles

1. Define the role and impact on load transport of baffles, bulkheads, surges, and outage to ensure safe operation of the vehicle.
2. Implement safe driving techniques to prevent rollovers caused by a tank vehicle's high center of gravity as well as the changes in weight and load distribution due to surge to minimize the effect of surge.
3. Account for extended start (times and stopping distance) when operating tank vehicles to reduce the chances of accidents.
4. Employ extended following distances when operating tank vehicles to help prevent rear end collisions.

C. Site Selection and Placement of Equipment

1. Conduct visual inspections of potential placement sites to find the best location for the equipment.
2. Assess locations for equipment placement to ensure hazards are not present so that safety, convenience for users, and accessibility for service are maximized.
3. Ensure equipment placement is optimal considering level terrain, anticipated traffic flow, wind/weather hazards, environmental/regulatory requirements and wheelchair access to ensure the best opportunity for service and safety for users.

D. Waste Disposal

1. Know and follow relevant environmental protection laws and regulations pertaining to the proper disposal of waste to prevent unlawful discharge of waste and environmental contamination.
2. Discern and confirm appropriate disposal sites to allow for efficient route planning and timely, proper disposal of waste.
3. Identify and follow the rules of the approved disposal site including the site's hours of operation, disposal procedures, and safety and documentation procedures to ensure continued access to the facility's services.
E. Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Protocols

1. Ensure the required maintenance schedule and service intervals for all vehicles driven are observed to keep the vehicle in proper working order.
2. Know the criteria for “Out of Service” conditions with all vehicles driven and take appropriate steps to remove from/return to service to ensure that all vehicles are safe to operate.
3. Implement appropriate stocking and restocking procedure with tools, equipment and inventory items to ensure all equipment and supplies needed to maintain equipment is available.

Knowledge Domain 2: Servicing Portable Sanitation Equipment (24% of exam items)

A. Operation of Pumping Equipment

1. Ensure the vacuum setting (versus the pressure setting) is properly engaged on a 2-way valve to assure proper collection of waste from the sanitation equipment.
2. Understand the functions and proper use of the primary valve, secondary valve, vacuum tank hose, and wand, to facilitate safe and efficient operation of this equipment and proper preventive maintenance.
3. Employ the proper procedure for checking the vacuum pump oil reservoir, and add/drain oil when indicated in order to keep the vacuum pump in optimal operating condition.
4. Employ the proper procedure for testing valves in order to maximize pump efficiency.
5. Read the vacuum gauge, evaluate whether vacuum is sufficient for pumping, and take appropriate action if it is not so that pump time is minimized and pump wear and tear is reduced.
6. Check hoses and connections for integrity and take appropriate corrective steps if they are not acceptable in order to improve pump efficiency and prevent leakage of sludge.
7. Safely operate valve and wand to pump a unit in order to efficiently collect the waste from the sanitation equipment.
8. Properly and safely remove hoses from a truck and stow them after use to ensure equipment integrity and safe transport.
9. Implement safe methods for freeing hoses from clogs to prevent sludge from escaping from the hose and creating a hazard.
10. Use proper wash-down procedures for cleaning sanitation equipment to ensure it is void of waste and the inside surfaces are free of dust and dirt.

B. Maintenance and Repairs of Portable Sanitation Equipment in the Field

1. Conduct a visual inspection of all equipment parts and identify those in need of repair to ensure proper collection of waste, minimize hazards and promote customer satisfaction.
2. Develop and employ field repair techniques including assessment of what can/should be repaired in the field versus when the equipment should be returned to the yard, performing field repairs when indicated for all equipment delivered, and transmitting inventory information to management in order to optimize customer safety and satisfaction while minimizing negative business impact.
3. Evaluate ongoing appropriateness of equipment placement in the field and make adjustments as necessary in order to optimize waste tank capacity, to ensure sanitary conditions and maximize safety.

C. Cleaning Procedures

1. Conduct effective visual inspection of tank contents and safely remove foreign/hazardous objects that cannot be pumped through the vacuum system in order to prevent injuries or equipment damage.
2. Safely evacuate contents of major tank types using proper pumping procedures to maximize cleanliness of the tank and to insure customer satisfaction.
3. Differentiate between proper yard cleaning procedures and field cleaning procedures so that maximum sanitary conditions are maintained.
4. To create optimal sanitary conditions in the field, understand and employ proper cleaning procedures for all major equipment categories including:
- a. Drop tank/standard unit
- b. Recirculating unit
- c. Freshwater flush unit
- d. Sinks/hand wash station
- e. Holding/waste tank
- f. Trailers: restroom only and shower/laundry unit
- g. Freestanding urinal
- h. Portable shower
- i. Men's room

5. To ensure equipment is void of waste, sanitized and ready for continued use, understand and employ specific, specialized procedures related to unique conditions and equipment modifications including:
- a. Cold weather service
- b. Warm/hot weather service
- c. High rise units
- d. Baby changing stations
- e. Single/double/triple trailer units
- f. Wheelchair accessible units

Knowledge Domain 3: Safety and Hazard Management (22% of exam items)

A. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

1. List personal protective equipment required for the position and additional unique equipment required on special job sites (e.g., mines, refineries, etc.) to ensure readiness to provide service in field conditions on the assigned route.
2. Understand conditions requiring use of specific items of protective equipment and use it as needed to ensure the safest possible work environment in varying circumstances.
3. Understand conditions under which personal protective equipment must be segregated, and segregate PPE when warranted to prevent cross-contamination.

B. Materials Handling

1. Identify and maintain a secure and accessible location for material safety data sheets (MSDS) or safety data sheets (SDS) for all relevant substances used on the job in order to readily access necessary information, or for an emergency.
2. Adhere to regulations requiring MSDS/SDS to be on trucks for every material carried so that drivers have instant information available when questions or incidents occur.
3. Consult MSDS/SDS when required by the spill containment checklist to ensure that protocol is followed.

C. Spill Containment

1. Effectively use the spill containment checklist to assure that containment supplies and equipment are available and precautions can be taken in addressing spills.
2. Employ proper spill containment protocols if and when spills occur to minimize impact on people and the environment.
3. Follow appropriate spill reporting procedures to complete documentation processes required by relevant authorities.

D. Accident/Incident Management

1. Effectively manage vehicle and driving related accidents.
   a. Know the legal definition of “accident” as required by governmental regulations to ensure compliance.
   b. Take appropriate actions on any accident site to preserve health, safety, and property.
   c. Identify the nature of the load to assist responders in determining the type of site assistance required to secure the site.
d. Follow required accident reporting and recordkeeping procedures as required by law and company policies.
e. Comply with required drug screen procedures to ensure conformity with applicable regulations.

2. Effectively manage personal injury and property-related accidents.
   a. Know accident protocols required by governmental regulations and company policy.
   b. Take appropriate and legal actions on any accident site to preserve health, safety, and property.
   c. Follow required accident reporting and recordkeeping procedures to provide adequate documentation for company, regulatory and insurance needs.
   d. Comply with required drug screen procedures to ensure conformity with applicable regulations.

E. Infectious Diseases

1. Know how the following diseases are transmitted and the implications for portable sanitation professionals: HIV/AIDS, hepatitis A-B-C, bacterial and viral infections to minimize exposure.
2. Employ safe sharps handling techniques to avoid accidental needle sticks and cuts.
3. Follow insect bite procedures to maintain health.

Knowledge Domain 4: Recordkeeping (24% of exam items)

A. To facilitate the creation of high quality records, understand the reasons, uses, and audiences for key documentation required in portable sanitation operations, specifically:
   1. Record of service per unit
   2. Disposal manifest
   3. Hours of service/vehicle operation
   4. Vehicle inspection record
   5. Roadside inspection record
   6. Accident/incident report

B. Complete documentation in an accurate and timely manner so the records are suitable for effective customer service, risk management and business decision-making.

Knowledge Domain 5: Professional Demeanor and Conduct (Integrated throughout the exam items)

A. Effective, Courteous Communication Skills
   1. Communicate effectively (i.e., to understand and to be understood) with customers, co-workers, managers, and the public so as to increase knowledge, to instill teamwork, and to represent the industry in a positive and professional manner.
   2. Understand and use appropriate terminology related to the portable sanitation profession so that communication is accurate and concise.
   3. Share knowledge of the portable sanitation profession, local requirements, and accurately answer customer questions to enhance customer satisfaction and a positive rental experience.
   4. Employ effective conflict management skills in order to resolve problems and to insure success.

B. Conduct Reflecting Positively on the Profession
   1. Understand the rationale for wearing a clean uniform and identification while working in the field or in public-facing role to ensure actions convey that cleanliness and professionalism are hallmarks of the industry image.
   2. Communicate a positive image of the profession through personal hygiene, demeanor, and gesture choices to demonstrate pride in an industry that deserves respect.
   3. Demonstrate respect for customers as well as the property of customers and the public in order to reflect positively on the industry and increase the likelihood of customer satisfaction.
   4. Engage in courteous driving behavior to foster safety and present a positive image of the industry.
Appendix B – Sample Questions

1. Which of the following is true of a portable sanitation unit?
   A. It must be exactly 3 feet square at the base
   B. It must open to the right
   C. It must open to the left
   D. It must be made of material that is waterproof

2. The customer has ordered three ADA-compliant units. What must you do to make sure you are meeting the requirements of the law?
   A. Place them together
   B. Place them separately
   C. Ensure there is an accessible path of travel to reach them
   D. Ensure there is an attendant available to assist users

3. Match the following personal protective equipment with its function

   _____ High visibility vest   A. Protects eyes from dust and splash back
   _____ Steel toed boots       B. Ensures you can be seen in dark or crowded conditions
   _____ Safety goggles        C. Protects your feet from heavy falling objects

4. A pre-trip inspection must be completed whenever a new driver takes control of a vehicle, regardless of the time of day this occurs or if the truck has already been out on the road.
   A. True
   B. False

5. Fill in the blank: For every 10 workers on a job site, there should be at least _____ portable restroom unit(s).