

National Commission for Certifying Agencies

Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs



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Standard 2: Governance and Autonomy

Essential Element D – The certification board must include at least one member, with voting rights, that represents the public or non-employer consumer interest. The certification Program must document how the public interest is routinely represented and protected.

Commentary 8 – A public or consumer member’s role is to bring a perspective to the decision-making of the certification program that is broader than the certificants and to help balance the certification program’s role in protecting the public while advancing the interests of the certificants. Effective public or consumer members also represent the public’s, consumer’s, or user’s perspective and interest; bring new ideas and goals to the certification board to ensure the public’s interest is valued; contribute an unbiased perspective; encourage consumer-oriented positions; and bring additional public accountability and responsiveness. The public member’s regular involvement in board actions and decisions should be documented.

Commentary 9 - The public or consumer member preferably should be a consumer or potential consumer of the certificants’ skills or services. Because the certification program may serve various public groups and/or interests, a rotating system may be established to ensure that these interests are fairly represented by the public or consumer member role over time. The public or consumer should

NOT be any of the following:

- A current or previous member of the profession, occupation, role, or specialty area encompassed by the certification program;
- A supervisor, manager, direct co-worker, or an employee or subordinate of individuals in the profession encompassed by the certification program;
- An employee of an individual certified by the certification program or of an employer of individuals in the profession encompassed by the certification program;
- A person who currently receives or within the last five years has received income from the profession encompassed by the certification program.

NCCA Standard Glossary Definition:

Public Member—

A representative of the consumers of services provided by a certificant population serving as a voting member on the governing body of a certification program, with all rights and privileges, including holding office and serving on committees. The public member should bring a perspective to the decision and policy making of the organization that is different from that of the certificants and should help to balance the organization’s role in protecting the public while advancing the interests of the profession.