



Value of Certification Statement

Credentialing is an overarching term that includes processes, policies, and practices that support credentials such as a license, registration, certification, qualification, or assessment-based certificate to demonstrate that an organization or individual has met predetermined and standardized criteria. Given the range of terms, different interpretations and distinctions between mandatory versus voluntary requirements among these credentials, can create confusion. This document serves as the first in a series of brief statements that clarify and communicate the value of credentials to stakeholders, beginning with certification.

Certification is a process by which an entity grants formal recognition to individuals that meet predetermined, standardized criteria. The certification process involves determination of eligibility, an assessment of demonstration of competence, and requirements for regular recertification. Certification is usually voluntary and established by a non-governmental entity.

Value of Certification

A high-quality certification validates an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities in a defined profession, occupation, skill, or role. Certified individuals in the workforce reduce risk and enhance consumer protection and public safety. In addition, these certifications allow employers and other stakeholders to identify individuals with the competencies needed to perform a role or task.

Certification holders benefit from:

- Increased recognition by peers and respect of colleagues in the profession
- Improved opportunities for employability and advancement
- Greater confidence in their professional competence
- Increased professional trust from employers or the public
- Increased autonomy in the workplace
- Better compensation and career longevity

Consumers benefit from:

- Objective, independent, third-party evaluation and assessment of professional competence
- Commitment to public safety and/or consumer protection
- Accountability through ethical conduct standards and/or a disciplinary process
- Recertification requirements for continued or enhanced competence

Employers benefit from:

- Qualified individuals for employment or advancement
- Recertification requirements for continued or enhanced competence
- Commitment to public safety and/or consumer protection
- Reduced risk of errors, accidents and/or legal liability
- Reduced employee turnover and increased job satisfaction
- Justification for potential compensation differential

Content for this statement inspired by *I.C.E. 2012, A Look at the Value of Professional Certification*.