



**IBLCE®**

*International Board of  
Lactation Consultant Examiners*

# RECERTIFICATION GUIDE

*For individuals recertifying as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant®*

As an International Organisation, IBLCE® uses British English in its publications.

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## I. What is IBLCE?

IBLCE®, or the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners®, is the independent international certification body conferring the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®) credential.

### A. Contact Information

International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE)  
10301 Democracy Lane, Suite 400  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030-2545 USA  
Phone: +1 703-560-7330  
[www.iblce.org](http://www.iblce.org)

IBLCE has locations in Austria, Australia, and the United States. Certificants may reach the location that serves their country of residence by using the contact information found on the IBLCE website.

NOTE: Due to COVID-19, IBLCE provides additional resources regarding applying for the IBCLC certification and the examination administration on its website on the [COVID-19 Resource Centre](#). Please check this website regularly as you prepare to either apply for eligibility or plan to sit the IBCLC examination in 2021.

### B. Key Dates

Please visit the IBLCE website for application deadlines and other important key dates.

## II. Purpose and Methods of Recertification

**Purpose:** The purpose of the IBCLC recertification programme is to measure and promote the continued competence of certificants in the field of lactation consulting. Whether recertifying by continuing education recognition points (CERPs) or by re-examination, the certificant is being assessed on new knowledge and information that was gained after initial certification, as well as being assessed to determine that prior levels of knowledge and skills have not diminished. Since alternate five-year recertification intervals require recertification by retaking the IBCLC examination, the validity and reliability of the assessment are set forth in the IBCLC Practise Analysis and Technical Analysis Reports.

**Timeframe and Rationale:** Once initially certified, a certificant typically holds the IBCLC certification for five years. At the five-year mark, a certificant can recertify by re-examination OR by earning continuing education recognition points (CERPs) or equivalent through individual CERPs.

It is recognised that the skills and knowledge acquired before and examined at initial certification do not necessarily relate to the knowledge of the person to practise in the field in the years to come, especially if the skills and knowledge are not regularly updated to incorporate new insights and practise. IBLCE therefore requires all certificants to recertify every five years. Within a five-year period, significant development in available information and management options will have occurred, and it is considered that the certificant's knowledge base will not remain current if further educational opportunities are not undertaken.

The five-year interval for recertification was chosen given the rate of change in the field.

The IBCLC recertification policy requires that certificants recertify by examination every ten years. This re-examination policy is intended to periodically assess knowledge and cognitive skills related to lactation consulting. At the ten-year interval, the examination for all candidates is premised on a new practise analysis, capturing major developments in the field.

**Please note:** commencing with IBCLCs recertifying in **2022**, the examination will remain an option for recertification but will no longer be a requirement. A self-assessment and required focused continuing education will be an option in lieu of examination at each five-year recertification period.

Irrespective of the method of recertification at the five-year interval, certificants must reaffirm adherence to the *Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs* and report any professional licensing/registration actions and/or professional disciplinary actions. IBLCE believes this reaffirmation is important and reminds certificants of their ethical obligations.

Methods: While examination is required once every ten years, a certificant may choose to recertify by CERPs at other intervals. If a certificant elects to recertify by CERPs at the five-year interval, IBLCE requires that 75 CERPs be earned, of which a minimum of 5 must pertain to professional ethics and a minimum of 50 must pertain specifically to human lactation and breastfeeding and the provision of care to breastfeeding families. The remaining CERPs (20) may be on any topic related to the field of lactation consulting because some of the disciplines on the *IBCLC Detailed Content Outline* are neither lactation nor ethics specific.

Irrespective of the method of recertification, IBCLCs must also complete basic life support education in this time frame, as well as complete 250 hours of practise in lactation consulting. In accordance with the [IBLCE Advisory Opinion on Telehealth](#), these hours may be completed remotely.

In order to maintain certification, IBCLCs not taking the examination must obtain continuing education that has been recognised by IBLCE for Continuing Education Recognition Points (CERPs) OR equivalent through individual CERPs.

Education recognised for CERPs may be provided by an individual or organisation through seminars, conferences, workshops, independent study modules, distance learning, or other educational means.

Education eligible for CERPs must cover subjects found on the *IBCLC Detailed Content Outline*.

A CERP is the continuing education credit unit assigned by IBLCE to 60 minutes of education that meets the professional education needs of practising IBCLCs. CERP credit is given to three types of continuing education:

- Education that is specifically about human lactation and breastfeeding is recognised with L-CERPs (L=Lactation).
- Education about professional ethics and conduct is recognised with E-CERPs (E=Ethics).
- Education that is related to the practise of IBCLCs, but is neither lactation nor ethics specific, is recognised with R-CERPs (R=Related).

For IBCLCs recertifying by either examination or CERPs **in 2021 and going forward**, IBLCE requires the following in each five-year recertification cycle:

- 250 hours of practise in lactation consulting (full- or part-time) in the area(s) of education, administration, research, clinical practise, or advocacy. These hours may be earned as volunteer or paid hours, or a combination of both. Clinical skills are an important area of the *IBCLC Detailed Content Outline*, and these skills are best maintained through active practise. The Lactation Specific Clinical Practise Calculator can assist with calculating these hours and can be submitted in the case of audit.
- Basic life support education. Examples of education that meets this are Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP). As healthcare professionals conducting in-person care, it is important to maintain basic life support education for the client and patient safety. Certificants selected for audit will be asked to submit their card or certificate as proof of basic life support education. The basic life support education requirement for recertification can be at any point within the five-year recertification cycle, and basic life support credentials do not need to be active at the time of recertification. A didactic basic life support course will be sufficient to meet the requirement. Note, if recertifying by CERPs, then these education hours are counted as part of the total 75 hours required.

The IBCLC certification programme offers a voluntary credential, and that certification does not necessarily confer the right or privilege to practise. Individuals who hold the IBCLC credential must abide by the legal authority in the jurisdiction in which they practise or wish to practise.

IBCLCs can recertify early by one year if taking the examination. If a certificant chooses to recertify one year early, then the expiration date is set to five years out from the passed examination (e.g., If due to recertify in 2021, but pass an examination in 2020, then the next expiration date will be 2025 and not 2026). If the certificant does not pass the examination, then they no longer hold the credential. A certificant may not elect to recertify by CERPs one year

prior to their expiration date.

## **A. IBCLC Failed Examination Policy**

The IBCLC examination is offered twice a year. If a current IBCLC does not pass an examination, certification will be revoked once results are disseminated. Candidates can take a second examination in the same year (where applicable) and will regain the certification if the examination is passed, but certification will not cover the time period between failing the examination and passing the re-take examination. If an IBCLC does not pass the April examination, the IBCLC certification will expire on June 30 of that year. If a certificant does not pass the September examination, the IBCLC certification will expire on December 31 of that year.

## **III. Important Publications**

Recertifying IBCLC certificants should be familiar with the following publications, all of which can be found on the IBLCE website.

- *IBCLC Detailed Content Outline*
- *Clinical Competencies for the Practice of International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs)*
- *Scope of Practice for International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC) Certificants*
- *Disciplinary Procedures*
- *IBLCE Appeals Policies (in the Candidate Information Guide and Recertification Guide) and Forms*
- *Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs*

## **IV. Applying for Recertification by Examination**

### **A. Complete an Online Application**

The online recertification application is available in the same languages as IBLCE offers the examination. Visit the IBLCE website and locate your language.

### **B. Fees and Payments**

Complete information about the fees and payment options can be found at the end of this Guide.

### **C. IBCLC Examination Overview**

The examination consists of 175 multiple choice questions. Each question has only one correct

answer, and there is no penalty for a wrong answer. It is to your advantage to answer all questions. The examination is given in two parts, and most questions in Part Two are associated with an image. The standard IBCLC examination is of four hours and two minutes' duration, which includes a five (5) minute break between Part One and Part Two. Thirty extra minutes of time are allocated for test takers who attest that the examination is not offered in their primary language. Additional test time is provided for paper; the paper examination requires use of an examination booklet, a photo booklet, and an answer sheet, whereas use of the computer-based testing system is more streamlined. The IBCLC examination consists of content related to the knowledge domains described in the *IBCLC Detailed Content Outline*.

## **D. Examination Sites**

IBLCE offers computer-based testing (CBT) for the examination worldwide. Due to COVID-19, in 2020 IBLCE also offered the examination in Live Remote Proctoring in English, as this was the only language available at the time from the testing vendor. Please reference the [COVID-19 Resources Centre](#) for information and updates regarding testing modalities in 2021. In countries where CBT centres are not geographically available or in cases of substantiated reasonable accommodations, either pop-up site CBT testing locations or paper and pencil administration of the examination may be offered. Test centre locations can be viewed prior to applying for an examination, but please know that IBLCE's available test centre list changes periodically. Test centre availability will be most accurate at the time that you apply and go to schedule the examination appointment. IBLCE will notify you by email when you are able to schedule an appointment. Scheduling as soon as you receive this notice can assist you with finding the test centre of your choice.

## **E. Examination Security and Incident Review Protocols**

The IBCLC examination is offered in secure testing environments in order to maintain the integrity of the examination and the IBCLC certification programme. IBLCE examination administrations follow security and confidentiality protocols.

IBLCE reviews incidents during examination administrations, and after the examinations, to follow up as needed to determine the nature of the incident and to seek resolution as applicable.

## **F. Reasonable Accommodations**

IBLCE works with candidates to provide reasonable accommodations during the examination administration for medical conditions and disabilities. The IBCLC examination application form asks the candidate whether they seek reasonable accommodation for the examination, or whether or not a personal medical item may be needed during the examination. If the candidate answers in the affirmative, IBLCE reaches out to the candidate and asks the candidate to submit a request form and third-party documentation. Such third-party documentation must directly link the requested reasonable accommodation(s) to the verified health condition(s).



To allow sufficient time for making reasonable accommodations, candidates must notify IBLCE of their requests at the time they apply for the examination. If an issue arises after submitting the examination application, candidates should report the request to IBLCE as soon as possible.

## **G. Special Note for Pregnant Candidates**

Candidates who experience health difficulties that may interfere with their ability to take the examination must notify IBLCE as soon as possible. In some circumstances, due to health complications, candidates may need to cancel or withdraw from the examination.

There are financial implications for cancelling/withdrawing from the examination. The IBLCE staff can assist in making informed decisions about one's options.

## **H. Breast/Chestfeeding During Examination Administration**

The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) is devoted to lactation and breast/chestfeeding care. Therefore, it is appropriate for IBLCE to provide the opportunity for examination candidates who are breast/chestfeeding to breast/chestfeed or express milk during the IBCLC examination while at the same time maintaining examination security. It is necessary that these allowances meet all the requirements for ensuring IBLCE examination security while at the same time offering reasonable solutions that will allow test takers to breast/chestfeed or pump during the examination appointment. Therefore, a break will be permitted for breast/chestfeeding or expressing milk after the first part of the examination, but no additional examination seat time for testing will be permitted.

Additionally, all examination candidates, inclusive of those breast/chestfeeding or expressing milk, may not return to the first part of the examination after its completion.

IBCLCs requesting a breast/chestfeeding break during the examination should read the *Procedures for Breast/Chestfeeding During Examination Administration* for more information. These procedures can be found on the IBLCE website.

## **I. Non-Primary Language**

The IBCLC examination is translated into a wide range of languages. For candidates or certificants whose primary language, as attested to on the IBCLC application, is not among those into which the IBCLC examination is translated, IBLCE will provide extra examination time of 30 minutes.

## **J. Notification of Examination Eligibility**

Applicants who successfully meet all requirements will be notified by email of their eligibility to take the examination. This eligibility notification will include information about examination centre locations and examination day procedures. Applicants who do not meet the examination requirements will be notified by email and will be eligible for a partial refund of examination fees paid.

## **K. Examination Withdrawal/Cancellation**

If a candidate must withdraw from the IBCLC examination for which they had applied and were accepted, and/or cancel their appointment to take the IBCLC examination, the candidate **MUST** notify IBLCE in writing by the posted deadlines to be eligible for a partial refund. After the posted deadlines, no partial refunds will be given to candidates who withdraw from/cancel the IBCLC examination. Current IBCLCs should carefully consider the consequences of withdrawing/cancelling their examination appointments/plans. Failure to recertify or receive a deferral due to extraordinary circumstances will result in loss of certification on December 31. Only documented extraordinary circumstances will be accepted as reason for IBLCE to consider a request for the deferral of the examination fees to a future examination and an extension of certification. Review the *IBCLC Examination Withdrawal/Cancellation Policy* on the IBLCE website for further details.

Due to COVID-19, IBLCE, additionally in 2021, is providing for a request for a full refund with documented extraordinary circumstances according to posted deadlines. Please visit the [COVID-19 Resource Centre](#) for further information.

## **L. Examination Rescheduling Policy**

Examination candidates that must reschedule their appointments may do so by the posted deadlines on IBLCE's website. After these dates, candidates will not be allowed to reschedule their appointments. Only under extraordinary circumstances will examination candidates be considered to reschedule. IBLCE must be notified if an appointment needs to be rescheduled after these dates. Such decisions on rescheduling are determined solely by IBLCE.

Once you have successfully rescheduled your appointment, you will receive a rescheduling confirmation e-mail. Failure to show up to your testing centre will result in loss of examination fees. Examination candidates can only be rescheduled for the examination for which they have been accepted.

## **M. Examination Admissions Procedures and Candidate Conduct**

To gain admission to the examination, candidates must present TWO (2) forms of identification. The primary ID must be a valid, unexpired government-issued identification that includes the candidate's name, current photograph, and signature, and the secondary ID must have either their name and signature or name and current photograph.

The **FIRST** form of identification **MUST** be one of the following government-issued IDs:

- driver's license with photograph
- international/national/regional/local identification card with photograph
- passport with photograph
- military identification card with photograph
- green card, permanent residence card, or visa with photograph

The **SECOND** form of identification **MUST** display the candidate's name and signature or name and current photograph. Acceptable forms of secondary ID include but are not limited to:

- credit card
- social security card
- employment/student ID card
- professional license
- health insurance cards

**Please Note:** Candidates who do not have these two forms of identification must contact IBLCE prior to examination day to learn of their options. The names on the IDs must match and must be the same name as the one on file with IBLCE. Candidates who need to update or make changes to their name **MUST** contact IBLCE with these changes and such updates/changes can be made up to five (5) days prior to the scheduled examination appointment; however, the IDs must match at the time of examination check-in.

Candidates should allow adequate time for arrival at the examination site. Candidates are encouraged to arrive at the test centre 30 minutes prior to the scheduled appointment. This should give candidates adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures. Candidates who arrive more than 30 minutes late for their appointment will be refused admission and examination fees will be forfeited. Likewise, candidates who fail to register at the examination site on the day of the examination will forfeit all rights to any refund of examination fees. Failure to make an appointment by the posted deadlines will result in the forfeiture of the examination fees paid.

Each examination site will be supervised and monitored by one or more test centre administrators/IBLCE Examination Proctors. Candidates are expected to follow the rules announced by the test centre administrators/IBLCE Examination Proctors. The rules are in place to ensure that the examination administration is as free as possible from distractions and that all candidates are treated fairly. The test centre administrators/IBLCE Examination Proctors will designate a location where personal belongings such as purses are to be stored during the examination. During the examination administration, test centre administrators/IBLCE Examination Proctors will be monitoring the room for any signs of cheating or other inappropriate behaviour.

Candidates may not leave the test centre during the examination administration or breaks. Leaving the test centre will result in an immediate dismissal from the examination.

You will not be allowed to use your mobile/cell phone or electronic devices during the examination or during any breaks that you take during the examination administration. Candidates found in possession of and/or using such devices during the examination or during breaks will be dismissed and their examinations will not be scored. Candidates who bring their cell phones or other electronic devices to the examination site must power them off (putting them on silent/mute is not sufficient) and store them in the place designated by the test centre administrator/IBLCE Examination Proctor. [Please note: Neither the test centre administrators/IBLCE Examination Proctors nor IBLCE are responsible for candidates' personal property.]

Talking to another examination candidate is not permitted during the examination. Questions regarding the examination administration will be answered by the test centre administrator/IBLCE Examination Proctor during orientation. Questions concerning the examination content are not permitted. Test centre administrators/IBLCE Examination Proctors are not allowed to provide interpretation or clarification of examination questions. Cheating will not be tolerated and if found cheating, it will result in a candidate's scores being cancelled or their certification being revoked in accordance with IBLCE policies and procedures and/or legal action against the candidate, including criminal prosecution.

Additionally, candidates may not discuss any examination questions after the examination with anyone, even those who also took the examination, as indicated in the *Confidentiality Policy* located in this Guide.

**Please note:** candidates will be asked to agree to Test Centre Regulations upon arrival to the test centre. If a candidate does not comply with these regulations, then they may be dismissed from the examination with forfeiture of the examination fees paid, including invalidation of the test score and/or pursuit of civil or criminal charges.

The examination will be administered in a multiple-choice format either by computer or by paper and pencil. For computer-based testing, the candidate will view and answer questions on the computer provided. For paper and pencil testing, the examination questions will be provided in a booklet, together with a photo booklet, and answers must be recorded on an answer sheet using a pencil.

## N. Examination Results Notification

Official examination results will be provided to candidates two to three months following the exam. Candidates who pass the examination will also receive their IBCLC certificate, along with their examination score report. For examination security reasons, IBLCE does not make individual questions available following the examination.

## O. Policy on Requesting a Hand Score

If taken as a paper and pencil examination, scoring of the IBLCE examination is based on optical scanning of candidates' answer sheets. For computer-based testing, the candidate's response is electronically evaluated against the answer key provided by IBLCE. Candidates who believe that their examinations were not scored correctly may request hand verification of their answer sheets or a re-scoring of their computer-based testing responses.

**All hand score requests must be submitted within 30 days following the date that the examination results were disseminated.** The Hand Score Request Form can be downloaded from the IBLCE website. **There is a fee associated with a Hand Score Request.** This fee will be refunded if it is determined that the candidate's examination was scored incorrectly.

## P. Policy for Appealing an Examination Outcome

IBLCE will review appeals of adverse certification decisions from examination candidates. An adverse decision may be appealed for the following reasons: (1) alleged inappropriate examination administration procedures, (2) environmental testing conditions severe enough to cause a major disruption of the examination process and/or other irregularities. Appeals regarding the following will NOT be accepted: (1) the determination of the passing score, (2) the examination or individual test items or (3) test content validity. Any examination outcome appeal should be as specific as possible, detailing the basis of the appeal.

The Examination Outcome Appeals Form should be submitted to initiate this request. **All Examination Outcome Appeals must be submitted within 30 days following the date that the examination results were disseminated.**

In evaluating an appeal, IBLCE considers the executed appeal form and supporting documentation filed with the appeal as well as additional relevant information. *In signing the appeals form, the candidate acknowledges that the decision of the IBLCE Appeals Committee is final.*

A favourable appeal results ONLY in the deferral of the examination fees to a future examination arranged with adequate future notice.

## Q. Examination Retest Policy

There is no limit to the number of times an unsuccessful candidate may apply to retest the IBLCE certification examination. Applicants who plan to retest the examination should carefully review their examination score report and consider completing education in those areas of the examination in which their performance was poor. To be eligible to take the examination again, a candidate must meet current requirements, submit an application for the applicable examination, and pay the relevant examination fee. The rationale for the retesting policy is that candidates are encouraged to affirmatively address areas of deficiency prior to retaking the examination.

If a candidate fails the IBCLC examination, then they are eligible to receive a 50% discounted examination retest fee for the next three examination attempts or up to three years following the first time they do not pass. Both initial and recertification examination candidates are eligible for the discounted rate.

## **V. Applying for Recertification by CERPs**

Complete information about the cost and deadlines can be found on the IBLCE website. Please note all requirements for recertification must be met at the time of application for recertification.

### **A. Complete an Online Application**

The online recertification application is available in the same languages as IBLCE offers the examination. Visit the IBLCE website and locate your language.

### **B. Dates for Earning CERPs for the Purpose of Recertification by CERPs Policy**

Education for the purposes of recertification by CERPs must be obtained after initial certification as an IBCLC. Only education obtained after notification of first earning IBCLC certification can be used to recertify by CERPs.

### **C. Categories and Required Number of CERPs**

Education eligible for CERPs must cover subjects found on the *IBCLC Detailed Content Outline*. IBLCE assigns three (3) different categories of CERPs to continuing education:

- L-CERPs are for education that is specifically about human lactation and breastfeeding and the provision of care to breastfeeding families.
- E-CERPs are for education that is about professional ethics, conduct, and standards for health professionals.
- R-CERPs are an optional category that covers education that is in any way related to the practise of lactation consulting.

In order to recertify by CERPs, IBCLC certificants must obtain at least 75 CERPs in the intervening five years since they last passed the examination. These 75 CERPs **MUST** meet the following minimum requirements:

- At least 50 L-CERPs and
- At least 5 E-CERPs and
- At least 20 additional CERPs, which may be L-, E-, or R-CERPs

CERPs can be earned through applicable educational activities that are either recognised by IBLCE for CERPs through its CERP Provider Programme or from non-IBLCE recognised activities. If IBLCE has already awarded CERPs to the education, the certificate of completion will show the CERPs Registry number and the type and number of CERPs awarded.

The following are examples of each category of CERPs, as well as information about what type of education does not count toward CERPs:

Examples of appropriate L-CERPs topics include:

- Breast anatomy in relation to lactation
- Clinical skills for IBCLCs
- Clinical documentation for IBCLCs
- Influence of culture on breastfeeding
- The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding
- Breastfeeding management
- Breastfeeding research
- Nutrition during lactation

Examples of appropriate E-CERPs topics include:

- Practise ethics for lactation consultants
- Informed consent
- Health workers and the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes
- Conflict of interest
- Knowing your limits; when to refer
- Human rights and infant feeding choice
- Dealing with a colleague whose practise is not based on scientific principles and up-to-date information
- Copyright and intellectual property

Examples of appropriate R-CERPs topics include:

- General anatomy
- Infant growth and development
- Research methods and statistics
- Cultural differences in health practises
- Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Postpartum depression
- Counselling or communications skills
- Adult education principles
- Family dynamics
- Infant Massage Practises
- Nutrition (if not lactation-specific)

- Complementary therapies (overview sessions only)

Educational programs based on topics not included on the *IBCLC Detailed Content Outline* are not eligible for CERPs. Examples of topics that will not be recognised for CERPs include:

- Computer skills
- Business management
- Bra fitting (unless specifically related to lactation)
- Motivational sessions
- Instructional programs on complementary therapies
- Specialised health care skills (e.g. fetal monitoring)

In addition, CERPs will **not** be recognised for the following types of education:

- clinical work as a lactation consultant
- antenatal or postnatal classes for mothers
- private study, including reading journals and watching videos

## D. Individual CERPs

The *Individual CERPs Guide* can help you earn L-, E-, or R-CERPs for the following activities. This guide can be found on the IBLCE website.

- Primary author or co-author of an article/abstract/chapter in a refereed journal or edited book
- Completion of a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation
- Poster presentation
- Development of a video for professionals
- Primary author or co-author for an original hospital protocol or policy
- Clinical observation
- Attendance at an educational offering where the topic was human lactation and breastfeeding
- Presenting an educational offering
- Volunteer service
- Pathway 3 mentorship
- Pathway 2 clinical preceptor hours

If the content is relevant to the practise of an IBCLC, the educational activity will be awarded L-, E-, or R-CERPs, depending upon the subject matter.

Over a five-year period, IBCLCs may earn up to a total of 6 R-CERPs for completion of one or more of the following life support courses.

- CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation)
- NRP (Neonatal Resuscitation Program)



- PALS (Paediatric Advanced Life Support)
- ACLS (Advanced Cardiac Life Support)
- S.T.A.B.L.E (Sugar & safe care, Temperature, Airway, Blood pressure, Lab work, Emotional support)

IBCLCs will receive 3 R-CERPs for each aforementioned course up to a maximum of 6 R-CERPs. IBCLCs who were an instructor for one of these courses will receive 6 R-CERPs for teaching the course.

## **E. Documentation of CERPs**

IBCLCs who are selected for audit during the recertification process must submit copies of their certificates of completion. For the purposes of the recertification process, IBLCE **does not** maintain records of participants in education programmes that have been awarded CERPs through the IBLCE CERP Provider Programme. IBCLCs who have lost or misplaced their certificate of completion must contact the education provider.

## **F. Recertification by CERPs Extension Request Policy**

Recertifying IBCLCs should carefully consider the consequences of not meeting the requirements for recertification, as failure to recertify will result in loss of certification. Only documented extraordinary circumstances will be accepted as reason for IBLCE to consider a request for an extension of certification to the next year. Review the *IBLCE Recertification by CERPs Extension Request Policy* on the IBLCE website for further details.

# **VI. Confidentiality Policy**

## **A. Commitment to Confidentiality**

IBLCE is committed to protecting confidential and/or proprietary information related to applicants, certificants, the examination development process, and examination content. IBLCE will not disclose any confidential applicant, candidate, or certificant information unless authorised in writing by the individual or as required by law.

## **B. Examination Results**

Individual examination results are considered confidential. Examination scores are released only to the individual candidate unless a signed release is provided in advance. Results are not released by phone or fax. Personal information submitted by applicants, candidates, and certificants with an application for initial certification or recertification is considered confidential.

## **C. Application Status**

An individual's application status is considered confidential. IBLCE does not disclose information regarding whether or not an individual has applied for certification or has taken the examination. Current certification status is published and verifiable as noted in the Credential Verification section of this policy.

## **D. Credential Verification**

The names of certified individuals are not considered confidential and may be published by IBLCE. Published information may include name, city, state, country, and certification status. An online Registry of certificants is provided to the public. Employers may also receive written verification provided that IBLCE has received a signed release from the certificant.

## **E. De-Identified Data**

To promote and support research within the human lactation and breastfeeding field, IBLCE will upon approval by the IBLCE Research Committee provide aggregated and de-identified data. To achieve these goals and aims, IBLCE reserves the right to use a combination of de-identified data, including but not limited to examination results to evaluate performance, testing, and administration strategies for research and evaluation purposes. IBLCE may also disseminate approved surveys and questionnaire-type requests to its constituents to complete at their own will.

## **F. Examination Candidates**

IBLCE examination candidates are prohibited from transmitting information about IBLCE examination questions or content in any form to any person or entity at any time, either prior to, during, or following the examination, and failure to comply with this prohibition, or failure to report any information about suspected violations of such prohibitions or otherwise about any possible examination irregularities by themselves or others, may result in their scores being cancelled or their certification being revoked in accordance with IBLCE policies and procedures and/or legal action against the candidate, including criminal prosecution.

## **VII. Initial Candidate and Recertification Audit Policy**

IBLCE audits initial applications and recertification applications. These audits are conducted on a standardised and randomised basis. If selected for such an audit, the applicant or certificant must furnish the complete, accurate information in a timely manner. Failure to do so may result in a delay or denial to sit the IBCLC examination or of recertification by CERPs and/or disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Professional Conduct and/or suspension or revocation of the opportunity to reapply for certification.

In addition to the randomised and standardised audit process set forth above, IBLCE specifically further reserves the right to require any applicant or recertificant to provide proof of education, employment, course work, or proof of any of the initial eligibility or recertification requirements in a timely manner and be complete and accurate. Such failure to do so could also result in a delay or denial to sit the IBCLC examination or in recertification by CERPs and/or disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Professional Conduct and/or suspension or revocation of the opportunity to reapply for certification.

## **VIII. Policy for Appealing an Eligibility or Recertification Decision**

IBLCE will review appeals of adverse certification eligibility or recertification decisions from IBCLC certificants and applicants. An adverse decision may be appealed for the following reasons: 1) IBLCE did not apply certification or recertification criteria correctly or 2) a factual error impacted the underlying decision.

A missed deadline may be appealed only due to substantiated and verified extraordinary circumstances. Certificants or applicants who wish to do so should submit the Appeals Form. The requirements associated with this process are described below.

Extraordinary circumstances are exclusively serious illness or severe injury of the candidate/certificant or immediate family member, death of an immediate family member, experiencing unavoidable natural disaster, or changes related to active military duty. Due to COVID-19, additionally in 2021, extraordinary circumstances include COVID-19 related concerns, such as job loss of the candidate and/or partner/spouse, COVID-19 health issue for candidate or immediate family member, and/or concern for going into the public due to COVID-19.

Certificants or applicants who are determined to be ineligible to take the examination or ineligible to recertify by CERPs will be notified by IBLCE. ***All appeals must be submitted to IBLCE within 30 days of the date of the notification of ineligibility.***

Appeals are evaluated by the IBLCE Appeals Committee, which considers the executed appeals form together with information submitted in support of the appeal. ***In signing the appeals form, the certificant or applicant acknowledges that the decision of the IBLCE Appeals Committee is final.***

## **IX. Nondiscrimination Policy**

IBLCE does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, sect, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sex, ethnicity, age, national origin, ancestry, political persuasion, ability/disability, marital status, geographic location, or socioeconomic status in any of its activities or operations or any other basis prohibited by the laws of the United States of America or of the Commonwealth of Virginia. IBLCE is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming

environment for all members of the IBLCE community, as well as all seeking access to the IBLCE community.

## **X. IBCLC Trademark Use Policy**

The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (“IBLCE”) owns certain names, trademarks, and logos, including the certification marks International Board Certified Lactation Consultant and IBCLC Logo (the “Marks”). Only those individuals who have met the IBLCE eligibility requirements, passed the IBLCE examination, and maintained the IBCLC certification may use the Marks. Use of the Marks may only be made in accordance with the IBCLC Trademark Use Policy and its terms and conditions which can be found on the IBLCE website.

## **XI. IBCLC Registry**

IBLCE reserves the right to publish the names of current IBCLCs. This Registry can be found on the IBLCE website.

## **XII. Lapsed Certification**

Should an IBCLC let their certification lapse, they may take the examination one time within the following 12 months without having to meet the IBLCE examination eligibility requirements; this exemption is limited to one examination sitting within the year that immediately follows the lapse of their certification. For any subsequent examination attempts they are expected to meet the eligibility requirements valid at the time of examination application. For example, an individual who fails the examination in April will be able to take the September examination of the same year or the next April examination without having to meet the pre-requisites for the examination. An IBCLC who fails in September will be granted one attempt for either April or September of the following year without having to demonstrate meeting the pre-requisites.

## **XIII. Inactive Status**

In 2021, IBLCE will introduce an Inactive Status for currently active IBCLCs who are unable to meet recertification requirements in the year they are due to recertify but intend to earn the certification again within one year. During Inactive Status, individuals do not actively hold the IBCLC credential. **This status will replace the Lapsed Status described above.**

To regain the IBCLC certification, during the Inactive Status, individuals can either sit and pass the examination without meeting the current eligibility requirements, or recertify by CERPs (75 CERPs), which at that time will include the self-assessment. All candidates exiting Inactive Status via either method must also complete an additional 15 CERPs.

As the new recertification via CERPs method that includes a self-assessment begins with IBCLCs

recertifying in 2022 and not those recertifying in 2021, IBCLCs who enter into Inactive Status in 2021 must sit the 2022 recertification examination to renew their certification.

IBCLCs who cannot meet the requirements and who wish to enter into Inactive Status in 2022 and beyond may recertify either by examination or with the recertification method in effect in that year.

Should one not reapply for certification in the year of the Inactive Status, then one would need to sit and pass the examination, having met the initial candidate eligibility requirements. Should an IBCLC choose not to enter into the Inactive Status and let their certification expire, then they would need to sit and pass the examination, meeting the initial candidate eligibility requirements.

## **XIV. Retired Status**

In 2021, IBLCE will introduce a Retired Status for active IBCLCs who intend to retire and no longer practise as an IBCLC. For a limited time, those who held the certification in good standing in the past will be able to apply for this status. Dates for these applications will be announced on the IBLCE website.

Those who have achieved this status may use “IBCLC Retired” on a résumé, or below their name on a business card. However, it may not be listed directly following their name or signature (e.g., charting) as an active credential. The intention of this status is one of recognition and is for those who are no longer actively practising as an IBCLC and have no intention to return to practise.

## **XV. Examination Day Notice**

By taking the IBCLC examination, you agree to assume all of the risks including, without limitation, any and all damage, loss, claim, or expense of any kind related to the exposure to or infection by COVID-19, and agree to release IBLCE, its officers, directors, employees, volunteers, contractors, and agents, from any and all liability, loss, damage, claim, or expense claimed by you or on your behalf, arising out of or in any way relating to your IBCLC examination. You agree to release, discharge, indemnify, defend, and hold harmless IBLCE and its officers, directors, employees, volunteers, contractors, and agents, from any and all loss, damage, claim or expense arising out of or in any way relating to your IBCLC examination.

To ensure your safety and the safety of other test takers and test centre staff, you agree that you will not be allowed to take and that you will not try to take your scheduled IBCLC examination at a contracted test centre if: (i) you have experienced any symptoms of COVID-19 or the flu or cold-like symptoms in the 14 days prior to your scheduled examination, (ii) you have tested positive for COVID-19 in the 14 days prior to your scheduled examination, (iii) you have been in close personal contact with anyone in the 14 days prior to your scheduled examination that has been diagnosed with COVID-19\*, (iv) you have returned from travel from a highly infected area within the preceding 14 days.\*\*

IBLCE reserves the right to bar entrance at any contracted test centre to any individual who cannot or will not respond affirmatively to the four requirements above or who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 or to any requirements listed by Prometric on its website through the IBCLC examination dates. You will be required to comply with any mandatory safety procedures while taking the IBCLC examination and IBLCE reserves the right to require the immediate removal of any individual who refuses to comply with any mandatory safety procedures. By taking your IBCLC examination, you acknowledge and agree that you are taking the examination at your own risk and that you expressly assume any risk with a full understanding of the contagious nature of COVID-19.

For those taking the examination by live remote proctoring from a residence or other location, please note that successfully accessing the confidential IBCLC examination will depend on a strong and reliable internet connection and computer equipment meeting the specifications as defined by IBLCE's third-party testing vendor, Prometric. IBLCE and its testing vendor Prometric are making live remote proctoring available in this unique situation and have taken reasonable and diligent steps to deliver the examination. However, if your internet connection is subject to disruption at your location or your computer does not perform properly, this is outside of the control of IBLCE or Prometric and IBLCE policies will govern. IBLCE and Prometric will not be responsible for such technical problems caused by local internet connectivity or other local computer related issues and you agree to waive any claims and hold harmless IBLCE and Prometric with respect to any such issues.

To understand how IBLCE processes your personal data for purposes of the examination, please review our [Privacy Notice](#).

\*Medical and healthcare professionals who have been practicing safe and preventative measures using personal protective equipment with their patients are an exception.

\*\*Highly infected areas subject to travel restrictions/quarantine requirements are typically identified at the local level via orders, directives, or guidelines. Please consult with local requirements on restricted travel in the location you wish to test.

## XVI. 2021 Fee Schedule

### A. IBLCE 2021 Recertification Fee Schedule for Tier 1 Countries

Tier 1	Andorra, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Bermuda, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Cayman Islands, Chile, Croatia, Curacao, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Falkland Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Greenland, Guadeloupe, Guam, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macau, Malaysia, Malta, Martinique, Monaco, Netherlands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Qatar, Reunion, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Maarten, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Virgin Islands (British), Virgin Islands (US)
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\*If your country is not listed, please contact IBLCE at [iblce@iblce.org](mailto:iblce@iblce.org).

Currency	Recertification by Examination Fee	Recertification by CERPs Fee	Hand Score Fee	Refund for Recertification Candidates who are ineligible or withdraw by the specified deadline	Examination Fee for Lapsed Candidates
USD	\$470	\$470	\$100	\$235	\$660

Please visit [iblce.org](http://iblce.org) for up-to-date information about application deadlines.

If completing your application online, the system requires USD and the rate is based on the exchange rate for that day. If using the online system, payment must be made online. The system accepts credit cards and prepaid credit cards.



## B. IBLCE 2021 Recertification Fee Schedule for Tier 2 Countries

Tier 2	Albania, Algeria, American Samoa, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, China, Colombia, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, French Polynesia, Gabon, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kosovo, Laos, Lebanon, Libya, Maldives, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Montserrat, Morocco, Namibia, North Macedonia, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, St. Lucia, St. Martin, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, eSwatini, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam
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\*If your country is not listed, please contact IBLCE at [iblce@iblce.org](mailto:iblce@iblce.org).

Currency	Recertification by Examination Fee	Recertification by CERPs Fee	Hand Score Fee	Refund for Recertification Candidates who are ineligible or withdraw by the specified deadline	Examination Fee for Lapsed Candidates
USD	\$350	\$350	\$90	\$175	\$400

Please visit [iblce.org](http://iblce.org) for up-to-date information about application deadlines.

If completing your application online, the system requires USD and the rate is based on the exchange rate for that day. If using the online system, payment must be made online. The system accepts credit cards and prepaid credit cards.

## C. IBLCE 2021 Recertification Fee Schedule for Tier 3 Countries

Tier 3	Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Federated States of Micronesia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Samoa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Western Sahara, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe
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\*If your country is not listed, please contact IBLCE at [iblce@iblce.org](mailto:iblce@iblce.org).


Currency	Recertification by Examination Fee	Recertification by CERPs Fee	Hand Score Fee	Refund for Recertification Candidates who are ineligible or withdraw by the specified deadline	Examination Fee for Lapsed Candidates
USD	\$250	\$250	\$70	\$125	\$255


Please visit [iblce.org](http://iblce.org) for up-to-date information about application deadlines.

If completing your application online, the system requires USD and the rate is based on the exchange rate for that day. If using the online system, payment must be made online. The system accepts credit cards and prepaid credit cards.

## XVII. IBCLC Detailed Content Outline

	<b>International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBCLE) International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®) Detailed Content Outline</b>	<b># of Items</b>
<b>I. Development and Nutrition</b>		<b>26</b>
<b>A. Infant</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feeding behaviours at different ages</li> <li>2. Food intolerances/allergies</li> <li>3. Infant anatomy and anatomical/oral challenges</li> <li>4. Introducing complementary foods</li> <li>5. Low birth weight</li> <li>6. Milk banking – formal and informal</li> <li>7. Normal infant behaviours</li> <li>8. Nutritional requirements - preterm</li> <li>9. Preterm development and growth</li> <li>10. Skin tone, muscle tone, reflexes</li> <li>11. Term development and growth</li> <li>12. WHO growth charts with gestational age adjustment</li> </ol>		
<b>B. Maternal</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Breast development and growth</li> <li>2. Breast surgery</li> <li>3. Composition of human milk</li> <li>4. Maternal anatomical challenges</li> <li>5. Maternal nutritional status</li> <li>6. Nipple structure and variations</li> </ol>		
<b>II. Physiology and Endocrinology</b>		<b>24</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Diabetes</li> <li>2. Infertility Issues</li> <li>3. Maternal metabolic and hormonal disorders (e.g., thyroid, Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome)</li> <li>4. Maternal autoimmune disorders</li> <li>5. Multiples</li> <li>6. Newborn hypoglycemia</li> <li>7. Pregnancy and breastfeeding – tandem</li> <li>8. Relactation</li> <li>9. Stooling and voiding</li> </ol>		
<b>III. Pathology</b>		<b>31</b>
<b>A. Infant</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allergies</li> <li>2. Ankyloglossia</li> <li>3. Cleft lip and palate</li> <li>4. Congenital anomalies (e.g., gastrointestinal, cardiac)</li> </ol>		

	<b>International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBCLE) International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®) Detailed Content Outline</b>	<b># of Items</b>
	5. Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), reflux 6. Hyperbilirubinemia 7. Infant acute disease (bacterial, viral, fungal, systemic) 8. Infant neurological disabilities 9. Small for Gestational Age (SGA), Large for Gestational Age (LGA)	
	<b>B. Maternal</b>	
	1. Abscess 2. Milk ejection reflex dysfunction 3. Maternal acute disease (bacterial, viral, fungal, systemic) 4. Maternal chronic disease 5. Maternal disability (physical and neurological) 6. Mastitis 7. Milk supply, low or over 8. Nipple and breast conditions 9. Nipple pain and trauma 10. Post-partum hemorrhage 11. Pre-eclampsia / pregnancy induced hypertension	
	<b>IV. Pharmacology and Toxicology</b>	<b>13</b>
	1. Alcohol and tobacco 2. Contraception 3. Drugs of abuse 4. Galactogogues 5. Gel dressings/nipple creams 6. Medication (prescription, over-the-counter, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures) 7. Medicinal Herbs	
	<b>V. Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology</b>	<b>21</b>
	1. Transition to parenthood 2. Birth practices 3. Foods to eat/avoid that affect lactation 4. Employment – returning to work 5. Family lifestyle 6. Identifying support networks 7. Maternal mental health 8. Maternal psychological/cognitive issues 9. Mother-baby relationship 10. Safe sleep 11. Weaning 12. Cultural competency	

	<b>International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBCLE)</b> <b>International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®)</b> <b>Detailed Content Outline</b>	<b># of Items</b>
<b>VI. Techniques</b>		<b>25</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Effective milk transfer (including medically-indicated supplementation)</li> <li>2. First hour</li> <li>3. Latching</li> <li>4. Managing supply</li> <li>5. Milk expression</li> <li>6. Positioning</li> <li>7. Refusal of breast, bottle</li> <li>8. Skin-to-skin (Kangaroo care)</li> <li>9. Test-weighing</li> </ol>		
<b>VII. Clinical Skills</b>		<b>35</b>
<b>A. Equipment and Technology</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feeding devices (e.g., tubes at breast, cups, syringes, teats)</li> <li>2. Handling and storage of human milk</li> <li>3. Nipple devices (e.g., shields, everters)</li> <li>4. Pacifiers</li> <li>5. Pumps</li> <li>6. Scales</li> <li>7. Communication technology</li> <li>8. Websites</li> </ol>		
<b>B. Education and Communication</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active listening</li> <li>2. Anticipatory guidance</li> <li>3. Care plan development and sharing</li> <li>4. Documentation</li> <li>5. Educating mothers and families</li> <li>6. Educating professionals, peers, and students</li> <li>7. Extending the duration of breastfeeding</li> <li>8. Emotional support</li> <li>9. Empowerment</li> <li>10. Group support</li> </ol>		
<b>C. Ethical and Legal Issues</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Breastfeeding in public</li> <li>2. Clinical competencies</li> <li>3. Code of Professional Conduct (CPC)</li> <li>4. Principles of confidentiality</li> <li>5. WHO code –advocacy and policy</li> </ol>		

	<b>International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBCLE)</b> <b>International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®)</b> <b>Detailed Content Outline</b>	<b># of Items</b>
	<b>D. Research</b>	
	1. Apply research in practice 2. Appraise and interpret research results 3. Use research to help develop policies and protocols	
	<b>E. Public Health and Advocacy</b>	
	1. Advocate for Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) 2. Advocate for compliance with World Health Organization International Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitutes (WHO Code) 3. Advocate for mother / baby in healthcare system 4. Develop breastfeeding-related policies	
<b>Total Number of Items</b>		<b>175</b>

Approximately half of the items will include images, and these will be administered in the afternoon session; items without images will be administered in the morning session. As supported by the practice analysis results, examination items should generally relate to the key tasks associated with developing a care plan, which include:

1. Assessment
2. Develop a plan
3. Document
4. Evaluate
5. Help mother determine goals
6. History taking
7. Work with other medical providers

Except for those items addressing general principles, items are classified according to the chronological period, using the following guidelines:

CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS	Target # of Items*
1. Prenatal - maternal	8
2. Labor - maternal / birth - perinatal	9
3. Prematurity	12
4. 0 - 2 days	21
5. 3 - 14 days	21
6. 15 - 28 days	20
7. 1 - 3 months	12
8. 4 - 6 months	12
9. 7 - 12 months	5
10. Beyond 12 months	5
11. General principles (including preconception)	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>

\*Appropriate flexibility will be allowed surrounding these targets.