



IBCLC® Examination Withdrawal/Cancellation Policy

If you must withdraw from the IBCLC® examination for which you have applied and are accepted, and/or cancel your appointment to take the IBCLC examination, you **MUST** notify IBLCE in writing by the posted deadlines to be eligible for a partial refund. Written notification of withdrawal/cancellation may be sent by mail, e-mail, or fax and must be *received* by IBLCE no later than these deadlines in order for you to be eligible for a partial refund of the examination fees paid. Please see the Candidate Information Guide or the Recertification Guide for details regarding the partial refund amount. In the unfortunate and rare instance of verified death or late-stage, terminal illness of the candidate, IBLCE will provide a full refund of examination fees. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, IBLCE has made available the option in 2021 for a full refund with documented extraordinary circumstances. Visit the IBLCE COVID-19 Resource Centre for more information about [options](#) available to examination candidates in 2022.

After the posted deadlines, no partial refunds will be given to candidates who withdraw from/cancel the IBCLC examination. Only documented extraordinary circumstances will be accepted as reasons for IBLCE to consider a request for the fees paid to be deferred to a future examination.

Extraordinary circumstances are exclusively serious illness or severe injury of the candidate/certificant or immediate family member, death of an immediate family member, experiencing an unavoidable natural disaster, or changes related to active military duty. In 2022, extraordinary circumstances also 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.

A request for a deferral is not a guarantee that it will be granted. If granted, the deferral will be good for one examination within a one-year timeframe. After that the candidate must re-apply for the examination and meet the most current requirements.

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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 and an extension of certification.

A request to defer fees and a one-year extension of certification is not a guarantee that it will be granted. A request requires a completed submission of the examination application and payment on or before posted application deadlines, documentation of completion of continuing education equivalent to at least 15 L-CERPs within the past year, and third-party documentation substantiating the extraordinary circumstance. If the deferral of fees and extension of certification are granted, the IBCLC must either successfully pass the IBCLC examination within the following year to maintain certification OR the IBCLC would also have the option to recertify by CERPs, with the completion of the self-assessment and focused continuing education. Note that any CERPs provided as part of the deferral and extension request count toward the 75 hours for the CERPs requirements for full recertification in the extension year. If granted, the extension does not extend the next five-year cycle for certification; the IBCLC will still be expected to recertify in the original five-year cycle meeting current recertification requirements.

Effective in 2021, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, IBLCE amended this policy for those in 2021 to allow for a deferral of fees for up to two consecutive years and for IBCLCs, an extension of certification for one year for up to two consecutive years with proof of 15 L-CERPs earned within the past year for each request. Additionally, for IBCLC examination candidates in 2022, IBLCE amended this policy to allow for a deferral for three consecutive years with proof of 15 L-CERPs. Initial candidates also have the option of deferring their examination fees for a third consecutive year. The deferral for a third year is exclusively only to be related to COVID-19 extraordinary circumstances. Refer to the IBLCE COVID-19 Resource Centre for updates regarding options in 2022.