

Comparison of Certified Nurse Midwives, Certified Midwives, and Certified Professional Midwives

Clarifying the distinctions among professional midwifery credentials in the United States

International Confederation of Midwives' Definition of MIDWIFE	<p>While the profession of midwifery has developed differently in each country, we share a common understanding of the midwife internationally. The International Confederation of Midwives' definition is:</p> <p>The midwife is recognized as a responsible and accountable professional who works in partnership with women to give the necessary support, care and advice during pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period, to conduct births on the midwife's own responsibility and to provide care for the newborn and the infant. This care includes preventative measures, the promotion of normal birth, the detection of complications in mother and child, the accessing of medical care or other appropriate assistance and the carrying out of emergency measures. The midwife has an important task in health counseling and education, not only for the woman, but also within the family and the community. This work should involve antenatal education and preparation for parenthood and may extend to women's health, sexual or reproductive health and childcare. A midwife may practice in any setting including the home, community, hospitals, clinics, or health units.</p>
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NATIONAL MIDWIFERY CREDENTIALS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	CERTIFIED NURSE-MIDWIFE (CNM)	CERTIFIED MIDWIFE (CM)	CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL MIDWIFE (CPM)
EDUCATION			
Minimum Degree Required for Certification	Graduate Degree		Certification does not require an academic degree but is based on demonstrated competency in specified areas of knowledge and skills.
Minimum Education Requirements for Admission to Midwifery Education Program	Bachelor's Degree or higher from an accredited college or university AND		High School Diploma or equivalent
	Earn RN license prior to or within midwifery education program.	Successful completion of required science & health courses and related health skills training prior to or within midwifery education program.	Prerequisites for accredited programs vary, but typically include specific courses such as statistics, microbiology, anatomy and physiology, and experience such as childbirth education or doula certification. There are no specified requirements for entry to the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) Portfolio Evaluation Process (PEP) pathway: an apprenticeship process that includes verification of knowledge and skills by qualified preceptors.
Clinical Experience Requirements	Attainment of knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors as identified by the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Education.		Attainment of knowledge and skills, identified in the periodic job analysis conducted by NARM.

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	<p>Clinical education must occur under the supervision of an American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB)-certified CNM/CM or other qualified preceptor who holds a graduate degree, has preparation for clinical teaching, and has clinical expertise and didactic knowledge commensurate with the content taught; >50% of clinical education must be under CNM/CM supervision.</p>		<p>NARM requires that the clinical component of the educational process must be at least two years in duration and include a minimum of 55 births in three distinct categories. Clinical education must occur under the supervision of a midwife who must be nationally certified, legally recognized and who has practiced for at least three years and attended 50 out-of-hospital births post certification.</p> <p>CPMs certified via the PEP may earn a Midwifery Bridge Certificate (MBC) to demonstrate they meet the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) standards for minimum education.</p>
EDUCATION PROGRAM ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION			
	<p>The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) is authorized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit midwifery education programs and institutions. Midwifery education programs must be located within or affiliated with a regionally accredited institution.</p>		<p>The Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC) is authorized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit midwifery education programs and institutions. The scope of recognition includes certificate and degree-granting institutions, programs within accredited institutions, and distance education programs.</p>
SCOPE OF PRACTICE			
Range of care provided	<p>Midwifery as practiced by CNMs and CMs encompasses the independent provision of care during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period; sexual and reproductive health; gynecologic health; and family planning services, including preconception care. Midwives also provide primary care for individuals from adolescence throughout the lifespan as well as care for the healthy newborn during the first 28 days of life. Midwives provide care for all individuals who seek midwifery care, inclusive of all gender identities and sexual orientations.</p> <p>CNMs/CMs provide initial and ongoing comprehensive assessment, diagnosis, and treatment. They conduct physical examinations; independently prescribe medications including but not limited to controlled substances, treatment of substance use disorder, and expedited partner therapy; admit, manage, and discharge patients; order and interpret laboratory and diagnostic tests; and order medical devices, durable medical equipment, and home health services.</p> <p>Midwifery care as practiced by CNMs and CMs includes health promotion, disease prevention, risk assessment and management, and individualized wellness education and counseling. These services are provided in partnership with individuals and families in diverse settings such as ambulatory care clinics, private offices, telehealth and other methods of remote care delivery, community and public health systems, homes, hospitals, and birth centers.</p>		<p>Midwifery as practiced by CPMs offers care, education, counseling and support to women and their families throughout the caregiving partnership, including pregnancy, birth and the postpartum period. CPMs provide on-going care throughout pregnancy and continuous, hands-on care during labor, birth and the immediate postpartum period, as well as maternal and well-baby care through the 6-8 week postpartum period.</p> <p>CPMs provide initial and ongoing comprehensive assessment, diagnosis, and treatment. CPMs are trained to recognize abnormal or dangerous conditions requiring consultation with and/or referral to other healthcare professionals. They conduct physical examinations, administer medications, and use devices as allowed by state law, order and interpret laboratory and diagnostic tests.</p>
Practice Settings	All settings - hospitals, homes, birth centers, and offices. The majority of CNMs and CMs attend births in hospitals.		Homes, birth centers, and offices. The majority of CPMs attend births in homes and/or birth centers.

Prescriptive Authority	All US jurisdictions	Maine, Maryland, New York, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington, DC	CPMs do not maintain prescriptive authority; however, they may obtain and administer certain medications in select states.
Third Party Reimbursement	Most private insurance; Medicaid coverage mandated in all states; Medicare, TRICARE	Most private insurance; Medicaid coverage in Maine, Maryland, New York, Rhode Island, and Washington, DC	Private insurance mandated in 6 states; coverage varies in other states; 13 states include CPMs in state Medicaid plans
CERTIFICATION			
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Certifying Organization	American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB)		North American Registry of Midwives (NARM)
	AMCB and NARM are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies		
Requirements Prior to Taking National Certification Exam	Graduation from a midwifery education program accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME); AND Verification by program director of completion of education program AND Verification of master's degree or higher <i>*CNMs must also submit evidence of an active RN license at time of initial certification</i>		Graduation from a midwifery education program accredited by the Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC) OR Completion of NARM's Portfolio Evaluation Process (PEP) OR AMCB-Certified CNM/CM with at least ten community-based birth experiences OR Completion of an equivalent state licensure program All applicants must also submit evidence of current adult CPR and neonatal resuscitation certification or course completion
Recertification Requirement	Every 5 years		Every 3 years
LICENSURE			
Legal Status	Licensed in 50 states plus the District of Columbia and U.S. territories as midwives, nurse-midwives, advanced practice registered nurses, or nurse practitioners.	Licensed in Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.	Licensed in 35 states and the District of Columbia.
Licensure Agency	Boards of Midwifery, Medicine, Nursing or Departments of Health	Boards of Midwifery, Medicine, Nursing, Complementary Health Care Providers or Departments of Health	Boards of Midwifery, Medicine, Nursing, Complementary Health Care Providers; Departments of Health or Departments of Professional Licensure or Regulation
PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION			
	American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM)		National Association of Certified Professional Midwives (NACPM)
<i>Note: This document does not address individuals who are not certified and may attend births with or without legal recognition.</i>			

Updated: ACNM Government Affairs | April 2022