



RPVI[®]

Certification /How to Apply Guide

Registered Physician in Vascular Interpretation[®]

APCA.org
1-800-943-1709 • 240-386-1738

   @APCA_Council



APCA[™]

Alliance for Physician
Certification & Advancement

About This Guide

This guide walks you through the application process for taking the Physicians' Vascular Interpretation (PVI) examination in order to earn the Registered Physician in Vascular Interpretation® (RPVI®) certification. The PVI examination is administered and RPVI certification is awarded by APCA™, the Alliance for Physician Certification & Advancement™.

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The Alliance for Physician Certification & Advancement (APCA) was created to exclusively meet the needs of the physician community, is part of the nonprofit Inteleos™ family of Councils spun out of the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography® (ARDMS®).

APCA, already supporting over 21,000 physicians worldwide, is dedicated to helping physicians secure certification in various types of medical imaging. APCA is dedicated to continual learning and providing high-quality and compassionate patient care through certification.

To keep advancing the use of diagnostic medical imaging for superior patient

care, APCA also offers physicians numerous volunteering opportunities. For information on how to volunteer, visit [APCA.org/Volunteer](https://www.apca.org/Volunteer).

For more information on APCA's physician-only certifications, including ABVM, CBCCT, CBNC, CBCMR, RPVI, RPVI-China, RMSK, and the Latin American Ultrasound Certificate Program, please visit [APCA.org](https://www.apca.org).

For comprehensive application information on sonographer-level credentials including the RDMS®, RDCS®, RMSKS™, and RVT® offered by the ARDMS, APCA's companion Council, visit [ARDMS.org](https://www.ardms.org).

Meet Eligibility + Pass PVI Examination = Certification Earned

PVI (Physicians' Vascular Interpretation)

RPVI (Registered Physician in Vascular Interpretation)



Learn why RPVI certification is right for you

About the RPVI® Certification

The Registered Physician in Vascular Interpretation (RPVI) certification, developed in response to requests from physicians in the vascular surgery and vascular medicine community, documents the highest attainable standard in vascular ultrasound interpretation.

The RPVI certification programs is accredited by ANSI to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17024 Standard. Earning the RPVI certification is a requirement to sit for the American Board of Surgery's Vascular Surgery Qualifying Examination. Additionally, the RPVI certification is required for completion of many vascular surgery fellowship programs.

Earning the RPVI Certification

The RPVI certification is earned by passing the Physicians' Vascular Interpretation (PVI) examination. The content of the PVI examination reflects current noninvasive vascular laboratory practice. To learn about how the PVI examination is written, go to APCA.org/PVI.

How the RPVI and RVT Certifications Differ

The RPVI certification, offered exclusively to physicians, validates the clinical expertise fundamental to vascular sonography interpretation and provides recognition of the skills and knowledge required in making consistent and reliable diagnoses in vascular disease. The Registered Vascular Technologist® (RVT®) certification assesses the competency needed to perform a vascular sonography scan and is administered by the ARDMS, companion Council of APCA.

Picture Archive and Communication Simulation (PACSim) Questions on the PVI Examination

The patent-pending PACS items are designed to simulate an interpretation workstation experience relevant to actual present-day medical practice. The PACS items require examinees to read a clinical history of the patient, evaluate the existing media, and complete a diagnostic ultrasound report by selecting from the presented options. Candidates have 4 hours to complete the PVI examination which contains approximately 180 questions comprised of multiple-choice and PACSim items. Visit APCA.org/Pacs to learn more.

Applying Online is Fast, Easy and Secure

Get started at APCA.org

1.

The PVI examination is now available year-round.

The PVI examination is now available on demand year-round, allowing you to apply, schedule and prepare for the examination at your convenience.

2.

Before beginning the online application.

Review the PVI prerequisite (in this guide or at APCA.org/PVI) to ensure you meet the requirements.

3.

Visit APCA.org/PVI. Fill out, pay for and submit your application forms.

You will need to assemble the required documentation under the listed documentation section by the deadline provided in order for APCA to determine eligibility. You may check the status of your required application support documentation by logging on to APCA.org/MYAPCA.

4.

APCA emails eligible Applicants an Examination Confirmation Letter upon receipt of the application and all required supporting documentation.

Eligibility will not be determined by phone, fax, or e-mail.

Examination Confirmation letters may also be found by logging onto APCA.org/MYAPCA. The letter lists the approved examination(s).

A website address and toll-free number are provided so you can schedule an appointment. Test centers are located in the U.S., Canada and select international locations*.

If you are ineligible, you are notified via letter of your ineligibility and reasons for that decision. APCA retains a \$100 USD processing fee for each examination.

5.

Prepare for the examination:

Review the PVI content outline and register to take the practice exam at APCA.org/PVI.

6.

On examination day:

The PVI examination is administered on a computer in a secure test center.

7.

After the examination:

The printed examination score is immediately provided upon completion of the examination and is automatically sent to the APCA for final review and acceptance. The Pass or Fail results will

then be posted to your secure MY APCA (APCA.org/MYAPCA) account within the next week.

Candidates receiving a confirmed passing score on the PVI examination and meeting all other requirements will be awarded a certification, effective the date the PVI examination was taken.

Six weeks after the RPVI certification has been awarded, the Certificant will receive a certificate via mail.**

Certificants are listed in the APCA online directory at APCA.org.

Note: APCA, in its discretion, may request from you or others information concerning matters that may be relevant to your eligibility for certification and certification status.

*Please visit APCA.org/Schedule for a current list of test center locations.

**Certification will only be awarded to APCA Certificants who hold active status.

APPLY & MANAGE YOUR APPLICATION THROUGH
[APCA.ORG/MYAPCA](http://APCA.org/MYAPCA)





Prepare for your test day

Test Center Admission and Identification

When you arrive at the test center, be prepared to:

- Check in with a Test Center Administrator
- Present a valid photo ID
- Have your palm scanned
- Take a test-day photograph

Special Accommodations

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), APCA will provide reasonable testing accommodations for Candidates with professionally diagnosed disabilities as defined by the ADA. Visit [APCA.org/ADA](https://www.apca.org/ADA).

APCA Compliance Policies and Required Review

During the online application process, Applicants are required to attest to their compliance with all APCA Compliance Policies. Applicants who have legal or disciplinary matters in their past must be prepared to disclose the matters to APCA at the time of application and submit the required initial review fee of \$150 USD. Please review the APCA Compliance Policies ([APCA.org/Compliance](https://www.apca.org/Compliance)) to learn how the policies apply to you.

Compliance Pre-Application Review

APCA will conduct a “pre-application review,” for a \$125 USD nonrefundable fee for individuals who wish to determine the impact of a previous violation of APCA Discipline Policies ([APCA.org/Discipline](https://www.apca.org/Discipline)) on their eligibility to apply for APCA certification. You may obtain additional information regarding the pre-application process along with the appropriate forms by visiting [APCA.org/Compliance](https://www.apca.org/Compliance).

RPVI Prerequisite Information



Licensure

MD or DO with a current, valid, unrestricted license to practice medicine in the U.S. or Canada.

OR

Outside of U.S. and Canada – MD or DO degree equivalent to the U.S. or Canada (must provide a credential report/evaluation indicating that this medical degree is equivalent to a doctor of medicine degree in the U.S. or Canada) with a current, valid unrestricted license to practice medicine as a physician in any country.

Clinical Vascular Ultrasound Experience

The Applicant is required to document vascular interpretation experience* in a clinical diagnostic setting** with a minimum of 500 cases interpreted over a minimum of one month within the preceding 36 months of application submission. No more than 100 of these cases may be didactic or simulated cases that are presented and interpreted in a format that is equivalent to cases encountered in a clinical diagnostic setting.***

Cases must be distributed over the following testing areas, with no more than 50% of the total coming from any one area:

- Carotid duplex ultrasound (extracranial cerebrovascular).
- Transcranial Doppler (intracranial cerebrovascular).
- Peripheral arterial physiologic testing (excludes Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) and single level exams).
- Peripheral arterial duplex ultrasound.
- Venous duplex ultrasound.
- Visceral vascular duplex ultrasound.

* Vascular interpretation experience must be obtained through one of the following pathways:

(1) Attendance of a residency or fellowship that is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) or the American Osteopathic Association (AOA). The program must include didactic instruction and training in the interpretation of vascular laboratory studies. The letter verifying this experience

must be signed by the program director, the Medical Director of the vascular lab or other appropriate RPVI-certified program affiliate.

(2) Attendance of a post-graduate medical education program that is not accredited by the ACGME, RCPSC or AOA. The program must include didactic instruction and training in the interpretation of vascular laboratory studies. The program must also have at least 48 weeks of clinical training, at least 30 hours of didactic instruction relevant to interpretation and other vascular laboratory topics, and at least 40 hours of observation or supervised participation in a vascular laboratory setting. Didactic instruction may include (but is not limited to) AMA PRA Category 1 CME relevant to the vascular laboratory. The letter verifying this experience must be signed by the program director, the Medical Director of the vascular lab or other appropriate RPVI-certified program affiliate.

(3) Physicians in practice may obtain vascular interpretation experience in the course of employment or contractual work in a supervised clinical diagnostic setting. In addition, documentation must be provided of 40 hours of AMA PRA Category 1 CME relevant to the vascular laboratory obtained within the preceding three years prior to application. The letter verifying this experience must be signed by the medical director of the vascular laboratory or other qualified physician if the Applicant is the medical director.

** Clinical diagnostic settings include hospitals, clinics and private practices. APCA does not accept volunteer, instructorship, unpaid, barter or veterinary experience.

Required Documentation

1. Copy of current, valid, unrestricted medical license.

2. Letter from the appropriate individual (specifically referenced in the Clinical Vascular Ultrasound Experience options above) describing the Applicant's experience with vascular laboratory interpretation. For required letter content, please visit [APCA.org/SampleLetters](https://www.apca.org/SampleLetters). Physicians may not sign their own letters.

3. If up to 100 didactic or simulated cases are used as part of the 500 case interpretation requirement, this experience must be documented in a separate letter from the sponsoring organization ensuring the criteria listed above are met. For required letter content, please visit [APCA.org/SampleLetters](https://www.apca.org/SampleLetters).

4. Copy of a patient log or other record of interpretation experience with a minimum of 500 vascular laboratory studies. This documentation must be maintained for at least three years following the date of application approval as case logs are subject to audit. Case logs must include at a minimum the date of the case, the testing area of the case, and whether the case was simulated/didactic or clinical. Additionally, the case log must include the name of the supervising physician/medical director and clinical site (i.e. hospital name, clinic or private practice) with contact information. For a sample patient case log, please visit [APCA.org/SampleLetters](https://www.apca.org/SampleLetters).

5. International physicians (individuals who completed medical school outside the U.S. and Canada), if not licensed to practice medicine in the U.S. or Canada, must provide a credential report of the evaluation converting the foreign medical degree; it must indicate that this medical degree is equivalent to a doctor of medicine degree in the U.S. or Canada.

All documentation must be uploaded and submitted through MY APCA ([APCA.org/MYAPCA](https://www.apca.org/MYAPCA)).

Notes About the Prerequisite:

*** When used to satisfy a portion of the 500 case interpretation requirement, all didactic or simulated cases (up to 100) must be generally equivalent to cases interpreted in a clinical diagnostic setting, including the following features:

1. Indications and relevant clinical information are presented to the interpreting physician.
2. Complete technical information for the examination should be provided, including images, cine loops, worksheets, and sonographer notes.
3. The interpreting physician completes a final report in a format that meets IAC Vascular Testing Standards and Guidelines and is compliant with requirements for clinical documentation and billing.
4. There is feedback from an educator or supervisor indicating that the interpretation met standards or what changes were required.
5. The time to complete each simulated case interpretation should not be less than what would be required in a clinical diagnostic setting case details are available for audit by the APCA to ensure that the above requirements are met.

All documentation must be in English or include a notarized translation. (MD licenses, CMEs, etc.)

The name on all supporting documentation must be consistent and must match the name under which you apply. If it does not, you will need to submit a name change request with legal supporting documentation (e.g., a copy of marriage/driver's license) with your application summary page and all other supporting documentation.



Find more information at [APCA.org](https://www.apca.org)

Fees and Online Resources

Online application payment is fast and secure! Log on to [APCA.org/MYAPCA](https://www.apca.org/MYAPCA) today to find all the necessary information for submitting documentation and payments.

Examination Fees

Physicians' Vascular Interpretation (PVI) **\$600**
(MD, DO, or equivalent)

Individuals who are taking APCA examinations at international test centers outside the U.S., Canada, and Mexico will be assessed a **\$50** USD fee.

For comprehensive application information on sonographer-level credential examinations including the RDMS, RDCS, RMSKS and RVT offered by ARDMS, APCA's companion Council, visit [ARDMS.org](https://www.ardms.org).

APCA functions under policies intended to demonstrate impartiality, high ethical standards and validity of its certification assessments. APCA does not restrict Applications, Candidates or becoming a Certificant based on limiting conditions, such as membership of an association or professional society of any organization. APCA will not unfairly impede or inhibit access to its certification to Applicants, Candidates or Certificants who meet our stated policies regarding qualification requirements, renewal requirements and/or passing APCA psychometrically sound certification assessments.

Additional Resources

Visit and bookmark [APCA.org](https://www.apca.org) to find the following:

- Apply for an Examination
- Prepare for an Examination
- Schedule an Examination
- Content Outlines
- Application Resources
- APCA Rules and Policies
- PVI Prerequisite Chart
- Compliance and Legal Information

Information in this "How to Apply Guide" supersedes the information in any prior edition. Earlier versions of this publication may contain outdated information.

Learn more at [APCA.org/RPVI](https://www.apca.org/RPVI)
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