



FAQs regarding the transition of currently certified PATH Intl. Professionals and Instructor Candidates to the new PATH Intl. CTRI process and credential – November 9, 2018

The PATH Intl. Credentialing Council has done an outstanding job of defining a certification process that will meet the rigors of obtaining National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) accreditation of the PATH Intl. CTRI certification. We thank them for their diligence and meticulous efforts. Achievement of NCCA accreditation of the certification will elevate the value of the CTRI credential and support increased professional recognition of the industry.

To accompany the council's announcement regarding processes and procedures for future candidates applying for PATH Intl. CTRI certification and the process and procedures for transitioning current registered instructors into the new CTRI system, we've created these FAQs. Hopefully they will help answer many of your questions.

A couple key word definitions might help translate some of the details. For instance, when the term certification maintenance is used, it's basically the compliance process everyone has grown accustomed to. PATH Intl. CTRIs will have transitioned from the previous annual certification compliance process to the every-other-year certification maintenance process.

Section 1. Answers about transitioning to the new CTRI credential for currently certified PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructors

Q1. Remind me why we're going through this process?

A. In response to a call from the PATH Intl. membership to elevate the professionalism of PATH Intl. credentials and to foster the legitimacy of the equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) industry in general, PATH Intl. is pursuing third-party accreditation from NCCA of a certification that will replace the Registered Therapeutic Riding Certification. To meet NCCA requirements that include removing bias, the registered therapeutic riding instructor certification process had to go through a metamorphosis. To comply with NCCA standards, PATH Intl. will also be removing the certification process requirements of PATH Intl. membership and PATH Intl. education (although both will continue to be offered, they are no longer mandatory). This pursuit is part of the strategic plan, and the continued support of the PATH Intl. membership is a vital piece to the success of this effort.

Any professional organization that takes the voluntary step to accredit its certification ensures that the individual who holds the certification has met or exceeded the minimal competency of their said trade by examination. In return, the examination is monitored closely by a contracted testing company's psychometrician to ensure the examination is fair and reliable. When an individual earns the credential, it adds additional value to the end user that all internal and external checks and balances were in place and that the individual has in fact earned their validated credential. That leads to a more meaningful certification to families, caregivers and participants, as well as potential partners such as medical professionals, higher education institutions and insurers.

Q2. Will I automatically be grandfathered in to the new system?

A. No, not technically. Grandfathering is a term that has many interpretations. Per NCCA standards, grandfathering in the

sense of immediate conversion of a non-validated credential to a validated credential is not an acceptable way for an organization to issue or maintain a credential. The current PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructor process is a non-validated process.

HOWEVER, and **here's the important part, the credentialing council has designed a simple process for transitioning current PATH Intl. Certified Instructors to the new validated PATH Intl. CTRI process.** This process will be the same process by which current registered instructors maintain their certifications in the future. This process reduces the annual amount of continuing education and does NOT entail full certification testing, meaning that instructors will not have to spend additional time and money to carry forward their hard earned certifications. In fact, by shifting over to the new PATH Intl. CTRI maintenance process, instructors can benefit from the reduced annual time and financial commitments associated with the new process. Keep reading for details on the process.

Q3. Will I have to recertify?

A. No, not in the sense you're likely thinking of. You will not have to recertify, take the new comprehensive, proctored CTRI exam, submit any of the new applications, teaching video, etc. However, you will have to complete an at-home, online maintenance test and the other requirements as listed below. (Please see Q4 below.)

PATH Intl. Certified Instructors will have to choose between two options for how to transition their certification based on their personal goals. Please see Q4 below—What do I have to do first?

Q4. I'm a PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructor. What do I have to do first?

A. First decide which of the following two options you'd like to pursue based on your personal goals. You may choose:

Option one: Continue to abide by the current compliance process of submitting 20 hours of pertinent continuing education hours plus submit the completed instructor compliance form annually through 2020. To have an active certification recognized by PATH Intl., all PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructors must have transitioned to the new CTRI maintenance process by December 31, 2020.

OR

Option two: Transition into the new CTRI maintenance process beginning July 2019. If your next renewal is after July 1, 2019, PATH Intl. Certified Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructors can transition to the PATH Intl. CTRI credential with a two year maintenance (renewal) cycle AND receive recognition as PATH Intl. CTRIs, potentially having the ability to sign-off on PATH Intl. CTRI applicant paperwork.

Q5. Will there be a test as part of the transition?

A. Yes. **However, this is NOT the same as the comprehensive proctored exam new PATH Intl. CTRI candidates will take in the future.** To transition your certification you will have to achieve a passing score on an online exam from the comfort of your own home. The estimated time to complete the test is roughly 45 minutes. This exam is meant to serve as a refresher/review of critical knowledge, such as but not limited to: safety awareness, mandatory PATH Intl. standards, precautions and contraindications, lesson planning concepts, task analysis, measurable objectives and riding theory. The test is the same maintenance exam all instructors will take every two years to maintain their certification.

This test will, in conjunction with the other maintenance requirements, keep your CTRI status current for two years. The cost will be included in the still-to-be-determined certification maintenance fee. Before questioning a certification maintenance fee

expense, please remember a PATH Intl. membership will no longer be required (encouraged, however, for the education discounts and other benefits!).

Q6. What are the additional compliance (maintenance) requirements to transition my certification?

A. The requirements of the PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process are as follows:

To transition your current certification and every **TWO** years after on the date the instructor certification was granted the instructor must:

1. Submit **20 hours of continuing education** satisfying the following requirements:
 - 12 hours of disability education (DE) — defined as educational activities that provide the student with greater understanding of the physical, social, cognitive and/or behavioral impacts experienced by individuals with disabilities, mental health disorders or emotional trauma. The education received should help the instructor understand how to communicate with and more effectively instruct a wide range of EAAT participants in order to increase the efficacy of the learning environment.
 - 4 hours of general continuing education (CE) — should reflect the overall purpose of all continuing education and the pursuit of professional development. These hours should encourage self-reflection, enhance instructor skills and techniques, and expand knowledge of EAAT, equine management and welfare.
 - 4 hours of core requirements (CR) — includes receiving personal riding lessons, coaching (or receiving coaching from) another PATH Intl. Certified Professional, attending a formal education event with an emphasis on instruction/teaching techniques, mentoring an Instructor in Training (only if the mentor has taken the PATH Intl. Mentor Training Course).
2. Achieve a passing score on an online exam from the comfort of your own home (NOTE: this is NOT the same exam as the PATH Intl. CTRI certification exam; estimated time to complete is roughly 45 minutes). This unproctored exam is meant to serve as a refresher/review of critical knowledge, such as but not limited to: safety awareness, PATH Intl. Mandatory Standards, precautions and contraindications, lesson planning concepts, task analysis, measurable objectives and riding theory. A fee will apply if the exam must be retaken.
3. Agree to uphold the **PATH Intl. Certified Professional Code of Ethics**
4. Possess a current **Adult & Child CPR** and basic first aid certifications
5. Submit the **Certification maintenance fee** (remains to be determined by PATH Intl., but is projected to be less than the current annual instructor membership renewal fee).

Q7. I'm a PATH Intl. Certified Advanced, Master Therapeutic Riding, Interactive Vaulting and/or Therapeutic Driving Instructor. What do I need to do?

A. First decide which of the following two options you'd like to choose based on your personal goals.

Option one: Existing advanced, master, interactive vaulting and therapeutic driving instructors may choose to renew their credentials for two years AND receive recognition as a PATH Intl. CTRI, obtaining the clearance to sign-off on future PATH Intl. CTRI applicant paperwork.

This option is accomplished by completing the PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process **every two years** as described in the section above. This process not only honors the work these certified professionals have done to earn and maintain their elevated certifications, but also establishes a validated skilled support network for incoming PATH Intl. CTRI candidates.

OR

Option two: Existing advanced, master, interactive vaulting and therapeutic driving instructors may choose to continue submitting 20 hours of pertinent continuing education hours **annually** and submit a completed instructor compliance form

until the certification maintenance requirements specific to their certification are updated by the credentialing council. All updates to certification maintenance requirements will be accompanied by a reasonable transition process and period.

Q8. I'm a PATH Intl. Certified Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning without an instructor certification, what do I need to do?

A. Certified professionals holding ONLY a PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning certification will continue submitting membership renewal fees and an instructor compliance form **annually** as usual. They will NOT receive recognition as a PATH Intl. CTRI unless they are also a certified therapeutic riding instructor who has completed the PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process. The ESMHL certification will receive its own certification maintenance process once that credential comes under the review of the credentialing council. A full transition process and period will be determined at that time.

Q9. How much will the transition (maintenance) test cost?

A. The test cost will be included in the still-to-be-determined certification maintenance fee. Before questioning the certification maintenance fee expense, please remember a PATH Intl. membership will no longer be required (encouraged, however, for the education discounts and other benefits!).

Q10. When will this process start?

A. Existing registered instructors can continue submitting 20 hours of pertinent continuing education hours **annually** through 2020 or existing registered instructors may choose to transition their certification by taking the test, etc., beginning July 2019. ALL registered instructors will be required to transition to the new PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process no later than December 31, 2020, to maintain active PATH Intl. therapeutic riding instructor credentials.

Q11. By when must I have completed the process?

A. ALL registered instructors will be required to transition to the new PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process no later than December 31, 2020, to maintain active PATH Intl. therapeutic riding instructor credentials.

Q12. When will membership no longer be a requirement of certification?

A. July 1, 2019

Q13. I'm due to renew between 1/1/2019 and 7/1/2019; do I renew using the current processes?

A. Registered instructors with renewal dates between January 1 and June 30, 2019 can only remain compliant by submitting their membership renewal fees and instructor compliance form as usual. Doing so means they will remain a compliant PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructor for one more year and be due to transition to the new PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process in 2020.

Q14. After the initial transition will instructors have to maintain their certifications in the future?

A. Yes. NCCA standards require an ongoing maintenance process to verify certificants are staying current with their knowledge, skill and abilities. The certification maintenance process will replace annual instructor compliance and will be in a two year cycle instead of annually. The new certification maintenance process developed to coincide with the validated PATH Intl. CTRI credential consolidates continuing education into three categories focused on development of instruction skills and cuts the number of general continuing education hours. The design promotes investment in professional development

opportunities. The process is also understandable and valued by the public and provides clear assurances about guaranteed upkeep of PATH Intl. CTRI credentials. The requirements to be completed **every two years** are:

- 1) 20 hours of continuing education consisting of:
12 hours of DE* + 4 hours of CR* + 4 hours of CE*
**As defined by the current [PATH Intl. CEU Guidelines](#) that accompany the current instructor compliance requirements*
- 2) An online, unproctored refresher exam that can be taken in the comfort of your own home on topics such as safety awareness, PATH Intl. Mandatory Standards, precautions and contraindications, lesson planning concepts, task analysis, measurable objectives and riding theory.
*NOTE: This exam is NOT the same as the PATH Intl. CTRI certification exam, although it is designed using similar validation procedures to provide defensible evidence of **ongoing competency** of PATH Intl. CTRIs.*
- 3) Agreement to uphold the PATH Intl. Certified Professional Code of Ethics.
NOTE: Beginning in 2019, PATH Intl. Certified Professionals will not be required to also be PATH Intl. members. As a result, a separate code of ethics has been developed specifically for PATH Intl. Certified Professionals.
- 4) Possession of current Adult & Child CPR and basic first aid certifications.
NOTE: Fully online courses will be accepted. Proof of current certification must be provided from recognized issuing organizations.
- 5) Certification maintenance fee
*NOTE: This fee remains to be determined, but is projected to be **less** than the 2018 annual instructor membership renewal fee and covers **two years** of certification.*

Q15. What happens if I don't transition my certification?

A. PATH Intl. Certified Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructors who choose not to complete the PATH Intl. CTRI maintenance process will retain their current registered credential until the new certification maintenance process is completed. Beginning in 2020, the PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructor credential will be phased out. All registered instructors must transition to the PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process no later than December 31, 2020 in order to maintain active PATH Intl. therapeutic riding instructor credentials.

Q16. Do I have to be a member of PATH Intl. to obtain or maintain a CTRI certification?

A. No. Beginning July 2019, a PATH Intl. membership will no longer be required for instructors. However, it would make great sense to renew your membership because the discounts on certification maintenance, online and face-to-face education such as conferences, and other discounts will pay for your membership in no time; and you will still receive *PATH Intl. Strides* magazine, have the right to vote in association elections and assume leadership roles by serving on workgroups, task forces and committees.

Section 2. Current Certification Candidates in process of becoming PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructors

Q1. I'm a PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructor candidate in mid process. What do I do?

A. Implementation of the PATH Intl. CTRI certification is designed to not hinder current PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructor certification candidates.

Things you need to know:

- PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructor candidates currently in process of completing registered instructor certification may proceed unimpeded throughout 2019

- Registered instructor candidates who received an instructor in training letter in 2018 continue to have one year from the date of their letter to complete the PATH Intl. Registered Therapeutic Riding Instructor On-site Workshop and Certification.
- Accomplishing certification will remain achievable for new registered instructor applicants in 2019.
- Candidates in mid process will have two paths to choose from in 2019 to achieve entry-level PATH Intl. therapeutic riding instructor certification based on what works best with their certification goals and timeline. Please see options below.

Candidates will have the option to choose how to maintain their certification based on their personal goals.

Option 1 Through the new PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process:

Registered instructors can transition to the PATH Intl. CTRI credential with a two year maintenance (renewal) cycle AND receive recognition as PATH Intl. CTRIs, potentially having the ability to sign-off on PATH Intl. CTRI applicant paperwork.

Option 2 Through the current annual instructor compliance process:

Existing registered instructors can continue submitting 20 hours of pertinent continuing education hours **annually** until through 2020. ALL registered instructors will be required to transition to the new PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process no later than December 31, 2020 to maintain active PATH Intl. therapeutic riding instructor credentials.

Each of the above is accomplished by completing the PATH Intl. CTRI certification maintenance process **every two years** as described in the section Q14 above. This process not only honors the work these certified professionals have done to earn and maintain their elevated certifications, but also establishes a validated skilled support network for incoming PATH Intl. CTRI candidates.

Section 3. PATH Intl. Center and Premier Accredited Center Members and the transition

Q1. What is required of PATH Intl. Center and Premier Accredited Center Members at this time?

A. The requirement for having a compliant PATH Intl. Certified Instructor on staff is still required for center membership. Since the PATH Intl. Registered Instructor certification will no longer be recognized beginning December 31, 2020, PATH Intl. Center and PAC members must have a PATH Intl. CTRI who has gone through the transition process by that date.

Q2. Should PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Centers continue hosting PATH Intl. Registered Instructor on-site workshops and certification events?

A. We encourage centers to continue hosting registered workshops AND certifications throughout 2019 as there are many registered instructor candidates still in the pipeline. Candidates will be able to complete the registered instructor certification process throughout 2019. Since all registered instructors will have the opportunity to transition their credentials to the PATH Intl. CTRI credentials beginning next summer, it is NOT a moot point to continue supporting candidates through registered instructor certification.

Center specific FAQs will be delivered shortly.

Riding Component Question

One frequently asked question we have not addressed in this communication is the question about riding being assessed as part of the prerequisites. The credentialing council and PATH Intl. have been focused on the timely release of the information for today's communication regarding the transition and maintenance processes. Information about the riding component will be sent in a separate communication in the weeks following Thanksgiving.