

Overview of Responsibilities

NASM/AFAA Certification Governing Board

Thank you for considering how you may be involved as a member of the NASM/AFAA Certification Governing Board (CGB). Some of the following content is excerpted from the NASM/AFAA Certification Governing Board Member Handbook which is required reading if you are approved as a new Board member.

What NASM and AFAA Does

The [National Academy of Sports Medicine](#) (NASM) offers nationally recognized learning tools and certifications for the health and fitness and personal trainer industries. NASM is responsible for designing assessment tools that are psychometrically sound, follow industry accepted standards and appropriately assess the minimum competencies identified by the profession. NASM awards credentials to those who meet the eligibility standards and successfully challenge NASM's certification examinations.

At the end of 2015, NASM acquired the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA). Following the acquisition, the full name of AFAA was changed to [Athletics and Fitness Association of America](#). NASM and AFAA now operate as two brands, each with their own websites and identities. Both organizations have their operations and sales headquarters in one location in Arizona.

NASM Programs Offered

Since its founding, NASM has offered certification for personal trainers and awarded the Certified Personal Trainer (NASM-CPT) credential. The NASM-CPT certification is accredited through 11/30/2026 by the [National Commission for Certifying Agencies](#) (NCCA), a division of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence.

In addition to fitness certification programs, NASM offers advanced specializations, such as Performance Enhancement Specialist (PES) and Corrective Exercise Specialist (CES). NASM offers more than 20 continuing education courses in a variety of disciplines and a myriad of solutions including fitness education partnerships and professional consulting. In 2019 NASM began offering a NASM Certified Nutrition Coach (NASM-CNC) credential that does not have nor is seeking NCCA accreditation. Two other offerings now include Certified Wellness Coach (NASM-CWC) and Certified Nutrition Sports Coach.

AFAA Programs Offered

The launching of a new certification program by AFAA, the AFAA Certified Group Fitness Instructor (AFAA-CGFI), was started in 2016 and in July 2017 was granted NCCA accreditation.

In addition to the AFAA-CGFI credential, AFAA offers a certificate for passage of a non-proctored, open book exam focused on group fitness instruction which does not have nor is seeking NCCA accreditation. Further, AFAA offers workshops, specialties, and courses for exercise professionals.

The Purpose of the Certification Governing Board

The purpose of the CGB is to establish the standards, policies and procedures for the development and administration of the NCCA accredited certification programs offered by NASM and AFAA. Currently, it is NASM Certified Personal Trainer (NASM-CPT) certification program. Others may be added in the future including AFAA-CGFI if and when NCCA accreditation is granted.

Board Election and Representation

The Board is comprised of eight members. This includes three group fitness instructor representatives, three personal trainer representatives, one representative of the industry, and one public member. With respect to both personal trainer and group fitness instructor membership, an effort is made to have at least one person represent the practitioner and at least one person represent employers of practitioners. Board members are elected by the CGB on a staggered schedule. Elected Board members serve three-year

terms. Up to three consecutive terms may be served by a member. A listing of current board members and the year their current term expires is at <https://www.nasm.org/about/nasm-certification-governing-board>.

Board members have the opportunity to serve on the CGB Disciplinary and Appeals Committee and on special projects or ad hoc committees.

Board Member Responsibilities

Orientation and Training: Board members are expected to complete an orientation and training program provided by the Executive Director following their election. Other training is provided during in-person meetings or otherwise as required.

Meeting Attendance: Meetings typically occur three times a year. Meetings occur via Zoom for 30-60 minutes. One meeting every other year will occur in person; reasonable travel expenses are covered for each member attending. The most recent in-person meeting was in March 2024 at the NASM/AFAA headquarters in Gilbert Arizona. The next projected in-person meeting will be in 2026.

Set Certification Policies and Procedures as Required by Accreditors: The CGB is required to establish certification policies and procedures consistent with the accreditation standards of any accreditation organization used by NASM or AFAA, including [NCCA Standards](#).

Oversight of Exam Development: The CGB reviews and approves the recommendations of psychometricians for periodic updates of each certification exam offered by NASM and AFAA. This occurs every five to seven years. This includes approval of candidate qualification of members of subject matter panels involved in the exam development process, the summary test plan, and participation in the process of creating a new “cut score” for the new exam. Specific training in each of these processes is provided to Board members.

Establishing Certification Program Policies: The CGB sets policies and procedures for the certification programs as contemplated by the NCCA standards, including the polices concerning candidate eligibility, exam development, administration and proctoring of examinations, scoring and reporting of assessments, recertification, exam security, and disciplinary actions and appeals. The policies and procedures established by the Board are documented in the NASM/AFAA Certification Policies & Procedures, a separate document that is provided as part of training.

Fiduciary Duties: Each Board member owes certain fiduciary duties to the Board and the stakeholders. Each member agrees to adhere to the fiduciary duties and other obligations through an agreement, executed before joining the Board. The agreement provides more details on what is required.

- **Duty of Care:** This duty requires each Board member to act in good faith and to exercise his/her duties in a reasonable and prudent manner.
- **Duty of Loyalty:** This duty requires Board members to put the interest of the certification program and its stakeholders above their own, avoiding conflicts of interest, such as any business, personal, financial, or organizational interests and affiliations that are or could be construed to be a conflict of interest.
- **Duty of Confidentiality:** This duty requires that Board members respect the importance and sensitivity of information before the Board.
- **Duty of Obedience:** The duty of obedience requires that Board members act in support of the certification program’s mission and objectives.

Selection and Election Process

Vacancies: With an eight-member board with each member serving a three-year term for as many as three consecutive terms, vacancies occur periodically as members leave the board. Efforts are made to avoid vacancies of more than one or two each year.

Recruitment: Recruitment focuses on the special needs and qualifications for an open position, but résumés

are accepted at any time for later consideration should an opening occur or for special projects.

Application: If upon reading this information you have an interest in serving on the CGB, please submit your résumé. If you meet the minimum qualifications, you will be asked to complete a screening questionnaire of about 11 questions. This form is available upon request at any time.

Approval: The Board Chair, in cooperation with the Executive Director, will present qualified applicant(s) to the CGB for election to the Board. The newly elected Board members will receive more information, including the Board Member Agreement required to be signed before becoming a member of the Board.

Term: As noted above, Board members typically serve three-year terms, starting on January 1 of the year following election. When a member is elected to fill a mid-term vacancy (such as when a member resigns from the Board early), the newly elected member will complete the prior member's term, starting on the date he/she executes the Board Member Agreement. Such member will stand for re-election in December of the year in which the prior member's term would have expired.

More Information

For more information or to submit your résumé with an interest in serving, please contact Sarah Bulger, Executive Director-Certifications at sarah.bulger@nasm.org.