

2013

ASHI Certified Inspectors Handbook



Table of Contents

American Society of Home Inspectors, Inc.....	3
About the Certified Inspector Program	3
Becoming an ASHI Certified Inspector	3
ASHI Associate with Logo Use	4
Eligibility Appeals	4
Application Steps	4
Taking the National Home Inspector Examination (NHIE)	5
ASHI Standards of Practice.....	5
ASHI Code of Ethics.....	5
Annual Continuing Education Requirement.....	6
Overview	6
Renewal Verification.....	7
Grace Period.....	7
Member Resources Available Online	7
Recognition of Membership in Other Home Inspector Associations	7
Policies	8
Administrative Suspension	8
Accommodations	8
Confidentiality	9
Directory	9
Reinstatement	9
Nondiscrimination	9
Discipline & Appeals.....	9
ASHI Logo Use.....	9
Questions and Additional Information.....	10

American Society of Home Inspectors, Inc.

In 1976, a group of visionary home inspectors established the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI), a not-for-profit membership organization. Their goal was to build consumer awareness of home inspection and to enhance professionalism by developing high Standards of Practice and a Code of Ethics.

Today, ASHI is the largest and most respected professional association for home inspectors in North America, with more than 5,000 members. ASHI's Standards of Practice, covering all of a home's major systems, are specifically noted in state and federal legislation and recognized by consumers as the definitive standard for professional home inspection.

Candidates and Members of ASHI are required to abide by the Society's Code of Ethics, which specifically forbids home inspectors from active brokerage or sale of real estate, or performing repairs on homes which they inspect. ASHI Candidates and Members also agree to perform and report inspections in accordance with the ASHI Standards of Practice. Because the ASHI logo is widely regarded as the mark of a professional home inspector, its use by the ASHI membership is also carefully controlled.

About the Certified Inspector Program

The ASHI Certified Inspector program promotes excellence within the home inspector profession as well as continual improvement of Certified Inspector's services to the public. The ASHI Certified Inspector program establishes a minimum and uniform standard of practice for home inspectors.

The ASHI Certified Inspector program is governed by the independent ASHI Certification Committee. The Committee is charged with upholding the purpose of the Certified Inspector program and has authority over all components of the certification program including policy development, examination requirements, and operations oversight.

Becoming an ASHI Certified Inspector

Home inspection professionals offer a vital service to the public in evaluating the condition of a prospective home. The American Society of Home Inspectors requires that all Associate Candidate and Certified Inspector member home inspectors meet minimum professional practice standards and operate according to ethical guidelines.

Both experienced and novice home inspectors enter ASHI membership as Associates/Candidates. To become a full Certified Inspector member, the Associate Member/Candidate must be in good standing with ASHI and:

1. Complete at least 30 days as an ASHI Associate Inspector.
2. Agree to follow ASHI's Standards of Practice
3. Agree to abide by ASHI's Code of Ethics
4. Pass the National Home Inspector Examination (NHIE)
5. Have inspection reports successfully verified for compliance with ASHI's Standards of Practice
6. Submit valid proof of performance of at least 250 fee-paid home inspections that meet or exceed the ASHI Standards of Practice
7. There are some Association and regulatory equivalency acceptance agreements

Members who complete the eligibility requirements above and submit a complete membership application for ASHI Certified Inspector status will be notified by ASHI headquarters of their status as an ASHI Certified Inspector.

ASHI Certified Inspectors must meet all of the eligibility requirements in effect at the time of application for Certified Inspector status. Certified Inspectors who continually maintain their certification in good standing, including compliance with all continuing education requirements, are considered ASHI Certified Inspectors regardless of any change in eligibility requirements that have been or may be later implemented. Individuals with lapsed certification must meet the requirements of the Membership Reinstatement policy.

The ASHI Certification Committee recognizes the value of experienced Home Inspectors in other Home Inspector Associations or licensed states and has developed programs to ease entry into ASHI so the interconnectivity will strengthen the Home inspection profession. See the "Recognition of Membership in Other Home Inspector Associations" policy in this handbook for more information, or contact ASHI headquarters.

ASHI Associate

All ASHI members join the Society as Candidates for full membership towards the ASHI Certified Inspector designation. This candidacy begins as an Associate Member. As ASHI Associates complete the experience requirements and verification procedures they progress toward becoming an ASHI Certified Inspector Member and receive more benefits within the Society. ASHI Associate Members do not have ASHI Logo privileges until they upgrade their membership to the next level.

ASHI Inspector

Associates who have passed the National Home Inspector Examination and completed the ASHI Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics Education Module, but who have completed only 75 home inspections, may have the inspections verified by ASHI. If accepted, the Candidate may apply for use of the distinct "ASHI Inspector" logo in their marketing materials. Associates may NOT use the official "ASHI Certified Inspector" logo under any circumstances.

Eligibility Appeals

Individuals who are notified that they do not meet the Certified Inspector eligibility requirements above may appeal the decision by sending a written notice of appeal to ASHI headquarters within 30 days of notification. The Certification Committee will review the appeal request and will make a final determination regarding eligibility.

Application Steps

1. Complete the Application for ASHI Associate Membership
2. Complete at least 30 days as an ASHI Associate Member and all Certified Inspector eligibility requirements
3. Have inspection reports verified
4. Complete the NHIE exam and fax, mail or e-mail results to ASHI

Taking the National Home Inspector Examination (NHIE)

The National Home Inspector Examination (NHIE), which is developed and administered by the independent Examination Board of Professional Home Inspectors (EBPHI), has been selected by the ASHI Certification Committee as the required examination for the ASHI Certified Inspector program. The NHIE was selected because of the EBPHI's ongoing commitment to develop, maintain, and administer the examination according to accepted psychometric standards.

The EBPHI is an independent non-profit organization. The sole purpose of the EBPHI is the development, maintenance, and administration of a valid, reliable, and legally defensible home inspector competence assessment test. (Source EBPHI's Home Inspector Licensing and the National Home Inspector Examination publication.)

Detailed information about the National Home Inspector Examination is available at <http://www.homeinspectionexam.org/> or by contacting the EBPHI at info@homeinspectionexam.org or 847-298-7750.

After you complete the NHIE you will be provided with two copies of your examination results, keep one copy for your records and the other to submit to ASHI.

ASHI Standards of Practice

Compliance with the ASHI Standards of Practice is mandatory for all Certified Inspectors. The ASHI Standards of Practice are available on the ASHI web site at <http://www.homeinspector.org/standards/default.aspx>. The purpose of these Standards of Practice is to establish a minimum and uniform standard for home inspectors who subscribe to these Standards of Practice. Home Inspections performed to these Standards of Practice are intended to provide the client with objective information regarding the condition of the systems and components of the home as inspected at the time of the home inspection.

Certified Inspectors must sign a statement annually attesting to agreement with the Standards of Practice.

ASHI Code of Ethics

Compliance with the ASHI Code of Ethics is mandatory for all Certified Inspectors. Certified Inspectors must sign a statement annually attesting to agreement with the Code of Ethics.

Code of Ethics

The ASHI Code of Ethics details the core guidelines of home inspection professionalism and home inspection ethics. Covering crucial issues such as conflicts of interest, good faith and public perception, these home inspection ethics are central pillars of home inspection professionalism for the entire industry.

Integrity, honesty, and objectivity are fundamental principles embodied by this Code, which sets forth obligations of ethical conduct for the home inspection profession. The Membership of ASHI has adopted this Code to provide high ethical standards to safeguard the public and the profession.

Inspectors shall comply with this Code, shall avoid association with any enterprise whose practices violate this Code, and shall strive to uphold, maintain, and improve the integrity, reputation, and practice of the home inspection profession.

All inspector members of ASHI have agreed to abide by this Code of Ethics

1. Inspectors shall avoid conflicts of interest or activities that compromise, or appear to compromise, professional independence, objectivity, or inspection integrity.
 - A. Inspectors shall not inspect properties for compensation in which they have, or expect to have, a financial interest.
 - B. Inspectors shall not inspect properties under contingent arrangements whereby any compensation or future referrals are dependent on reported findings or on the sale of a property.
 - C. Inspectors shall not directly or indirectly compensate realty agents, or other parties having a financial interest in closing or settlement of real estate transactions, for the referral of inspections or for inclusion on a list of recommended inspectors, preferred providers, or similar arrangements.
 - D. Inspectors shall not receive compensation for an inspection from more than one party unless agreed to by the client(s).
 - E. Inspectors shall not accept compensation, directly or indirectly, for recommending contractors, services, or products to inspection clients or other parties having an interest in inspected properties.
 - F. Inspectors shall not repair, replace, or upgrade, for compensation, systems or components covered by ASHI Standards of Practice, for one year after the inspection.
2. Inspectors shall act in good faith toward each client and other interested parties.
 - A. Inspectors shall perform services and express opinions based on genuine conviction and only within their areas of education, training, or experience.
 - B. Inspectors shall be objective in their reporting and not knowingly understate or overstate the significance of reported conditions.
 - C. Inspectors shall not disclose inspection results or client information without client approval. Inspectors, at their discretion, may disclose observed immediate safety hazards to occupants exposed to such hazards, when feasible.
3. Inspectors shall avoid activities that may harm the public, discredit themselves, or reduce public confidence in the profession.
 - A. Advertising, marketing, and promotion of inspectors' services or qualifications shall not be fraudulent, false, deceptive, or misleading.
 - B. Inspectors shall report substantive and willful violations of this Code to the Society.

Annual Continuing Education Requirement

Overview

The American Society of Home Inspectors requires 20 hours of Continuing Education annually in order to maintain Certified Inspector status. Continuing Education is essential to the ongoing development and client expectations of a professional home inspector. Inspections are performed on new construction properties, pre Revolutionary War residences and all manners of construction in between. Every year there are new building materials and techniques that home inspectors must keep abreast of. And just as importantly is a thorough knowledge and understanding existing dwellings regardless of

age. There are also designs and materials that have not withstood the test of time that inspectors must be aware of. ASHI's Continuing Education requirement provides the knowledge needed to deliver informed home inspection reports to our clients.

Continued Certified Inspector status is dependent upon the dedication of the membership investing in their profession by continuing their education regarding the inspection profession. The continuing education requirement was developed to ensure Certified Inspectors invest in ongoing education throughout their careers to enhance their professional development and contribute to improved public safety.

The Certification Committee, after evaluating the home inspector profession and the frequency of changes in the profession, has determined that an annual continuing education requirement will best serve the needs of Certified Inspectors for ongoing education.

ASHI Certified Inspectors are required to document 20 continuing education hours per year. Following a Certified Inspector's completion of all eligibility requirements, the CE requirement will start after October 1st during their first year. No more than 10 CE's will be credited to the following year on an annual basis.

Continuing Education Requirement Guidelines

Certified Inspectors should download the ASHI Continuing Education Requirement Guidelines, available on the ASHI web site, for detailed information regarding CE requirements, approved courses, and the renewal process. A copy of the guidelines may also be obtained by contacting ASHI headquarters.

Renewal Verification

ASHI staff will conduct a random audit of renewal applications to verify CE. Member's who cannot properly document claimed CE will be notified and put on administrative suspension until the deficiency is addressed or until the end of the membership year, whichever comes first. If the required CEs are not turned in by the end of the membership year, the individuals will not be allowed to renew or reinstate their membership and Certified Inspector status.

Grace Period

CE will be accepted during a 60-day grace period. CE obtained during the grace period will apply to the individual's current requirement only and may not be counted twice. Failure to comply with renewal requirements will result in administrative suspension.

Member Resources Available Online

The ASHI web site, www.homeinspector.org/membersonly, offers access to your membership profile, a membership journey time line, resource and networking opportunities, ASHI publications, ASHI downloads and forms, and more. We encourage members to take advantage of the information available on the web site.

Recognition of Membership in Other Home Inspector Associations

The ASHI Certification Committee recognizes the value of experienced Home Inspectors in other Home Inspector Associations or licensed states and has developed programs to ease entry into ASHI so the interconnectivity will strengthen the Home inspection profession. This list is reviewed and updated annually, please contact ASHI headquarters to verify current recognition for your current membership.

1. Certified CREIA Inspector (CCI) Members of CREIA (The California Real Estate Inspectors Association) are welcomed as ASHI Certified Inspectors with the following provisions: CCI Members must pass report verification, must document 250 fee paid inspections and must provide evidence of passing the CREIA membership examination.
2. Inspector level members of the Texas Association of Real Estate Inspectors (TAREI) who hold a Professional Inspectors' License from the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) are welcome as ASHI Certified Inspectors with the provisions that they must pass report verification and must pass TAREI membership verification. Other TREC Professional Inspectors who have completed 250 TREC Home Inspections and who have passed report verification are welcome as ASHI Certified Inspectors.
3. Full members of the Georgia Association of Home Inspectors (GAHI) are welcomed as ASHI Certified Inspectors with the following provisions: GAHI members must pass the National Home Inspectors Examination, must pass report verification, must pay an application fee, must pay annual dues and must meet annual CE requirements.
4. Any inspector who holds the CAHPI RHI designation in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, or Quebec, and is in good standing in their Canadian chapter shall move straight to ASHI Certified Inspector status, for as long as the RHI requirements continue to be equal or exceed ASHI's requirements for top level membership status. This policy will apply to RHIs in other Provinces when they become qualified, as determined by the Certification Committee. Annual dues for all RHI level designees and/or full Canadian ASHI Certified Inspectors are set at not more than US \$150 per year. Canadian inspectors without RHI status will still have to begin their membership in ASHI as an Associate Inspector and go through the verification and exam process. Associate Inspector dues shall be set at \$100 and, when they become a Certified Inspector, dues will be \$150.
5. New Jersey licensed inspectors are welcomed as ASHI Certified Inspectors with the following provisions: They must pass the National Home Inspector Examination (NHIE), they must pass report verification and must have performed 250 fee-paid home inspections.

Policies

Administrative Suspension

Any Certified Inspector placed on Administrative Suspension will lose all membership benefits provided by ASHI National, excluding the right to vote (if applicable). An individual may remain in Administrative Suspension until the end of his or her current membership year. If administrative suspension is not removed for the individual at that time, his or her ASHI membership will not be renewed.

Accommodations

EBPHI certifies that its test administrators comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 USC Section 12101, et. seq.) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000e, et. seq.) in accommodating individuals who, because of a disability, need special arrangements to enable them to take an examination. If you need special arrangements for testing because of a disabling condition, you may ask for special testing services. All examination sites have access for individuals with movement disabilities.

Individuals requesting special testing arrangements should contact EBPHI directly. More information is available at http://www.homeinspectionexam.org/test_policies.php or by contacting the EBPHI at info@homeinspectionexam.org or 847-298-7750.

Confidentiality

All member/associate information, other than information included in the membership directory, is considered confidential and will not be disclosed unless required by law. ASHI and the Certification Committee ensure the secure storage of all confidential information.

Directory

ASHI maintains a public directory of member home inspectors on its web site. Directory listings include name, certification status, company name, contact information and services offered.

Verification of ASHI Membership Status

The current status of an ASHI Certified Inspector can be verified by contacting ASHI headquarters. ASHI also lists all members in a web site directory. Members with "Associate" status are clearly marked as such in the directory.

Reinstatement

Any individual whose certification has lapsed for up to two years for reasons other than ASHI discipline may reinstate his or her membership provided that:

- a. All back and current dues and fees are paid;
- b. Proof of required CE's during the absence (20 CE's per year);
- c. There have been no ASHI disciplinary actions or complaints about him or her during the absence.

If certification has lapsed for more than two years the Certified Inspector must reapply for certification under the existing application process except that any waiting period will be waived.

Nondiscrimination

ASHI and the ASHI Certification Committee do not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, creed, or geographic area of origin or employment.

Discipline & Appeals

ASHI has established the following procedures to evaluate complaints against home inspectors regarding violation of any ASHI Bylaw, policy, procedure, Code of Ethics, or legal right.

A complete copy of the Complaint policy and procedures and appeal process may be downloaded from the ASHI web site or requested from ASHI headquarters.

ASHI Logo Use

Compliance with the ASHI logo use policy is mandatory for any individual who accepts the privilege of using the ASHI logo or name. The Policy for the Use of the Name and Logo of the American Society of Home Inspectors, Inc. may be downloaded from the ASHI web site members section or may be obtained by contacting ASHI headquarters.

Questions and Additional Information

For additional information about the ASHI Certified Inspector program, please visit www.ashi.org or contact ASHI: American Society of Home Inspectors[®], Inc.

932 Lee Street, Suite 101
Des Plaines, IL 60016
1-800-743-2744