

2018

ASHI Certified Inspectors Handbook



**AMERICAN SOCIETY
OF HOME INSPECTORS**

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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 8,000 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.

About the ASHI 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 and Certified Inspector member home inspectors meet minimum professional practice standards and operate according to ethical guidelines.

To become an ASHI Certified Inspector:

1. Agree to follow ASHI's Standards of Practice
2. Agree to abide by ASHI's Code of Ethics
3. Pass the National Home Inspector Examination (NHIE)
4. Have inspection reports successfully verified for compliance with ASHI's Standards of Practice
5. Submit valid proof of performance of at least 250 fee-paid home inspections that meet or exceed the ASHI Standards of Practice

Eligibility Rationale:

1. Agree to follow ASHI's Standards of Practice:
Rationale: The ASHI Standards of Practice details a commitment to established, accepted practices across the home inspection industry. Those who maintain the ACI certification will keep up-to-date on changes and advancements within the home inspection industry through standards of practice developed by ASHI and other industry experts in order to define the type of quality ASHI stakeholders, including consumers, expect and deserve.

2. Agree to abide by ASHI's Code of Ethics

Rationale: 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. ASHI has adopted this Code to provide high ethical standards to safeguard the public and the profession.

3. Pass the National Home Inspector Examination (NHIE)

Rationale: NHIE is the only independent, psychometrically valid home inspector exam in the United States. Home inspectors who pass the NHIE are career-ready, with proven competence.

The National Home Inspector Examination is both valid and reliable, two qualities required for legal defensibility:

1. Validity means the examination is able to measure what it is supposed to measure.
2. Reliability is an index of how accurately the examination measures a candidate's skills. A test must be both valid and reliable in order for it to be considered a "high-stakes" exam for purposes of public protection.

As a result of these safeguards, the National Home Inspector Examination accurately assesses each candidate's competence to carry out the required duties of a home inspector.

4. Have inspection reports successfully verified for compliance with ASHI's Standards of Practice

Rationale: Helps ensure that inspection reports are in compliance with following of the ASHI Standards of Practice. We also want to make sure the public is receiving a report that is technically sound and valid.

5. Submit valid proof of performance of at least 250 fee-paid home inspections that meet or exceed the ASHI Standards of Practice

Rationale: The 250 fee-paid inspections show a level of experience in the field that demonstrate technical competence and practical application of the skills necessary to be an ASHI Certified Inspector.

The number 250 represents nearly a year's worth of work for the typical inspector.

Inspectors who complete the eligibility requirements above and complete an ACI Application form, will be notified 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 ASHI Certified Inspector status. ASHI 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 current ACI requirements at time of application.

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
2. Have inspection reports verified
3. Submit proof of passing the National Home Inspector Examination

ASHI does not endorse any particular preparation program or offering. We encourage prospective credentialed practitioners to use a variety of resources that reflect their learning styles and needs. Purchasing a certification preparation product is NOT required and ASHI does not guarantee that an individual will pass based on the purchase of a certification preparation product.

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 <https://www.homeinspector.org/Standards-of-Practice>. 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.

ASHI 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 ASHI Certified Inspectors. ASHI 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. 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 ASHI Certified Inspectors must agree 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 ASHI Certified Inspector status. Continuing Education is essential to the ongoing development and client expectations of a professional home inspector. Recertification is a mandatory process designed to ensure ACI's maintain and demonstrate specified levels of knowledge, skills, or ability not only at the time of initial certification but throughout an individual's professional career.

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

ASHI Certified Inspectors should visit the CE Claim Form located here:

<https://www.homeinspector.org/CEClaim>

Renewal Verification

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

Grace Period

CEs will be accepted during a 60-day grace period. CEs 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.

Policies

Administrative Suspension

Any ASHI Certified Inspector placed on Administrative Suspension will lose all benefits provided by ASHI. An individual may remain in Administrative Suspension until the end of his or her current anniversary year. If administrative suspension is not removed for the individual at that time, his or her ASHI Certified Inspector status 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

ASHI and the Certification Committee ensure the secure storage of all confidential information.

Any applicant's information that is not approved for certification is considered confidential. This information would only be released to the ASHI Certification Committee in the case of an appeal by that applicant.

Directory

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

Verification of ASHI Certified Inspector Status

The current status of an ASHI Certified Inspector can be verified by contacting ASHI headquarters. ASHI also lists all ASHI Certified Inspectors in a web site 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 ASHI Certified Inspector must reapply for certification under the existing application process.

Nondiscrimination

ASHI Certification Committee does 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 found in the ASHI Policy Manual.

Reconsideration of Adverse Decision

The Certification Committee will review the applicant's request and supporting documentation and materials when reconsidering the adverse eligibility, or recertification, and the Committee Chair will notify the applicant in writing of the Appeals Committee's decision within 45 days of receiving the request.

All decisions by the committee are final.

The Certification Committee shall maintain a record of all appeals, take appropriate action regarding the appeal in a timely manner, and document the actions taken.

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