



## Program Description

### Council-certified Microbial Investigator

# CMI

The American Council for Accredited Certification offers the Council-certified Microbial Investigator (CMI) to individuals whose training and field experience in applied building sciences and microbial issues warrant professional recognition.

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#### Objectives of the CMI Program:

- To raise the standards of those engaged in indoor air quality testing, sampling, monitoring and consulting.
  - To identify persons with acceptable knowledge of indoor air quality and the standards and regulations affecting Council-certified Microbial Investigators.
  - To award special recognition to those microbial consultants who have demonstrated verifiable field experience.
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#### Eligibility:

Applicants for the CMI certification must demonstrate academic- and experience-related eligibility.

- Applicants must possess one of the following combinations of education and relevant field experience:
    - A 2-year post-secondary degree or its equivalent (15 credit hours) in microbiology, engineering, science, architecture, industrial hygiene or related field of science with at least one (1) year documented experience in microbial sampling.
    - No degree with at least two (2) years of consulting experience in microbial sampling. (high school diploma or GED required.)
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#### The Required Body of Knowledge:

The effective practice of microbial investigation requires detailed knowledge of a variety of subjects, from microbiology and microbial risk analysis to the various disciplines of the building sciences. For certification purposes, the candidate for the CMI designation must demonstrate familiarity with the basic concepts and reference materials relating to microbial sampling, such as those summarized in the following list.

- ACGIH, *Bioaerosols: Assessment and Control* (Cincinnati: ACGIH, 1999)
- AIHA, *Field Guide for the Determination of Biological Contaminants*, 2nd ed. (Fairfax, VA: AIHA, 2005)
- IICRC, *Standard S500-2006: Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Water Damage Restoration*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Vancouver, WA: IICRC, 2006) **OR** ANSI/IICRC, *S500-2015, Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Water Damage Restoration*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (LasVegas: IICRC, 2015).
- IICRC, *Standard S520: Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Mold Remediation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Vancouver, WA: IICRC, 2008) **OR** ANSI/IICRC *S520-2015, Standard for Professional Mold Remediation*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Las Vegas: IICRC, 2015) and IICRC *R520-2015, Reference Guide for Professional Mold Remediation*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (LasVegas: IICRC, 2015).

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### **The Required Skills:**

A Council-certified Microbial Investigator (CMI) has demonstrated the following skills through a combination of documented experience, documented education and training and the successful completion of an examination process.

1. Scientific knowledge of the morphology and ecology of specific biological agents
  - Bacteria
  - Fungi
  - Amebae
  - Viruses
  - Dust Mites
  - Endotoxins and other Bacterial cell-wall components
  - Fungal Toxins
  - $\beta$ -(1-3)-D-Glucans
  - Antigens
  - mVOCs
2. An understanding of the health effects and risks associated with bioaerosol exposure
3. The ability to conduct microbial investigations – including knowledge of the general principles governing their design and execution
4. The ability to design and execute appropriate microbial sampling regimens
  - The ability to design appropriate sampling strategies
  - An understanding of current sampling technologies and their proper use, including instrument calibration and limitations
  - The ability to follow effective protocols during the execution of a sampling regimen
5. The ability to analyze sampling data accurately
6. The ability to evaluate and interpret sampling data responsibly
7. The ability to execute or recommend appropriate prevention, control, and remediation measures in cases of microbial contamination indoors

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### **The Certification Process:**

1. Complete and forward the notarized application and project sheets and a copy of diploma or transcripts. Incomplete applications will not be forwarded to the Certification Board for review.
2. Pass the closed-book examination. If the examination is not successfully passed, a mandatory 15-day waiting period and re-examination fee of \$100 is required before retaking the examination. A maximum of four examinations may be attempted.
3. Applicants have up to 2 years from the date of their examinations to complete the application process. Examination results for applications left incomplete after two years will be considered null and void.
4. Wait for the awarding of the certification. The Certification Board will meet approximately every four (4) weeks to review the examination results and supporting materials before voting to award the certification.

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### **The Application:**

The Application Form provides an area for contact information, academic information and experience background. We strongly recommend a notarized application be sent to the Council office prior to the examination, so that the certification staff may prepare the applicant's file for Board review.

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**Required Documentation:**

The applicant must provide documentation of a) education and b) field experience in conducting microbial sampling regimens. Required forms of documentation include:

- College transcripts and diplomas, if the application relies upon college credit;
- Project documentation forms (included in this application packet);
- Employer affidavits for projects on which the candidate worked as an employee (included in this application packet).

The application packet must include four project sheets, at least one of which must date from the first year of experience claimed.

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**The CMI Examination:**

1. The applicant must complete a 3-hour, closed-book, written examination. The examination questions are based on the listed core skills and required body of knowledge. For an updated list of exam topics and item references to use in test preparation, visit [www.certificationcouncil.org](http://www.certificationcouncil.org).
  2. The examination is closed-book! It is strongly recommended that candidates read the reference materials listed above before taking the examination.
  3. There are 100 questions on the examination. Each question is multiple-choice with at least four (4) possible answers. A score of 75% must be achieved to pass this examination.
  4. The examination is delivered electronically at an authorized testing center operated by Kryterion, Inc. There are no paper exams. Once a complete application packet is on file in the Council office, the candidate may register for the examination by calling the office at (888) 808-8381.
    - Candidates should arrive 30 minutes before the testing appointment.
    - Candidates must present two forms of government-issued identification at the testing center, one of which must be picture ID.
    - Candidates must follow proctor instructions with regard to the use of personal belongings and test materials, including submitting eyeglasses and exterior pockets for inspection.
    - Candidates failing to abide by these rules will not be permitted to sit for the exam, and a re-examination fee of \$100 will be required.
  5. All examinations contain the same questions; however, the examination questions are presented to each candidate in random order and the examination answers are presented to the candidate in random order.
  6. Examinations are graded electronically at the testing facility, and scores are available to candidates immediately. An email is sent to the candidate's email address confirming test results.
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**The Certifying Body:**

1. The American Council for Accredited Certification is the certifying body for this program.
2. All decisions regarding application materials, examinations and the awarding of certifications are made by the CMI Certification Board, which functions as part of the American Council for Accredited Certification.
3. The certifying body's responsibility to applicants is to provide a credible certification. Operation of the certification program is closely monitored to ensure that reference materials remain current with the industry guidelines and standards and the eligibility requirements for certification are at appropriate levels. Examination questions are developed by certified CMIs who are currently active in the field of microbial investigation. Pass/fail scores are set by the CMI Certification Board at the ACAC annual meeting using the modified Angoff method. The Board authorizes an annual statistical review of examination item performance and test

reliability and updates the examination to reflect the latest changes in our rapidly evolving field.

4. The CMI certification is valid for two (2) years, after which time re-certification is required.
  5. Certification Board members are required to abstain from voting on any applicant's completed file that may present a conflict of interest, either personally or professionally.
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#### **Re-certification:**

ACAC certifications are current for two years from the date of issue. The certificate holder must accumulate forty (40) Re-certification Credits (RCs) prior to the certificate's expiration date. Each RC represents one (1) hour of continuing education in a Council-registered activity. The certificate holder may accumulate the required hours at any time during the two-year certification period. An updated list of activities which qualify for RCs is available on the Council website at [www.certificationcouncil.org](http://www.certificationcouncil.org).

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#### **Due Process Procedures:**

1. The CMI Certification Board is responsible for all facets of the certification program, including the review and evaluation of applications, the development and administration of examinations, the granting and reissuing of certificates and the adjudication of complaints against certificants.
  2. **Suspensions:** If a Council-certified Microbial Investigator does not accumulate the required re-certification credits, certification shall terminate unless, in the judgment of the Certification Board, extenuating circumstances exist and the deficiency can be readily overcome. Examples of extenuating circumstances include documentation of active military service or documentation of a serious medical condition.
  3. **Complaints:** If a Council-certified Microbial Investigator fails to abide by the ACAC Code of Conduct or is formally accused of gross negligence in the performance of his or her professional duties, the Certification Board may vote to refuse re-certification.
  4. **Appeals:** Any holder of a valid Council certification or applicant for such a certification may appeal the decisions of the Certification Board.
  5. Complaints or appeals shall be made in writing via certified mail to the Certification Administrator.
  6. In the case of complaints, the Certification Administrator shall forward the complaint to the accused certificant and allow him or her ample time to respond.
  7. The Certification Administrator, at the direction of the Executive Committee, may forward complaints or appeals to the appropriate Certification Board.
  8. The Certification Board shall rule on all complaints or appeals by unanimous vote.
  9. Complaints or appeals may be continued in writing via certified mail to the National Advisory Board.
  10. The National Advisory Board shall be the final court of appeal and will rule on complaints or appeals by unanimous vote.
  11. In resolving complaints or appeals, ACAC may rule only on its own decisions to grant or deny certification and recertification.
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#### **Reinstatement of the CMI:**

Council-certified Microbial Investigators who do not acquire sufficient CMI Re-certification Credits by their recertification date will be notified in writing to cease using the CMI designation. They will be listed as expired on the Council website and will no longer be listed as a CMI in any ACAC publication until such time as they resubmit to the certification process and successfully meet the current criteria for certification. Appropriate fees will apply.

**Fees:**

*Corporate purchase orders, checks, Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted.*

**Certification Fee: \$400 for a two-year certification**

- Certification fees include a \$100 non-refundable processing fee

**Examination Fee: \$100**

- Examination and certification fees are required prior to taking examinations

**Re-certification Fees: \$400**

- Re-certification is for a two-year period and requires documentation of continuing education. Re-certification fees include a \$100 non-refundable processing fee.

**Re-examination Fees: \$100**

- For those who failed a previous exam

**Penalties: \$100 for late re-certification.**

- May be waived in case of documented active military duty or medical issues
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**Emeritus (Retired) Status:**

1. Retired Council-certified Microbial Investigators who are at least 62 years of age may be granted emeritus status in their designation as long as they are no longer engaged in professional practice as a CMI. Such persons will be granted the title "Emeritus".
  2. Re-certification Fees for Emeritus (Retired) Status: **\$100** USD for each two-year certification.
    - A photocopy of a current driver's license must accompany the request for Emeritus Status.
  3. Continuing education is not required.
  4. To return to active status, emeritus certificants must notify the Council in writing and pay a \$50 fee for a two-year active certification. At the end of the two-year period, all normal re-certification policies will apply.
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**Use of the CMI Designation:**

- A Council-certified Microbial Investigator (CMI) may use the designation with his/her name on organization letterheads, business cards and all forms of address. When using the CMI designation, we encourage the spelling out of the designation fully in smaller print immediately below the signature block, as in the following example:

John Doe, CMI  
Council-certified Microbial Investigator  
Board-awarded by the American Council for Accredited Certification

- Certification is for individuals only. The CMI designation may not be used to imply that an organization or firm is certified.

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**ACAC Code of Conduct:**

▪ **Objective**

The objective of this code is to provide guidance for appropriate conduct for the certificants of the American Council for Accredited Certification as they engage in their individual professions.

▪ **Rules of Conduct**

Certificants of the American Council for Accredited Certification shall:

- Practice their respective professions following accepted industry standards and guidelines.
- Exercise caution not to misrepresent their credentials, training or experience in the course of their professional activities.
- Deal responsibly in advising parties regarding potential damage to property and/or risk to health.
- Maintain confidentiality concerning both personal and business information gathered in the performance of their professions, except in the case of overriding legal and/or health concerns.
- Avoid instances where conflict of interest or compromise of professional judgment may occur.
- Act with integrity to uphold the standards of their profession and of the Council and avoid any conduct that could adversely reflect on the Council and its certificants.

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We reserve the right to change/update our certification examination material, eligibility requirements and re-certification requirements at anytime we deem necessary to maintain the professional integrity and validity of our certification.

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