CCO Certification

CANDIDATE HANDBOOK
• Evaluator of Crane Operator

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Program Description

Welcome to the CCO Evaluator of Crane Operator certification program. This nationally recognized certification program is the culmination of hard work by experts from the various industries and groups that use evaluators of articulating, mobile and tower crane operators including construction, steel erection, utilities, crane rental, petrochemicals, pulp and paper and operating engineers.

The CCO Evaluator of Crane Operator Exam Management Committee oversees the content of the certification exams. It is comprised of experts from all aspects of the crane industry, who collectively represent many thousands of hours of crane-related and operator evaluation experience. These volunteers freely give of their time and expertise to improve the safety of all whose work involves cranes and lifting equipment.

WHO IS AN EVALUATOR OF CRANE OPERATOR?

Within the confines of the responsibilities outlined in ASME B30 and according to OSHA 1926 Subpart CC, an Evaluator of a Crane Operator is an individual who can assess a crane operator through an evaluation in accordance with OSHA 1926.1427(f). An Evaluator of a Crane Operator knows how to evaluate the crane operator's knowledge related to safety devices, operational aids, software, size and configuration of the equipment as well as the ability to perform hoisting activities required for assigned work, including, if applicable, blind lifts, personnel hoisting, and multi-crane lifts.

WHAT IS A NATIONALLY ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION?

A nationally accredited certification signifies that the certifying body has undergone a rigorous evaluation by a nationally recognized accrediting organization to ensure adherence to established standards of quality, fairness, and transparency. Such accreditation affirms that the certification is competency-based, valid, and reliable, thereby instilling confidence in employers and the public regarding both the qualifications of the certified individual and the integrity of the certification process.

In 1998, CCO received its initial accreditation from the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), recognizing that CCO programs meet or exceed NCCA's exacting standards for certification competency. Federal OSHA referenced this accreditation in its formal agreement signed with CCO in 1999.

In 2007, CCO received accreditation from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Most CCO certification programs are accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) to the ISO/IEC 17024 International Standard for organizations that certify personnel. ANAB requirements are rigorous and designed to give assurance to those who depend on certification programs that the tests are fair, sound, and valid assessments of the knowledge and skills they are intended to measure. The decision of ANAB's Professional Certification Accreditation Committee to award accreditation came only after exhaustive on-site and field audits of CCO's management systems and psychometric procedures.

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Certification Policies

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for certification, candidates must:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Comply with CCO's Substance Abuse Policy
- Comply with CCO's Code of Ethics
- Pass a Core written examination
- Pass a Specialty written examination – Articulating, Mobile, or Tower

EXAMINATION FEES

For all exam and related fees, visit www.nccco.org/fees.

CCO CERTIFICATION TIME FRAMES

Candidates must pass the Core Written Examination and a Specialty Written Examination to be certified for five years. The Core and Specialty Written Exams may be taken in either order. Candidates have 12 months from the time they pass their first Core or Specialty Written Exam to pass the corresponding Exam.

Any tests passed within 12 months count towards certification. For example, a candidate who fails the Core Written Exam in January 2025 but passes a Specialty Written Exam in June 2025 has until the end of June 2026 to retake and pass the Core Written Exam.

Candidates may add a new certification at the same time as they take their recertification examinations by taking the required examination(s) for the new certification.

CERTIFICATION CARDS

Certified operators receive a laminated photo ID card at no cost when they certify. Replacement cards may be obtained from CCO for $30 and ordered online.

Certification cards remain the property of CCO, are not transferable, and must be returned to CCO upon demand.

RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

CCO Evaluator of Crane Operator certification is valid for five years. Recertification candidates must complete all of their recertification requirements during the 12 months before their certification's expiration date.

Regardless of the date of the exams within that one year, the new five-year certification period begins from the date of expiration of the candidate's initial certification.

Recertificants must:

- Pass the Evaluator of Crane Operator Core written examination
- Pass the Specialty written examination for which they are certified
- Comply with CCO's Substance Abuse Policy
- Comply with CCO's Code of Ethics

There is no grace period after their certification's expiration date. Candidates whose certification has lapsed must take and pass the Core and Specialty written examinations to be certified again.

***NOTE**: Candidates who recertify more than 12 months prior to their expiration date will have their new certification period begin immediately, not from the end of their current certification period.*

Written exams for recertification are available at any written test administration. Candidates wishing to recertify may take exams via Online Proctored Testing (OPT), Test Center Testing (TCT), Event Online Testing (EOT), or contact the Test Site Coordinator who set up their initial certification.

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Certification Overview

WRITTEN EXAMINATION

The Evaluator of Crane Operator written examinations consist of a Core examination and Specialty examinations for the Evaluation of Articulating Crane Operators, Mobile Crane Operators, and Tower Crane Operators. The Core examination has 65 multiple-choice questions, and candidates are allowed 60 minutes to complete the exam. The Specialty examinations each have 35 multiple-choice questions, and candidates are allowed 60 minutes to complete each of the Specialty exams. A calculator is permitted for the Core and each of the Specialty exams.

CCO has three options for taking written exams:

Online Proctored Testing (OPT), Test Center Testing (TCT), and Event Online Testing (EOT). Testing fees remain the same regardless of the option you choose.

All methods of test delivery offer:

- Easy and fast online application
- No late application fees
- Quick and simple online scheduling
- No rescheduling fees
- Switch between testing options easily and at no cost
- Immediate score reporting *

**A preliminary score will be available immediately. Results are subject to review and approval in accordance with standard testing protocols.*

The same exam delivery platform is used to administer all written exams, so the look and feel is nearly identical, no matter which option is selected. Exams that require supplements (e.g., load charts) or calculators have these available on-screen. In place of scratch paper, candidates may use a physical whiteboard/dry-erase board up to 8.5 in. x 11 in. or an on-screen whiteboard that is built into the exam.

See how the testing platform works at www.nccco.org/ESOdemo.

COMPARING EXAM DELIVERY OPTIONS

Online Proctored Testing (OPT)

OPT allows individual candidates to take exams anytime, anywhere via computer, while being monitored virtually by a proctor. Benefits specific to OPT include:

- Available 24/7 – Test without missing work
- Test from anywhere – Home, office, hotel, anywhere with sufficient internet and a private room with a closed door
- Fast scheduling – Candidates may be able to schedule testing appointments in as little as 15 minutes (pending availability)
- Exams on your computer - Use your own computer that meets minimum technical requirements and has a microphone and webcam.
- Flexible rescheduling – You may reschedule up to 30 minutes before your exam appointment time
- No additional fees – no “sitting fee” or other hidden charges

Test Center Testing (TCT)

TCT allows individual candidates to go to a professional computer lab environment established specifically for administering secure exams. Benefits specific to TCT include:

- Testing near you – Nearly 600 testing centers available nationwide
- Plan ahead – Candidates will schedule (or reschedule) exam appointments at least 2 days before testing
- Show up and test – No need to ensure your space, computer, or internet meet specifications
- Whiteboards provided – The test center provides an 8.5 in. x 11 in. whiteboard to each candidate
- In-person Proctor – Professional, experienced TCT staff on-site to get your exam started

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- No additional fees – No “sitting fee” or other hidden charges

Event Online Testing (EOT)

EOT allows groups of candidates to take tests, usually at an employer's or training provider's facility. The EOT test site has complete flexibility with setting up exams on a schedule that meets the site and their stakeholders’ needs. Benefits specific to EOT include:

- Familiar setting – Testing is typically done at your employer or training provider’s facility
- On-site testing personnel – Individuals credentialed by CCO will be onsite to guide you through the test day process
- Scheduling flexibility – Work with testing personnel to schedule and reschedule, even if you miss your exam time
- Show up and test – No need to ensure your space, computer, and internet connection meet specifications

PRACTICAL EXAMINATION

The practical exam component of the Evaluator of Crane Operators certification is incorporated in the written exams through the use of scenario-based questions of real-life situations. These real-world scenarios test Evaluators’ of Crane Operators abilities to identify deficiencies and hazards commonly seen in the field.

FIND TEST LOCATIONS

Written Exams

- CCO written examinations are offered via online proctored testing (OPT) using your equipment from nearly any place with an internet connection, and on-demand at official sites nationwide.
- Find test center testing (TCT) locations by logging into your myCCO portal.
- Explore event online testing (EOT) options by searching your myCCO portal.

NOTE: Test sites are permitted to charge additional fees beyond the CCO exam fees for the use of their facilities and/or services.

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Written Examination Content Outline

Evaluator of Crane Operator – Core Examination

65 Questions / 60 Minutes (Calculator Permitted)

The Evaluator of Crane Operator Core Written Examination tests the following knowledge areas relating to crane operator evaluation.

Domain 1: Prepare to Conduct an Evaluation

- Approximately 30% of test

Domain 2: Conduct an Evaluation

- Approximately 60% of test

Domain 3: Process Evaluation Results

- Approximately 10% of test

DOMAIN 1: PREPARE TO CONDUCT AN EVALUATION

1. Commit to an evaluation that is honest and objective
2. Review federal, state, and local standards and regulations; and manufacturer information
   a) Knowledge and understanding of applicable OSHA regulations and ASME standards
   b) Knowledge and understanding of applicable state and local regulations
   c) Knowledge of how to locate manufacturer information
3. Gather information regarding the contractor and site information
   a) Know what information should be collected
4. Obtain crane configuration and specific hoisting activities to be evaluated
   a) Knowing who to speak to regarding task requirements and crane make & model configuration elements
   b) Knowledge of questions to ask regarding the hoisting activities that the employer or authorized personnel expects the operator to perform
   c) Skill in interviewing the employer or authorized personnel
5. Confirm that the crane inspections have been completed
   a) Knowledge of what inspections are required, including manufacturer or contractor specific inspections
6. Determine what topics to cover with the operator during the evaluation
   a) Knowledge of the particular tasks performed, site conditions, configurations
   b) Determine what constitutes an adequate evaluation

DOMAIN 2: CONDUCT AN EVALUATION

1. Confirm the crane operator credentials, where applicable
   a) Knowledge of what credentials to confirm (e.g., medical cards, state license, certification)
   b) Knowledge of certifications and/or licensing required in given locale)
2. Assess crane operator's knowledge regarding the type, size, and configuration of the equipment
   a) Knowledge of the crane being used in the evaluation
3. Confirm the operator's ability to understand the load chart
   a) Know how to determine what load chart(s) and questions would be applicable to tasks being performed
   b) Know how determine gross and net capacities given the crane configurations used during the evaluation.
4. Assess crane operator's knowledge regarding safety devices, operational aids and software used in conjunction with crane operation
   a) Knowledge of safety devices required
   b) Knowledge of operational aids
   c) Knowledge of software relative to the crane model
   d) Knowledge of temporary alternative measures when operational aids are inoperable
5. Assess crane operators' ability to identify hazards and avert risk
   a) Knowledge of site-specific hazards and unsafe acts
   b) Ability to mitigate identified hazards
6. Assess crane operator's knowledge of manufacturer-specific procedures if applicable
   a) Knowledge of which manufacturer-specific procedures to assess

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7. Assess crane operators' knowledge and performance of proper set-up procedures
    a) Knowledge of required shift inspections
    b) Knowledge of acceptable ground conditions
    c) Knowledge of cribbing/matting
    d) Knowledge of proper reeving requirements
    e) Knowledge of proper software configurations, if applicable
    f) Knowledge of acceptable level tolerances
    g) Knowledge of appropriate swing radius protection
8. Observe crane operators' performance of hoisting activities required for assigned work
    a) Knowledge of what a controlled load looks like
    b) Knowledge of crane signals being followed
    c) Knowledge of proper rigging techniques
    d) Knowledge of crane working within capacity configuration
    e) Knowledge of specialty attachments
    f) Knowledge of proper cab access and egress of equipment
    g) Knowledge of crane traveling, if applicable
    h) Knowledge of proper crane shutdown and securement procedures
    i) Knowledge of proper crane emergency shutdown procedures

DOMAIN 3: PROCESS EVALUATION RESULTS

1. Complete evaluation documentation
    a) Knowledge of required documentation per applicable OSHA regulations
    b) Knowledge of requirements per the contractor/company
2. Establish the recommendation on the qualification of the operator
    a) Knowledge of what constitutes passing or failing an evaluation
3. Report evaluation results
    a) Knowledge of who receives the evaluation results
    b) Knowledge of who maintains the documentation
    c) Skill in written and verbal communication

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Written Examination Content Outline

Evaluator of Articulating / Mobile / Tower Crane Operator Specialty Examinations

35 Questions / 60 Minutes (Calculator Permitted)

The Evaluator of Articulating, Mobile, and Tower Crane Operators Specialty Written Examinations test the following knowledge areas relating to articulating, mobile, and tower crane operator evaluations.

Domain 1: Prepare to Conduct an Evaluation

- Approximately 10% of test

Domain 2: Conduct an Evaluation

- Approximately 90% of test

DOMAIN 1: PREPARE TO CONDUCT AN EVALUATION

1. Review federal, state, and local standards and regulations; and manufacturer information
   a) Knowledge and understanding of applicable OSHA regulations and ASME standards
   b) Knowledge and understanding of applicable state and local regulations
   c) Knowledge of how to locate manufacturer information (e.g., TVA, US Corps of Engineers EM385)
2. Determine what topics to cover with the operator during the evaluation
   a) Knowledge of the particular tasks performed, site conditions, configurations

DOMAIN 2: CONDUCT AN EVALUATION

1. Assess crane operator's knowledge regarding the type, size, and configuration of the equipment
   a) Knowledge of the crane being used in the evaluation
2. Confirm the operator's ability to understand the load chart
   a) Know how to determine what load chart(s) and questions would be applicable to tasks being performed
   b) Know how determine gross and net capacities given the crane configurations used during the evaluation.
3. Assess crane operator's knowledge regarding safety devices, operational aids and software used in conjunction with crane operation
   a) Knowledge of safety devices required
   b) Knowledge of operational aids
   c) Knowledge of software relative to the crane model
   d) Knowledge of temporary alternative measures when operational aids are inoperable
4. Assess crane operators' ability to identify hazards and avert risk
   a) Knowledge of site-specific hazards and unsafe acts
   b) Ability to mitigate identified hazards
5. Assess crane operator's knowledge of manufacturer-specific procedures if applicable
   a) Knowledge of which manufacturer-specific procedures to assess
6. Assess crane operators' knowledge and performance of proper set-up procedures
   a) Knowledge of required shift inspections
   b) Knowledge of acceptable ground conditions
   c) Knowledge of cribbing/matting
   d) Knowledge of proper reeving requirements
   e) Knowledge of proper software configurations, if applicable
   f) Knowledge of acceptable level tolerances
   g) Knowledge of appropriate swing radius protection
7. Observe crane operators' performance of hoisting activities required for assigned work
   a) Knowledge of what a controlled load looks like
   b) Knowledge of crane signals being followed
   c) Knowledge of proper rigging techniques
   d) Knowledge of crane working within capacity configuration
   e) Knowledge of specialty attachments
   f) Knowledge of proper cab access and egress of equipment
   g) Knowledge of crane traveling, if applicable
   h) Knowledge of proper crane shutdown and securement procedures

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Reference List

The latest versions of the following reference materials are used by CCO's Evaluator of Crane Operator Exam Management Committee to verify the accuracy of CCO test questions. Candidates are also strongly advised to become familiar with load charts in preparing for CCO certification examinations.

Evaluator of Crane Operator Core

ASME B30.9 (2025) – Slings
- https://store.ccocert.org/product/asme-b30-9-slings/

ASME B30.10 (2024) - Hooks
- https://store.ccocert.org/product/asme-b30-10-hooks/

ASME B30.23 (2022) - Personnel Lifting Systems
- https://store.ccocert.org/product/asme-b30-23-personnel-lifting-systems

CCO Evaluator of Crane Operator Reference Manual
- https://www.nccco.org

IPT's Crane and Rigging Training Manual (2020)
- www.iptbooks.com

OSHA 1910.180
- https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.180

OSHA 1926.251
- https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.251

OSHA Subpart CC
- https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926SubpartCC

OSHA Subpart E
- https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926SubpartE

OSHA Subpart R
- https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926SubpartR

Evaluator of Crane Operator Articulating Specialty Exam

ASME B30.22 (2023) - Articulating Boom Cranes
- https://store.ccocert.org/product/asme-b30-22-articulating-boom-cranes/

CCO Articulating Crane Reference Manual
- https://www.nccco.org/docs/default-source/reference-materials-2014/cco-articulating-crane-reference-manual_080222a.pdf?sfvrsn=3e2ec00e_2

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Evaluator of Crane Operator Mobile Specialty Exam

ASME B30.5 (2025) - Mobile and Locomotive Cranes

- *https://store.ccocert.org/product/asme-b30-5-mobile-and-locomotive-cranes/*

Evaluator of Crane Operator Tower Specialty Exam

ASME B30.29 (2018) - Self-Erecting Tower Cranes

- *https://store.ccocert.org/product/asme-b30-29-self-erecting-tower-cranes/*

ASME B30.3 (2025) - Tower Cranes

- *https://store.ccocert.org/product/asme-b30-3-tower-cranes/*

CCO Tower Crane Reference Manual

- *https://www.nccco.org*

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CCO Policies

All program participants must adhere to CCO policies and procedures. Key policies can be found at

- https://www.nccco.org/nccco/about-nccco/policies

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CCO Certification
990 W. Bellwood Ln.
Murray, Utah 84123
Phone: 703-560-2391
info@ccocert.org
www.nccco.org

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