



# Hypertension Practice Center and Comprehensive Hypertension Center

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## Certification Eligibility Guide 2.0

Certification provided by the American Heart Association® Certified Care

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This Certification Eligibility Guide is effective beginning January 1, 2021.

## Hypertension Certification Mission Statement

The mission of the American Heart Association Hypertension Certification program is to improve the outcomes of patients with complex or difficult-to-treat hypertension while partnering with medical practices, incorporating best practices, and implementing evidence-based treatment guidelines.

## Hypertension Certification Overview

The overarching goals of the certified Hypertension Center encompass the patient, provider, research and training opportunities, and engagement with insurers and payors. The Certification is focused on enhancing hypertension patient care. It is designed to evaluate each medical practice against a professional set of criteria based on demonstrated adherence to key standards and a rigorous review process.

### Benefits for Patients

- Provide patients with access to centers focused on treating complex hypertension and its co-morbidities
- Provide patients with confidence that the centers provide the most effective treatment strategies based on current hypertension guidelines and science-based research in hypertension
- Provide patients with assurance that the certified Center was evaluated and is recognized by the American Heart Association, based on criteria designed by hypertension experts

### Benefits for Health Care Providers

- Provide a referral source for non-hypertension specialist physicians and other health care providers treating patients with resistant hypertension and its co-morbidities
- Access to a national online network of American Heart Association Certified Hypertension Centers designed to facilitate physician and other health care provider collaboration
- Establish a pathway for appropriate reimbursement for those health care professionals treating patients with resistant hypertension and its co-morbidities
- Provide direct access to American Heart Association sponsored live and online educational activities
- Opportunity to contribute as experts in Target: BP program discussions

### Insurance Provider and Payment Engagement

- Establishes collaborative and educational liaison with payors
- Provides standardized criteria for a hypertension specialty practice
- Provides information on effective treatment strategies and protocols

### Clinical Research and Training Opportunities

- As a member of the exclusive online community, certified centers can engage in conversations with other certified centers to drive hypertension clinical research
- Serve as an impetus to expand hypertension training programs at all levels
- Utilize the outcomes of these studies to develop needs assessments for hypertension health care providers and develop appropriate educational activities

# Hypertension Center Certification | Eligibility Guide

## Certification Tracks

Hypertension Centers are certified as either:

- Hypertension Practice Center
- Comprehensive Hypertension Center

## Certification Term & Fees

Comprehensive and Practice Centers are each \$2,000 per year for a term of three years.

Invoices are sent to the applicant once the Certification Agreement is fully executed. Practices have one year from the payment date to complete the Hypertension Certification process. All payments are non-refundable.

## Hypertension Center Certification Eligibility Criteria

- The Center is in the United States or operated by the US government, or operated under a charter of the US Congress
- The hypertension center uses a standardized method of delivering clinical care based on current science-based guidelines
- Comprehensive Centers are in either academic medical centers or large multi-specialty clinics. The Center may exist independently or as part of larger divisions or departments
- Practice Centers are either private or group medical practices

HYPERTENSION CENTER CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY OVERVIEW	PRACTICE CENTER	COMPREHENSIVE CENTER
The Medical Director must have extensive experience in the care of complex and difficult to treat hypertension	√	√
The Medical Director provides clinical leadership and guidance to the hypertension center program	√	√
The Medical Director is required to complete eight hours of continuing education annually in the management of clinical hypertension	√	√
The Medical Director must hold an academic appointment		√
The Medical Director must be a current Premium Professional or Premium Professional Plus member of the American Heart Association with membership on the Council on Hypertension ( <a href="http://www.professional.heart.org">www.professional.heart.org</a> )	√	√
Practice must be registered for the Target: BP program ( <a href="http://www.targetbp.org">www.targetbp.org</a> )	√	√
Majority of clinic/practice must be devoted to patients with hypertension and related disorders	√	√
The Center is recognized as a referral and treatment resource for resistant and secondary hypertension and alternative therapies	√	√

The Center has a process in place to monitor staff competence in the accurate measurement and documentation of blood pressure	√	√
The Center has a protocol for performing and interpreting 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring	√	√
Center performs or has access to risk assessments, diagnostic evaluation tools, and interventions to perform extensive multi-specialty examination and treatment to assess complicated hypertension process <b>Cardiovascular Risk Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantitative echocardiography</li> <li>• Exercise testing</li> <li>• Ankle-brachial index</li> <li>• Carotid doppler</li> <li>• Evaluation of Autonomic function</li> </ul> <b>Diagnostic Evaluation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renal angiography</li> <li>• Doppler renal ultrasound</li> <li>• CT Angiography</li> <li>• MR Angiography</li> <li>• Adrenal vein sampling for Aldosterone (Desirable, but not required)</li> </ul> <b>Interventions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renal angioplasty with/without stenting</li> <li>• Laparoscopic adrenalectomy</li> <li>• Sleep Lab</li> </ul>	√	√
The Center has a process in place for the selection of independently validated stationary blood pressure monitoring equipment	√	√
The Center has a process in place that addresses patient education, including the anticipation of the patient’s individualized needs and patient-centered goals	√	√
Center performs ongoing quality improvement aimed at improving hypertension control and related outcomes of the patient population	√	√
Personnel participate in ongoing hypertension educational activities for both staff and community	√	√
Medical Director and Practitioners participate in the education of medical students, house officers, and fellows on hypertension specific topics		√

<p>Participates in one or more of the following Research Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigator-initiated research</li> <li>• Implementation research and support</li> <li>• Management of patients enrolled in clinical trials</li> <li>• Multi-center trials and observational studies</li> <li>• Basic Science</li> <li>• Clinical Science</li> <li>• Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis</li> <li>• Publication of scholarly articles within the last five years related to the field of hypertension/related disorders</li> </ul>		√
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## Certification Process

1. Eligibility Information: Review the eligibility information contained in this document, determine your organization's commitment to pursuing Certification.
2. Please complete the information request form located at the bottom of this web page: <https://www.heart.org/hypertensioncertification> to begin your journey to Certification.
3. Certification Agreement: Once the Center has expressed commitment to pursue Certification, the contracting process will begin. The representative will provide instructions for submitting the signed participating agreement.
4. Payment: When the Agreement is fully executed, the facility will be responsible for payment. Please remit payment within 30-days of receipt.
5. Document Upload: The Center will join the Quality and Certification Tool and upload all documents required for Certification.
6. Desk Review: The Desk Review begins after the Certification Agreement has been signed, an invoice has been paid, and all the documentation has been submitted. It is a comprehensive and detailed evaluation of supporting documents submitted to meet the Certification Requirements.
7. Committee Review: The Reviewer makes the recommendation for Certification and submits a detailed report to the expert panel for consensus agreement.