



## Recognition of Advanced Proficiency for the PTA Frequently Asked Questions

Following are typically asked questions regarding the PTA Recognition process. Please email [PTARecognition@apta.org](mailto:PTARecognition@apta.org) if you have additional questions.

**Q: Where can I obtain an application?**

A: Applications are available online at [www.apta.org/ptarecognition](http://www.apta.org/ptarecognition). Click on Application Forms & Instructions.

**Q: How long does it take to prepare the application materials?**

A: The amount of time required to complete the application depends on your record keeping. The application is relatively simple to complete if you have good records of your employment, continuing education, and outside activities. You must obtain two letters of reference, which may take some time.

**Q: What are the benefits of receiving this recognition?**

A: Benefits for physical therapist assistants who complete all of the eligibility requirements for recognition include increased confidence in the provision of patient care, external recognition from APTA, reinforcement of lifelong learning, and distinction that assists with career advancement.

**Q: What is the deadline for submitting an application?**

A: The application deadline is February 1.

**Q: Who is eligible to receive this recognition?**

A: PTAs who are members of APTA, have at least 5 years of experience, and meet the eligibility requirements.

**Q: What recognition will I receive?**

A: Successful applicants will receive a certificate indicating their area of advanced proficiency suitable for framing and a lapel pin. Additionally, recipients are recognized at the Honors and Awards Ceremony and Reception during the NEXT Conference and Exposition and appear in an issue of *PT in Motion*.

**Q: What is the application fee?**

A: The non-refundable application fee is \$85.00. Recipients that maintain their APTA membership throughout the period of recognition (5 years) receive a \$20 discounted re-application fee.

**Q: Why isn't the Recognition Program free to members?**

A: The PTA Recognition Program is not an award program. APTA does have a wide variety of awards that PTAs are eligible to receive, but this does not fit in the awards category. Achieving Recognition of Advanced Proficiency is a brand that signifies to the rest of the world, including employers, that you have pursued and attained additional knowledge and skill in a particular area of work within physical therapy. As a result of this brand, PTAs may be eligible for additional benefits in the work place, including additional salary, movement up career ladders, etc. There are numerous costs associated with the program, including certificate purchase and personalization, pins, recognition during the Honors and Awards Ceremony and its reception.

**Q: How long will it take for the committee to notify applicants of their status?**

A: Every effort is made to expedite the process so that applicants will know if they have met the eligibility requirements 4-6 weeks after the application deadline.

**Q: Is there a limit to how many PTAs will receive this recognition?**

A: No. All PTAs who meet the eligibility criteria are encouraged to apply.



## Recognition of Advanced Proficiency for the PTA Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: How will the recipients of this recognition be chosen?**

A: Applications are reviewed by a physical therapist and physical therapist assistant team to ensure eligibility requirements are met

**Q: Is there a process for re-applying after the 5-year recognition period?**

A: Yes. The re-application process is the same as the original process except there is a \$20 discount for the application fee for individuals that have maintained their APTA membership during the 5-year recognition period.

### Possible Scenarios and Solutions

**Q: "I work part time and am not sure if I'm eligible to apply."**

A: PTAs working part time who have 2,000 hours in the past 5 years (including 500 hours in the last year of experience with patients in the selected area of advanced proficiency) are eligible to apply.

**Q: "I meet the overall CEU requirement for continuing education, but have one year that I did not acquire CEU's due to family obligations. Do I have to wait five more years to apply?"**

A: No. You should submit your application now, but be sure to include in your narrative why you have a year with no CEU's. The intent of the continuing education requirement is to show a history of commitment to lifelong learning.

**Q: "I have been a PTA for fifteen years and have supervised students for twelve years. Do I qualify?"**

A: You must meet all of the eligibility requirements to qualify. Your work experience must be in the area that you are requesting recognition of advanced proficiency. Supervising students satisfies one of the conditions for leadership/contributions to the community.

**Q: "I am involved in data collection for quality assurance review in the PT department. Does this qualify?"**

A: Depending on the depth and breadth of your participation, this may count as one of your leadership/contributions to community activities. Remember that you must satisfy all of the eligibility requirements.

**Q: "Does participation in local or state physical therapy association count as leadership?"**

A: It depends on what you mean by participation. For your physical therapy association participation to count, you must demonstrate that you are contributing your time and abilities and not just attending scheduled district or chapter meetings.

**Q: "Is there a designation (i.e. initials) that I can use after my name once I achieve this recognition?"**

A: No. This is not equivalent to specialist certification.

**Q: "I feel a bit odd completing this application. I feel like I'm bragging about myself."**

A: This is your opportunity to "toot your own horn!" Don't hold back. You've worked hard for your knowledge and skills and this is your opportunity to let others know.

**Q: "Can I add more information than is required about my leadership experience, continuing education, and experience?"**

A: The Committee is only going to look at your achievements over the past 5 years, so please limit your responses to the three most pertinent activities.



## Recognition of Advanced Proficiency for the PTA Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: "I have a lymphedema massage certificate. Can I use this toward my recognition?"**

A: Sure, as long as it fits into your selected category of work (musculoskeletal, neuromuscular, cardiovascular/pulmonary, or integumentary) as described in the Guide to Physical Therapist Practice.

**Q: "Do I have to go through the entire process again when it is time to renew?"**

A: Yes. You must be prepared to demonstrate that you have continued to expand your clinical knowledge and skills when you apply for renewal.

**Q: I have a unique situation. Who can I talk to about my application?**

A: Please send an email to [ptarecognition@apta.org](mailto:ptarecognition@apta.org).

Revised 3/3/2015