

Certified Healthcare Leader (CHL) Exam Content Outline

Revised August 2021; Updated May 2022



The CHL Exam Content Outline was created through the 2020-2021 job task analysis and outlines the specific areas of knowledge necessary to perform the duties of an Healthcare Leader. The Content Outline also details the percentage weight for each of the four sections which comprise the CHL Exam. The higher the percentage weight, the more heavily the questions in that area will affect your overall test score.

SECTION 1: **PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING** (PERCENTAGE WEIGHT 30%)

I. **CHANGE MANAGEMENT**

- A. Current Sterile Processing techniques, technologies, standards, and regulations
- B. Outsourcing, standardization, and restructuring
- C. Surgical procedures, equipment, and surgical instrumentation
- D. Non-surgical procedures and equipment
- E. Contractual obligations related to supplies and instrumentation (e.g., Loaner, Consignment, surgical instrument repair)

II. **WORKPLACE AND EQUIPMENT**

- A. Workflow processes and design in accordance with local, state, and federal standards and regulations, and industry standards and recommendations
- B. Trends and practices in processing equipment
- C. Processing equipment lifespan and Instructions for Use (IFUs)
- D. Facility, utility, and safety requirements as it pertains to Sterile Processing operations

III. **WORKPLACE SAFETY**

- A. Tools for monitoring and evaluating workplace safety

IV. **WORKFORCE**

- A. Responsibilities of all Sterile Processing positions
- B. HR practices and department capacity planning
- C. Strategic planning processes for staff education and recruitment (e.g., orientation and onboarding)
- D. Strategic planning processes for staff development, retention, and engagement (e.g., career advancement)
- E. Technology and tools for workforce planning (i.e., management operating systems)

V. **FINANCIAL PLANNING**

- A. Financial planning processes, resources, and opportunities
- B. Forecasting tools, technologies, and processes
- C. Cost accounting principles that apply to the Sterile Processing department

VI. **QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

- A. Assessment tools to prepare a risk management plan for the Sterile Processing department
- B. Hazards within the Sterile Processing department (e.g., chemical exposure, blood-borne pathogens, ergonomics)
- C. Best practices for infection control as it pertains to Sterile Processing

VII. **EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PLANNING**

- A. Components of internal and external emergency / disaster plans

VIII. **COMMUNICATION**

- A. Communication styles and methods (e.g., in-person, email, phone etiquette)

IX. **PROCESS IMPROVEMENT**

- A. Cross-functional teams and customer needs (e.g., Plan Do Check Act [PDCA], Root Cause Analysis [RCA])
- B. Process improvement techniques and strategies (e.g., LEAN)

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SECTION 2: **ORGANIZING** (PERCENTAGE WEIGHT 25%)

I. **STAFF MANAGEMENT**

- A. Skills, tools, and resources required by staff to perform roles within the Sterile Processing department
- B. Components of individual tasks within the Sterile Processing department
- C. Departmental and organizational structure
- D. Staffing model (e.g., volume, operational hours, processing time)
- E. Benefits of a cohesive team (e.g., team collaboration)
- F. Customer service and relationships

II. **PROCESSES AND WORKPLACE**

- A. Design considerations, standards, regulations, and infection control principles (e.g., AAMI, AORN)
- B. Standards and resources available to maximize efficiency in key processing areas (e.g., LEAN)
- C. Instructions for Use (IFUs) and regulatory standards
- D. Key components to be included in policies and procedures (i.e., standards, regulations, consignment / loaner agreement)

III. **PROCESS IMPROVEMENT**

- A. Voluntary / regulatory requirements, best practices, and expectations of accreditation agencies
- B. Team development and meeting preparedness (e.g., task force)

SECTION 3: **LEADING** (PERCENTAGE WEIGHT 30%)

I. **STAFF**

- A. Orientation and onboarding process
- B. Staff recognition and empowerment strategies
- C. Conflict management (e.g., mediation techniques)
- D. Ethics, behavioral expectations, and relationship building
- E. Role and responsibilities of a supervisor and effective supervision techniques

II. **MENTORING / TRAINING**

- A. Functional areas and tasks performed within the Sterile Processing department (e.g., decontamination, sterilization, assembly and distribution)
- B. Staff development and education methods and strategies (e.g., return demonstration, learning theories / styles)
- C. Frequency and methods for completing competency assessment
- D. Equipment functionalities, troubleshooting techniques, and resources

III. **COMMUNICATION**

- A. Communication skills and styles (e.g., speaking, listening, negotiating, collaborating)
- B. Communication techniques, methods, and tools (e.g., email, internal messaging systems, communication boards)
- C. Communication challenges and barriers
- D. Sensitive information, privacy policies, and appropriate disposal methods (e.g., HIPAA, social media)

IV. **LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

- A. Leadership skills and strategies to promote mentorship (e.g., relationship building, leadership training, diversity, inclusion, teamwork)

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SECTION 4: **CONTROLLING** (PERCENTAGE WEIGHT 15%)

I. **WORKFLOW AND PROCESSES**

- A. Tasks, expectations, and departmental capacity (e.g., staff, equipment, space)
- B. Equipment functionality, performance parameters, and interpretation of test results
- C. Performance expectations (e.g., strengths and weaknesses of Sterile Processing staff)

II. **WORKPLACE SAFETY**

- A. Standards and principles of workplace safety (e.g., OSHA hazards assessment)

III. **INVENTORY MANAGEMENT**

- A. Inventory control and management methods and tools (e.g., automated, manual)
- B. Standards and regulatory requirements for inventory management
- C. Inventory lifespan and shelf-life
- D. Tools and technology for tracking inventory
- E. Supply compatibility (e.g., quality specifications of comparable substitutes to respond to a shortage stock out)

IV. **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

- A. Financial management practices (e.g., expense budget variance)
- B. Principles of sustainability (e.g., energy reduction, re-usable vs. single-use products, chemical usage)

V. **QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT**

- A. Quality assurance measures (e.g., tray defects, mechanical washer checks)
- B. Event reporting structure and frequency expectations (e.g., incident reporting portal)
- C. Performance improvement techniques and organizational expectations

VI. **INFECTION PREVENTION**

- A. Infection prevention guidelines and facility protocol for reporting and documenting events (e.g., sentinel event)
- B. Infection control and prevention (e.g., breaking the chain of infection, cross-contamination, traffic control)
- C. Infection prevention protocols (e.g., AAMI, AORN, OSHA, CDC, FDA)

VII. **DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD MAINTENANCE**

- A. Record management (e.g., accreditation requirements, duration and storage of records, audits)
- B. Facility and regulatory agency requirements

VIII. **QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

- A. Quality control guidelines and facility protocol for reporting and documenting events
- B. HR practices and department capacity planning
- C. Quality control protocols and resolutions (e.g., recalls)
- D. Different types of errors (e.g., inadvertent, intentional, incompetence)
- E. Components of risk assessment
- F. Customer and facility expectations
- G. Guidelines, regulatory and safety requirements, and best practices (e.g., Instructions for Use [IFUs])