

# NABCEP PV Associate (PVA) FAQ

## 1. What is the NABCEP PV Associate Credential?

- An entry-level credential for individuals seeking recognition in the solar PV industry.
- Demonstrates basic knowledge of PV application, design, installation, and operations.
- Does **not** replace state licensing requirements.

## 2. Who is eligible to apply?

- Must be **at least 18 years old**.
- Agree to NABCEP Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct.
- Pay all applicable fees.
- Qualify through **one of four pathways**:
  - **Education Pathway**: Complete a course with a NABCEP Associate Registered Training Provider.
  - **Experience Pathway**: Document at least **6 months (910 hours)** of full-time equivalent work experience in PV-related roles.
  - **Veterans Pathway**: Document military experience relevant to PV and upload DD-214.
  - **Entry Level Conversion**: Convert an old NABCEP Entry Level Certificate (requires 12 hours CE within last 3 years).

## 3. How do I qualify through the Education Pathway?

- Complete a NABCEP Associate Registered Training Provider course covering PV Job Task Analysis (JTA).
  - Recommended courses
    - Solar Energy International PV101: Solar Electric Design and Installation (6 weeks / 60 hours).
    - Local vocational/trade schools (check with workforce coordinator).
- Average recommended: **40 hours of instruction**.
- Obtain a **Course Completion Document** (valid for 1 year to take the exam).

#### 4. How do I qualify through the Experience Pathway?

- Provide documentation of **6 months full-time PV-related employment** (or equivalent hours).
  - SolarCorps fellowships also meet this qualification
- Supervisor must complete a **Work Verification Form** confirming duties and dates.
- Examples of qualifying roles: installation, sales, site assessment, design, roofing, electrical, mechanical.

#### 5. How do Veterans qualify?

- Upload DD-214 and document **6 months PV-related experience** (can include electrical, construction, solar, engineering, etc.).
- Apply via NABCEP Veterans Page: <https://www.nabcep.org/veterans-2/>.
- GI Bill reimbursement available for exam fees.

#### 6. What is the exam format?

- **70 multiple-choice questions** (60 scored, 10 pilot).
- **2-hour time limit**.
- Passing score: **Scaled score of 65**.
- Delivery options:
  - **Computer-Based Testing (CBT)** at Scantron centers.
  - **Live Remote Proctoring (LRP)** from home/work.
  - **Paper & Pencil** (only through training providers in U.S./Canada).
- No open book; calculators allowed (basic scientific only for paper exams).

#### 7. What does the PV Associate Exam cover?

- Based on **PV Associate Job Task Analysis (JTA)**:
  - 15% Application
  - 13% Sales & Economics
  - 25% Design
  - 29% Installation
  - 18% Operations & Maintenance

## 8. How long is the credential valid?

- **3 years** from issuance.
- Renewal requires:
  - **12 hours of continuing education** every 3 years.
  - OR retake the current NABCEP Associate Exam.
- Renewal applications available in **myNABCEP** account.

## 9. What are the fees?

- **Initial Application + Exam Fee:** \$150 (non-refundable, non-transferable).
- **Retake Fee:** \$150 per attempt.
  - Candidates may retake the exam up to **6 times per year** with a mandatory **14-day waiting period** between attempts.
- Additional fees may apply for:
  - International CBT sites (\$75).
  - Late renewal or conversion applications.
- The fee for renewal is typically \$125 (plus any late fees if applicable).
  - For the most accurate and current amount, NABCEP directs candidates to check the official fee schedule here: <https://www.nabcep.org/certifications/nabcep-fees/>.

## 10. What happens if I fail the exam?

- Eligible to retake up to **6 times per year** within the 1-year eligibility window.
- Must wait **14 days** between attempts.
- After 2 years, must reapply and requalify.

## 11. How do I maintain my credential?

- Complete **12 CE hours** every 3 years.
- Acceptable CE activities:
  - NABCEP Registered Courses.
  - College/university courses.
  - State licensing board-approved training.
  - NABCEP CE Conference sessions.

- Documentation required for all CE activities.

## 12. Where can I find study resources?

- Review the **PV Associate Job Task Analysis (JTA)**: <https://www.nabcep.org/resources>.
- NABCEP Course Catalog: <https://coursecatalog.nabcep.org/>.