

NABCEP PV Installer Specialist (PVIS) FAQ

1. What is the PV Installer Specialist Certification?

- A voluntary NABCEP certification that sets international standards for PV installation specialists.
 - Demonstrates competency in PV installation, including DC and AC conductors, grounding, and bonding systems.
 - Certification does **not** replace state licensing requirements.
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2. Who is eligible to apply?

- Must be **at least 18 years old**.
 - Complete an application documenting all requirements.
 - Agree to NABCEP Code of Ethics.
 - Pay application and exam fees.
 - Pass the written exam.
 - Maintain certification through continuing education and recertification every **3 years**.
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3. What experience is required?

- Must have served in a **decision-making role** with material impact on PV installation.
 - Installations must:
 - Be completed within **2 calendar years** prior to application.
 - Have a minimum rating of **1 kW DC (STC)**.
 - Document at least **6 Project Credits**:
 - Systems 1–999 kW = **2 credits**
 - Systems ≥ 1 MW = **3 credits**
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4. How do I qualify for the NABCEP PV Installer Specialist exam?

- Complete:

- Complete **OSHA 10-hour training**.
 - Complete **24 hours of advanced PV training** within the last 5 years.
 - Document experience in the trade, including:
 - At least **6 Project Credits**:
 - Systems 1–999 kW = **2 credits**
 - Systems ≥ 1 MW = **3 credits**
 - All systems submitted must:
 - Be completed **within 2 calendar years** prior to application.
 - Have a minimum rating of **1 kW DC (STC)**.
 - Applicant must have served in a **Decision-Making Role (DMR)** (e.g., Lead Installer, Designer, Project Manager, Foreman, Electrician, QA/Commissioning Agent).
 - DMR means having material impact on quality and serviceability of the installation. Multiple people can qualify per system.
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5. How do I document my experience?

- For each system, provide:
 - System location, completion date, PV array size, inverter details.
 - Contact info for installation contractor, permit contractor, and your supervisor.
 - Description of your work.
 - Submit:
 - Electrical/Building permits and final inspection reports from AHJ.
 - If unavailable, provide inspection report from qualified electrician or NABCEP PV System Inspector.
 - Document Decision Making Role (DMR) with:
 - Signed letter on company letterhead explaining your role and authority.
 - OR design plans/line drawings identifying you as responsible.
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6. What counts as advanced PV training and where can I get it?

- **OSHA 10-hour Construction Industry Training.**
 - **24 hours advanced PV training:**
 - **18 hours** advanced PV installation principles (PVIS JTA) from an accredited institution.
 - **6 hours** National Electric Code (NEC).
 - Training must:
 - Be completed within **5 years** prior to application.
 - Be formal (teacher-learner structure, online or in-person).
 - Acceptable providers:
 - Accredited universities/colleges.
 - U.S. Dept. of Labor Registered Apprenticeships.
 - IREC-accredited training providers (GRID Alternatives IBT program).
 - ANSI/IREC or ANSI/ASTM accredited certificate programs.
 - State or provincial vocational/technical programs.
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7. How do I document my training?

- Submit **certificate of completion** or **transcript** for each course.
 - Your IBT Certificate of Completion, completed in the past 5 years counts
 - If unclear, include syllabus and signed letter from provider detailing hours covering PVIS JTA or NEC.
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8. How is the exam structured?

- **4 hours, 70 multiple-choice questions** (60 scored, 10 pilot).
- Computer-based or live remote proctoring.
- Less than 3.5 minutes per question.
- Special accommodations available.
- Must present government-issued photo ID.

- You are allowed to retake the exam (for a fee) up to 4 additional times within 1 year of your first exam date.
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9. What's on the exam?

- Based on **PVIS Job Task Analysis (JTA)**.
 - Includes knowledge domains:
 - PV installation principles and practices.
 - NEC compliance.
 - Safety and quality assurance.
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10. What are the fees?

- **Initial Application + Exam Fee:** \$500 (non-refundable, non-transferable).
- **Retake Fee:** \$275 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 **\$390** (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/>.

11. How long is certification valid?

- **3 years.**
- Recertification requires:
 - **30 hours continuing education:**
 - 6 hours NEC.
 - 12 hours PVIS JTA.
 - 12 hours renewable energy (2 hours building/fire codes).
 - Proof of industry involvement (e.g., decision-making role in 3 installs, teaching, leadership).
