



American Horticultural Therapy Association®

AHTA Professional Registration Policies and Procedures

The American Horticultural Therapy Association recognizes and registers horticultural therapists through a voluntary professional registration program. The designation Horticultural Therapist-Registered, HTR, ensures professional competencies have been achieved based on standardized academic requirements and professional training.

Applications for Professional Registration are accepted for review when all requirements for Registration have been completed and upon receipt of a complete application packet.

I. Professional Registration

A. Eligibility for Professional Registration

To be eligible for and be granted professional registration, an applicant is required to:

1. Be a member of the AHTA at the Associate level.
2. Have a baccalaureate degree in horticultural therapy or an equivalent degree.
3. Complete all coursework requirements in plant science, human science, and horticultural therapy. Horticultural Therapy coursework taken through a certificate program must be from an AHTA accredited program.
4. Have successfully completed the required 480-hour internship in horticultural therapy.

B. Application Procedures and Process

Application for professional registration is a combination of electronic and manual submission of materials. It is the responsibility of the applicant to complete the process and verify that all materials have been received.

1. Application requirements:
 - a. A completed electronic application for Professional Registration is required.
 - b. Official transcripts are required for all coursework:
 - Official transcripts may be forwarded directly from the educational institution or sent to the applicant and mailed to the AHTA by the applicant.
 - Electronic transcripts sent directly from the granting school are acceptable.
 - Unofficial transcripts, or unsealed transcripts, will not be accepted.
 - c. A completed *Internship Performance Report* is required. Acceptable documents include a clean copy scanned in JPEG format or PDF document.
 - d. Application fee of \$150.00. The application fee is nonrefundable.

2. Application process:

- a. An applicant must submit one (1) complete application packet to the AHTA. A complete application packet includes:
 - The online *Professional Registration Application*
 - Official transcripts for all required courses
 - The *Internship Performance Report*
 - Application fee of \$150.00
- b. Access the online *Professional Registration Application* through the AHTA website, Professional Registration section. Follow the *Online Application Information for Horticultural Therapist-Registered* instructions to complete the application.
- c. You have the option of uploading your Internship Report to the electronic application. Follow the instructions at the end of the application.
- d. You have the option to submit the application fee at the end of the online application process. Follow the *Online Application Information for Horticultural Therapist-Registered* instructions to process payment with your application.
- e. After submitting the online application, send the AHTA office a confirmation-of-receipt email within 24 hours.
 - Include as an attachment the required *Internship Performance Report*.
 - Please inform the AHTA Office if transcripts will be received from the educational institution or are being mailed directly by you. Please state for whom, and how many, transcripts will be received.
- f. If you chose to pay by mail, please also inform the AHTA Office that you are mailing your application fee. Mailing information is in Section VII.
- g. All additional attachments/correspondence relating to the application should be sent electronically.

C. Application Review

Applications are reviewed and evaluated by the AHTA Professional Registration Review Board. The Review Board is composed of six reviewers.

1. Applications are reviewed based on the academic and internship requirements.
2. If there are any questions regarding the submitted coursework in the required topic areas, the applicant will be asked to provide the syllabus. The application will be held until this information is received.
3. Applications will be assessed within eight (8) weeks of submission. The AHTA Office will notify the applicant by letter of the Review Board's decision and include a copy of the

Summary Action Form. Applicants approved for professional registration are conferred the credential HTR and will receive a *Certificate of Professional Registration.*

4. One (1) copy of the application will be kept on file by the AHTA for five (5) years.
5. An incomplete application will not be processed. A summary report noting the missing documentation will be sent to the applicant electronically. At that time, the applicant may submit the missing material or the application will be returned.

D. Reapplication Requirements

Applicants that have been denied registration because they did not meet the standards have one (1) year from the date of notification to attain those standards and reapply.

1. The AHTA Office will keep the original application on file. Individuals who reapply need only submit an addendum to their original application.
2. Complete the online *Addendum to Professional Registration Application.*
3. Transcripts, *Internship Performance Report*, or additional information identified on the *Summary Action Sheet* should be submitted by methods described above in Section B.
4. The Review Board Chair has the authority to accept or reject the reapplication based on prior recommendations of the Review Board. The AHTA Office will notify the applicant by letter of the Review Board's decision and include a copy of the *Summary Action Form.* Applicants approved for professional registration are conferred the HTR credential and will receive a Certificate of Professional Registration.
5. The reapplication fee for this service is \$35.00. Process payment by one of the methods described above in Section B.

E. Professional Registration Appeals

Applicants may appeal a decision of the Registration Review Board within thirty (30) days of notification of their decision.

1. The AHTA Executive Committee serves as the Registration Appeals Board.
2. Appeals must be in writing and mailed to the AHTA Office. Appeals should state the reason for appeal and state pertinent information. Mailing information is in Section VII.
3. Applicants filing an appeal will be advised when an appeal review has been scheduled. Should the Appeals Board decide that there are grounds for an appeal, the application will be submitted to the Review Board for reconsideration.
4. Any decision made by the Review Board at that time will stand. The AHTA Office will notify the appellant by letter of the Review Board's decision and include a copy of the *Summary Action Form.*

F. Maintaining Professional Registration

Applicants granted professional registration are required to renew annually at the **Professional** level and must maintain their membership in good standing in order to keep their professional designation.

1. The Professionally Registered member is responsible for maintaining their membership.
2. After three (3) months of a lapsed membership, a registrant must pay a reinstatement fee in addition to their annual membership dues to be reinstated.
3. The reinstatement fee for this service is \$75.00.
 - You may submit an electronic payment using the 'membership renewal' option accessed through the membership section of the AHTA website.
 - You may mail a check or money order made payable to AHTA along with your membership renewal form. Mailing information is in Section VII.
4. After two (2) years of a lapsed membership, a registrant will be required to reapply for registration status.

G. Professional Registration Fees and AHTA Contact Information

1. Payment may be a check or money order made payable to AHTA. Fees are due and payable to AHTA upon application. Registration fees are nonrefundable.

- Registration Application Fee..... \$150.00
- Reapplication fee (within in 1 year)..... \$ 35.00
- Reinstatement fee (after 3 months)..... \$ 75.00

2. Mailing address: AHTA Headquarters
610 Freedom Business Center, Suite 110
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Mail **transcripts and/or fees** attention to: Professional Registration.

Mail **registration appeals** attention to: Professional Registration Appeals Board.

3. Email all professional registration correspondence to:

Martha Heinze, AHTA Executive Director

martha@ahta.org

II. Professional Registration Education Requirements

A. Academic Requirements

1. A baccalaureate degree is the baseline requirement for professional registration. There are two options to meet this requirement:

Option A: A baccalaureate degree in horticultural therapy.

Option B: An equivalent baccalaureate degree.

2. An applicant must also successfully complete the required 480-hour internship. Refer to the *AHTA Horticultural Therapy Internship Handbook* available on the AHTA website for complete information.

B. Option B: An equivalent baccalaureate degree

1. An equivalent baccalaureate degree is defined as a degree in a field other than horticultural therapy that includes 33 semester credits of specific required coursework as outlined below.
2. The required coursework may be in fulfillment of a degree or may be completed in addition to an existing degree.
3. All coursework must be for college credit and documented through college transcripts.
4. All horticultural therapy coursework taken through a certificate program must be from an AHTA accredited program.

C. Coursework

The following coursework represents **topic areas** and not specific course titles. A list of suggested course titles is available in the Professional Registration section of the AHTA website.

1. Twelve (12) semester credits in plant science:

Plant Science

Three core required courses:

- Introduction to horticulture
- Plant propagation
- Pest and disease plant management

One elective course:

- General plant pathology
- Greenhouse production/management
- Nursery production/management
- Landscape design
- Plant materials

2. Twelve (12) semester credits in human science:

Three core required courses:

- General psychology
- Abnormal psychology
- Human lifespan development

One elective course:

- Counseling theories
- Aspects of disabilities and illnesses
- Group dynamics
- Principles of therapy
- Human anatomy/physiology
- Adult development and aging

3. Nine (9) semester credits, a minimum of three (3) courses, in **horticultural therapy**:

- Horticultural therapy overview, introduction, or fundamentals
- Horticultural therapy program management
- Horticultural therapy skills, techniques, or practice
- Horticultural therapy methods and programming
- Human issues in horticultural therapy, people-plant relationships