

HOW DO I BECOME A REHS?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING REGISTRATION AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

1. **What duties does a Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) perform?** A REHS works to improve the quality of life and health through environmental education, consultation, and enforcement. Although a majority of REHSs work for government, many are also employed by the private sector. Some typical program responsibilities include food protection, land use, recreational swimming, onsite sewage disposal, drinking water, housing, vector control, disaster sanitation, and solid waste and hazardous materials management.

Typical duties of a REHS in local government include inspections of various facilities such as food establishments, public swimming pools, community drinking water systems, landfills, and underground storage tanks in order to determine compliance with federal, state, and local statutes, regulations, and ordinances. For further information contact California Environmental Health Association at www.ceha.org the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health at www.ccdeh.com, or the universities with approved environmental health degrees that are listed on our web page.

2. **What are the minimum requirements to become a REHS?** A bachelor's degree is required with a minimum of 30 semester units of approved basic science courses including approved coursework in biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry or physics, microbiology, and college algebra or calculus.
3. **What are basic science courses?** Basic science courses are normally the foundation college courses required for a science degree. These should not be confused with general education courses that cannot be counted if they are for non-science majors. Courses designed for liberal arts, general education, or non-science degrees are not accepted.
4. **Where can I get further information regarding the EHS Registration Program?** You may visit the CA REHS web page at www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/occupations/Pages/REHS.aspx. In addition contact Margaret Blood, Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program, PO Box 997377, MS 7404, Sacramento, California 95899-7377 or telephone (916) 449-5663, REHSprog@cdph.ca.gov.
5. **Where can I get a listing of the basic requirements of the program?** [Education Requirements](#) will list the education, training, and experience requirements for the five different options.

6. **Which universities have approved environmental health degrees that meet the requirements of Option V (Section 106635)?** Universities offering approved programs for a bachelor's degree are California State University, Northridge; California State University, Fresno and California State University, San Bernardino. Universities offering an approved master's degree are the University of California, Los Angeles and Loma Linda University and California State University, Northridge. California State University, Chico; California State University, Los Angeles and California State University, Fullerton offer environmental health programs in Options III and IV. Please check with our office or your school counselor for the approved program option. For further information see [Universities Offering Approved Environmental Health Curriculum](#).
7. **I graduated from a college in a country other than the United States. How can I receive credit for the coursework I have completed?** All candidates with foreign transcripts must have a credential evaluation service review their official transcripts and submit a letter as a part of the application package. Foreign transcript evaluators approved by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) are listed on our web site under: [Foreign Transcripts](#).
8. **How do I apply for registration as an Environmental Health Specialist?** To apply for registration as an EHS or certification as an EHS trainee you will need to file an application with the Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program (REHS Program), [Application](#). Your application package must include:
- 1) A completed Environmental Health Specialist Registration application and a nonrefundable **\$95.00** application fee and
 - 2) A transcript evaluation from CPS or a foreign credential evaluation service. Generally CPS will forward their evaluation to this office.

Mail your application package to the REHS Program

California Department of Public Health
Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program
MS 7404
P.O. Box 997377,
Sacramento, CA 95899-7377

You may apply concurrently CPS Human Resource Services and the REHS Program.

FOR Graduates of AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES and COLLEGES

You will need to file an application with CPS for the evaluation of your transcripts and remit **\$245.25** to:

CPS Human Resource Services
241 Lathrop Way
Sacramento, CA 95815

phone (916) 263-3600

To self-evaluate your education, you are encouraged to review the [Preliminary Guidelines](#), you may also email ehs@cps.ca.gov for course specific questions. The CPS web site dedicated to transcript evaluation is www.cps.ca.gov/TakeATest/EnvHealth.

FOR Graduates of FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES and COLLEGES

9. All candidates with [foreign transcripts](#) must have a credential evaluation service review their official transcripts and submit a letter as a part of the application package.
10. **How long does the evaluation process take?** A transcript evaluation letter from CPS will be mailed to you approximately four weeks after the receipt of all required documentation. This letter tells you whether or not you are eligible to become an environmental health specialist trainee and may list additional requirements you need to complete. As long as your CDPH application is on file the certification letter from CDPH will arrive the following week.
11. **Where can I complete the training and experience requirements?** Local environmental health agencies that have an approved Environmental Health Specialist Trainee Program can provide the required training and experience. Along with your certification letter stating that are eligible to work as a trainee, you will receive a listing of agencies with approved Training Plans. Typically you will work for a county environmental health agency and meet the requirements as a part of your employment. [Elements of a Training Plan](#) describes the specific training plan requirements. Be sure to work with your training coordinator.
12. **How do I prepare for the registration examination?** The training and experience requirements are designed to prepare you for the exam. A [study guide](#) and [reference list](#) are available by mail. You also may want to consider taking one of the REHS [Exam Review Courses](#).
13. **When will I be eligible to take the examination to become a Registered Environmental Health Specialist?** After all of the education, training, and experience requirements have been met, you will be eligible to take the exam that is given three times a year. You will be notified prior to exam that you are eligible. The exam is scheduled in March, July, and November in both Sacramento and the Los Angeles area.
14. **When will I receive the results of the exam?** You will receive a notice in the mail approximately four to six weeks after the exam indicating whether you passed or failed. Percentage scores are not released.
15. **Must I report a change of address?** Yes, send your signed request for change of address to the Department of Health Services at the address listed below. It is your responsibility to notify us of any [change of address](#). Failure to keep this office updated on your current address may jeopardize your application status.
16. **What is the Environmental Health Specialist Registration Committee (EHSRC)?** The EHSRC was created in the Environmental Health Specialist

Registration Act, Health and Safety Code Section 106675. [Committee members](#) advise and make recommendations to the program staff on issues relevant to the registration process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION YOU MAY CONTACT:

**California Department of Public Health
Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program
MS 7404
P.O. Box 997377
Sacramento, California 95899-7377**

Message Phone: (916) 449-5663

Fax: (916) 449-5665

Email: REHSprog@dhs.ca.gov

Web Page: www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/occupations/Pages?REHS.aspx