

REGISTERED DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHER (RDMS)[®] CERTIFICATION

WHO ISSUES THE CERTIFICATION?

The [American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography](#) (ARDMS), managed by [Inteleos](#).

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CERTIFICATION?

This certification focuses on the field of diagnostic medical sonography, an allied health occupation to ensure patient safety and public health.

WHAT IS THE CAREER LEVEL OF THE CERTIFICATION AND WHO IS IT GEARED TO?

The [RDMS](#) is geared to aspiring ultrasound practitioners. It is one of several entry-level certifications (e.g., Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer[®], Registered Vascular Technologist[®], and Registered Musculoskeletal Sonographer[™]) offered by ARDMS. Additionally, there are other certifications that are more applicable to medical doctors and other specialty medical positions.

WHAT ARE THE EDUCATION AND/OR EXPERIENCE PREREQUISITES FOR THE CERTIFICATION?

Of the four prerequisite packages for this certification, the most common are:

- » completing an accredited two-year diagnostic medical sonography program; or
- » completing an associate of arts degree in a broader allied health care program, plus 12 months of full-time clinical ultrasound/vascular experience earned outside the degree program.

WHAT IS THE COST AND STRUCTURE OF THE CERTIFICATION'S EXAM(S)?

To be certified, candidates must pass a principles and instrumentation exam and a clinical specialty area in abdomen, breast, fetal echocardiography, obstetrics and gynecology, and/or pediatric sonography within five years. The principles and instrumentation exam takes two hours and contains 110 multiple-choice and semi-interactive console questions. Most of the specialty exams take longer (e.g., the breast specialty exam takes three hours). The principles and instrumentation exam costs \$225; the specialty exams costs vary, but most are \$250.

WHAT IS THE GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATION?

International. ARDMS has certificants in more than 70 countries, and most of its growth is outside the U.S. since a major constraint on U.S. expansion is an insufficient number of clinical sites for training.

IS THE CERTIFICATION ACCREDITED?

ARDMS meets the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) accreditation program requirements and those set forth in ISO/IEC 17024:2012 *Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons* for the RDMS program.

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HOW LONG IS THE CERTIFICATION VALID?

It is valid for three years.

IS THERE A PROCESS FOR RENEWING THE CERTIFICATION, OR RECERTIFICATION?

Yes, a person must obtain 30 continuing education units and pay a fee in order to remain certified. The renewal rate is 98 percent.

CAN THE CERTIFICATION BE REVOKED?

Yes, the certification can be revoked or suspended for violations of ARDMS's compliance policies, including performing clinical duties while impaired by legal or illegal substances or careless disregard for patient health, welfare, or safety, among others.

IS THE CERTIFICATION LINKED TO LICENSURE?

Having just the certification is the usual requirement for most states and employers. However, four states (New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, and Oregon) require medical sonographers to also be licensed.

HOW DOES THE CERTIFICATION RELATE TO OTHER ARDMS CERTIFICATIONS OR THOSE OF OTHER CERTIFICATION BODIES?

The RDMS is comparable to radiologic technologists and respiratory therapists.

WHAT ARE SOME ORGANIZATIONS OR INDUSTRIES THAT RECOGNIZE OR USE THE CERTIFICATION?

Hospitals, physicians' offices, and clinics.

ARE THERE ANY COMPANIES, CORPORATIONS, OR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE PUBLICLY DECLARED THEY PREFER OR REQUIRE THE CERTIFICATION?

Many small, private clinics do not require the RDMS, but most hospitals and other larger health care settings do. Some will even allow an uncertified intern to work so he/she can gain the necessary clinical experience; it is estimated that 90 percent or more of such interns decide to get certified.

WHAT OCCUPATIONS USE THE CERTIFICATION?

Sonography can be thought of as both an occupation and a skill set that other health practitioners, including physicians, may acquire to broaden their diagnostic capabilities.

DOES ARDMS OFFER TRAINING MATERIALS TO HELP INDIVIDUALS PREPARE FOR THE CERTIFICATION EXAM?

No.