CERTIFIED DIRECTOR OF ASSISTED LIVING (CDAL)

Candidate Handbook

ARGENTUM
EXPANDING SENIOR LIVING

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INTRODUCTION

The CDAL Candidate Handbook is the single best source of information regarding the CDAL certification program, covering everything from initial application, the CDAL examination, maintaining certification (recertification), and the policies and procedures used in the operation of this program. The Candidate Handbook is updated periodically, so please visit the Argentum website for the most current edition. If you have questions after reviewing this information, please contact Argentum at (703) 562- 1187 or learn@argetum.org.

Mission

The Senior Living Certification Commission (SLCC) was established by Argentum in 2015 to develop voluntary certification programs that recognize qualified senior living professionals and promote professionalism in senior living communities. SLCC was merged into Argentum in 2018 and is now governed by Argentum.

Purpose

The Certified Director of Assisted Living (CDAL) program recognizes senior living professionals who demonstrate the knowledge required for competent management of assisted living communities at the executive director level. Participation in the CDAL program is open to all individuals who meet eligibility requirements. Certification is granted to individuals who meet all eligibility requirements, agree to uphold the SLCC Code of Conduct, and successfully complete the CDAL examination.

Certified Director of Assisted Living (CDAL) Scope

Assisted living community executive directors are responsible for the overall management of assisted living communities. The executive director:

- Works to ensure residents' choice, independence, individuality, dignity, quality of life, and quality of care in a home-like environment.
- Is responsible for the work of staff, vendors, and providers, as well as the interests of residents, family members, owners, and other key stakeholders.
- Executes policies that address safety, risk, regulatory compliance, and quality.
- Provides overall direction for the community within guidelines set up by the owner, board of directors, or similar governing body.
- Manages resident and family relations.
- Plans, directs, and coordinates operational activities at the highest level of management with the help of staff managers.

Exam Information

The Certified Director of Assisted Living (CDAL) Examination is administered online and at conveniently located testing centers around the world. The exam includes 131 multiple-choice questions from the subjects shown in the Content Outline and is developed and built according to the Certified Director of Assisted Living Test Specifications. The exam was developed by subject matter experts using psychometrically validated procedures and testing industry standards. Argentum relies on psychometric consultants to ensure that the Certified Director of Assisted Living Certification Examination is valid, reliable, statistically sound, and legally defensible.

Statement of Impartiality

Argentum understands the importance of impartiality in carrying out its CDAL certification activities, manages conflicts of interest, and acts to ensure the objectivity of its CDAL certification activities. In addition, Argentum is committed to acting impartially in relation to its Applicants, Candidates, and Certificants.

CDAL certification decisions are made in accordance with policies and procedures established under the authority of the Argentum Board of Directors. Policies and procedures affecting applicants, candidates, and certificants are made public and fairly, and accurately convey information about the CDAL program.

Argentum understands threats to impartiality that include, but are not limited to, self-interest, activities from related bodies, relationships of personnel, financial interests, favoritism, conflict of interest, familiarity, and intimidation. Argentum periodically conducts a threat analysis to determine the potential, both real and perceived, of an individual or an organization to influence certification.

The eligibility requirements have been established to recognize individuals who have demonstrated the experience, knowledge, and skills necessary to competently manage assisted living communities.

To earn CDAL certification, Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements and demonstrate proficiency in assisted living management by passing the CDAL examination, as specified and administered under the authority of Argentum. Eligibility requirements for the CDAL Certification Program are listed in this CDAL Candidate Handbook.

Argentum serves the industry by providing education and training designed to help industry professionals understand best practices for managing assisted living communities. However, completion of Argentum's education or training is not a prerequisite or component of the CDAL certification program. Candidates are free to select any training they wish, and completion of Argentum's training will not provide any advantage over completion of any other quality training program.

CDAL certification is open to all individuals who manage assisted living communities. Argentum membership is not a requirement for CDAL eligibility.

Argentum recognizes that equal opportunity is fundamental to fairness in all forms of human endeavor. Therefore, Argentum does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, lifestyle, gender, or sexual orientation.

APPLYING FOR CERTIFICATION

Eligibility Requirements
To be eligible to sit for the examination, Applicants must demonstrate the following qualifications:

Route 1 (Education + Experience)

EDUCATION	Bachelor's degree granted by a college or university that is accredited by an entity approved by the United States Department of Education, or the equivalent		
EXPERIENCE	At least one year (2,000 hours) work experience as an assisted living community executive director	OR	At least three years (6,000 hours) work experience in a management capacity in one or more assisted living communities

OR

Route 2 (Experience)

EXPERIENCE	At least three years (6,000 hours) work experience as an assisted living community executive director	OR	At least five years (10,000 hours) work experience in a management capacity in one or more assisted living communities

Note that assisted living management does NOT include long term care management, nursing home management, or independent living management.

Application Instructions
A completed, current version of the CDAL Application Form – including all attestations, signatures and fees, and documentation for accommodation requests (if applicable) – must be submitted to Argentum before an Applicant can be approved to take the CDAL examination. Individuals who receive a Group Discount will need to include a Promo Code provided by Argentum in the appropriate place within the CDAL Application Form.

Applications may be submitted at any time but must be received by Argentum at least **21 days** in advance of the exam administration date to allow time for processing. If requesting an accommodation (see Accommodations for Candidates with Disabilities), the application must be received by Argentum at least 30 days in advance of testing. Completed applications will be evaluated and Applicant eligibility determined within 14 business days following receipt by Argentum.

Applicants who submit their application before they have fully satisfied the experience/education requirements will be ruled ineligible for participation in the CDAL program. Individuals who submit incomplete applications will be notified that their application will not be processed until all required information and materials have been received.

NOTE: You must apply using the name that appears on the government-issued photo identification that you will use to enter the testing center to sit for your examination.

Candidate Status
Applicants who have been approved to take the CDAL examination are considered CDAL candidates. Candidates have **12 months** from their initial application date to pass the CDAL exam, although this timeframe may be relaxed as appropriate (i.e., during a pandemic).

Fees for Initial Certification
The CDAL fee includes initial application processing, access to Argentum's Executive Director of Assisted Living online learning course, one CDAL Practice Test administration, and one CDAL Examination administration.

The Application Form must be submitted with appropriate payment and is non-refundable. However, this fee will be refunded if the Applicant is deemed ineligible for participation in the CDAL program.

Argentum Member Rate
Individuals employed by an Argentum member company, or a company that is a member of a partner association (including State Partners), are eligible for a discounted rate of $750.

Others
All other individuals will be charged an application fee of $995.

Reexamination Fee
Candidates may re-take the CDAL examination after a 45-day wait period and within the 12-month eligibility period for $125. Candidates will be allowed no more than three (3) testing attempts within a 12-month period. If a candidate has not successfully passed the exam within 12 months from the date of application, he/she must reapply and pay the full application and examination fees again.

Reexamination fees can be paid at this link.

Accommodations for Candidates with Disabilities
Candidates with documented visual, physical, hearing or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking an examination under standard conditions, may request special testing accommodations using this Request for Testing Accommodation Form. This Form must be submitted at least 30 days in advance of the testing appointment.

Argentum requires written documentation of the disability from the candidate's doctor or from another qualified medical professional on the professional's letterhead. This written documentation must accompany the CDAL Application Form at the time application is made. There is no extra fee for making these arrangements.

Reasonable accommodations provide candidates with disabilities a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill in the essential functions being measured by the examination. Reasonable accommodations are decided based on the individual's specific request, disability, documentation submitted, and appropriateness of the request. Reasonable accommodations do not include steps that fundamentally alter the purpose or nature of the exam.

For more information regarding reasonable accommodations, please contact Argentum at (703) 562-1187 or learn@argentum.org.

Eligibility Appeals/Requests for Reconsideration

Argentum is committed to a fair appeals process for any applicant, candidate, or certification holder with any adverse outcome of a decision. Applicants who have submitted a completed application and who are notified that they do not meet the eligibility requirements, or who submitted a completed Request for Accommodations Form and were denied a requested accommodation, may appeal this decision in accordance with the process outlined in Appendix B: Appeals.

CDAL Examination Options

Once all eligibility requirements have been met and approved via the application process, an applicant becomes a Candidate, eligible to sit for the CDAL certification examination. Successful completion of the certification examination is a requirement for CDAL certification.

The CDAL examination is offered for computer-based testing at proctored test centers around the world through Argentum's provider, Kryterion. Click here to find Kryterion test centers in your area. (This list is subject to change.)

The CDAL examination is also available via online proctoring, allowing candidates to test from home or office using a computer that has a functioning camera and microphone. If you're considering this option, consider reviewing Online Testing Requirements: What You Need to Know.

SCHEDULING THE EXAM

The CDAL Examination is administered at conveniently located testing centers around the world and may be offered in conjunction with industry events. Applicants are required to indicate on the application form whether they intend to take the CDAL exam at a local computer-based testing center, or using the online proctoring system.

Exams at Testing Centers

Once authorized for testing, candidates will receive a login and password that can be used to log in and self-schedule the exam through Webassessor, Argentum's online registration system. Candidates will select the test center location, date, and time of exam administration appointment.

After scheduling the examination, the candidate will receive an automated email confirming the appointment date, time, and location of the test center. The message will include test center check-in and identification requirements. The confirmation includes a unique Test Taker Authorization Code. Candidates must bring a copy of the confirmation message to the test center on the day of the exam.

Online Proctored Exams

Candidates may take the CDAL exam via Kryterion's online proctoring system. Using the login and password you receive via email, you may self-schedule the exam through Webassessor. Candidates interested in the online proctored exam must select this version of the CDAL exam: "CDAL Certification Exam – ONLINE" (product code PR000010).

After scheduling the examination, candidates will receive an automated email confirmation. This confirmation will include instructions to install Kryterion's Sentinel system on the computer they plan to use for the exam, and create a Biometric Profile.

Cancellations

Kryterion requires 72-hours' notice for exam cancellations. Cancellations may be made by following the instructions in the exam confirmation message.

Rescheduling

Individuals who cancel at least 72 hours in advance may re-schedule by contacting Argentum at (703) 562- 1187 or learn@argentum.org. Individuals who fail to cancel their exam at least 72 hours (three days) in advance shall forfeit the examination fee and will not be eligible to reschedule the exam until the $125 Exam Retake fee is paid.

Exam Retakes

Candidates who do not pass the CDAL examination may contact Argentum to schedule another exam attempt within 12 months of the original application submission date. The fee for each exam re-take is $125. There is a mandatory 45-day waiting period between exam attempts. In addition, unsuccessful candidates are not allowed to take the examination more than three (3) times in a 12-month period.

Reexamination fees can be paid at this link.

EXAM PREPARATION

The CDAL Exam Content Outline (next page) provides an overview of the competency requirements assessed in the CDAL certification examination. Candidates are encouraged to review this Outline to assess their familiarity with these subject as part of their exam preparation strategy.

Argentum Education, Training, and Other Resources

Argentum offers a variety of education and training opportunities for individuals who want to prepare for the CDAL examination. Please note that these resources are available to candidates for informational purposes. These materials are intended to help candidates prepare for the certification exam, however they are NOT designed to teach the entire content of the exam. Reviewing these materials will not guarantee passing the certification exam.

- The **Executive Director of Assisted Living** online learning course consists of 16 modules which teach the learner best practices and fundamental skills in assisted living community leadership and administration. (Enrollment in the course is included as part of the CDAL Application package.)
- The **CDAL Practice Test** contains 50 questions that Candidates can use to assess their readiness for the CDAL Examination. This Practice Test can be taken via computer from home or office. (One administration of the CDAL Practice Test is included as part of the CDAL Application package.)
- The **Sample Test** in this Candidate Handbook, after the Content Outline, may also be helpful in assessing readiness for the exam.

CDAL EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

		TASKS	WEIGHT
I		**PRINCIPLES AND PHILOSOPHY OF ASSISTED LIVING**	**13-14%**
	A	Create options for residents to exercise choice by designing programs and individualized services to maximize resident autonomy and highest level of functioning.	
	B	Create a home-like environment by promoting interpersonal relationships and connections with the community in an engaging, inviting atmosphere to foster autonomy and provide quality of life for residents and their families.	
	C	Establish programs, practices, and environments using collaborative service planning, optimizing building design, organizing groups and committees, and sharing risk to promote a culture of resident independence and to provide residents with a sense of meaning and purpose.	
	D	Establish a positive approach to resident care and services by managing the actions of staff and promoting positive attitudes and respect to foster residents' dignity.	
	E	Administer community policies and procedures by complying with applicable ethical standards and/or codes of conduct for resident care and business practices to ensure the integrity of the organization.	
	F	Integrate flexible practices and programs through strategic planning that emphasizes affordability, economic value, and continuing innovation in senior living options to promote choices for seniors.	
	G	Uphold the assisted living service model and what sets it apart from institutionalized settings to promote public and stakeholder understanding about its historical development and role in housing and healthcare continuums.	
II		**RESIDENT CARE AND SERVICES**	**14-15%**
	A	Articulate the scope of the community's care and services based on available resources and regulatory requirements to meet resident needs, educate stakeholders, and/or to make appropriate referrals.	
	B	Manage the process of the initial and ongoing assessment or appraisal of resident health, cognitive and functional status, psychosocial needs, and preferences by ensuring personnel are proficient and procedures are appropriate to individualize a plan of care that promotes holistic health and wellness.	
	C	Manage the process of development, documentation, communication, and implementation of individualized plans of care and service using assessment or appraisal data and other appropriate information to monitor and optimize resident outcomes.	
	D	Manage a systematic documentation process usable by designated staff according to established standards to maximize resident care and services.	
	E	Communicate care and services to the resident, family, or other responsible party in accordance with established procedures and requirements to facilitate understanding.	

	F	Manage the coordination of care services with ancillary and third-party providers in accordance with established procedures and requirements to maximize access to needed services.	
	G	Manage resident emergencies by establishing systems and protocols to provide adequate and appropriate care.	
	H	Manage the coordination of a multi-faceted life enrichment program for residents that addresses all dimensions of wellness to encourage social engagement and enhance quality of life.	
	I	Verify that dining service, choices, and special diets comply with current guidelines to provide healthy options and adequate nutrition and hydration.	
	J	Demonstrate knowledge of the aging process, geriatric syndromes, cognitive/memory impairment and dementias, chronic diseases and health services trends to manage the community effectively.	
	K	Establish a system that provides for the identification, investigation, and analysis of high-risk situations and appropriate responses to them in order to ensure resident and staff safety.	
III	**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**		**12-13%**
	A	Create a positive first impression by establishing community-specific greeting processes to build rapport with customers.	
	B	Personalize interaction with prospects, residents, families, vendors, and stakeholders by offering a resident centered approach to care, programming, and services to achieve satisfaction.	
	C	Create an effective communication process to identify needs and preferences, address inquiries and requests, and resolve grievances in a timely manner to ensure conflict resolution, transparency, and trust.	
	D	Create quality improvement initiatives using customer satisfaction results to drive positive outcomes.	
	E	Empower staff and ancillary service providers to engage with customers by implementing service standards to personalize the community experience.	
	F	Manage the coordination of transportation services using established standards and processes to meet the medical and other needs of residents.	
IV	**LEADERSHIP**		**11-12%**
	A	Determine the engagement level of all employees using appropriate surveys and tools in order to meet the employees' and company's needs and ensure organizational alignment.	
	B	Manage human resources policies and practices (e.g., hiring, compensation, payroll, benefits, workplace safety) as they relate to the staff and organizational alignment to ensure a sufficient number of qualified staff.	
	C	Create a culture of learning based on core, organizational principles in order to maximize employee potential and ultimately attain business goals.	
	D	Execute the community's vision, mission, and strategy using specific goals and objectives in order to ensure a sustainable market position.	
	E	Employ leadership and management tactics in order to empower employees to achieve company goals.	

	F	Manage change using accepted methods and practices in order to meet the needs of the evolving business environment.	
	G	Participate in external organizations and events to contribute to the community at large, raise awareness of assisted living, and elevate professional knowledge.	
V	**OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT**		**13-14%**
	A	Direct proper food handling, storage, and preparation to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations for food safety and sanitation.	
	B	Manage the dining experience and service delivery in accordance with community standards and/or best practices to meet resident needs and preferences.	
	C	Maintain the physical plant, life safety, and transportation provisions consistent with regulatory and legal requirements through regular housekeeping, maintenance, internal reviews, and third-party inspections in order to provide a healthy and safe environment for residents, staff, and visitors.	
	D	Manage third party contractors in accordance with established agreements in order to ensure that quality goods and services are provided.	
	E	Use technology systems and processes that support resident care and community operations to improve efficiency, quality, and compliance.	
	F	Establish a system that provides for the identification, investigation, response, and analysis of incidents or accidents including those that involve events that require self- reports to regulatory agencies in order to minimize risk and future occurrences.	
	G	Manage crisis communication using appropriate modalities to ensure the accuracy of content and timeliness of information to inform stakeholders, mitigate risk, and deploy essential resources.	
	H	Establish quality assessment and performance improvement plans in order to verify compliance, enhance customer experience, and revise community standards and practice.	
VI	**REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**		**12-13%**
	A	Manage formal and informal methods for educating employees on federal, state, and local regulations and organizational policy for their respective areas in order to promote compliance.	
	B	Maintain ongoing compliance with federal regulations that pertain to the assisted living community (e.g., Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)) by reviewing quality assessment audit documents, implementing an interdisciplinary team survey management process, and periodically assessing staff performance to ensure health and safety.	
	C	Maintain ongoing compliance with state and local regulations that pertain to the assisted living community by reviewing quality assessment audit documents, implementing an interdisciplinary team survey management process, and periodically assessing staff performance to ensure health and safety.	
	D	Oversee the correction process when noncompliance is identified by authorizing necessary resources, ensuring the plan of correction is accurate and timely, and ensuring that systems are in place for ongoing and sustained corrections in order to minimize risk and mitigate future enforcement action.	

	E	Foster professional relationships with regulatory agencies by participating in inspections, following up on issues promptly and effectively, and working transparently to refine understanding and improve compliance.	
VII	**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**		**12-13%**
	A	Prepare budgets by analyzing historical operating trends, current benchmarks, and capital needs in order to project and manage future performance.	
	B	Analyze ongoing key financial indicators, historical trends, and market intelligence in order to forecast performance and achieve and/or surpass established financial goals.	
	C	Manage revenue and cost performance by analyzing financial reports and trends in order to make sound fiscal decisions and maintain viability.	
	D	Evaluate the cost effectiveness of the equipment, services, and activities valued by stakeholders using established measures and formulas to make decisions about cost benefit.	
	E	Manage workforce labor needs in alignment with organizational goals, census, and complexity of care by forecasting the needs of residents to balance quality of care and financial outcomes.	
VIII	**SALES AND MARKETING**		11-12%
	A	Meet occupancy and revenue targets by implementing training, understanding sales metrics, and holding staff accountable for results.	
	B	Create an annual marketing plan with budget recommendations to provide direction and adequate resources to generate qualified leads.	
	C	Manage a grassroots professional outreach program by building relationships and demonstrating outcomes to drive qualified referrals and reciprocity.	
	D	Communicate the options for senior living to prospective residents and their families to facilitate the selection of product/service type.	
	E	Manage regular competitive analyses by evaluating the position of your community in comparison to competitors to identify community advantages.	
TOTAL			100%

Sample Exam Questions
The following questions were taken from the examination question repository and serve as samples ONLY of the question type and content found on the examination. The answer key appears at the end of the Sample Test.

1. A community has a budgeted occupancy of 110 residents, but has a current occupancy of 95. On a budget of 0.60 hours per resident day in the dining services department, how many hours per day should be scheduled?
   A. 57
   B. 60
   C. 66
   D. 95

2. What is the BEST way to analyze sales staff performance?
   A. Routinely evaluate the number of sales per lead by individual sales staff against established goals and standards
   B. Perform post move-in resident satisfaction surveys to compare the sales process against established goals and standards.
   C. Collect statistics for individual sales staff and review them against established goals and standards.
   D. Review follow-up appointments for a single prospect and the appointment-to-conversion rate against established goals and standards.

3. Which law prohibits employment discrimination against recovering drug addicts?
   A. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
   B. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
   C. Civil Rights Act (Title VII)
   D. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

4. A resident bumped her head during a fall but has no apparent injury. The community's policy states that all residents who are known to have hit their head must be evaluated medically in a hospital. The resident does not want to go to the hospital, and her responsible party insists on not sending her to the hospital. **What should the team do**?
   A. Call the physician and ask for advice.
   B. Follow the community's policies and procedures
   C. Have the responsible party stay with the resident or hire a private duty aide to observe her for changes over the next 48 hours.
   D. Negotiate with the responsible party that the team will watch the resident closely for changes and send her for evaluation only if the resident agrees.

5. Which is a **BEST** practice for determining whether a community is appropriate for a prospective resident?
   A. Complete an admission checklist with the resident and family.
   B. Conduct a face-to-face interview with the family.
   C. Obtain a physician order that the resident is appropriate.
   D. Complete a comprehensive assessment of the potential resident.

Sample Question Answer Key

Question Number	Correct Answer	Domain
1	A	7
2	C	8
3	B	4
4	B	2
5	D	2

TAKING THE EXAM

Please note that Candidates must present **two valid forms of identification** at the test site. The name on the identification must match the name of the Applicant, as shown on the CDAL Application Form.

- Acceptable forms of identification include signed, unexpired driver's licenses, passports, and government-issued identification cards.
- Unacceptable forms of identification include gym memberships, warehouse memberships, school identification cards, credit cards, and identification with signature only (no photo).

Testing Time
Your scheduled test appointment time is three (3) hours. Candidates are asked to arrive at the test center 15 minutes in advance of the exam start time.

If you are taking the Online Proctored Exam, it is recommended that you download the required software and ensure that your computer is set up properly at least 24 hours in advance of your exam start time.

During the examination, you will have the opportunity to review questions, change answers, mark questions to come back to, or skip questions. Should your time expire while taking the exam, all answers, regardless of how they are marked, will be calculated into your score. Once your allotted time has expired, or you exit the examination, you cannot see or review the questions again.

Examination Rules
Argentum and Kryterion follow standard testing industry rules and policies as outlined below.

Test Aids
Please note that you are encouraged to bring a basic four-function, non-programmable calculator to the test center to assist you with basic calculations. If you are testing at a computer-based testing center, you will also have access to the on-screen calculator. Please note that mobile phones are NOT allowed.

Prohibited Items
Candidates are expressly prohibited from bringing the following items to the test site:

- Cameras, cell phones, optical readers, or other electronic devices that include the ability to photograph, photocopy, or otherwise copy test materials
- Notes, books, dictionaries, or language dictionaries
- Book bags or luggage
- iPods, MP3 players, headphones, or pagers
- Programmable calculators, computers, PDAs, or other electronic devices with memory
- Personal writing utensils (i.e., pencils, pens, and highlighters)
- Watches
- Food and beverage
- Hats, hoods, or other headgear

If the proctor determines that you have brought any such items to the testing center, they may be demanded and held for an indefinite period by Argentum/Kryterion testing personnel. We reserve the right to review the memory of any electronic device that may be in your possession at the testing center to determine whether any test materials have been photographed or otherwise copied.

If our review determines that any test materials are in the memory of any such device, we reserve the right to delete such materials and/or retain them for subsequent disciplinary action. Upon completion of our review and any applicable deletions, we will return your device to you, but will not be responsible for the deletion of any materials that may result from our review, whether or not such materials are test materials.

By bringing any such device into the test site in contravention of our policies, you expressly waive any confidentiality or other similar rights with respect to your device, our review of the memory of your device and/or the deletion of any materials. Argentum/Kryterion, the testing center, and the test administration staff are not liable for lost or damaged items brought to the examination site.

Exam Security
Exam security is a serious matter. In addition to leaving all personal items outside of the exam room, candidates may be asked to turn pockets inside out, as well as show that nothing is hidden under shirt sleeves and the hems of pants legs. Also note that most sites record testing sessions. Candidates caught with prohibited items in the exam room risk exam invalidation, disciplinary action, assessment of monetary damages, and/or legal liability.

The examination content is copyrighted and is strictly confidential information. You are strictly prohibited from retaining, copying, distributing, disclosing, discussing, possessing or receiving any examination content, including even partial questions, by written, electronic, oral or other form of communication. This includes, but is not limited to, emailing, copying or printing of electronic files, reconstructing content through memorization and/or dictation, before, during or after the examination. Doing so may result in disciplinary action, assessment of monetary damages and legal liability. By proceeding further with the examination process, you are acknowledging and agreeing that you understand these restrictions and the consequences if you break these restrictions.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Candidates testing at a local computer-based test center will typically receive their exam results immediately after the exam is submitted. The exam results will appear on-screen and will automatically be sent to the candidate, and Argentum, via email.

Please note:
- Results may be delayed up to 60 days following release of new or revised exams.
- Examination results will be released to the candidate only.
- Exam results will not be released by telephone.

The passing score for the CDAL examination was established using a criterion-referenced standard setting process. Candidates are not required to pass each content domain separately. Pass/fail status is determined by the total number of questions answered correctly.

Candidates are provided feedback on their performance in each content domain. This information is provided solely for informational purposes.

Certificates
Candidates who pass the CDAL examination and are granted certification will receive a certificate including the certificant's name, the date the individual was initially certified, the expiration date, and a unique certification number. These certificates remain the property of Argentum.

RECERTIFICATION & MAINTAINING YOUR CDAL CERTIFICATION

Address Updates: Communicating Changed Contact Information
One of the most important aspects of maintaining your CDAL certification is to communicate updated contact information when you change employers, move to a new residence, get a new phone number, and/or get a new email address. This is how Argentum notifies you of important issues related to your certification, including recertification notices and critical program updates.

Recertification
Argentum uses recertification to promote continued competence and proficiency as the senior living industry changes over time. The following elements of this program have been established to define the standards of a CDAL in good standing:

1. Base Recertification Requirements
2. Scope Expansion Measures (when applicable)
3. Recertification Fees

Purpose and Rationale
Argentum's goals for recertification are to promote continued competence and proficiency as the assisted living industry and the role of its executive directors continue to evolve. CDAL recertification provides added incentive to stay current with best practices and gain a broader view of the industry. Recertification contributes to the collective reputation and overall professionalism of CDALs as leaders in managing the delivery of quality care in assisted living.

Recertification Schedule
As part of maintaining certification, CDALs are responsible for meeting established recertification requirements every three years. Individuals are required to recertify by December 31 of the year recertification is due to remain certified in good standing.

During their initial certification cycle, newly certified CDALs follow a slightly different schedule. If certification is granted on or before June 30th of a given year, that year serves as the first year of the three-year cycle, and CDAL certification expires December 31st two years later. If initial certification is earned on or after July 1st of a given year, then the certification expiration date is December 31st three years later.

Initial Certification Date	Recertification Date
January – June of Year 1	December 31 of Year 3 & every 3 years thereafter
July – December of Year 1	December 31 of Year 4 & every 3 years thereafter

Example: If an individual earns CDAL certification in May 2023, recertification is due by December 31, 2025. If certification is earned in July 2023 (or later that year), the first recertification is due by December 31, 2026 to remain certified in good standing. After the initial certification period, the certification will expire and require recertification by the end of the three-year cycle.

Base Recertification Requirements
To recertify:

1. Pay the CDAL recertification fee of $300 by December 31st of the year recertification is due.
2. Demonstrate having earned at least thirty (30) CEUs from an acceptable source from the time of initial certification. (Note: Continuing Professional Development as defined herein may be substituted for up to 10 CEUs.)
3. Meet any Scope Expansion Measures (if applicable – see below).
4. Submit a signed, completed CDAL Recertification Application Form by December 31st of the year recertification is due, or within the grace period.

Applications will not be considered complete unless they include all required information, are signed by the applicant, and are accompanied by full payment of specified fees.

Pre-approved Sources for Continuing Education
Continuing education units (CEUs) from a National Association of Long-Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB)-approved provider are pre-approved for use toward CDAL recertification.

Alternate Sources of Continuing Education
Argentum will accept alternate sources of continuing education that meet the following criteria:

- The continuing education content reasonably relates to the role of assisted living executive director (e.g., content is related to resident care and services, safety, customer experience, operations management, regulatory compliance, leadership, sales/marketing, finance, or other content pertinent to senior living);
- The continuing education content was available to the public (i.e., the content was not proprietary/restricted to company personnel);
- The number of hours of continuing education being requested is included as part of the request;
- The source of continuing education can be verified by SLCC (i.e., you will need proof of attendance or similar confirmation.)

Sources of Continuing Education that will be considered for CDAL recertification include events sponsored by Argentum, its state partners, colleges/universities, training organizations (e.g., Relias), or

other industry organizations. Courses offered online and in-person can qualify. Please contact Argentum staff with any questions regarding alternate sources of continuing education.

Continuing Professional Development
Continual Professional Development as defined within the options below may be substituted for up to 10 CEUs.

- Presenting a webinar, workshop, or training/conference session: 2 CEUs each
- Certification Test Development: 2 CEUs per hour
- Peer-reviewed publications/papers/articles: 5 CEUs each

Audits
Recertification submittals will be randomly selected for audit. If selected for audit, the CDAL certificant must provide documentation of continuing education activities in order to recertify. NOTE: all recertification activities submitted after the due date are subject to audit.

Argentum staff will provide for the competent review of all applications. Certificants who are found to have met the criteria for recertification are awarded certification for the upcoming three-year period, beginning on the expiration of their current certification.

When certificants are found not to have met the criteria for renewal, they will be provided a clear written explanation of the deficiencies, with reference to applicable Argentum published requirements and policies.

Certificants whose applications for renewal are found to be incomplete or deficient will be considered inactive (i.e., not in good standing) and have 366 calendar days from the date they are notified of such to submit evidence that they have satisfied all requirements for renewal. Applicants who cannot or do not do so within this time and wish to be recognized as certified thereafter will be required to submit an entirely new application that will be evaluated against the then-current eligibility requirements.

Scope Expansion
The scope and content of the CDAL certification program will change from time to time as industry best practices evolve and the tasks performed by assisted living executive directors are changed. These revisions will typically follow completion of a CDAL Job Task Analysis Study, with the role of assisted living executive director targeted for reevaluation approximately every five to seven years.

Additional recertification requirements may be established following adoption of a revised CDAL scope, including completion of targeted education, completion of one or more quizzes, and possibly retesting, depending on the extent of the scope revisions. The goal of this activity is to maintain consistency in the competence of CDALs as the program evolves.

Recertification Fees
Upon submitting the CDAL Recertification Application Form, applicants will be redirected to Argentum's secure payment portal to complete payment using a credit card. A receipt will be sent to the email address entered during processing. These fees are payable by December 31st the year recertification is due. It is the CDAL's responsibility to ensure that the fee is paid by the due date. The recertification fee is $300 and covers a three-year period.

Failure to Recertify and/or Pay Recertification Fee

In the years in which recertification is due, if the individual does not submit documentation and pay the applicable fees by the December 31st due date, a $100 late fee may be assessed. There is a grace period for recertification, during which time the CDAL's status will remain active. However, if fees are not paid and/or the recertification process is still incomplete as of the following April 30th, the individual's status is changed to withdrawn and the certification is no longer valid.

Individuals who subsequently wish to restore their certification after the grace period has lapsed must go through the initial certification process again, including paying all applicable fees and re-taking the certification examination.

NOTE: If your CDAL certification has lapsed, please contact Argentum staff at learn@argentum.org.

Recertification Appeals

Argentum is committed to a fair appeals process for any applicant, candidate, or certificant with any adverse outcome of a decision. Individuals for whom recertification or reapplication are denied may file an appeal to Argentum (see the CDAL Candidate Handbook, Appendix B: Appeals).

APPENDIX A: EXAM PREPARATION TIPS

How to Study
Argentum encourages candidates to prepare for the examination by using available resources. Argentum serves the senior living industry by providing professional development for assisted living community executive directors. However, completion of Argentum's education or training is not a prerequisite or component of the CDAL program. Candidates may select any training they wish, and completion of Argentum's training will not provide any advantage over completion of any other quality training program.

Create your study plan and review methods well in advance of the examination. Think about the study method that is best for you (e.g., individual review, study group, class) and the types of materials that are most helpful (e.g., textbooks, audio or video programs, outlines, memory aids). It may also be helpful to use materials given to you during training activities related to your work.

Managing Test Anxiety
A little anxiety regarding test taking can be helpful because it stimulates and motivates you to perform at your best; however, severe anxiety can hinder test performance. If you know that you frequently experience severe test anxiety, consider preparing yourself for the examination by developing coping mechanisms to make your tension work for you.

Before the day of the examination, visualize and rehearse the testing situation. Imagine yourself taking the examination with a positive attitude and focused, calm behavior.

Take measures to reduce your stress during the examination. Use deep-breathing techniques, and be sure to stretch your muscles periodically. Such exercises can reduce both physical and mental stress. If necessary, take a few minutes to imagine a calm, pleasant scene, and repeat positive phrases.

Do not let the comments or behavior of testing personnel or other examinees make you anxious. As examinees are taking different versions of the examination, as well as entirely different examinations, examinees will finish at different times – some finishing very early, others taking the full three (3) hours. Examinees who finish more quickly than you may not perform any better than you. Everyone works at his or her own speed. Some of the best test performers routinely use the total allocated time.

Remember that (a) there is no limit to the number of examinees who can receive passing scores, (b) there is no bonus for completing the examination early, and (c) you are not competing with anyone else to pass the exam.

Eating well, avoiding too much alcohol, and maintaining a regular sleep pattern for several days before the examination will help you to be physically prepared. Also, on the day you take the test, choose comfortable clothing.

Finally, your best method for controlling your anxiety is to feel prepared for the test. Designing a study plan well in advance will help you to be successful.

Tips for Taking the Examination

- Budget your time well. Because you will have three (3) hours to complete 131 questions, you will want to complete more than half of the exam (75 questions) in less than half the time (90 minutes). This is so you will have extra time after completing the full examination to review questions you either skipped or marked for review. Also, allow time so that every hour you can take a minute or so to relax your eyes and stretch your neck and hand muscles.

- Read each question carefully, focusing on what is being asked. If you are uncertain about the answer but nevertheless want to give a tentative response at the time, mark the test question to indicate that you want to review the question and your answer if time allows. Go back to questions marked in this manner after completing the entire test.

- Read all options before selecting your answer. Always select the best choice.

- Do not overanalyze or try to "read into" a question. Questions are not written to be tricky. Do not assume additional information beyond what is given in the test question. All information necessary to answer the question will be given in the text of the question or scenario.

- Test questions are based upon an accepted knowledge base as outlined in the test content outline. Choose options that you know to be correct in any setting, not just your place of employment.

- If there are questions including the words "not," "except," or "least," answer with particular care because you will be looking for the exception. These questions involve a reversal of your usual thought patterns.

- Pay close attention to key words such as "best," "most," "primary," or "usually." These words indicate that other options may at times be correct, but given the wording or situation in the test question, you must judge which option is the best.

- Skip difficult questions and come back to them later. Questions on the test are not ordered by difficulty (i.e., they do not go from easiest to hardest). Also, content areas (the domains) and topics are addressed randomly in questions throughout the test.

- Answer every question. Go through the entire test, answering the questions you believe you know and skipping the ones you do not. Leave time at the end of the testing period to go back to the questions you skipped or want to review.

- If reading English is difficult for you because English is not your primary language, maximize your time by reading and answering all the shorter questions first. After completing the short questions, go back and attempt to answer the longer questions.

APPENDIX B: APPEALS/REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION

Argentum is committed to a fair appeals process for all applicants, candidates and certificants who face an adverse decision. Adverse decisions by Argentum may include but are not limited to:

1. Denial of adequacy of credentials related to eligibility determination.
2. Denial of certification or recertification for an individual.

In the event of an adverse decision by Argentum, the applicant, candidate, or certificant will be informed of the decision and of the procedure for appealing the adverse decision. Any individual desiring to appeal Argentum's adverse decision must adhere to the following:

1. The appeal must be submitted in writing and received by Argentum staff within 60 calendar days of the date that notice of the adverse decision was issued by Argentum. The request for appeal must include:
   - The Appellant's name;
   - Statement of the facts giving rise to the adverse decision;
   - Identification of the provisions of Argentum policy or of state or federal statutes, regulations, or guidelines purportedly being violated; and
   - Appellant's contention with respect to the alleged violation and basis for appealing the adverse decision, as well as the supporting documentation, if any.
2. The applicant or certificant is responsible for demonstrating that the appeal should be granted. The appeal must be based on the grounds that Argentum has ruled erroneously by:
   - Disregarding the established criteria for certification,
   - Failing to follow its established procedure, or
   - Failing to consider relevant evidence and documentation presented.

If the evidence presented appears, on its face, to justify the appeal, Argentum will forward the petition to the Argentum Board of Directors for adjudication. Otherwise, the request for appeal will be denied and communicated to the appellant.

For appeals requests that are accepted, the appellant may, at the discretion of Argentum, be invited to appear at the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors at the expense of the appellant. Argentum staff will review the request , will investigate the adverse decision, and report its findings and recommendation to the Argentum Board of Directors. The board will make the final determination, and report this back to Argentum staff.

Argentum staff will notify the appellant of the determination. This decision will be delivered in writing by mail to the individual not more than 30 calendar days after the Board of Directors meeting.

APPENDIX C: Argentum Code of Conduct - *Developed by the Senior Living Certification Commission.*

Introduction
The SLCC Code of Conduct applies to individuals credentialed by Argentum as Certified Assisted Living Executive Directors and those who are candidates for certification. All applicants and certificants are required to adhere to the SLCC Code of Conduct (Code). Violation of any portion of the Code may result in disciplinary action as outlined in the disciplinary policy.

Purpose
Assisted Living Community Executive Directors are responsible for the overall management of assisted living communities. The Executive Director works to ensure residents' choice, independence, individuality, dignity, quality of life, and quality of care, in a home-like environment. Executive Directors are also responsible for the work of staff, vendors, and providers, as well as the interests of residents, family members, owners, and other key stakeholders. They execute policies that address safety, risk, regulatory compliance, and quality, and provide overall direction for the community within guidelines set up by the owner, board of directors, or similar governing body. Additional responsibilities are resident and family relations. The plan, direct, or coordinate operational activities at the highest level of management with the help of staff managers.

The Code establishes the basic ethical standards for the professional behavior of certificants and candidates for certification (candidates). The Code is designed to provide both appropriate and ethical practice guidelines and enforceable standards of conduct.

Code of Conduct
The SLCC has established professional standards designed to serve Executive Directors, employers, the assisted living community team and, most importantly, residents and their families. First and foremost, Argentum certificants and candidates, in their role as Executive Directors, exemplify the principles of choice, dignity, independence, and quality of life for seniors.

Argentum certificants and candidates have the obligation to: maintain high standards of integrity and professional conduct, accept responsibility for their actions, continually seek to enhance their professional capabilities, administer communities with fairness and honesty, and, encourage others to act in a professional manner, consistent with the certification standards and responsibilities set forth below.

Section 1: Adherence to Legal Requirements
1. Adhere to all applicable state and/or federal laws and all applicable rules and regulations that apply to assisted living care and the Executive Director role.
2. Maintain any required certifications, licenses, operating licenses, etc., in compliance with applicable state regulations.
3. Adhere to all applicable nondiscrimination laws and refrain from discrimination in professional activities, including relationships with employees, employers, residents and their families, and other professionals.
4. Refrain from public behavior that is clearly in violation of professional, ethical, and/or legal standards that apply to assisted living Executive Directors.

Section 2: Adherence to Argentum Policies and Requirements

1. Follow all Argentum certification program policies, procedures, requirements, and rules. This includes the obligation to be aware of and understand these policies and requirements.
2. Provide accurate and complete information to Argentum concerning certification and recertification.
3. Cooperate with Argentum regarding matters related to the Code of Conduct, complaint investigations, and/or disciplinary matters.
4. Keep confidential all certification examination information, including preventing any unauthorized disclosures of exam information.
5. Report candidate or certificant violations of the Code of Conduct to Argentum involving violations of the law, violations of state regulations, and/or violations that affect the health and/or safety of a resident.

Section 3: Professional Performance

1. Deliver competent services in the assisted living Executive Director role.
2. Treat employees, residents, and residents' families with fairness and respect.
3. Maintain the confidentiality of private and sensitive information, unless there is a mandate to report or other legal obligation to disclose the information.
4. Appropriately disclose any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest and avoid conduct that could cause a conflict of interest.
5. Establish a safe environment for residents and staff through appropriate systems that enhance resident and employee safety.
6. Establish adequate financial controls to protect residents and employers against financial crimes.
7. Promote quality staffing through appropriate hiring practices, including background checks and drug screening as required, and by providing specialized training.
8. Support resident rights of informed choice, independence, dignity, and privacy to the extent possible and appropriate.
9. Make available a consumer-friendly disclosure document to prospective residents.
10. Promote a zero-tolerance environment in regard to abuse by appropriately reporting abuse and providing training to residents, families, and staff in order to provide for the detection, reporting and prevention of elder abuse.
11. Act honestly in the conduct of professional responsibilities and in all professional interaction with others.
12. Properly use professional titles, degrees, and all credentials and provide accurate and truthful information regarding education, experience, qualifications, and the performance of services.

APPENDIX D: USE OF CDAL CERTIFICATION MARKS & LOGOS

The CDAL certification mark and logo are the property of Argentum. Permission to use the certification mark or logo is granted to CDAL certificants at the discretion of Argentum, for permissible uses only.

After receiving notification of certification, the CDAL credential may be used only while certification remains valid and in good standing. Individuals may not use the CDAL designation until they have received specific written notification that they have successfully completed all requirements for CDAL certification, including passing the exam. Certificants must comply with all verification and recertification requirements to maintain use of the credential.

Certificants will receive a certificate that includes their name, credential awarded, expiration date, and other information. The certificate may only be displayed during the time period for which the credential is valid. Certificates remain the property of Argentum and must be promptly returned upon request.

CDAL marks and logos may be used only on business cards, stationery, letterhead, and similar documents on which the name of the individual certified is prominently displayed.

CDAL marks and logos may not be used in any manner that could bring the CDAL program, Argentum, or the SLCC, into disrepute, or in any way that may be considered misleading or unauthorized.

Use of the mark and logo by individuals who have not been granted and maintained the certification is expressly prohibited. Continued use of the CDAL marks or logos after notice of suspension or revocation will result in legal action, which will be pursued to the full extent of the law.