

NHA Phlebotomy (CPT) Cheat Sheet 2026

The night-before summary, built like the exam.

120 Scored questions	2h Time limit	390 (scaled, 200-500) Passing score
\$0 Exam fee	NHA Governing body	

Fast-reference facts, must-know rules, and formulas for the NHA CPT certification exam. Bold items are the numbers to memorize cold.

The Exam at a Glance

- 100 scored questions
- 120 minutes (2-hour) time limit
- Passing = scaled score of 390
- Pace: ~ 1.2 min/question — flag-and-move, don't stall

Order of Draw (memorize — most-tested rule)

Sterile blood cultures first, then tubes in additive order to prevent cross-contamination:

1. Blood cultures (yellow / sterile)
2. Light blue — sodium citrate (coagulation; must fill completely for 9:1 ratio)
3. Red / gold / tiger (SST) — clot activator / serum
4. Green — heparin (plasma)
5. Lavender / purple — EDTA (whole blood, CBC)
6. Gray — sodium fluoride / potassium oxalate (glucose, lactate)

Mnemonic: "Boys Love Ravishing Girls, Longing Gently" or "Stop Light Red Stay Put Green Light Go."

Coagulation Tube Fill Rule

Light-blue (citrate) tubes require a 9:1 blood-to-anticoagulant ratio. Underfilled or overfilled tubes = rejected specimen.

Must-Remember Safety & Compliance Rules

- Two patient identifiers before every draw (name + DOB); never rely on room/bed number.
- Never recap a used needle; activate safety device and dispose in the sharps container immediately.
- Standard Precautions: treat all blood/body fluids as infectious.
- Tourniquet time: ≤ 1 minute to avoid hemoconcentration.
- Antiseptic order for routine venipuncture: alcohol; for blood cultures use chlorhexidine and let it dry fully.

Site Selection

- Preferred vein: median cubital, then cephalic, then basilic (basilic last — near the brachial artery and median nerve).
- Avoid: mastectomy-side arm, hematoma, IV/infusion arm, scarred/burned sites.

Common Errors & Fixes

- Hemolysis: vigorous mixing, small-gauge needle, drawing from a line — redraw.
- Hematoma: needle through the vein — release tourniquet, remove, apply pressure.

- Missed vein: reposition slightly; limit to 2 attempts before escalating.

Test-Taking Formula

- Budget checkpoints: ~ 50 questions by the 60-minute mark to stay on pace.
- Answer every question — no penalty for guessing on a scaled-score exam; eliminate two distractors first.

Official sources

- NHA — NHA Candidate Handbook:
https://www.nhanow.com/docs/default-source/test-plans/candidate_handbook.pdf?sfvrsn=2dc93c04_8
- NHA — NHA Renew / Reinstate Certification:
<https://www.nhanow.com/certification/Before-After-Certification/renew-reinstate-certification>
- NHA — NHA Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT) Program Page:
<https://www.nhanow.com/certifications/phlebotomy-technician>

Free practice questions for this exam: www.everyexamprep.com/practice/exams/healthcare/nha-cpt