

aPHR Cheat Sheet 2026

The night-before summary, built like the exam.

65 Questions	1h 45m Time limit	— Passing score
\$300 Exam fee	HR Certification Institute... Governing body	

The numbers to remember

- 65 scored questions
- 25 unscored pretest questions mixed in (you can't tell which is which — answer all with full effort)
- 105 minutes (1 hour 45 minutes) total time limit
- \$300 exam fee + a separate, non-refundable \$100 application fee
- \$150 cancellation/rescheduling fee if you need to change your appointment
- Check in 30 minutes before and no later than 15 minutes after your scheduled online-proctored start time
- Eligibility: high school diploma or global equivalent
- Certification is valid for 3 years; maintaining it requires 45 recertification credit hours

Subtests and scores

The aPHR has one exam session covering all five functional areas — there are no separate subtests to pass individually. HRCI does not publish a specific passing score or cut percentage for the aPHR; don't fixate on hitting an exact percentage in practice, focus instead on consistent accuracy across every functional area.

High-yield review areas

- Compliance & Risk Management (25%) — the single largest area. Employment law basics, workplace safety, recordkeeping.
- Employee Relations (24%) — nearly tied for largest. Workplace conduct, policies, employee experience.
- Talent Acquisition (19%) — recruiting, hiring, and onboarding fundamentals.
- Compensation & Benefits (17%) — pay structures and benefit program basics.
- Learning & Development (15%) — the smallest area, but don't skip it — training and employee growth concepts.

Compliance & Risk Management and Employee Relations together account for nearly half the scored questions. If you're short on time the night before, review those two first.

Top traps

- Don't blank on unsure questions. Since pretest and scored questions look identical, a thoughtful guess beats leaving anything unanswered.
- Don't over-focus on your favorite domain. A strong Learning & Development score can't offset a weak Compliance & Risk Management score if you haven't reviewed all five areas.
- Don't chase a mythical passing percentage. No specific cut score is published — prepare broadly instead of gaming a number.
- Don't forget the cancellation window. Rescheduling after committing costs \$150, so only book a date you're confident about.
- Don't skip the check-in window. Arriving outside the 30-minutes-before to 15-minutes-after window for online proctoring can cost you the appointment entirely.

Official sources

- HR Certification Institute (HRCI) — aPHR - Associate Professional in Human Resources | HRCI:
<https://www.hrci.org/certifications/individual-certifications/aphr>
- HR Certification Institute (HRCI) — aPHR Exam Content Outline (HRCI, official PDF):
https://www.hrci.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/hrci_aphr-exam-content-outline.pdf?sfvrsn=a156174d_2
- HR Certification Institute (HRCI) — OnVUE Online Proctored Testing FAQ (HRCI, official PDF):
https://www.hrci.org/docs/default-source/document-control-2023/onvue-faq-2023.pdf?sfvrsn=28ae08f1_1

Free practice questions for this exam: www.everyexamprep.com/exams/aphr/practice-test