



PA-OPA: The Distinctions

Practitioner	Physician Assistant (PA-C) ⁱ	Orthopedic Physician's Assistants (OPA-C) ⁱⁱ
Education Standards	A master's level graduate degree, ^{iii iv} based on the physician education model that averages 27 months, including 12 months of didactic education and 15 months of clinical rotations.	None "Although not a requirement, it is highly recommended that candidates have at least two years of college work in the sciences before sitting for the Certification Examination for Orthopaedic Physician's Assistants." ^v
Accredited Educational Programs	164 ^{vi}	1 (opened 2011)
Accrediting Body for Educational Programs	Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant	Distance Education and Training Council (DETC)
Education Program Accreditation Participating Organizations	American Academy of Family Physicians American Academy of Pediatrics American Academy of Physician Assistants American College of Physicians American College of Surgeons American Medical Association Physician Assistant Education Association	None
Licensure	All 50 states & District of Columbia Guam, Northern Marianas Islands US Virgin Islands, American Samoa	Tennessee New York (Specialist Assistant Category) California (only graduates from OPA program between 1971-1974 grandfathered)
Certifying Body	National Commission for the Certification of Physician Assistants ^{vii}	National Board for the Certification of Orthopedic Physician Assistants ^{viii}
Certifying Body Participating Organizations	American Academy of Family Physicians American Academy of Pediatrics American Academy of Physician Assistants American College of Emergency Physicians American College of Physicians American College of Surgeons American Hospital Association American Medical Association American Association of Medical Colleges Physician Assistant Education Association Federation of State Medical Boards United States Department of Veterans Affairs	None
Number Certified in United States	75,000 ^{ix}	550 ^x California (26), New York (31), Tennessee (34)



