

PHR study plan and fact sheet

Fact sheet

Credential	Professional in Human Resources (PHR), HR Certification Institute
Cost	\$495. \$395 exam fee plus a \$100 application fee. Fees are nonrefundable once the application is approved.
Eligibility	One of: a master's degree and 1 year of professional-level HR experience, a bachelor's degree and 2 years, or 4 years of HR experience with no degree.
Exam	115 questions (90 scored, 25 pretest) in 2 hours, plus 30 minutes of administration.
Testing	Year-round at Pearson VUE test centers or online through OnVUE remote proctoring.
Pass rate	72% (2025, HRCI)
Recertification	60 HR recertification credits every 3 years, or retake the exam.
Renewal fee	\$169 for one credential, plus \$50 for each additional HRCI credential.

Your PHR study plan

Week 1	Download the official exam outline or handbook, confirm eligibility, and set your exam date.
Weeks 2 to 3	Take a baseline practice test and list your three weakest areas.
Weeks 4 to 7	Study one content area per week, starting with the heaviest weighted.
Weeks 8 to 9	Review weak areas and do timed question sets every other day.
Week 10	Take a full-length timed practice exam under test conditions.
Final week	Light review only. Confirm your appointment, ID, and test center or remote setup.
Typical total	8 to 12 weeks

Preparation tips

- ☐ Download HRCI's exam content outline and build your plan around the heaviest domains.
- ☐ Know the federal laws cold: FLSA, FMLA, Title VII, ADA, ADEA, NLRA, and OSHA basics.
- ☐ Use timed practice tests to build pacing. You'll have just over a minute per question.
- ☐ Schedule early in your eligibility period, so you have time to reschedule if work gets in the way.

Exam day checklist

- ☐ Government-issued ID that matches your application name exactly.
- ☐ Arrive 30 minutes early, or test your remote setup the day before.
- ☐ Know the rescheduling deadline in case something comes up.
- ☐ Plan your renewal: note your cycle end date and credit requirements.

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