



# Health Information Technology

## PPE II and III Handbook

### 2025/2026



# **Welcome to the HIT Professional Practice Experience (PPE)**

## **Courses (124 and 222) at CCCC!**

### **PPE Handbook Objective**

This handbook is to serve as a comprehensive guide for students intending to take the HIT 124 and HIT 222 courses at CCCC. It is intended to provide details to make the students' professional practice experiences run as smoothly as possible. These courses provide live real-world experiences at a health facility so that the student is better prepared for their future entrance into healthcare as a HIM professional. The students will finish their experiences better prepared for the demands of working in the HIM field.

### **PPE II and III Purpose**

#### **PPE II (HIT 124)**

The purpose of the PPE II (HIT 124) is to give the student a general overview and insight of each area in the HIM department. The student will apply classroom knowledge that has been learned in each course to experiences in a live HIM department. The students will also be able to see how each section in the HIM department works together and how the HIM department interacts with other departments throughout the facility. Forty (40) hours is the minimum required that the student must complete for this course; however, more hours are recommended if the site and the student's schedule allow.

#### **PPE III (HIT 222)**

The purpose of the PPE III (HIT 222) is for the student to spend time in a specific department of the student's choice in an area in which they wish to further their career or have an interest in pursuing. The student will spend sixteen (16) hours living "a day in the life" in the area they choose at a healthcare facility, along with spending several hours completing activities in AHIMA's online virtual practice environment. In AHIMA's VLAB, the student will gain experience with multiple real software applications used in the healthcare environment. Additionally, this course aids in preparing students for their initial role in the HIM workforce.

through the completion of job preparation assignments and engaging in personal and professional growth activities from the course textbook, *Personal and Professional Growth for Healthcare Professionals*.

## **What Will Students Do Onsite?**

### **PPE II (HIT 124)**

You will complete a minimum of 40 hours of various tasks assigned by the site supervisor. Some of the health applications/activities may be new to you but your previous HIT courses will have prepared you to turn theory into hands-on practice. You should rotate through many departments and sit with various mentors to learn what they do and then participate in actual hands-on activities if applicable. You should spend at least one hour in each department. Some of the departments/units could be (if available at your facility):

- Release of Information (ROI)
- Electronic Health Records (EHR)
- Admissions/Registration/Patient information
- Medical Records (Assembly, Analysis, Scanning)
- Coding
- Auditing
- Clinical Documentation Improvement (CDI)
- Physician deficiencies/incomplete records
- Billing and Reimbursement
- Filing and Microfilm
- Statistics
- Birth/Cancer registries
- Transcription
- Risk Management/Compliance
- Data Analysis
- Various electronic health applications

### **PPE III (HIT 222)**

You will complete 16 hours face-to-face/onsite in one specific job role/function within HIM that you are most interested in pursuing after graduation. You will sit with one or more mentors, seeing and completing hands-on activities to learn what it would be like to have a career in that role and get a feel for day-to-day job duties. Additionally, 35+ PPE hours will be completed

virtually via simulation activities on AHIMA's virtual lab and submitted on Blackboard for a grade.

### **Things To Know/Do Before Starting Your PPE**

- Carefully read the PPE Handbook to view the expectations and what is required in each of these practicum courses.
- View the course checklist so that you are aware of what needs to be completed during these courses.
- If you are currently working, prepare to take 40 hours off during your next to last semester and 16 hours off during your final semester, from work, to complete your PPE hours. Speak with your supervisor about what will be best; for example, you can use vacation time, take time without pay, or work an alternate schedule to allow time for you to complete your PPE hours.
  - You should plan to complete your PPE hours during normal business hours, Monday-Friday, since most HIM departments are closed nights and weekends.
- Many facilities will require you to receive vaccinations before your experience. These policies and procedures are typically the same whether your PPE is on-site, hybrid, or virtual. You should anticipate that most healthcare organizations will require full vaccination for your PPE. If you are not fully vaccinated and/or do not have plans to be vaccinated at the time of admission to the HIT program, you will need to speak to the HIT Clinical Coordinator to develop a plan for your PPE. It will be your responsibility as a student to secure a PPE site that will accept your vaccination status.
- It's important to recognize the potential health risks associated with any healthcare facility, including the possibility of accidents or exposure to diseases and illnesses. We strongly recommend that you obtain your own comprehensive health and accident insurance to ensure you are covered in the event of an accident or illness exposure at your PPE site. Please note that some healthcare facilities may require proof of your health insurance before you can begin your PPE.
- Daycare/transportation issues (if applicable) need to be arranged before the start of these courses. These issues will not be excusable.
- You will receive academic credit for the learning experience of the PPE; therefore, you should not be used to replace a paid employee in any circumstances.

- If you are completing your PPE hours at the facility where you currently work, you will need to provide verification that your PPE hours were completed outside of your normal work schedule and obligations. You should be learning something new, furthering your education and understanding of health information management concepts.
- You should prepare for the financial costs of PPE above normal tuition such as transportation, parking, lunches, etc.

### **Organizations To Serve As PPE Sites**

The student may complete their PPE hours in any environment that collects and stores patient information. The following are available organization types for consideration:

Academic institutions	Hospital associations
Acute care hospitals	Hospitals
Ambulatory clinics	Information technology departments
Ambulatory surgery	Insurance agencies
Behavioral health facilities	Law offices
Blood centers	Long term care facilities
Chiropractic	Outpatient behavioral health centers
Coding agencies	Pediatric hospitals
Compliance organizations	Pharmaceutical companies
Consulting agencies	Physical therapy and sports rehab
Data analysis organizations	Physician office practices
Dental offices	Primary care associations
Dialysis centers	Professional associations
Disease specialty centers	Public health agencies
Governmental agencies	Rehabilitation facilities
Health departments	Health information organizations
Health information exchanges	State agencies
Healthcare software companies	System vendors

HIM service providers	University health centers
Home health agencies	Veterans Administration
Hospice care centers	

### **3 Places of Interest**

- You should begin brainstorming three practicum sites of where you would like to complete your PPE hours. If the facility you are interested in is not included in the list of approved sites provided below, you must make initial contact with your first-choice site's HIM director/supervisor to see if they are accepting students to complete internships and ask if they would allow you to complete your practicum at their facility.
- When you contact the site of your first choice and the HIM director agrees to allow you to complete your hours there, submit their name, phone number, email address, and then your two additional sites of interest, to Mrs. Barrick, HIT Clinical Coordinator via the PPE Handbook Student Signatures/Site Submission electronic form in the HIT Organization PPE Folder. The clinical coordinator will let you know if you need to contact the second site if something falls through with the first-choice site selected.
- Mrs. Barrick, clinical coordinator, will be in contact throughout this entire process so watch for PPE emails from her throughout the program. PPE II (HIT 124) sites must be submitted **6 months prior** to the start month of your PPE. PPE III (HIT 222) must be submitted **4 months prior** to the start month of your PPE. She will let you know when your due date is for these submissions. Mrs. Barrick will then contact the site to verify and contact you when it is approved to move forward with the process. If it is not approved, we will move on to your second site listed on the site selection form and repeat the same process as outlined.
- Keep in mind that you should plan to go to a facility where you can see yourself working in the future. This is a great opportunity to meet the HIM leadership and team. This experience can be a working interview, meaning you get to show them that you would be a great future employee in their department. Many of our current and past students have obtained employment opportunities from their PPE experience. A hospital is

recommended for HIT 124 (40 hrs) because there are more opportunities to see all HIM processes and how the different departments interact with each other.

- Failure to provide your sites to the coordinator by the deadline (6 months prior for PPE II or 4 months prior for PPE III) will prevent your enrollment in these classes, which will result in your PPE courses being pushed to a future semester and your graduation date being pushed further back as well.
  - **Note: If you wish to go to any of the facilities below, please submit your sites on the electronic form [HERE](#) or via the link in the HIT Organization to Mrs. Barrick (HIT Clinical Coordinator) instead of reaching out to the site. We have already executed affiliation agreements at these organizations, so there is no need for you to make the initial contact with the HIM director. We will contact the site supervisor on your behalf to check availability. For all other facilities, please follow the steps above. All facilities are first-come, first-served and are dependent on department availability and approval from the HIM director. There are times when they may not be accepting any students, which is why submitting your top 3 sites is important.**
    - Advent Health (Hendersonville, NC)
    - Advocate Aurora Health (Remote, NC)
    - Banner Health (Remote, Facilities on the West coast – AZ, CA, CO, etc)
    - Cape Fear Valley Health – includes: Cape Fear (Fayetteville, NC), Betsy Johnson (Dunn, NC), Hoke (Raeford, NC), Highsmith-Rainey (Fayetteville, NC)
    - Catawba Valley Medical Center (Hickory, NC)
    - Central Carolina Hospital (Sanford, NC) (*Rotation Manager Site*) \*
    - Cone Health Alamance Regional (Burlington, NC)
    - Duke Health (Durham, NC) (*Apprenticeship placement site only*)
    - EmergeOrtho (Durham, NC and other various locations)
    - Fayetteville VA Medical Center (Fayetteville, NC)
    - First Health Moore Regional Hospital (Pinehurst, NC) (*Castlebranch Site*) \*\*
    - Good Hope Psychiatric Hospital (Erwin, NC)
    - Liberty Healthcare and Rehabilitation Services facilities; all 37 locations throughout NC (ex: Woodlands, Westfield, Lee Commons)
    - Mission Hospital (Asheville, NC); along with several other HCA Healthcare Hospitals on the western side of NC – check with the clinical coordinator if interested in a different one.

- Novant Health Thomasville Medical Center (Thomasville, NC)
- Randolph Hospital (Asheboro, NC)
- Rutherford County Emergency Medical Services (Spindale, NC)
- UNC Johnston Health (Smithfield, NC)
- UNC Chatham (Siler City, NC)
- UNC Rex Hospital (Raleigh, NC)
- UNC Hospitals – (Chapel Hill, NC)
- WakeMed (Raleigh, NC) *(Rotation Manager Site) \**
- Winn Army Community Hospital – (Fort Stewart, GA)

*\*Rotation Manager: Students are required to pay an additional fee for the facility clearance process to be managed by Rotation Manager; the fee is currently \$39.99 for a year and is subject to change.*

*\*\*Castlebranch: students are required to pay an additional fee for the facility clearance process to be managed by Castlebranch; the fee is currently \$10 and is subject to change.*

*At the time of publication, these are the known sites that utilize these clinical facilitators (Rotation Manager and Castlebranch), however, this is subject to be amended throughout the academic year.*

## **Viewpoint**

Students should order a Viewpoint package (\$121) and make a doctor's appointment to have the immunization and physical form completed around 4 months prior to the start month of your first PPE. (Viewpoint will provide all instructions and guidelines for completing these items). \*Please note **DO NOT** create an account with Viewpoint Screening until you are instructed to do so by the coordinator. Creating an account triggers the background check to run. Doing this early can cause issues with some organizations accepting students' clearance as some require time-specific/sensitive background checks. If it is ordered too early, it may result in the student having to repurchase the package or parts thereof.

When the Coordinator notifies you to begin the Viewpoint process, students will then create an account (which creates the background check), and schedule/complete the drug screening, immunization/health form, and HIPAA training through Viewpoint. **Your package MUST be COMPLETED no later than 2 months prior to the start month of your PPE.** If it is not completed on time, the student will be withdrawn from the course and it will result in the student having to push back their PPE to another semester, reordering/paying for the VP package, and postponing their graduation date.



## **Completing PPE In Your Current Healthcare Work Setting**

The student working in a healthcare facility may complete his or her practicum at the same facility where they are currently working. However, the work performed should be outside of normal daily responsibilities to further the learning of the student.

### **Paid PPE's**

While not common, some circumstances (e.g., completing the PPE at your employer), provide an opportunity for a paid internship. If this experience is being provided to you, it must be communicated to and requested for consideration in the semester prior to the corresponding PPE. CCCC HIT department and CAHIIM do not prohibit a paid internship experience. However, duties and responsibilities must be verified to ensure all standards and compliance measures are met. Students should submit this information to the PPE Coordinator as early as possible.

## **PPE Student Expectations**

### **Attendance**

- Absenteeism and tardiness are considered unprofessional and undesirable traits. While there may be times when you may be absent due to illness or other valid reasons, it is your responsibility to still make up the time.
  - If you are unable to be present during your scheduled hours on a specific day, it is your responsibility to notify the PPE site supervisor and set up arrangements to make up for the missed time. You are also required to notify the coordinator (Mrs. Barrick) of these changes.
  - Every effort should be made to arrive at the site on time. If you are running late, you must contact the PPE site supervisor and provide him or her with an estimated arrival time.
  - Do not ask to leave early. You are expected to complete a certain number of hours in the field to fulfill the PPE experience. If departing early due to an emergency, be sure the arrangement is agreed to by the PPE site supervisor, and that a later visit is arranged to make up for missed hours.

- Excessive absenteeism and tardiness will likely adversely affect your grade for the PPE course.

## **Appearance**

- Practice professionalism by presenting a professional appearance.
  - Adhere to the facility's dress code. Dress in suitable attire in accordance with the PPE site's dress code.
  - For example, women should wear blouses and skirts, dresses, or dress slacks with hose or socks. Men should wear dress shirts, ties, and dress slacks with socks. If the department allows scrubs, scrubs may be worn.
- Jeans, shorts, sneakers, tank tops or t-shirts should not be worn—avoid extremes in jewelry, hairstyles, body piercing, tattoos, and make-up.
- When working in proximity with professional staff, you must be aware of your personal hygiene and scents. Students should aim to be scent/odor-free while on-site at their PPE experience. Odor-related concerns, such as the use of strong perfumes/colognes, tobacco odors, and/or personal hygiene odors (bad breath, flatulence, body odors, and perspiration) will be addressed by the PPE site supervisor in accordance with the facility policies and procedures.
- Wear an identification badge if required at all times, in accordance with the facility policy.
- If there are questions regarding proper attire and appearance, you should discuss them with the site supervisor.

## **Professional Conduct**

- Demonstrate professional conduct throughout the course of the PPE.
- Demonstrate initiative by completing activities as assigned.
- Complete assignments early and ask for additional work rather than waiting for someone to notice. There may be times when clinical personnel are unavailable to work with you. During those times, you should use initiative to interview staff, maintain a PPE log of activity, review policy manuals, and so on.
- Do not use cell phones during practicum hours, including texting. Make personal calls and texts only at breaks and lunchtimes.

- Do not surf the web during practicum hours; this includes checking e-mail and logging into social networking sites.
- Demonstrate a professional attitude during any unexpected situations that might occur. Assist, if possible. Otherwise, be a silent observer or remove oneself from the situation. Remember that much can be learned by observing how other professionals handle difficult situations.
- Utilize professional communication. Be cognizant of the professional titles used in the healthcare setting. Medical professionals, patients, and coworkers should be always addressed in the appropriate manner; (for example, Doctor Jones, Mrs. Smith, or Mr. Johnson)
- Maintain professional relationships. As professionals, you are expected to handle minor difficulties that arise on your own. However, if attempts to solve the situation have been unsuccessful, these matters should be brought to the attention of the PPE site supervisor and the HIT Clinical Coordinator.
- Avoid gossiping or complaining about PPE with site staff or other students. If there are issues, they should be discussed with the HIT Clinical Coordinator.

### **Ethics and Confidentiality**

- You are expected to:
  - Adhere to AHIMA's Code of Ethics
  - Abide by the school's Code of Student Conduct
  - Abide by applicable facility policies and procedures
  - Abide by HIPAA and other regulations, as appropriate.

### **What Happens If I Fail to Complete My PPE Hours?**

If you fail to complete the minimum of 40 hours in HIT 124 or the 16 hours in HIT 222 it will result in an 'I' (incomplete) on your final grade. You will then have until the midterm point of the following semester to complete the class requirements or the registrar will turn the I (incomplete) into a 'F' for the course grade and it will be calculated into the student's cumulative GPA.

### **What Happens If I Am Dismissed from My Practicum Site?**

If you are dismissed or fired from your practicum site due to willful violations of any confidentiality or facility rules, it will result in failing this class, being automatically withdrawn from the HIT program, and being recommended for expulsion from the college. In addition, any breach of confidentiality will result in criminal charges being filed and could result in criminal penalties, including monetary fines, probation, exclusion from participation with Medicare, and federal prison time, in accordance with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines.

## **PPE Assignments**

### **PPE II (HIT 124)**

#### **Confidentiality Agreement Form**

- You must complete a PPE Confidentiality Agreement Form to have on file by week one of course.

#### **Set Up Interview with HIM Site Director/Supervisor**

- Once your PPE course begins and it is the week prior to your starting your PPE hours, the Clinical Coordinator will send you an email with the important details in order to reach out to your site supervisor to touch base, you may email, call, or meet in person with your site supervisor to go over all PPE details. You should discuss any information you need to know prior to the first day on site. Such as:
  - Verifying the dates you will be on site
  - Start time and end time
  - Where and who to report to on your first morning
  - Where to park? Parking fees?
  - Directions? How to find the HIT department/office if in a large facility?
  - Need to go through security first?
  - Do you need to get a badge/identification prior to start date?
  - Meals and break? Need to pack a lunch?
  - Specific dress code other than normal business attire? Mask?
  - Need to bring anything for them or HR, such as copies of immunization form, background check, HIPAA etc.
  - Any other questions you may have for them

#### **Activity Log/Timesheet**

- You will maintain a daily log/time sheet of activities accomplished during PPE and to keep track of time spent at the facility. All hours **must** be accounted for on your timesheet, and the log should be completed accordingly to include date, time, hours, activities completed, contact information (name, email, and credentials for your mentor), and a signature at the end of the form verifying that the activities/hours are correct by your site supervisor.
- All mentors' names, credentials, and time spent **must** be documented and accurate so that they can be awarded CEUs for their time spent mentoring you.

## **Thank-You Letter**

- You are required to send a personal thank-you letter to the PPE site supervisor. You are also encouraged to send them to other specific individuals who contributed to your experience.

## **Site Evaluation of PPE Site**

- You are required to complete an evaluation form for your practicum site. This form is completely confidential and is only used to determine individual practicum sites for future students and to make sure they are meeting the needs of the students.

## **Reflection Paper**

- You are required to write a 3-5-page, APA format, reflection paper about your Professional Practice Experience. This paper is used to get a better understanding of what students are experiencing at their PPE sites and to see if there is anything that students need more experience with in the classroom. The paper should include:
  - Introduction – describe your organization.
  - Practicum description – describe in detail the tasks/projects you experienced during your 40 hours.
  - Practicum challenges and rewards – describe what you felt was most challenging and rewarding during your experience at your site.
  - Job preparation – describe what classroom preparation you felt was best for this experience, and what you wish you were more prepared for.

- Final comments and outlook – describe your thoughts about the experience overall, if you have any new ideas about a specific career path you would now like to pursue in HIT.

## **PowerPoint Presentation of HIT Department**

- Upon completion of the PPE, you are also required to create a PowerPoint presentation or Prezi displaying detailed information from each department visited in the HIM department and/or information from a project completed on-site. The presentation must be a minimum of 25 slides. Each presentation will be different due to every facility utilizing different health applications, processes, and regulations. (See Blackboard course for further instructions)

## **PPE III (HIT 222):**

**Interview with Site Supervisor/Director** (See description above)

**Activity Log/Timesheet** (See description above)

**Thank You Letter** (See description above)

**Site Evaluation of PPE Site** (See description above)

## **Career Path Essay**

- You are required to compose an APA-formatted two-page paper discussing the detailed career path in which you plan to take and how you will accomplish these goals. AHIMA's career map will be used as a reference.

## **PPE II and III Student Evaluation.... What Can I Expect?**

The goal of your PPE is for you to demonstrate entry-level knowledge and skills. At the conclusion of each of your PPE experiences, you will be evaluated by your PPE site supervisor through the Student Performance Evaluation form. The detailed results of this evaluation will remain confidential and will not be shared with you. This evaluation is used to assess your learning, overall experience, and professionalism. You will be evaluated on the hard skills you demonstrated and the following topics/components:

- Displayed professionalism in all aspects including appearance, attendance, and attitude.

- Demonstrated effective oral and written communication skills.
- Demonstrated the ability to work effectively in a team setting.
- Adhered to employee rules, regulations, and policies.
- Showed initiative by volunteering to perform tasks or help with projects.
- Demonstrated an understanding that met or exceeded entry-level health information concepts in the following competency domains:
  - Data Content, Structure, and Information Governance
  - Access, Disclosure, Privacy, and Security
  - Data Analytics and Use
  - Revenue Cycle Management
  - Compliance
  - Leadership
  - Computer and Technology Skills
- Comments on the students' strengths.
- Comments on the students' weaknesses.
- Do you think this student would be an asset to your or another HIM team/department?

*Parts of this PPE handbook was adapted from AHIMA's PPE Guide - <http://www.ahima.org/ppe>*



## PPE II (124) Checklist

Number	Description of item	Completed
1	Sign PPE Handbook Contract and Submit three places of interest via electronic form in HIT Organization 6 months prior to course start month	
2	Order/Complete Background Check on Viewpoint (order VP package 4-5 months prior to course start month)	
3	Complete Drug Screening on Viewpoint	
4	Complete HIPAA Training on Viewpoint	
5	Submit Health and Immunization Forms on Viewpoint	
6	Submit Confidentiality Agreement Form (in Blackboard class)	
7	Set up Interview (via email/phone) with Site Supervisor (Once class begins)	
8	Complete 40 hours onsite (weeks 2-7)	
9	Submit Thank-You Letter to Site Supervisor	
10	Submit PPE Activity log/Time Log	
11	Submit Student Evaluation of PPE Site Form	
12	Submit three to five-page reflective essay	
13	Submit PPE Presentation/Prezi	





## PPE III (222) Checklist

Number	Description of item	Completed
1	Submit three places of interest 4 months prior to course start date to Mrs. Barrick, Clinical Coordinator, via email	
2	Set up an Interview (via email/phone) with Site Supervisor (Once class begins)	
3	Complete 16 hours onsite (weeks 2-6)	
4	Submit Thank-You Letter to Site Supervisor	
5	Submit PPE Activity log/Time Log	
6	Submit Student Evaluation of PPE Site Form	
7	Submit two-page career path essay	

## **How to Order Viewpoint Screening Package**

- To get started, visit <https://www.viewpointscreening.com/cccc> and click on “Start Your Order”
- A popup box will provide you with ordering options. Choose Health Information Technology, and then select Background Check + Drug Test + Health Portal + HIPAA/Bloodborne Pathogen Training
- Begin to read through the information and enter your personal information (Name, DOB, addresses, etc.)
- Complete your account and submit your payment. Once your order is submitted, you will receive emails as stated on the ordering form regarding the drug testing and eLearning. It may take a couple of days but you can login to your Viewpoint portal with your email that you registered with and get started with submitting the other requirements.

### **Requirements:**

**Background Check:** When your background check is completed, you can view the report at [viewpointscreening.com](https://www.viewpointscreening.com) by entering your email address and password. Results are typically completed within 3-5 days.

**Drug Screening:** You will receive an email with the subject line: “Viewpoint Screening Drug-Screen Registration” within 24-48 hours. This email will explain where you need to go to complete your drug test and contain the form required for the drug test.

**eLearning:** Your order includes online training for HIPAA and Bloodborne Pathogens. You will receive a separate email within 24-48 hours with instructions and a link to complete this training.

**Vaccination Requirements:** Hepatitis B, Influenza, MMR, Tdap, Tuberculosis, Varicella, (COVID is optional, not required at this time)

### **1-Step TB Skin Test**

**Physical Form:** Must be signed by a physician

***\*Please note DO NOT create an account with Viewpoint Screening until you are instructed to do so by the HIT Clinical Coordinator. This triggers the background check to run. This can cause issues with some organizations accepting students as some require time-specific background checks. If the Viewpoint package is ordered early, it may result in the student having to repurchase the package or parts thereof.***