**Pathways to Becoming a Registered Dietitian/Registered Dietitian Nutritionist & Requirements to Practice in Alabama**

The requirements to become a become a Registered Dietitian (RD) / Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) is established by ACEND. Students must meet all requirements, they are:

1. Completed a minimum of a Baccalaureate degree granted by a U.S. regionally accredited university or college and course work accredited or approved by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND).
2. Completed an ACEND-accredited supervised practice program (dietetic internship) at a health care facility, state or community agency, foodservice establishment, or a university. Typically, a supervised practice program is about 9-24 months in length. Supervised practice also may be available through a university-based coordinated program, in which supervised practice is combined with undergraduate or graduate studies; or through an Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) (available on a limited basis).
3. Passed the Registration Examination for Dietitians administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). Eligibility to take this examination is established through the Commission on Dietetic Registration, the credentialing agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Information regarding the examination may be obtained from [www.cdrnet.org.](http://www.cdrnet.org/)
4. Continued life-long learning by completing continuing professional educational requirements to maintain registration. 75 CEUS are required every 5-year cycle.

**Note:** "Effective January 1, 2024, the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) will require a minimum of a master’s degree to be eligible to take the credentialing exam to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN). In addition, CDR requires that individuals complete coursework and supervised practice in program(s) accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). *Graduates who successfully complete the ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) at the University of Alabama are eligible to apply to an ACEND-accredited supervised practice program.* Anyone who graduates after December 31, 2023 will also need to complete a graduate degree in order to be eligible to take the CDR credentialing exam to become an RDN.

**ADVANCED PRACTICE CERTIFICATIONS:**

Some RDs hold additional advanced practice certifications in specialized areas of practice such as pediatric or renal nutrition, obesity management, nutrition support, sports nutrition, and diabetes education. These certifications are awarded through the Commission on Dietetic Registration and/or other medical and nutrition organizations. Such specialty certifications are recognized within the profession and may be required only for advanced-level positions. Additional information on advanced practice certifications and requirements are available at <https://www.cdrnet.org/certifications/board-certified-specialist>

**State Licensure:** In addition to RD/RDN credentialing, many states have regulatory laws for dietitians and nutrition practitioners. Frequently these state requirements are met through the same education and training required to become an RD.

***In the state of Alabama, you must be licensed to practice***. The Alabama State Board of Examiners for Dietetics (<https://www.boed.alabama.gov/>) requires that all dietitians practicing in the state meet the following qualifications in order to become licensed to practice.  
1. Finish your college education (minimum BS degree in Food and Nutrition)  
2. Apply and complete a Supervised Practice.  
3. Take and Pass the CDR Examination.  
4. Apply for Licensing as a RD/Nutritionist in Alabama.  
5. Maintain your License (acquire a minimum of 30 CEUs every 2-to practice year period)

State laws/regulations are *subject to change* at any time. Enrolled and prospective students are strongly encouraged to contact their state’s licensing body for information and guidance on licensure requirements for the state where they are located or where they plan to practice.