

NBOME

NATIONAL BOARD OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL EXAMINERS

REQUEST FOR TEST ACCOMMODATION INSTRUCTIONS

COMLEX-USA

LEVEL 1 | LEVEL 2-CE | LEVEL 2-PE | LEVEL 3

ELIGIBILITY

Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended (ADA) provides that testing organizations such as the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, Inc. (NBOME) shall offer their examinations “in a place and manner accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative accessible for such individuals.” 42 U.S.C. §12189.

Therefore, if you are a “person with disabilities” as defined by the ADA, and require an accommodation to access the COMLEX-USA examination, you may be eligible for an accommodation under the ADA so you can access the examination the same as most people.

Under the ADA, “persons with disabilities” are individuals with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual. The term “major life activity” is broadly construed, but for purposes of a COMLEX-USA examination is a major life activity that affects the individual’s ability to access the examination.

Whether or not an individual’s physical or mental impairment “substantially limits” his or her major life activity, or in other words his or her ability to access the COMLEX-USA examination, is “as compared to most people in the general population,” not compared only to the individual’s medical school peers, personal potential, or to obtain a better score result.

If you are a “person with disabilities” as defined by the ADA, and your disability “substantially limits” your ability to access the COMLEX-USA examination, you may request a “reasonable accommodation” for that examination.

A reasonable accommodation does not include any test accommodation that would fundamentally alter the nature of the COMLEX-USA examination, including the skills the examination is intended to test or measure (e.g., the candidate’s ability to complete the patient encounter portion of the Level 2-PE examination in the standard time, or his or her ability to respond in the standard time to the test items that assesses the candidate’s medical knowledge and his or her “knowledge fluency”), or that would impose an undue burden on NBOME.

Carefully read the following instructions. You should also consult the Test Accommodation Requests section of the NBOME Bulletin of Information (BOI) at www.nbome.org.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete and sign the Request for Test Accommodations application. The application form may be typed or hand-written (black ink only), but must be clearly legible. Please provide an answer for each question that applies; do not write only “see attached.” If there is insufficient space on the form for a complete response, provide any additional details in your personal statement to be attached to your completed Request for Test Accommodations application.
2. If you have had prior accommodations in medical school, request the Dean of your medical school (or his/her representative) to complete and sign the Verification of Test Accommodations included in the application.
3. Obtain ALL necessary documentation, both current and historic, from the qualified professionals who have evaluated or treated your impairment. You must also provide the CV or other documentation demonstrating the qualifications of your evaluator or health care provider.
4. All documents must be on 8.5" x 11" paper, single-sided, and without any paper clips or staples. Do not submit documentation in a binder or folder. Do not include tabs or dividers.
5. Retain a copy of your request and all documentation. Do not send originals of your documentation as we generally do not return documentation submitted.
6. The application and all supporting documentation must be submitted together in one packet to the following address:
NBOME Test Accommodations
101 West Elm Street, Suite 150
Conshohocken, PA 19428
7. Send your request with delivery verification in order to provide proof of submission and receipt.

REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

In order for a Request for Test Accommodations to be considered, you should submit the following documentation with your fully completed Request for Test Accommodations application, as necessary to support the request for accommodation:

- A detailed personal narrative providing a description of the impairment and how it impacts your daily life. This must include how your impairment adversely affects your ability to access the examination as compared to most people in the general population. Additionally, if needed, provide any elaboration of your responses on the Request for Test Accommodation application in this portion of the application.
- Full evaluations from a qualified professional(s) explaining the following in detail:
 - Formal diagnosis of the physical or mental impairment
 - Identification of each major life activity limited by the your impairment
 - How the impairment substantially limits that major life activity/activities as compared to most people in the general population
 - Any specific accommodation that is necessary for the examination to be accessible to the candidate the same as most people, without fundamentally altering what the examination is intended to measure or test

- Why the recommended accommodation is necessary
 - The date(s) of the assessment of your impairment (the most recent assessment must be no more than three (3) years prior to the request date unless an assessment within that period is waived by the NBOME)
 - A clear and comprehensive description of the specific diagnostic criteria and the names of all diagnostic tests used including:
 - * Date(s) of evaluation
 - * A list of specific test results in standard score format and a detailed interpretation of the test results in support of the diagnosis. For evaluations reflecting current functioning, the tests used must be reliable, valid, and standardized to the general population. These evaluations must use age-based norms.
 - Other relevant medical history
- The qualifications of the evaluating professional
- A detailed history of treatment and medications provided to you by the evaluating professional and others, and if and to the extent any treatment or medication you receive for your physical or mental impairment ameliorates your impairment
- All historical educational and developmental records relevant to your impairment (ie., report cards, transcripts, etc.)

PLEASE NOTE: *If the documentation listed above is not provided, the request may be deemed incomplete and may not be considered until all documentation is submitted.*

CONSIDERATION PROCESS

Before a request for test accommodations will be considered by the NBOME, you must complete, sign and submit to NBOME the Request for Test Accommodation application and obtain from your medical school the completed Verification of Prior Test Accommodations (if applicable) with all required supporting documentation.

You are responsible for obtaining all required documentation, including all costs of providing documentation. NBOME reserves the right to request additional documentation.

NBOME, in its sole discretion, may revoke or deny a candidate's eligibility to take any NBOME examination if a candidate misrepresents any information or documentation.

RECONSIDERATION OF DENIED REQUEST

If your request for an accommodation under the ADA is not approved and you thereafter obtain new and compelling data or information supporting your request, you may appeal and request that NBOME reconsider its decision. Any request for reconsideration must be submitted in writing to NBOME with the new and compelling data or relevant information not previously considered by NBOME.

You must also submit a written rationale explaining the basis upon which you are contending NBOME's decision was incorrect and why your application should be reconsidered.

If the new information provided warrants reconsideration, NBOME will review the submission and notify

you whether or not the requested accommodation(s) is granted based upon all documentation and information submitted by you to NBOME.

SUBSEQUENT EXAMINATIONS

If you have previously requested test accommodations for a COMLEX-USA examination and wish to receive accommodations for a subsequent examination, you must complete and submit a new Request for Test Accommodations application. This may include documentation previously submitted and any new documentation not previously submitted.

Upon receipt, NBOME will review the application and advise you as to whether or not new or additional information may be necessary to properly evaluate the request.

SCHEDULING

If an accommodation is granted, you must contact NBOME's Client Services (866-479-6828) for assistance with scheduling the accommodated examination.

We recommend that you do not schedule an examination until your application has been reviewed and you have received the decision in writing from NBOME. You may schedule a standard (non-accommodated) examination appointment while your application for test accommodations is pending if you so choose. If the application is approved by NBOME and test accommodations are granted, you may need to reschedule the examination date(s) and/or location depending on the nature of the accommodation granted. Rescheduling fees incurred because you registered for a non-accommodated examination may be waived, in the sole discretion of NBOME, if you are approved for test accommodations that require rescheduling of a standard test administration. If you take a non-accommodated examination after submitting a request for test accommodations, whether or not your request is approved, the NBOME will score and report the score of your non-accommodated examination in the normal course and that request for test accommodations will be voided.

PLEASE NOTE: The review of your Request for Test Accommodations will not start until the application is complete, including all appropriate documentation. The review process on average generally takes up to 60 days.

CANCELLATION

All candidates who cancel or reschedule an appointment within thirty (30) days of the scheduled examination date, whether or not for an accommodated examination, will be responsible for paying the associated cancellation/rescheduling fee, unless waived by NBOME. A list of fees can be found in the NBOME Bulletin of Information as well on your NBOME online account under the "Exam Information" tab.

For accommodated candidates taking the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE examination:

In order to cancel a scheduled Level 2-PE examination, you must call the NBOME National Center for Clinical Skills Testing (866-479-6828) at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled administration of that examination, but you will still be responsible for cancellation fees.

SPECIAL INFORMATION

COMLEX-USA LEVELS 1, 2-CE AND 3 EXAMINATIONS – COMPUTER BASED

The multiple choice COMLEX-USA Levels 1, 2-CE and 3 computer-based examinations are administered in a standardized, time-measured environment. These examinations assess clinical skills and medical knowledge, including the candidate's "knowledge fluency," the ability to recall, interpret, process, and apply clinical knowledge and skills without hesitation and in a fluid manner, which is fundamental to a generalist osteopathic physician's competence to practice osteopathic medicine, and a competency integral to the COMLEX-USA examinations. NBOME may in an appropriate case approve extended testing time for a COMLEX-USA Level 1, 2-CE or 3 computer-based cognitive examination to be accessible to a disabled candidate, but only to accommodate the disabled candidate's impaired skills required to access the examination. Any extended testing time beyond that which is needed by the candidate to access the examination would fundamentally alter a significant aspect of the examination, namely NBOME's assessment of the candidate's knowledge fluency, a skill fundamental to a generalist osteopathic physician's competence to practice osteopathic medicine.

COMLEX-USA LEVEL 2-PE – CLINICAL SKILLS EVALUATION

The COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE (performance evaluation) examination is intended to measure not only the candidate's core clinical skills under standardized conditions, but also the ability to perform those skills in a "timely, efficient, safe and effective manner," including prioritization of the limited time available. The 14-minute timeframe to assess the candidate's ability to perform clinical skills in a "timely, efficient, safe and effective" manner is appropriate and necessary to assess the candidate's competency in a real-life situation and to be consistent with clinical encounters in an outpatient setting, which may concern a patient in a time-sensitive, life threatening situation. Thus, NBOME does not grant any extended time for the standardized patient (SP) portion of the examination, as that would fundamentally alter what that portion of the Level 2-PE examination was intended to assess or measure. Nonetheless, NBOME may provide, when appropriate, extended time between breaks of SP encounters or, in an appropriate situation, extended time for a candidate to perform the eSOAP note portion of the examination, which may require scheduling the Level 2-PE examination over two or more days.

The COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE examination is designed to test the ability of the candidate to perform physical examinations and osteopathic manipulative treatment. Therefore, NBOME will not grant any accommodation such as a personal aid or assistant to perform these portions of the examination. Such an accommodation would fundamentally alter what is being tested.

NBOME provides several universal access accommodations features, including:

- ➔ Wheelchair accessible facilities and writing desks
- ➔ Adjustable electric examination and treatment tables
- ➔ Adjustable chairs/stools in examination rooms and at writing desks
- ➔ Portable examination equipment
- ➔ Quiet testing environment

Because of the differences in format and measurement objectives of the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE examination, a candidate who was granted accommodations for COMLEX-USA Levels 1, 2-CE or 3 examinations, may not warrant similar accommodations for the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE examination.