

TO: EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – STATE BOARDS OF PHARMACY

FROM: Al Carter, Executive Director/Secretary

DATE: May 15, 2020

RE: NAPLEX/MPJE Testing Updates

The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) is pleased to provide you with an update on Pearson VUE testing center availability, the launch of a remote-proctored Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination (MPJE), the requirements for transcripts to release exam scores for 2020 pharmacy school graduates, and the extension of licensing requirements for 2020 PGY1 residents.

Pearson VUE Test Centers

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has wreaked havoc unparalleled in assessment and testing history as it has with education. Beginning in mid-March 2020, Pearson VUE, as well as other testing providers, canceled all scheduled exams and closed its doors to testing for several weeks. Beginning in April 2020, Pearson VUE was permitted to provide limited testing operations for candidates who would provide essential services related to COVID-19. NABP worked with local governments and Pearson VUE to ensure that pharmacists were included on the list of essential service providers. At the beginning of May 2020, Pearson VUE began to open more testing centers, as allowed by local governments. NABP has been working with Pearson VUE to increase the number of testing centers available for North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX) and MPJE candidates. Starting in mid- to late May, Pearson VUE is opening its second-tier testing sites, which operate under the same Pearson VUE-mandated security procedures. All testing centers will continue to operate at 50% capacity due to social distancing regulations, locally mandated hours of operation, the health of staff and clients, and cleaning protocols.

With the limited number and capacity of the testing centers, we have received several generous offers by universities to host the NAPLEX exam. We have asked those universities interested in helping to create additional testing availability to consider having their college or university become a Pearson VUE Select testing site and provided them with a web link to view more information.

Remote MPJE

NABP has also been working with Pearson VUE for the past few months on the provision of a remote-proctored MPJE. Candidates will be able to choose to take the exam remotely or at a Pearson VUE testing center. Remote-proctored exams are limited to a three-hour maximum seat time. Candidates with Americans with Disabilities Act accommodations that allow for extra time would not be candidates for remote testing. NABP expects remote-proctored MPJE to be available by July 2020.

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Transcripts

Due to the limitations in seat times, NABP is allowing graduates to apply and schedule their exams. Their scores, however, will not be released until a transcript is received to verify their degree.

NABP clearly states in its *NAPLEX/MPJE 2020 Candidate Application Bulletin* that candidates for the exam must be graduates of an entry-level Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)-accredited pharmacy program. Education is self-reported in NABP's candidate e-Profile. NABP found an unprecedented variety in graduation dates reported for the 2020 graduating class, even at the same school or campus, with some candidates claiming to have graduated six to eight weeks prior to their classmates. One candidate who claimed to be part of the 2020 graduating class was not even a pharmacy school student.

For the integrity, validity, and security of NABP's licensing exams, it is imperative that the candidates who take the exam represent a homogenous group. The official transcript obtained directly from the pharmacy program is the primary source of truth and the only undeniable evidence that all academic requirements have been met.

NABP will continue accepting transcripts sent on an individual basis. Starting on May 21, 2020, NABP will provide instructions and training on how a school can upload transcripts for an entire class. In the meantime, NABP is asking the deans of the pharmacy schools and colleges to send the information via spreadsheets.

The candidate's score is released to the board of pharmacy as soon as NABP receives a valid transcript from the college of pharmacy. The board of pharmacy also will have access to the candidate's transcript.

ASHP Extends Licensure Requirements

The following announcement was released by ASHP on May 12, 2020:

"The Commission on Credentialing and ASHP Board of Directors today approved an extension of the licensure requirement for residents until January 1, 2021. This is a temporary waiver of the requirement that residents be licensed for 2/3 of the residency year (e.g. July 1st residency start requires licensure by November 1st). This waiver is for the 2020/2021 residency year only. Accreditation Services, through our partners at NABP, continues to monitor pandemic-related effects on residency and will take future action, if necessary, to ensure residents and programs receive relief from any further delays in testing or licensure."

PLEASE NOTE: *Incoming residents are expected to schedule and take all required licensing exams at the earliest date possible."*

If you have any questions, please contact Maureen Garrity, competency assessment director, at mgarrity@nabp.pharmacy or 847/636-1674.

Attachment: Pearson VUE testing centers May 2020

cc: NABP Executive Committee