United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®)

2023 Bulletin of Information

A Joint Program of the FEDERATION OF STATE MEDICAL BOARDS OF THE UNITED STATES, INC., and NBME

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CAUTIONS

To ensure you have a smooth examination journey, please be aware of the following cautions.

For Students or Graduates of a Medical School

You must become familiar with the information referenced in this Bulletin if you are an applicant with an eligibility period in 2023. If your eligibility period crosses into the next calendar year (i.e., 2024), please note that you are responsible for reading and abiding by the policies and procedures described in the 2023 and 2024 editions of the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* (BOI).

If changes in the USMLE program occur after the release of this BOI, they will be effective when posted on the USMLE website. You are responsible for checking the USMLE website for updates and changes to the USMLE policies and procedures.

For Students or Graduates of a Medical School Outside of the US and Canada

If you are a student or graduate of a medical school located outside the United States and Canada with an eligibility period in 2023, in addition to becoming familiar with this BOI, you must also be familiar with the contents of the *2023 Information Booklet* published by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG®), a member of Intealth.

If you are a student or graduate of a medical school located outside the United States and Canada and your eligibility period extends into 2024 and you test in 2024, you must become familiar with and will be subject to the policies and procedures in the ECFMG 2024 *Information Booklet*.

The ECFMG *Information Booklet* is available on the ECFMG website. Students and graduates of medical schools located outside the United States and Canada are responsible for monitoring the ECFMG website to ensure they understand current ECFMG policies and procedures.

USMLE CHECKLIST: What Do I Need to Do?

To make the application and testing process as easy as possible, here's a list of key things to do and remember:

Registering and Preparing for Your Examination

- ☐ Review the applicable USMLE *Bulletin of Information*.
- ☐ Ensure that you are eligible to register to take the USMLE.
- ☐ Log in to the registration website of the appropriate organization (dependent on your medical school and the Step for which you are applying).
- ☐ Ensure that the name you enter on your application matches your unexpired, government-issued photo identification exactly.
- ☐ Choose an eligibility period.
- ☐ Indicate on your application if you plan to apply for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- ☐ Submit your application and other required forms.
- ☐ After your application is processed, you'll receive your scheduling permit via email and may schedule your test date. If it turns out you are unable to test during your eligibility period, contact the organization that registered you to request an eligibility period extension (fees and restrictions may apply).
- ☐ Prepare for the USMLE by using the free practice materials that are available on the USMLE website. You can register for a practice session at a Prometric test center or purchase an NBME Self-Assessment.
- ☐ Contact Prometric if you need to reschedule your test date.

Test Day

- ☐ Before you go to the test center, review the Rules of Conduct. Make sure you understand what behaviors violate the rules. This includes understanding what items you may and may not access during the exam.
- ☐ Report to the test center at least 30 minutes prior to your scheduled testing appointment.
- ☐ Bring a paper or electronic copy of your scheduling permit to the test center.
- ☐ Bring an acceptable form of unexpired, government-issued photo identification.
- ☐ Comply with security checks when entering the test center and throughout the test day.
- ☐ Report any issue or suspicious behavior you encounter on test day.
- ☐ Consider rescheduling your examination if you do not feel well or otherwise feel unprepared to test.

Be sure to visit the USMLE website or contact us if you have any questions.

The USMLE: Purpose, Format, and Lengths

STEP & PURPOSE	FORMAT	LENGTH
STEP 1 assesses the examinee's understanding of and ability to apply important concepts of the basic sciences to the practice of medicine, with special emphasis on principles and mechanisms underlying health, disease, and modes of therapy	Approximately 280 multiple-choice questions (MCQs), divided into seven 60-minute blocks	One-day exam, approximately eight hours
STEP 2 CK assesses the examinee's ability to apply medical knowledge, skills, and understanding of clinical science essential for the provision of patient care under supervision, with an emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention	Approximately 318 MCQs, divided into eight 60-minute blocks	One-day exam, approximately nine hours
STEP 3 assesses the examinee's ability to apply medical knowledge and understanding of biomedical and clinical science essential for the unsupervised practice of medicine, with emphasis on patient management in ambulatory settings		
Day 1: FOUNDATIONS OF INDEPENDENT PRACTICE (FIP) assesses the examinee's knowledge of basic medical and scientific principles essential for effective health care	Day 1 FIP: Approximately 232 MCQs divided into six 60-minute blocks	One-day test session, approximately seven hours
Day 2: ADVANCED CLINICAL MEDICINE (ACM) assesses the examinee's ability to apply comprehensive knowledge of health and disease in the context of patient management and the evolving manifestation of disease over time	Day 2 ACM: Approximately 180 MCQs, divided into six 45-minute blocks and thirteen computer-based case simulations (CCS); each simulation is allotted a maximum of 10 or 20 minutes of real time	One-day test session, approximately nine hours

Sequence of Steps

If you meet the eligibility requirements, you may take Step 1 and Step 2 CK in any sequence. You may take Step 3 only after passing Step 1 and Step 2 CK.

How to Prepare

Sample items are available free of charge on the USMLE website under the section titled Prepare for Your Exam. You may also view free learning resources via NBME Unlocking Assessment videos or purchase an online self-assessment by visiting the Taking an NBME Assessment section of the NBME website. Practice materials and self-assessments are available to all USMLE examinees.

For more information on each Step, including applications, practice materials, and updates, visit the USMLE website.

Eligibility for the USMLE Steps

Who Is Eligible to Take the USMLE?

Step 1 and Step 2 CK

To be eligible, you must be in one of the following categories at the time you apply AND on the day of your examination:

- a medical student officially enrolled in, or a graduate of, a US or Canadian medical school program leading to the MD degree that is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), OR
- a medical student officially enrolled in, or a graduate of, a US medical school leading to the DO degree that is accredited by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA), OR
- a medical student officially enrolled in, or a graduate of, a medical school that is outside the US and Canada, listed in the *World Directory of Medical Schools* as meeting ECFMG eligibility requirements, and that meets other eligibility criteria of the ECFMG

Step 3

Eligibility requirements for Step 3 are:

- Passing scores on Step 1 and Step 2 CK, AND
- An MD degree or the DO degree from an LCME- or COCA-accredited US or Canadian medical school, OR the equivalent of the MD degree from a medical school outside the US and Canada that is listed in the *World Directory of Medical Schools* as meeting ECFMG eligibility requirements and obtain ECFMG Certification, AND
- Meet all other eligibility criteria as listed in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*

The USMLE program recommends that, for Step 3 eligibility, applicants should have completed, or be near completion of, at least one postgraduate training year in an accredited US graduate medical education program that meets state board licensing requirements.

Change in Eligibility Status

If your eligibility for a Step changes after you submit your application but before your scheduled test date(s), you must promptly notify the organization that registered you for your examination. If you take a Step for which you are not eligible, results for that examination may not be reported or, if previously reported, may be canceled, at the discretion of the USMLE program.

If you are dismissed or withdraw(n) from medical school, you are not eligible for the USMLE, even if you are appealing the school's decision or are otherwise contesting your status. If you are on a leave of absence, please check with the organization that registered you for your examination before submitting your application; if you have already registered, check before testing.

Failure to notify the organization that registered you for your examination of your changed status may result in a determination that you engaged in irregular behavior and placement of a permanent annotation on your score reports and transcripts.

Graduates from Unaccredited Medical Schools in the US or Canada

If you graduated from an unaccredited medical school in the US or Canada and are eligible for initial licensure as a physician by a US medical licensing authority, you may take the USMLE only upon specific request by that physician licensing authority. The physician licensing authority should submit the request to sponsor you to the USMLE Secretariat in advance of your application for each Step.

Number of Attempts and Time Limits

If you have attempted a Step four or more times, including incomplete attempts, and have not passed, you are ineligible to apply for any Step in the USMLE exam sequence. Attempts at the formerly administered Step 2 CS count toward the limit.

Many state medical boards require that all Steps of the USMLE exam sequence be successfully completed within a certain time frame.

Information regarding state-specific requirements for licensure can be obtained on the FSMB website. Note: combined degree (e.g., MD/PhD) students should reference the USMLE website for more specific information regarding exceptions to time limits.

Retaking Failed Examinations

You may not take the same Step more than three times within a 12-month period. Your fourth attempt must be at least 12 months after your first attempt at that examination and at least six months after your most recent attempt at that examination. This includes incomplete attempts.

Retaking Previously Passed Steps

If you pass a Step, you are not allowed to retake it, except to comply with a time limit imposed by a US physician licensing authority for completion of all Steps or by another authority recognized by the USMLE program. Visit the USMLE website for more information.

If you have not yet passed Step 3 and need to retake a previously passed Step 1 or Step 2 CK examination to meet a time limit imposed by a US physician licensing authority or another authority recognized by the USMLE program, you should understand that if you fail a retake, you will no longer be eligible to take Step 3. To meet the examination requirements for Step 3 eligibility, you must have achieved a passing performance on the *most recent administration* of the examinations intended to meet those requirements.

Previously Licensed Physicians

If you have already been granted a physician license by a US medical licensing authority based on other licensure examinations, such as the Federation Licensing Examination (FLEX), the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination, NBME certifying examinations, or National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners COMLEX-USA, you may not be eligible to take the USMLE. Please contact the appropriate registration organization with questions about your eligibility.

Applying for the Test and Scheduling Your Test Date

To apply for a USMLE Step, you must submit an application through the appropriate organization.

Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3 are administered at Prometric centers. Step 3 is administered only in the US and its territories. Visit the Prometric website to find the test center closest to you and to schedule an appointment.

Appointments at some test centers fill up quickly. Examinees are encouraged to schedule at their preferred test center as soon as they have received their scheduling permit.

Application Materials

For Students or Graduates of a Medical School Inside the US/Canada

Step 1 and Step 2 CK

Students and graduates of LCME- or COCA-accredited programs should apply for Step 1 and Step 2 CK by following the instructions on the NBME website.

Step 3

Graduates with an MD or DO degree from an LCME- or COCA-accredited medical school should apply for Step 3 by following the instructions on the FSMB website.

For Students or Graduates of a Medical School Outside the US/Canada

Step 1 and Step 2 CK

Students and graduates of medical schools outside the US and Canada that are listed in the *World Directory of Medical Schools* as meeting ECFMG eligibility requirements should apply for Step 1 and Step 2 CK by following the instructions on the ECFMG website.

Step 3

Graduates of medical schools outside the US and Canada that are listed in the *World Directory of Medical Schools* as meeting ECFMG eligibility requirements should apply for Step 3 by following the instructions on the FSMB website.

Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations

The USMLE program provides reasonable accommodations for examinees with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you are an individual with such a disability and require test accommodations, visit the USMLE website before you apply for each Step for information regarding test accommodations, including procedures and documentation requirements.

Requesting Additional Break Time Only

Examinees who require additional break time for medical conditions, such as diabetes, or for other reasons, like use of a breast pump for lactation, may apply for additional break time/standard testing time by submitting the form found on the USMLE website. Requests for additional break time should be made prior to or upon registration for a Step examination.

Personal Item Exceptions

Possession of personal items other than your locker key and ID while you are in the secure areas of the test center is prohibited. Exceptions to this policy may be made in certain limited circumstances. A list of approved personal items that may be permitted in the secure testing area, subject to inspection by test center staff, is available on the USMLE website.

Applying for and Scheduling Your USMLE Steps

OBTAINING AN ELIGIBILITY PERIOD AND SCHEDULING YOUR TEST DATE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
▪ When applying for the examination, you must select an eligibility period during which you wish to test. ▪ Once your registration is complete, a scheduling permit with your eligibility period will be issued. You will receive your scheduling permit via email. ▪ After obtaining the scheduling permit, you may visit the Prometric website to schedule a test date. Scheduling may not be available more than six months in advance.	▪ You are permitted to reschedule within your eligibility period; you must pay a fee if you make a change during the 45 calendar days before your scheduled appointment. ▪ If you are unable to test within your eligibility period, contact the organization that registered you for your examination to inquire about a one-time contiguous eligibility period extension. A fee is charged for this service. ▪ If you do not take the examination within your original or extended eligibility period, you must reapply by submitting a new application and fee(s). Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Test dates are provided on a first-come, first-served basis. The USMLE program cannot guarantee the availability of test centers. Therefore, you should contact Prometric to schedule as soon as possible after receiving your scheduling permit. It is also recommended that you schedule your test dates early in your eligibility period to provide flexibility in case you need to reschedule.

Examination Day and Testing

STOP IT! Report Cheating on USMLE

The USMLE program takes examination security seriously. Irregular behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Registering for or taking an exam when ineligible
- Seeking, providing, or obtaining unauthorized access to exam content, including solicitation via social media or web forums
- Altering exam scores or other official USMLE information
- Having unauthorized items in the testing area
- Having or attempting to have someone else take your exam
- Writing on anything other than the laminated note boards provided

The *penalties* for irregular behavior may include:

- Cancellation of your exam scores
- Ban on future USMLE testing
- Permanent annotation on your USMLE transcript
- Report to the FSMB's Physician Data Center and other entities with a legitimate interest
- Possible legal action

Contact the USMLE program via the STOPit app if you have evidence that someone may have violated a USMLE rule.
Visit the Apple or Google Play Store for a free download. Use access code: USMLE-TIP.

Readiness to Test on Exam Day

You should not feel compelled to test on a particular day if you are ill, under unusual personal stress, unprepared for the examination, or otherwise not ready to test. Contact the organization that registered you for your examination for further details regarding rescheduling your examination.

Testing Regulations and Rules of Conduct

Administrations of the USMLE Steps are monitored by test center staff, in person and through audio and visual recording. Test center staff is required to report any violations of the USMLE or test center rules. You must follow instructions from test center staff throughout the examinations; failure to do so may result in a finding that you have engaged in irregular behavior and a permanent annotation on your transcript. Test center staff is not authorized to answer questions regarding registration, examination content or format, or testing software, scoring, or retesting.

RULES OF CONDUCT

When you submit your application to take the USMLE, you agree to the following:

1. You are the person named on the scheduling permit for the examination.
2. You will not seek, provide, or obtain any form of unauthorized assistance at any time, including during the examination or during breaks.
3. You will not have prohibited materials, including formulas, study materials, notes, papers, or electronic devices of any kind, in your possession while you are in the secure areas of the test center.
4. You will place in a locker all personal belongings, including cell phones, watches, pagers, tablets, media players, fitness and tracking monitors, any device with transmitting or receiving capabilities (e.g., Bluetooth), formulas, study materials, notes, papers, pens/pencils, and your purse and/or wallet, before you enter the testing room.
5. You will leave your testing station for breaks only when the break screen is visible on your monitor.
6. You may use a telephone or other communication device only when outside the secure testing area and during an authorized break. You may not access your locker or use your cell phone on an unauthorized break.
7. You will not remove examination content from the test center by any means.
8. You will maintain the confidentiality of the materials, including, but not limited to, the multiple-choice items and the case content for Primum CCS. You will not reproduce or attempt to reproduce examination materials through recording, memorization, or any other means. Also, you will not provide information relating to examination content to anyone, including those

who may be taking or preparing others to take the examination. This includes postings regarding examination content and/or answers on the internet.

9. You will not write on anything other than the laminated note boards.

If you violate these Rules of Conduct, you may be directed to leave the test center before completing your examination. Also, evidence of violation of any test administration rule, including these Rules of Conduct, will result in actions being taken under the USMLE Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior. If you are found to have engaged in irregular behavior, your score report and transcripts will include this finding, you may be barred from taking the USMLE in the future, and your score may be canceled.

Personal Belongings – What You Can Bring into the Testing Room

Personal items are prohibited in the secure areas of the test center. The only items you are allowed to bring into the testing room are cordless soft-foam earplugs without strings. Earplugs must be removed from the packaging and be ready for inspection by test center staff during check-in and must remain at your workstation during all breaks.

For all Steps, if you bring personal items to the test center, you must store them in a small, designated locker outside the secure testing area. Electronic devices must be turned off; turning down the volume is not sufficient. All personal items are subject to inspection.

See also the Personal Item Exceptions section (page 10).

Admission to the Test

Check-in Procedures

You should arrive at the test center at least 30 minutes prior to your scheduled testing appointment. If you arrive after your appointment time, you may not be admitted. If you arrive more than 30 minutes after your scheduled testing appointment, you will not be admitted and must pay a fee to reschedule your test. Your rescheduled test date(s) must fall within your eligibility period.

When you arrive at the test center, you must present a paper or electronic copy of your scheduling permit and a valid, unexpired government-issued photo identification. Please review your scheduling permit for additional identification requirements. Acceptable forms of unexpired identification include:

- Passport

- Driver's license with photograph
- National Identity Card
- Other form of unexpired, government-issued identification

Your name, as it appears on your scheduling permit, must exactly match the name on your form(s) of identification. The only acceptable differences are variations in capitalization; the presence of a middle name, middle initial or suffix on one document and its absence on the other; or the presence of a middle name on one and middle initial on the other. The name on your identification must appear in the Latin alphabet (i.e., in "English language letters"). If the names on your identification and scheduling permit differ, contact the organization that registered you for your exam immediately. Your identification must contain both your signature and a recent photograph. Please review your scheduling permit for additional details.

If you do not bring your scheduling permit in paper or electronic (e.g., via smartphone) form and acceptable identification on each day of your exam, you will not be admitted to the test and will be required to pay a fee to reschedule your test. Your rescheduled test date(s) must fall within your eligibility period.

Security Procedures

During check-in, test center staff will scan you with a handheld or walk-through device designed to detect prohibited items and ask you to empty your pockets and turn them inside out before entering the testing room to confirm that you have no prohibited items. All examinees will be required to remove eyeglasses for close visual inspection by the test center administrator. These inspections will be done at check-in and upon your return from breaks. Jewelry, except for wedding and engagement rings, is prohibited. Hair accessories such as ornate clips, combs, barrettes, and headbands must be removed for inspection by proctors. Religious headwear is subject to visual inspection only; removal is not required.

Additionally, your photo ID and fingerprint may be scanned electronically, and you must sign the test center log during the initial check-in process and again at check-out, at the end of your test day.

Before you enter the test room, test center staff will give you laminated writing surfaces and markers to use for making notes and/or calculations during the testing session. You will be instructed to write your name and CIN, as shown on your scheduling permit, on one of the laminated writing surfaces provided. Writing surfaces and markers should be used only at your assigned testing station and only after you have entered your CIN in the computer to start your test session. If you have filled the laminated writing surfaces and need additional space for making notes, raise your hand to ask test center staff for a replacement. You must return laminated writing surfaces to test center staff at the end of the testing session. Do NOT write on anything (e.g., skin, clothing, tissue, etc.) other than the laminated writing surface. Failure to comply may result in a finding that you engaged in irregular behavior.

Test center staff will escort you to your assigned testing station and provide brief instructions on use of the computer equipment. You must enter your CIN to start the examination. A brief tutorial is available before each examination. You must run the sound check for the audio headphones either before the examination begins or during the tutorial, so that problems can be resolved before you start the examination.

There are no facilities available for family and friends to wait at the center while you test; please plan to meet them elsewhere after the examination ends.

The USMLE program reserves the right to terminate your administration if you engage in any activity that may compromise the validity, integrity, or security of the USMLE, including possessing or using prohibited items.

Break Time

Your test session is scheduled for a fixed amount of time, and the computer keeps track of the time allocated for each block and for breaks. At the start of the testing session, you have a total of 45 minutes of break time for authorized breaks and for computer transitions between blocks. Authorized breaks include any time you spend between test blocks, whether you remain at your seat or leave the testing room. If you complete the tutorial or other testing blocks early, the remaining time will be added to your total break time.

Once you begin a testing block, you may not leave the room (except in the event of an emergency). If you leave the room for a personal emergency and you are not on an authorized break, the block and daytime clocks will continue to run, and the test center will report the incident to the USMLE program. Additionally, the unauthorized break screen, described in the examination tutorial, will appear on the monitor after a defined period of inactivity. After the unauthorized break screen appears, you will need to enter your CIN to continue with the examination. Each time you leave the testing room, test center staff will record the time in and out. You must present your identification each time you return from a break.

If you exceed your allocated or accumulated break time, the excess will be deducted from your total testing time. Use the time summary feature (explained in the tutorial on your test day) to keep track of your time.

Starting and Completing the Test

Once you enter your CIN (candidate identification number) and launch the examination, you cannot cancel or reschedule that examination. The test session ends when you have started and exited all blocks or the total test time expires. You will receive a printout at checkout indicating that you have taken your Step exam.

Unanticipated Testing Conditions

The USMLE program recognizes that unanticipated situations may arise that may affect performance on your examination. Examples may include significant technical malfunctions that prevent you from continuing to test or other significant and sustained interruptions. The USMLE program maintains sole discretion concerning what, if any, situation warrants further review and/or remediation.

If you experience a situation as described above, you may elect to stop testing. Whether or not you elect to stop or continue testing, if you want the USMLE program to review your case, you must:

1. Promptly report any interruption you feel may adversely affect your exam performance to test center staff on the day of your exam; and
2. Email the USMLE program at testadmin@nbme.org within 10 calendar days following the date of the examination. Your correspondence should include your name, your USMLE ID number, the examination name (Step 1, 2 CK, or 3), the date of administration, and a detailed description of what occurred. Making a comment in the post-examination survey does not qualify as written notification to USMLE. Please be advised, the USMLE program will not review cases if the difficulty experienced is a result of inadequate preparation for the exam. If you choose to stop testing, your exam may be scored.

Please allow at least 15 business days for your report to be investigated and evaluated. You will receive a response in writing. Score reporting for your exam may be placed on hold until the USMLE program has completed its review.

After completing its review, the USMLE program in its sole discretion will determine if the attempt will be scored (whether in full or by removing the impact of the issue on your score), or not scored. If the attempt is not scored, it may not appear on your transcript, or it may appear on your transcript as an incomplete.

If you fail to notify both the test center staff on exam day and the USMLE program with 10 calendar days following the day of your examination, you thereby waive any claim or right to any recourse against the USMLE; the test center; or their employees, agents, or representatives arising out of or relating to that claim.

The USMLE program may prohibit an examinee from completing the exam and/or may impose conditions on retesting if the examinee appears to represent a health or safety risk to the test center staff and/or other test takers. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to, an examinee exhibiting signs of illness (e.g., persistent coughing or sneezing) during the examination, showing visibly open skin lesions or active bleeding, or excreting other bodily fluids.

If you do not feel well on the day of your test, we strongly encourage you to consider rescheduling your examination. If you become ill during your exam, follow the steps described above.

The USMLE makes every effort to ensure that your registration information is properly processed and that the Step examinations are properly built, administered, and scored. In the unlikely event that an error occurs in the exam construction, processing, administration, scoring, or score reporting of your USMLE examination, the USMLE program will make reasonable efforts to correct the error and/or provide a valid score, if possible. In some cases, you will be offered a retest of all or part of the exam at no cost to you or receive a refund of the exam fee. These are the exclusive remedies available to examinees impacted by errors in the registration process; in constructing, processing, or administering exams; or in scoring or score reporting. The USMLE program, in its sole discretion, will determine which of these remedies, if any, are available.

Scoring and Score Reporting

Examination Results and Scoring

The USMLE program provides a recommended pass or fail outcome on all Step examinations. Recommended performance standards for the USMLE are based on a specified level of proficiency. As a result, no predetermined percentage of examinees will pass or fail the examination. The recommended minimum passing level is reviewed periodically and may be adjusted at any time. Notice of such review and any adjustments will be posted on the USMLE website. The percentages of correctly answered items required to pass varies by Step and from form to form within each Step. However, examinees typically must answer approximately 60 percent of items correctly to achieve a passing score.

For Step 3, your performance on the case simulations will affect your Step 3 score and could affect whether you pass or fail. The proportional contribution of the score on the case simulations is no greater than the amount of time you are given to complete the case simulations.

For up-to-date information on minimum passing scores, examination performance data, and general scoring methodology, please visit the USMLE website.

What Happens While You Wait for Your Scores?

- After testing, the examination data are delivered electronically to NBME
- Your responses are scored and converted into the reported score scale for each examination
- Analyses are performed to detect aberrant examinee response behavior. Candidates who are identified by these analyses as having an aberrant score pattern may be asked to provide an explanation for their testing behaviors
- Final quality assurance procedures are performed to verify the accuracy of the scores
- Score reports are then posted to the secure website of the organization that registered you for your examination and made available to examinees

Score Availability

Results are typically available two to four weeks after your test date. However, a number of factors may delay score reporting. When selecting your test date and inquiring about results, you should allow at least eight weeks to receive notification that your score report is available. For more specific information about potential scoring delays, please visit the Announcements section on the home page of the USMLE website.

When your score is available, you will receive an email notification from the organization that registered you for your examination. Your score report will remain available on the website of the organization that registered you for your examination for approximately 365 days from the date of the email notification.

After the score report is removed from the website, your scores will be provided to you only in the form of an official transcript, for a fee.

How Do I Receive/Send Transcripts?

To obtain your USMLE transcript or have it sent to a third party, you must submit an online request and fee.

Please visit the USMLE website to determine which organization to contact to request your transcript and the fees associated with the service.

Your USMLE transcript includes biographical information, complete examination history, and, if applicable, information regarding findings of irregular behavior and actions reported to the FSMB Physician Data Center.

Reporting to Third Parties

NBME reports the results of the USMLE to LCME- and COCA-accredited medical school programs for their students and graduates. For Step 1 and Step 2 CK, if you do not want your results reported to your medical school, you must send a request from your email account of record to webmail@nbme.org at least 10 business days before your scheduled test date. A separate request must be submitted for each examination administration.

For Step 3, you must specify your reporting preference on your application.

The ECFMG may provide the results of the USMLE to international medical schools for their students and graduates. For Step 1 and Step 2 CK, if you do not want your results reported to your medical school, you must submit a request for each examination administration via the ECFMG website at least 10 business days before your scheduled test date.

De-identified results from examinees who requested their results be withheld may be included in aggregated data reports to medical schools. Examination data (including performance information) may be used by the USMLE program or made available to third parties for research and other purposes that are disclosed to or authorized by you, as appropriate. In all instances, the data will be confidential, and individual examinees will not be identifiable in any publication. If you do not wish your examination data to be made available for such purposes, you must advise the USMLE Secretariat via email at webmail@nbme.org no later than 30 days before your administration.

The USMLE program does not provide scores or outcomes by telephone, email, or fax to anyone. The scoring process is not expedited or accelerated for any individual or group.

Incomplete Scores

If you do not open every block of your examination, your examination may not be scored, and the attempt may be reported as incomplete on your USMLE transcript. For Step 3, if you take Day 1 but do not take Day 2, the exam may be reported as Incomplete.

Score Rechecks

For all Steps, a highly rigorous process is used to ensure the accuracy of scores, including a parallel scoring method involving independent scoring systems. Therefore, a change in your score or in your pass/fail outcome based on a recheck is an extremely remote possibility. To date, the score recheck process has not resulted in a score change.

The score recheck process does not include a manual review of the questions or your answers. When a request for a score recheck is received, the original response record is retrieved and rescored using a system that is outside of the normal processing routine. The score calculated during the recheck is then compared with the original score. You will be advised in writing whether the original score (if applicable) and/or pass/fail outcome was deemed accurate. No additional information will be provided in the letter.

If you wish to request a score recheck, submit a request and service fee to the organization that registered you for your examination. Your request must be received no later than 90 days after your result was released to you.

Score Validity

The performance of examinees is monitored and may be analyzed to detect aberrancies that raise questions about the validity of scores. The USMLE program reserves the right to cancel scores that are at or above the passing level if the USMLE program has a good faith basis for questioning whether they represent a valid measure of knowledge or competence as sampled by the examination. Questions about score validity may result from irregular behavior (please refer to the Irregular Behavior section of this BOI, pages 20–21) or other factors. If there are questions related to the validity of your score, your score report may be delayed or withheld pending completion of further review and/or investigation. You will have an opportunity to provide information that you consider relevant.

After review and analysis of all available information, scores will be classified as either valid and reported or invalid and canceled. If your score is canceled, an annotation of “score not available” will appear on your record next to the date of your examination. If your score is canceled, you will be notified and advised of the options for retaking the examination.

Anomalous Performance

Anomalous performance and/or unusual testing history may impact your access to the USMLE. If your performance raises concerns about your readiness to test or your motivation to pass, the USMLE program reserves the right to restrict your future access to its examinations and/or to impose conditions on future access. Do not test if you are not able or not ready on your scheduled test date.

Taking a Step examination to familiarize yourself with the examination format, or for any reason other than to pass, is prohibited and may result in restrictions on your future access to the USMLE.

Irregular Behavior

Irregular Behavior Defined

Irregular behavior includes any action by applicants, examinees, potential applicants, or others that could compromise the validity, integrity, or security of the USMLE process.

Please help maintain the integrity of USMLE by reporting suspected security violations. If you have information that a person or entity has compromised the security of the USMLE or violated any exam rule, please submit a report via the STOPit app. Visit the Apple or Google Play Store for a free download. Use access code: USMLE-TIP.

Examples of Irregular Behavior

Specific examples of conduct that may be deemed to be irregular behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- registering for, scheduling/rescheduling, or taking an exam when ineligible
- seeking, providing, and/or obtaining unauthorized access to examination materials (e.g., “recalls” or “past questions”), including, but not limited to, in-person or online
- unauthorized reproduction of examination materials by any means, including, but not limited to, reconstruction through memorization and/or dissemination via the internet
- communicating (including online and via social media) or attempting to communicate about test items, cases, and/or answers with another examinee, potential examinee, or formal or informal test preparation group at any time before, during, or after an examination

- providing false information or making false statements on or in connection with application forms, scheduling permits, or other USMLE-related documents
- taking or attempting to take an examination for which you are not eligible
- taking or attempting to take an examination for someone else, or engaging someone to take an examination for you
- seeking, providing, or obtaining unauthorized assistance during the examination or attempting to do so
- making notes of any kind while in the secure areas of the test center, except on the writing materials provided at the test center for this purpose
- failing to adhere to any USMLE policy, procedure, or rule, or instructions of the test center staff
- verbal or physical harassment of test center staff or other examination staff, or other disruptive or unprofessional behavior during the registration, scheduling, or examination process
- possessing any unauthorized materials, including, but not limited to, photographic equipment, communication or recording devices, fitness and tracking monitors, and cell phones in the secure testing areas
- altering or misrepresenting examination scores or outcomes
- making violent, threatening, or unprofessional comments to USMLE or test center staff
- failing to cooperate fully in an investigation concerning a possible violation of the USMLE rules

Test preparation courses and materials are available from individuals and companies not associated with the USMLE. It is unlawful for any test preparation service or program to use, disclose, distribute, or solicit content from recent test takers or to otherwise provide access to questions or answers from actual USMLE examinations. If there is evidence that you enrolled in, participated in, or used any test preparation program or service that distributes, provides access to, or uses USMLE content (questions or answers) or provides a forum for others to share such information, your registration and/or testing may be canceled, your scores on the USMLE may be withheld or canceled, and you may be subject to further sanctions.

Irregular Behavior – Investigation Process

The USMLE program will conduct an investigation if it receives information that an individual may have engaged in irregular behavior. During this time, anyone alleged to have engaged in such activity will be prohibited from registering for additional exams; previously unreleased scores, if any, may be withheld; and pending examination appointments will be canceled. If the evidence suggests that the alleged irregular behavior affects score validity, the score will also be reviewed as described in the Score Validity section of this *BOI*, page 19.

If you are the subject of a USMLE investigation, you will be advised of the matter and will have an opportunity to provide information that you consider relevant. Individuals who are the subject of an investigation must cooperate fully, including providing all requested documentation and truthfully

answering all questions posed during investigative interviews conducted on behalf of the USMLE program. If requested, individuals who are the subject of an investigation shall provide a signed release authorizing the USMLE program to obtain information and records from educational institutions and other third parties.

Failing to cooperate with an investigation or providing misleading or untruthful information in the course of an investigation will constitute irregular behavior that may be the basis of separate proceedings or other actions by the USMLE program.

If it is determined that you engaged in irregular behavior, information regarding this determination will become part of your permanent USMLE history. Your score report (if applicable) and USMLE transcript will contain a notation of the finding of irregular behavior. The USMLE program will provide information about the irregular behavior to third parties that receive or have received your USMLE transcript and may also report to other legitimately interested entities, as determined by the USMLE program. You may be barred from taking future examinations, and/or special administrative procedures or conditions may be implemented for your future examinations. The USMLE program also reserves the right to take such action when information regarding irregular behavior on predecessor examinations suggests that such actions may be appropriate to ensure the security of the USMLE.

About USMLE

The USMLE is a highly reliable and relevant three-Step examination for medical licensure in the United States. It is sponsored by the FSMB and NBME. The USMLE assesses an examinee's ability to apply knowledge, concepts, and principles, and to demonstrate fundamental patient-centered skills. The USMLE supports medical licensing authorities and physicians in the United States through development, delivery, and continual improvement of high-quality assessments across the continuum of physicians' preparation for practice.

State medical boards use USMLE outcomes to inform licensure decisions and to help achieve their mission of public protection. The USMLE program, which is sponsored by the FSMB and NBME, adheres to professional testing standards to provide fairness and equity to examinees, while identifying important information to medical regulators.

To learn more, visit the USMLE website.

Why Is the USMLE Important?

The USMLE assesses an examinee's ability to apply knowledge, concepts, and principles, and to demonstrate fundamental patient-centered skills. These skills constitute the basis of safe and effective patient care. Health care consumers throughout the nation enjoy a high degree of confidence that doctors who have passed all three Steps of the USMLE have met a common standard.

Examination Committees

Examination committees, composed of several hundred volunteer medical educators and clinicians, as well as several public members, create, review, and update the examination materials each year. Committee members broadly represent the teaching, practice, and licensing communities across the United States in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, and geographic region. At least two interdisciplinary committees of experts critically appraise each test question or case and revise or discard any materials that are outdated or inconsistent with current medical practice. These volunteers are also involved in its design, development, and continuous improvement.

Ownership and Copyright of Examination Materials

The USMLE examination materials are the confidential, copyrighted property of the USMLE program. If you reproduce and/or distribute any examination materials, by any means, including by memorizing and reconstructing them, you are violating the legal rights of the USMLE program. The USMLE program will use every legal means available to protect the copyrighted materials and secure redress against those who violate copyright law.

Contact Us

Application and Registration Inquiries

Contact the appropriate organization (see below) for information on how to apply for the USMLE, obtain application materials, and receive information on the status of your application and scheduling permit.

USMLE STEP	APPLICANT	ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION
STEP 1 and STEP 2 CK	Students and graduates of medical schools in the US or Canada	NBME 3750 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19104-3102 Website: http://www.nbme.org Telephone: (215) 590-9700 Email: webmail@nbme.org
STEP 1 and STEP 2 CK	Students and graduates of medical schools outside the US and Canada	ECFMG 3624 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 Website: http://www.ecfmg.org Telephone: (215) 386-5900 Email: info@ecfmg.org
STEP 3	All medical school graduates who have passed Step 1 and Step 2 CK	FSMB Assessment Services 400 Fuller Wiser Road Euless, TX 76039-3856 Website: http://www.fsmb.org Telephone: (817) 868-4041 Email: usmle@fsmb.org

Scheduling and Test Center Inquiries

Your scheduling permit includes instructions on how to contact Prometric to schedule your appointment to test. Inquiries about your appointment, such as a request to reschedule an appointment within your eligibility period, must be directed to Prometric. Visit the Prometric website for information on test center locations.

If you receive a scheduling permit but experience a problem scheduling your appointment that Prometric staff are unable to resolve, you may contact the organization that registered you for your examination.

Test Administration Inquiries

For questions and concerns about your administration, contact the NBME Test Administration office.

Attention: Test Administration NBME
3750 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3102
Telephone: (215) 590-9700

Email: testadmin@nbme.org

Security Concerns

USMLE encourages you to provide information about cheating, violations of the USMLE rules, and other activities of which you are aware that may compromise the security and integrity of the USMLE. If you have information that a person or entity has compromised the security of the USMLE or violated any exam rule, please submit a report via the STOPit app. Visit Apple or Google Play Store for a free download. Use access code: USMLE-TIP.

General Inquiries

Complete information about the USMLE is available on the USMLE website. General inquiries regarding the USMLE or inquiries for the USMLE Secretariat may be directed to:

Attention: USMLE Secretariat
NBME
3750 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3102
Telephone: (215) 590-9700

Email: webmail@nbme.org

Follow Us on Social Media

Stay up-to-date by following USMLE on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

List of Abbreviations

ACM	Advanced Clinical Medicine
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
COCA	Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation
CCS	Computer-based Case Simulations
CIN	Candidate Identification Number
CK	Clinical Knowledge
ECFMG	Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates
FLEX	Federation Licensing Examination
FSMB	Federation of State Medical Boards
FIP	Foundations of Independent Practice
LCME	Liaison Committee on Medical Education
MCQ	Multiple Choice Question
USMLE	United States Medical Licensing Examination