

2020 Bulletin of Information



A Joint Program of the FEDERATION OF STATE MEDICAL BOARDS OF THE UNITED STATES, INC., and the NATIONAL BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS®



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WELCOME

Reading this *Bulletin of Information (BOI)* is your first step in preparing to take the United States Medical Licensing Examination[®] (USMLE[®]) series. We are confident that this guide will help you succeed with this important examination sequence.

At the time you apply for the USMLE, you will be asked to certify that you agree to comply with the policies and procedures within this USMLE *BOI*. If you are a returning examinee, you must read the USMLE *BOI* each time you register. It is subject to change, and the version applicable to you is the version in effect at the time of your examination.

As you may already know, the USMLE is composed of Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS), Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK), and Step 3. Each Step gets you closer to achieving your goal of obtaining a license to practice medicine in the US.

The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) and the National Board of Medical Examiners[®] (NBME[®]) work together to co-sponsor the USMLE. We know that taking the USMLE Step exams is an important part of medical training. Passing each Step marks a milestone as you begin the next phase in your education.

As leaders of the USMLE program we are committed to helping you achieve your goals. Our teams are here as resources for you. This guide is updated each year to answer your questions and serve as a reference as you begin your journey to licensure.

Please visit the [USMLE website](#) or the [NBME](#) or [FSMB](#) websites to see everything we have to share. And don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#) for the most up-to-date news and information. We are always interested in improving your experience, and supporting you on your journey. Feel free to touch base with us at any time.

Congratulations on all of your achievements to date. We wish you the very best as you embark on your medical career!

Sincerely,

Lisa Rawding, MBA

Senior Vice President, Assessment Programs
National Board of Medical Examiners

David Johnson, MA

Senior Vice President, Assessment Services
Federation of State Medical Boards

CAUTIONS



You must become familiar with the information referenced in this *Bulletin* if you are an applicant with an eligibility period in 2020. If your eligibility period crosses into the next calendar year (ie, 2021), please note that you are responsible for reading and abiding by the policies and procedures described in both years' editions of the USMLE *BOI*.



If your eligibility period extends into 2021 and you test in 2021, you must become familiar with and will be subject to the policies and procedures in the 2021 *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.



If you are a student or graduate of a medical school outside the United States or Canada with an eligibility period in 2020, in addition to becoming familiar with this *BOI*, you must also be familiar with the contents of the 2020 *Information Booklet* published by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG®).



If you are a student or graduate of a medical school outside the United States or Canada and your eligibility period extends into 2021 and you test in 2021, you must become familiar with and will be subject to the policies and procedures in the ECFMG 2020 *Information Booklet*.



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

Quick Facts: Eligibility for the USMLE Steps

STEP COMPONENT	REQUIREMENTS	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
STEPS 1, 2 CK, AND 2 CS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officially enrolled in, or a graduate of, a US or Canadian medical school leading to the MD degree (LCME accredited), OR Officially enrolled in, or a graduate of, a US medical school leading to the DO degree (AOA accredited), OR Officially enrolled in, or a graduate of, a medical school outside the US and Canada listed in the World Directory of Medical Schools as meeting ECFMG eligibility requirements; and meet other ECFMG criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must meet eligibility requirements at time of application AND on test day 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
STEP 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possess the MD degree (or its equivalent) or the DO degree from an LCME- or AOA-accredited US or Canadian medical school or from a medical school outside the US and Canada listed in the World Directory of Medical Schools as meeting ECFMG eligibility requirements, AND Pass Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS, AND Possess ECFMG Certification if you are a graduate of a medical school outside the US and Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must meet eligibility requirements prior to submitting your application AND on the day of testing

If you meet the eligibility requirements, you may take Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS in any sequence.
Please see pages 14-16 for more information regarding eligibility requirements.

RETAKES

You may take the same examination no more than three times within a 12-month period. Your fourth and subsequent attempts 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.

If you have passed an examination, you are not permitted to retake a Step or Step Component, except to comply with certain requirements as approved by the USMLE governance committee (see page 16).

ATTEMPTS AND TIME LIMITS

You are ineligible to retake a Step or Step Component if you have made **six or more prior attempts** to pass that Step or Step Component, including incomplete attempts, regardless of when the examinations were taken.

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

Information regarding specific state requirements can be obtained on the [FSMB website](#).



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 to dismiss you or are otherwise contesting your status. If you are on a leave of absence, please check with the organization that would register you for your examination before submitting your application; or 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 of irregular behavior and a permanent annotation on your USMLE score reports and transcripts.

Quick Facts: Applying and Scheduling

STEP COMPONENT	APPLICATION AND SCHEDULING PROCESS	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
STEPS 1 AND 2 CK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students/graduates of LCME- or AOA-accredited programs should apply via the NBME Application website Students/graduates of medical schools outside the US/Canada should apply via the ECFMG Application website During the application process, select a three-month eligibility period during which you prefer to test You will receive an e-mail notifying you that your scheduling permit is available Visit the Prometric website to schedule your test date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may be able to schedule your test date up to six months in advance If you are unable to test within your eligibility period, contact the organization that registered you for your examination (NBME or ECFMG) to apply for a one-time eligibility period extension; a fee is charged for this service If you do not take the examination within your eligibility period, you must reapply with a new application and fee Your application fee is nonrefundable
STEP 2 CS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students/graduates of LCME- or AOA-accredited programs should apply via the NBME Application website Students/graduates of medical schools outside the US/Canada should apply via the ECFMG Application website You will be assigned a 12-month eligibility period, which begins upon acceptance and verification of your application You will receive an e-mail notifying you that your scheduling permit is available Visit the USMLE website to schedule your test date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once assigned, your eligibility period cannot be changed If you do not take the examination within your assigned eligibility period, you must submit a new application and fee Your application fee is nonrefundable
STEP 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All graduates should apply for Step 3 via the FSMB website During the application process, select a three-month eligibility period during which you prefer to test You will receive an e-mail notifying you that your scheduling permit is available Visit the Prometric website to schedule your test dates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may be able to schedule your test dates up to six months in advance If you are unable to test within your eligibility period, contact the FSMB to apply for a one-time eligibility period extension; a fee is charged and restrictions may apply. Visit the FSMB website for more information If you do not take the examination within your eligibility period, you must reapply with a new application and fee Your application fee is nonrefundable



For information about how to request test accommodations for documented disabilities or for permission to bring medically necessary items with you on exam day, see page 17 of the [Applying for the Test and Scheduling Your Test Date](#) section of this *BOI*.

Quick Facts: *Examination Day and Testing*

DO

- ✓ Review the USMLE *Rules of Conduct* prior to taking your examination
- ✓ Follow all test center staff instructions on the day of your examination
- ✓ Remember to bring a copy of your scheduling permit (electronic or paper) and required identification (see below); **you will not be permitted to test without them**
- ✓ Arrive 30 minutes prior to your testing appointment (computer-based examinations); for Step 2 CS, arrive at the time listed on your confirmation notice
- ✓ Confirm that your headphones are working, either before the examination begins or during the tutorial (computer-based examinations)
- ✓ Use personal items only when on an authorized break; you are not permitted to access your locker during unauthorized breaks (computer-based examinations)
- ✓ Ensure you've completed all sections of the examination

DON'T

- ✗ Feel compelled to test if you are ill, under unusual stress, or unprepared for the examination; to reschedule, contact the organization that registered you for your examination
- ✗ Bring family and friends to the test center; instead, arrange to meet them after the examination ends
- ✗ Bring unauthorized items to the testing room: for computer-based examinations, only soft-foam earplugs are allowed; for Step 2 CS, only your white lab coat and stethoscope are allowed
- ✗ Write on laminated note boards prior to entering your Candidate Identification Number (CIN) and starting your test session (computer-based examinations) or write on anything other than the laminated note boards
- ✗ Work past the announcements instructing you to stop
- ✗ Access your locker or use your cell phone on an unauthorized break

Please see pages 19-23 for more information regarding examination day regulations and rules of conduct.

Identification Required on Exam Day

You must present valid (unexpired) identification with:

- ✓ Your photo
- ✓ Your name as it appears on your permit
- ✓ Your signature

Your name, as it appears on your scheduling permit, must match the name on your identification exactly. If the name listed on your permit is not correct, [contact](#) the organization that registered you for your examination *immediately*.

Acceptable forms of unexpired identification include:

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Driver's license with photograph
- ✓ National Identity Card
- ✓ Other form of government-issued identification*

*See pages 20-21 for detailed identification requirements.

Security Procedures on Exam Day

During check-in, you will:

- ✓ be scanned with a handheld or walk-through device designed to detect prohibited items
- ✓ be asked to empty your pockets and turn them inside out
- ✓ place your personal belongings in bins that are inaccessible for the duration of the examination (Step 2 CS)
- ✓ have your photo identification checked*
- ✓ have your fingerprint captured using biometric technology (computer-based examinations; not available at all locations)
- ✓ write your unique CIN as shown on your scheduling permit on one of the laminated note boards provided (computer-based examinations)
- ✓ be asked to repeat much of this process each time you return to the testing room after a break

Quick Facts: Scoring and Score Reporting

WHAT HAPPENS WHILE YOU WAIT FOR YOUR SCORES?

STEPS 1, 2 CK, AND 3

- ✓ After testing, the examination data are delivered electronically to the NBME
- ✓ Examinee responses are converted into a raw score (the sum of the points earned from correct responses)
- ✓ The raw score is converted into a three-digit score
- ✓ 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 (NBME, ECFMG, or FSMB) and made available to examinees

STEP 2 CS

- ✓ Each day, after testing ends, the testing center performs quality control measures on the examination data before the information is delivered to the NBME
- ✓ Standardized patient rating scales are converted to scores. Patient notes are scored using specially trained patient note raters and/or computer-assisted scoring. Practicing physicians oversee the ratings for the patient note.
- ✓ Examinee test dates are batched into scoring cohorts that are usually eight weeks long
- ✓ When the test administration period for the cohort ends, the performance from the entire cohort is used to generate the data needed to ensure score comparability (across sites and administrations) and to report outcomes
- ✓ The results go through a final quality control process involving computation of statistical quality control measures
- ✓ Once results are verified and approved for release, the scores are made available as shown in the [Step 2 CS Score Reporting Schedule](#)

How Long Does it Take to Get Results?

Results for computer-based examinations (Steps 1, 2 CK, and 3) are typically available within three to four weeks after your test date. However, delays are possible for various reasons. In 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 of the [USMLE website](#).

For Step 2 CS, refer to the [Step 2 CS Score Reporting Schedule](#).

When you are notified that your score is available, follow the instructions in the e-mail to access your USMLE score report. The report will remain available for approximately 365 days from the date of the e-mail notification. After 365 days, your scores will be provided to you only in the form of an official USMLE transcript, which is available for a fee.

How Do I Receive/Send Transcripts?

To obtain your USMLE transcript or have it sent to a third party, you must contact the organization that registered you for your examination; there is a fee for this service.

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](#).



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

Quick Facts: *Irregular Behavior*

DO

- ✓ Put all personal belongings, including your cell phone and study materials, in the locker or bin provided
- ✓ Access your personal belongings only when on an authorized break
- ✓ Verify that your computer displays an authorized break screen before leaving the examination room for a break
- ✓ **Contact the USMLE program via the [USMLE website](#) if you have evidence that someone may have violated a USMLE rule**

DON'T

- ✗ Ask for or share content (items, cases) from any of the examinations, by any means, including but not limited to face-to-face conversation, web forums, or social media
- ✗ Provide examination content to others, including test preparation companies or other entities
- ✗ Change any information on score reports, transcripts, or any other USMLE-related documents
- ✗ Write on your skin, tissue, or any surface other than the laminated note board provided to you by test center staff on your examination day
- ✗ Apply and/or sit for an examination if you are not a current student or a graduate of a medical school program, even if you are appealing your school's decision to withdraw or dismiss you

You are responsible for reading the *USMLE Bulletin of Information* in its entirety; contact the [USMLE Secretariat's](#) office with questions or concerns.

Please see pages 27-28 for more information regarding irregular behavior.



STOP! THINK BEFORE YOU ACT!

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

If you have information concerning activities or behavior that may threaten the security or integrity of the USMLE, please contact us via the [USMLE website](#).



What Do I Need to Do: *USMLE Checklist*

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 [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#).
- Ensure that you are [eligible](#) to register to take 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 government-issued, unexpired photo [identification](#) exactly.
- Choose an [eligibility period](#) (only for Steps 1, 2 CK, and 3; for Step 2 CS your eligibility period will be assigned to you).
- 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 and 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. For Steps 1, 2 CK, and 3 you can take a [practice test](#) at a Prometric test center or purchase an [NBME Self-Assessment](#).
- Contact [Prometric](#) (for Steps 1, 2 CK, and 3) or [CSEC](#) (for Step 2 CS) if you need to [reschedule](#) your test date.

Test Day

- Before you go to the testing center, make yourself aware of the [Rules of Conduct](#) and learn what [behaviors](#) violate the rules. This also includes understanding what [items](#) you may and may not access during your exam.
- Report to the test center at least **30 minutes** prior to your scheduled testing appointment (for Step 2 CS, arrive at the time given on your confirmation notice).
- Bring a paper or electronic copy of your scheduling permit to the test center.
- Bring an acceptable form of government-issued, unexpired photo [identification](#).
- Expect to undergo [security measures](#) 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.

OVERVIEW

This *BOI* provides you with the information needed to complete each of the Steps of the USMLE. Please read it carefully and regularly check the [USMLE website](#) for announcements. By using this guide and our website, you will learn what to expect from each USMLE Step.

PURPOSE AND MISSION OF THE USMLE

The USMLE is a three-Step examination for medical licensure in the United States. It is sponsored by the FSMB and the NBME. The USMLE program 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.

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 medical educators and clinicians, create the examination materials. Committee members broadly represent the teaching, practice, and licensing communities across the United States. At least two 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.

HOW TO PREPARE

Sample items are available free of charge on the [USMLE website](#) under the section titled [Practice Materials](#). You may also purchase an at-home online self-assessment by visiting the [Students & Residents](#) section of the [NBME website](#). Practice materials and self-assessments are available to all USMLE examinees.

HOW TO REGISTER

To apply for USMLE examinations, you must submit an application through the [appropriate organization](#). 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. More information about scheduling is on pages 17 and 18 of this guide.

WHERE IS THE USMLE ADMINISTERED?

The Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK), and Step 3 examinations are computer-based tests that 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. The Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) examination is administered at six testing centers across the US. More information about CS centers can be found on the [Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration \(CSEC\) website](#).

THE USMLE: PURPOSE, TEST FORMAT, AND TEST LENGTHS

STEP & PURPOSE	FORMAT	LENGTH (including breaks)	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
<p>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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approximately 280 multiple-choice questions, divided into seven 60-minute blocks ▪ Computer-based examinations are administered at Prometric test centers around the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-day test session -Approximately eight hours 	<p>For more information on Step 1, including applications, practice materials, and updates, visit the USMLE website</p>
<p>STEP 2 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</p>	<p>Clinical Knowledge (CK)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approximately 318 multiple-choice questions, divided into eight 60-minute blocks ▪ Computer-based examinations are administered at Prometric test centers around the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-day test session -Approximately nine hours 	<p>For more information on Step 2 CK, including applications, practice materials, and updates, visit the USMLE website</p>
<p>The Clinical Skills examination is a separate component of STEP 2 that uses standardized patients to test the examinee's ability to gather information from patients, perform physical examinations, and communicate their findings to patients and colleagues</p>	<p>Clinical Skills (CS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 12 patient cases: 15 minutes for each patient encounter plus 10 minutes to record each patient note ▪ Administered at six test centers in the US – Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia (2) ▪ Composed of three subcomponents: Communication and Interpersonal Skills (CIS), Integrated Clinical Encounter (ICE), and Spoken English Proficiency (SEP). For more information, see pages 11 and 12 of the Step 2 CS Content Description and General Information Booklet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-day test session -Approximately eight hours 	<p>For more information on Step 2 CS, including applications, practice materials, and updates, visit the USMLE website</p>

STEP & PURPOSE	FORMAT	LENGTH (including breaks)	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
<p>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</p> <p>Day 1: FOUNDATIONS OF INDEPENDENT PRACTICE (FIP) assesses the examinee’s knowledge of basic medical and scientific principles essential for effective health care</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Day 1 FIP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approximately 232 multiple-choice test questions, divided into six 60-minute blocks ▪ Computer based, administered at Prometric test centers in the US <p>Day 2 ACM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approximately 180 multiple-choice test questions, divided into six 45-minute blocks ▪ Thirteen computer-based case simulations (CCS). Each simulation is allotted a maximum of 10 or 20 minutes of real time ▪ Computer based, administered at Prometric test centers in the US 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-day test session -Approximately seven hours ▪ One-day test session -Approximately nine hours 	<p>For more information on Step 3, including applications, practice materials, and updates, visit the USMLE website</p>

OWNERSHIP AND COPYRIGHT OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS

The examination materials in the USMLE 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.

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ELIGIBILITY FOR THE USMLE STEPS

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO TAKE THE USMLE?

Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS

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 American Osteopathic Association (AOA), **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



Individuals who passed Step 2 prior to the implementation of Step 2 CS are not permitted to take Step 2 CK, except under the specific exceptions to the retake policy approved by the Composite Committee (see page 16). These individuals are permitted to take Step 2 CS, provided they meet all other eligibility requirements.



All current USMLE applicants are required to take and pass Step 2 CS in order to be eligible for Step 3. If you passed the formerly administered CSA exam and elect to take Step 2 CS and fail, or you previously passed Step 2 CS but are required to retake it to meet a state medical board's or another authority recognized by the USMLE program's time limit requirements and fail, you are not eligible for Step 3 until you have passed your most recent administration of Step 2 CS.



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.

Step 3

To be eligible for Step 3, before submitting your application, you must:

- pass Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS, **AND**
- obtain the MD degree or the DO degree from an LCME- or AOA-accredited US or Canadian medical school, **OR**
- obtain 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

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 or Step Component 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. Failure to notify the organization that registered you for your examination of your change in status may result in a finding that you engaged in irregular behavior. If you take a Step or Step Component 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.

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 medical licensing authority. The medical licensing authority should submit the request to sponsor you to the [USMLE Secretariat](#) in advance of your application for each Step.

SEQUENCE OF STEPS

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

NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS AND TIME LIMITS

An examinee may not take the same Step or Step Component more than six times, including incomplete attempts. All attempts at a Step or Step Component are counted toward the limit, regardless of when the examinations were taken.

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

RETAKE FAILED EXAMINATIONS

You may not take the same Step or Step Component more than three times within a 12-month period. Your fourth and subsequent attempts 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 or Step Component, 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 examination in order 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. In order 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 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 (see page 29).

APPLYING FOR THE TEST AND SCHEDULING YOUR TEST DATE

APPLICATION MATERIALS

Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS

Students and graduates of LCME- or AOA-accredited programs should apply for Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS by following the instructions on the [NBME website](#). Students and graduates of medical schools outside the US and Canada should apply for Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS by following the instructions on the [ECFMG website](#).



If you are dismissed or withdraw(n) from medical school, you are not eligible for USMLE, even if you are appealing the school's decision or are otherwise contesting your status.

Step 3

Graduates with an MD or DO degree from an LCME- or AOA-accredited medical school 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 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 or Step Component for information regarding test accommodations, including procedures and documentation requirements.

EXAMINEES WHO REQUIRE ADDITIONAL BREAK TIME

Examinees with physical or health conditions who require additional break time should complete the [request form](#) and submit it with a letter from a qualified health care professional documenting the medical need. Examples include lactation (to express breast milk) and diabetes (to monitor/treat blood glucose). Requests for additional break time should be made prior to or at the same time as registration for a Step examination.

PERSONAL ITEM EXCEPTIONS (PIE)

Unauthorized possession of personal items while you are in the secure areas of the testing 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 at the [USMLE website](#).



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.

APPLYING FOR AND SCHEDULING YOUR TEST

STEP COMPONENT	OBTAINING AN ELIGIBILITY PERIOD AND SCHEDULING YOUR TEST DATE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
<i>STEPS 1 AND 2 CK</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When applying for the examination, you must select a three-month eligibility period during which you wish to test (eg, January – March). Once your registration is complete, a scheduling permit with your eligibility period will be issued. You will receive an e-mail with instructions for accessing your permit. 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are permitted to reschedule within your eligibility period; you must pay a fee if you make a change during the 30 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 nonrefundable and nontransferable.
<i>STEP 2 CS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When you apply for Step 2 CS, you are assigned a 12-month eligibility period that begins when your application is accepted and your eligibility is verified. Once your registration is complete, a scheduling permit with your eligibility period will be issued. You will receive an e-mail with instructions for accessing your permit. After obtaining the scheduling permit, you may visit the USMLE website to schedule your test date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once your eligibility period is assigned, it cannot be changed or extended. Please check the Step 2 CS Score Reporting Schedule before scheduling a testing appointment if you need your results by a specific deadline. Test centers fill quickly. Scheduling at least six months in advance is advisable. You are permitted to reschedule within your eligibility period; you must pay a fee if you make a change during the 14 calendar days before your scheduled appointment. If you do not take the examination within your eligibility period, you must reapply by submitting a new application and examination fee. Fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable.
<i>STEP 3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When applying for an examination, you must select a three-month eligibility period during which you wish to test (eg, January – March). Once your application is processed, a scheduling permit with your eligibility period will be issued. You will receive an e-mail with instructions for accessing your permit. After obtaining the scheduling permit, you may visit the Prometric website to schedule your test dates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are permitted to reschedule within your eligibility period; you must pay a fee if you make a change during the 30 calendar days before your scheduled appointment. If you are unable to test within your eligibility period, contact FSMB to inquire about a one-time contiguous eligibility period extension. A fee is charged for this service. Visit the FSMB website for more information on eligibility period extensions. 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 nonrefundable and nontransferable.

EXAMINATION DAY AND TESTING

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 of 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 or cubicle all personal belongings, including cell phones, watches, pagers, tablet PCs, iPods/media players, fitness and tracking monitors, any device with transmitting or receiving capabilities (eg, Bluetooth), formulas, study materials, notes, papers, pens/pencils, and your purse and/or wallet, before you enter the testing room (or “orientation room” for Step 2 CS).
5. During computer-based testing (Steps 1, 2 CK, and 3), you will leave your testing station for breaks only when the break screen is visible on your monitor. It is a violation of the Rules of Conduct if you indicate on the test center log that your break screen is visible when it is not.
6. During computer-based testing (Steps 1, 2 CK, and 3), you may use a telephone or other communication device only when outside the secure testing area and during an authorized break. During Step 2 CS, you will not use a personal telephone at any time while you are in the testing center.
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 Step 2 CS and *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 (computer-based examinations) or scrap paper (Step 2 CS) provided.



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 testing center. **For computer-based examinations (Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3), the only items you are allowed to bring into the testing room are 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. Earplugs are prohibited for Step 2 CS. Visit the [USMLE website](#) for more information.

For Step 2 CS, the entire test center, including the orientation room and the restrooms, is considered a secure testing area. **The only items you are allowed to bring into the secure testing area are your white lab coat (pockets must be empty) and a standard stethoscope,** without digital amplification, electronics, or any other enhancement. **(Should you forget to bring one, there are a limited number of standard stethoscopes available at the test center).** **If you require an amplified stethoscope and wish to bring one to the exam, you must request a personal item exception (PIE)** by contacting disabilityservices@NBME.org or by calling 215-590-9700 for additional information on how to request a PIE. All other equipment, including pens, gloves, writing paper, and other medical equipment, is provided by the test center. Visit the [USMLE website](#) for more information regarding the Step 2 CS examination experience and test center regulations.

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 or in the designated storage area for Step 2 CS; electronic devices must be turned off. Turning down the volume is not sufficient. All personal items are subject to inspection.

ADMISSION TO THE TEST

Check-in Procedures

Step 1, Step 2 CK, Step 3

You should arrive at the test center approximately 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.

Step 2 CS

You should arrive at the test center at the time listed on the confirmation notice you received. There will be an on-site orientation to demonstrate the equipment available for you to use in the examination rooms and to review examination rules and procedures. If you arrive during the on-site orientation, you may be allowed to test after signing a Late Admission Form. If you arrive after the on-site orientation, you will **not** be allowed to test and must pay a [fee](#) to reschedule your test. Your rescheduled test date must fall within your eligibility period.

All Steps

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. Your identification must contain both your signature and a recent photograph. Please review your scheduling permit for details and limited exceptions. If the name listed on your scheduling permit is not correct, contact the organization that registered you for your examination immediately.

If you do not bring your scheduling permit on paper or electronically (eg, via smartphone) 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

For Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3 ONLY

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. You will be asked to repeat this process each time you return to the testing room after a break. Additionally, your photo ID and fingerprint may be scanned electronically, and you must sign the test center log each time you enter or exit the test room.

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 (eg, skin, clothing, tissue) 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.

For Step 2 CS ONLY

In addition to having your photo ID scanned electronically, you will be asked to place your personal belongings (eg, pens, study materials, cell phones) in small bins, which are inaccessible for the duration of the examination day. Any personal belongings that you may need during breaks or during the examination, including your lab coat and stethoscope, can be placed at your seat in the orientation room. After the onsite orientation, 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. Please note that every area of the testing center is under video surveillance at all times; examinees are escorted by proctors at all times, with the exception of restroom breaks.

All Steps

There are no facilities available for family and friends to wait at the center while you test; plan to meet them elsewhere after the examination ends. 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, or headbands are subject to inspection. We reserve 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

Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3

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, you are required to sign out and sign in when you return. You must present your identification each time you sign in.

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.

Step 2 CS

Your Step 2 CS administration will include 12 patient encounters. The examination session lasts approximately eight hours. You will have 50 minutes of break time: 10-minute break after the third patient encounter; 30-minute break (which includes a light lunch) after the sixth patient encounter; and a 10-minute break after the ninth patient encounter. The test center is unable to accommodate special meal requests. However, you may bring your own food, provided that no refrigeration is required. No smoking or use of tobacco products, including vaping, is allowed in any CSEC center.

STARTING AND COMPLETING THE TEST

Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3

After you start taking an examination, you cannot cancel or reschedule that examination. If you experience a computer issue during the test, notify test center staff immediately. The testing software is designed to restart the test at the point that it was interrupted, without loss of time.

The test session ends when you have started and exited all blocks or the total test time expires. You will receive a notice during checkout that you have appeared for the test. If your test is scheduled for multiple days, be sure to bring a copy of your scheduling permit with you each day or you may not be permitted to test.

In the rare event that a technical problem occurs that does not permit you to complete your examination, please send a written description of the incident to Test Administration Services at the NBME. [Test Administration Services](#) must receive your notice within 10 days of your testing date or it may not be possible to fully investigate your concerns. Your correspondence should include your name, your USMLE ID number, the examination name (Step 1, 2 CK, 2 CS, or 3), the date of administration, and a message with a detailed description of the difficulty experienced. Please allow at least 15 business days for your report to be investigated and evaluated. You will receive written notification of the investigation results.

If you start the examination but do not complete it for reasons other than a technical problem or expiration of time, you should promptly write to [Test Administration Services](#) explaining, in detail, the reasons you did not finish the examination. The attempt may appear as an incomplete on your USMLE transcript.

For more information on how to report a test administration problem, visit the [USMLE website](#).

Step 2 CS

Once you enter the secure area of the test center, which includes the orientation area, you may not leave the area until the examination has been completed. All examinees taking the Step 2 CS examination are required to type the patient note portion of the exam. You are permitted to handwrite your patient note only if you were approved to receive an accommodation for a disability or if technical difficulties occur that make the patient note-typing program unavailable.

You may not solicit information about cases or discuss the cases with anyone, including other examinees, at any time (before, during, or after your examination). This includes any activity on the Internet, including on social media. All conversation at the testing center among examinees must be in English.



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 standardized patients or test center staff. Such circumstances include but are not limited to an examinee performing careless or hazardous acts during the physical examination, exhibiting signs of illness (eg, persistent coughing or sneezing) during the examination, or showing visibly open skin lesions or active bleeding.



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, inform a proctor promptly.



The USMLE makes every effort to ensure that your registration information is properly processed and that the Step examinations are properly prepared, administered, and scored. In the unlikely event that an error occurs in the preparation, processing, administration, or scoring of your USMLE examination or in the reporting of your USMLE scores, the USMLE program will make reasonable efforts to correct the error, if possible, or permit you either to retest at no additional fee or to receive a refund of the examination fee. These are the exclusive remedies available to examinees for errors in the registration process; in preparing, processing, or administering exams; or in determining or reporting scores.

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 at the [USMLE website](#). On the examinations containing multiple-choice items, 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](#).



You must pass all three subcomponents of Step 2 CS (ICE, CIS, SEP) in a single administration to obtain the overall designation of passing on Step 2 CS.

SCORE REPORTING

Score Availability

Results for computer-based examinations (Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3) are typically available three 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 Step 2 CS results, you should refer to the [Step 2 CS Score Reporting Schedule](#). 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 e-mail 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 e-mail 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, through the organization that registered you for your examination. Visit the [USMLE website](#) for more details, including how to request a transcript for you or for a third party.

Reporting to Third Parties

The NBME reports the results of the USMLE to LCME- and AOA-accredited medical school programs for their students and graduates. For Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS, if you do not want your results reported to your medical school, you must send a request from your e-mail 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, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS, if you do not want your results reported to your medical school, you must submit a request for each examination administration, via [ECFMG's Interactive Web Applications \(IWA\)](#), at least 10 business days before your scheduled test date.

Examination data (including performance information and recorded patient encounters) 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 e-mail at webmail@nbme.org no later than 30 days before your administration.

Incomplete Scores

If you do not open every block of your Step 1, Step 2 CK, or Step 3 examination, your examination may not be scored and the attempt may be reported as incomplete on your USMLE transcript.

For Step 2 CS, if you leave the test early or otherwise fail to carry out one or more of the cases, your performance may be assessed on those cases you completed. If, based on the performance of the completed cases, a pass/fail outcome cannot be determined, the attempt may be recorded as incomplete on your USMLE transcript.

For privacy purposes, the USMLE program does not provide scores or outcomes by telephone, e-mail, or fax to anyone. Additionally, the scoring process is not expedited or accelerated for any individual or group.

SCORE RECHECKS

For all Steps and Step Components, a rigorous process is used to ensure the accuracy of scores, including a double 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. However, 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.

REGISTRATION ORGANIZATION	TO REQUEST A SCORE RECHECK, VISIT
NBME	http://examinee.nbme.org/interactive
ECFMG	http://www.ecfm.org/forms/steprchk.pdf
FSMB	http://www.fsmb.org/step-3

For Steps 1, 2 CK, and 3, 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 rechecked score is then compared with the original score.

For Step 2 CS, the ratings received from the standardized patients and results from the patient notes are retrieved, re-summed, and reconverted into final scores to verify the accuracy of the original outcome. Encounters and patient notes are not rerated, and videos are not reviewed during the recheck.

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 27-28) 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.



If you have information that an examinee or other person or entity has, or may have, compromised the security of the USMLE or intended to do so, please immediately contact or call the [USMLE Secretariat](#).

EXAMPLES OF IRREGULAR BEHAVIOR

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

- seeking, providing, and/or obtaining unauthorized access to examination materials, 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 **Scoring and Score Reporting** section of this *BOI*, pages 24-26.

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 with the investigation, 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.

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	TYPE OF APPLICANT	ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION
<i>STEPS 1, 2 CK, AND 2 CS</i>	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 E-mail: webmail@nbme.org
<i>STEPS 1, 2 CK, AND 2 CS</i>	Students and graduates of medical schools outside the US and Canada	ECFMG 3624 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 Website: http://www.ecfm.org Telephone: (215) 386-5900 E-mail: info@ecfm.org
<i>STEP 3</i>	All medical school graduates who have passed Step 1 and Step 2 (CK and CS)	FSMB Assessment Services 400 Fuller Wiser Road Eules, TX 76039-3856 Website: http://www.fsmb.org Telephone: (817) 868-4041 E-mail: usmle@fsmb.org

SCHEDULING AND TEST CENTER INQUIRIES

For Steps 1, 2 CK, and 3, 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.

To schedule an appointment for Step 2 CS, follow the instructions provided on your scheduling permit. To check test center availability and to schedule or reschedule an appointment, visit the [USMLE website](#).

If you receive a scheduling permit but experience a problem scheduling your appointment that [Prometric](#) or Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration (CSEC) scheduling 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

National Board of Medical Examiners
3750 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3102
Telephone: (215) 590-9700
E-mail: 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. Please visit the [USMLE website](#) to report such information.

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

National Board of Medical Examiners
3750 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3102
Telephone: (215) 590-9700
E-mail: webmail@nbme.org

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACM	Advanced Clinical Medicine
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AOA	American Osteopathic Association
CCS	Computer-based Case Simulations
CIN	Candidate Identification Number
CIS	Communication and Interpersonal Skills
CK	Clinical Knowledge
CS	Clinical Skills
CSEC	Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration
ECFMG	Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates
FLEX	Federation Licensing Examination
FSMB	Federation of State Medical Boards
FIP	Foundations of Independent Practice
ICE	Integrated Clinical Encounter
LCME	Liaison Committee on Medical Education
NBME	National Board of Medical Examiners
PIE	Personal Item Exceptions
SEP	Spoken English Proficiency
USMLE	United States Medical Licensing Examination