JCNDE JOINT COMMISSION ON NATIONAL DENTAL EXAMINATIONS

National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE)

2026 Candidate Guide

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TESTING SERVICES

ADA American Dental Association®

The Department of Testing Services (DTS) is a shared service of the American Dental Association (ADA) that employs testing professionals and provides professional examination services in all relevant areas (e.g., test design, content development, administration, analysis, and reporting). At the direction of the governing bodies it supports, DTS advises on policy based on testing industry best practices and professional experience, and implements policy for the orderly, secure, and fair administration of examination programs within its charge.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *You are required to read this Guide before you apply to take the examination.*

At the time of application, you will be required to confirm that you have read this Guide, understood its contents, and agree to the policies and procedures contained herein.

Changes to the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE) Program may occur after publication of this Guide. Updated PDFs will be posted to ***ADA.org/NBDHE****. You will be subject to the policies and procedures currently in effect at the time of your test administration.*

JCNDE

National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE)

2026 Candidate Guide

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OVERVIEW

ABOUT THIS GUIDE AND EXAMINATION PROGRAM

This document is the official candidate guide for the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination ("NBDHE®"). It provides information about application and examination procedures, program policies, examination content, test security, rules of conduct, ramifications of rule violations, and scoring. The governing body for the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination is the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations ("JCNDE" or "Governing Body"). The NBDHE is implemented by the Department of Testing Services ("DTS"). The JCNDE is an agency of the American Dental Association ("ADA"), while DTS is a shared service of the ADA. This examination is administered by Pearson ("Pearson" or "Administration Vendor") in the United States and Canada. Collectively, the Governing Body, DTS, and the set of activities, policies, and procedures occurring in support of this examination are referred to as the "NBDHE Program" or simply the "Examination Program."

The ADA uses arbitration to resolve legal differences relating to the NBDHE. Arbitration is described more fully in the section on Arbitration Requirement and Agreement to Arbitrate in this Guide. Agreement to arbitrate is a prerequisite to taking the NBDHE.

The Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE) would like to thank you for your interest in this examination. As the agency responsible for overseeing the development and administration of this examination, the JCNDE appreciates the time and energy you are devoting to preparation. The JCNDE takes its responsibilities extremely seriously and works diligently to help ensure its examinations provide valid, reliable, and fair evaluations of candidate knowledge, skills, and abilities.

PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL BOARD EXAMINATIONS

The purpose of the National Board Examinations (NBEs) (i.e., the INBDE®, DLOSCE™, DHLOSCE™, and NBDHE®) is to assist jurisdictional boards in determining the qualifications of those who seek licensure to practice dentistry or dental hygiene. These examinations assess important knowledge, skills, and abilities required for safe practice, and their relevant application in a problem-solving context. Licensure boards use the information provided by the NBEs to help protect the public health.

Acceptance of the NBEs is at the discretion of individual licensing jurisdictions. Currently, all United States licensing jurisdictions recognize the INBDE and NBDHE; these jurisdictions include all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the US Virgin Islands. Please see ADA.org/DLOSCE and ADA.org/DHLOSCE for information concerning the specific licensing jurisdictions that currently accept DLOSCE and/or DHLOSCE results as either full or partial fulfillment of board clinical licensure examination requirements.

Additional information regarding licensure and licensure requirements can be found at the following links:

- Licensure Overview | American Dental Association (ADA.org/resources/licensure)
- Interactive licensure map | American Dental Association (ADA.org/resources/licensure/dental-licensure-by-state-map)
- Dentist and dental hygienist licensure compact (ddhcompact.org)

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EXAMINATION FAIRNESS

The Governing Body and DTS have devoted and continue to devote substantial time and energy to considerations involving fairness, to comprehensively consider the relevant issues and implement examination programs that are fair, valid, and reliable, providing candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities in support of accurate and valid skill measurement. Fairness efforts are rooted in professional standards as promulgated in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*[1]. This document — published by the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education — provides professional guidance on all aspects of testing, and specifically notes that fairness is fundamental to validity.

Fairness considerations are embedded throughout this Examination Program, affecting every aspect of how this examination is constructed, administered, scored, and reported.

DENTAL HYGIENE LICENSURE AND THE NBDHE

Licensure of dental hygienists in the United States is the responsibility of specific jurisdictions (e.g., states, the District of Columbia, and US territories), with corresponding licensure decisions made by jurisdictional boards.

Specific dental hygiene licensure requirements vary among jurisdictions, but most jurisdictions have three basic requirements: an educational requirement, a written examination requirement, and a clinical examination requirement. All jurisdictions accept graduation from a dental hygiene program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) as fulfilling the educational requirement. Most jurisdictions also accept graduation from a Canadian dental hygiene program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC).

The NBDHE is intended to fulfill or partially fulfill jurisdictional written examination requirements. Acceptance of National Board Examination results is completely at the discretion of the jurisdiction, which in turn can place any limit on acceptance of examination results that it deems appropriate. Additional information about dental hygiene licensure can be found at ADHA.org.

The JCNDE is responsible for the development and administration of the NBDHE and the Dental Hygiene Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DHLOSCE), in addition to dental licensure examinations which include the Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE) and the Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE). The JCNDE relies heavily on dental hygienists who act as subject matter expert consultants to inform the development of the NBDHE and DHLOSCE.

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[1] American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, National Council on Measurement in Education. (2014). Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing. Washington, DC: Author.

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ETHICAL CONDUCT

Healthcare professionals play a vital role in society by providing services that contribute to the overall health and well-being of individuals and their communities. In light of this responsibility, such professionals must behave ethically at all times. This obligation begins at the time of application to school and continues through the educational process, the licensure process, and the entirety of professional practice.

As professionals devoted to the prevention of disease and the promotion and improvement of the public's health, dental hygienists hold a position of trust within society. The American Dental Hygienists' Association's Code of Ethics for Dental Hygienists establishes standards of behavior to guide the public's expectations and support dental hygiene practice, laws, and regulations. By holding themselves accountable to the standards stated in the Code, dental hygienists enhance the public's trust on which their professional privilege and status are founded.

The purpose of this Examination Program is to provide licensure boards with information as to whether a candidate possesses the necessary skills to safely practice at an entry-level. Accordingly, all candidates are expected to pass the examination on their own merit without assistance. All candidates are required to maintain confidentiality with respect to examination content.

Candidates are required to abide by these ethical standards and to read, understand, and comply with the examination regulations and rules of conduct for this examination. The obligation to abide by these ethical standards includes a commitment to honesty, truthfulness, full disclosure, accuracy, fairness, and integrity in all matters pertaining to examinations completed now and, in the future, (examination applications, examination procedures, applications for licensure, etc.).

Misconduct in the examination process is a very serious matter. Violation of the rules of conduct or examination regulations may result in civil liability, voiding of examination results, retest penalties, or other appropriate penalties. Under certain circumstances, misconduct and irregularities in the examination process may be reported to relevant licensing authorities. **A candidate who acts unethically risks potential delay, denial, suspension, and loss of licensure.**

The Examination Program Governing Body, licensure boards, and the profession expect strong ethical behavior from all candidates. The Governing Body annually publishes policies and procedures applicable to misconduct and irregularities in the application and examination process. This information is available in later sections of this document. The Governing Body expects all candidates to carefully read and understand this information and their obligations as candidates for this examination.

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EXAMINATION CONTENT AND PREPARATION MATERIALS

EXAMINATION SPECIFICATIONS

Examination items are developed by test construction teams composed of subject-matter experts in accordance with established test construction team structures and examination specifications approved by the JCNDE. Test constructors are appointed based on expertise in six areas: biomedical sciences, radiology, periodontics, dental hygiene curriculum, clinical dental hygiene, and community dental health.

The Universal/National tooth notation system is used on all National Board Examinations. This system is a sequential tooth numbering system, designating the permanent dentition with numbers 1-32, and the primary dentition with letters A-T.

SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION

The NBDHE is a comprehensive examination consisting of 350 multiple-choice items covering functions that a dental hygienist is expected to be able to perform. Only functions that can be delegated to a dental hygienist in a majority of states are included in the examination. The examination contains a discipline-based component and a case-based component, with test specifications as follows:

Please note that updates to the NBDHE Test Specifications are anticipated in November 2026. Please consult the NBDHE website for the latest information and for any potential changes to the date of implementation. In preparing to take the NBDHE, candidates should reference the test specifications associated with the date of their NBDHE administration.

NBDHE Test Specifications *Prior* to Update

Discipline-Based Component (200 items)

The discipline-based component includes items addressing three major areas:

- Scientific Basis for Dental Hygiene Practice
- Provision of Clinical Dental Hygiene Services
- Community Health/Research Principles

The distribution of items in this component is presented below.

Scientific Basis for Dental Hygiene Practice (61 items)

- Anatomic Sciences
  - Anatomy
    - Head and neck anatomy
    - Dental anatomy
      - General anatomy
      - Root anatomy
    - Histology and Embryology
  - Physiology
  - Biochemistry and Nutrition
  - Microbiology and Immunology
  - Pathology
    - General
    - Oral
  - Pharmacology

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Provision of Clinical Dental Hygiene Services (115 items)

- Assessing Patient Characteristics
  - Medical and dental history
  - Head and neck examination
  - Periodontal evaluation
  - Oral evaluation
  - General
- Obtaining and Interpreting Radiographs
  - Principles of radiophysics and radiobiology
  - Principles of radiologic health
  - Technique
  - Recognition of normalities and abnormalities
  - General
- Planning and Managing Dental Hygiene Care
  - Infection control (application)
  - Recognition of emergency situations and provision of appropriate care
  - Individualized patient education
    - Planning of individualized instruction
    - Provision of instruction for prevention and management of oral diseases
      1. Dental caries
      2. Periodontal disease
      3. Oral conditions
    - Anxiety and pain control
    - Recognition and management of compromised patients
    - Dental hygiene treatment strategies
      1. Diagnosis
      2. Treatment plan
      3. Case presentation
    - General
- Performing Periodontal Procedures
  - Etiology and pathogenesis of periodontal diseases
  - Prescribed therapy
    - Periodontal debridement
    - Surgical support services
    - Chemotherapeutic agents
    - General
  - Reassessment and maintenance (e.g., implant care)
- Using Preventive Agents
  - Fluorides - systemic and topical
    - Mechanisms of action
    - Toxicology
    - Methods of administration
      - Water fluoridation
      - Self-administered
  - Pit and fissure sealants
  - Other preventive agents
- Providing Supportive Treatment Services
  - Properties and manipulation of materials
  - Polishing natural and restored teeth
  - Making of impressions and preparation of study casts
  - Other supportive services (e.g., tooth desensitization)
  - General
- Professional Responsibility
  - Ethical principles, including informed consent
  - Regulatory compliance
  - Patient and professional communication
  - General

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Community Health/Research Principles (24 Items)

- Promoting Health and Preventing Disease Within Groups
- Participating in Community Programs
  - Assessing populations and defining objectives
  - Designing, implementing, and evaluating programs
- Analyzing Scientific Literature, Understanding Statistical Concepts, and Applying Research Results

Case Based Items (150 items)

The NBDHE's case-based component includes 150 items involving 12 to 15 dental hygiene patient cases. These cases present information dealing with adult and child patients. Cases may involve patients of varying types, including geriatric, adult-periodontal, pediatric, special needs, medically compromised, and others. A medically compromised patient is one whose health status may require modification of standard treatment or special consideration. The patient information is presented by means of patient histories, dental charts, radiographs, and clinical photographs.

Case-based items address knowledge and skills required in the following areas:

- Assessing patient characteristics.
- Obtaining and interpreting radiographs.
- Planning and managing dental hygiene care.
- Performing periodontal procedures.
- Using preventive agents.
- Providing supportive treatment service.
- Professional responsibility.

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NBDHE Test Specifications *After* Update

Discipline-Based Component (200 items)

The discipline-based component includes items addressing three major areas:

- Scientific Basis for Dental Hygiene Practice
- Provision of Clinical Dental Hygiene Services
- Research Principles and Community Health

The distribution of items in this component is presented below.

Scientific Basis for Dental Hygiene Practice (56 items)

- Anatomic Sciences
  - Anatomy
    - Head and neck anatomy
    - Dental anatomy
      - General anatomy
      - Root anatomy
    - Histology and Embryology
- Physiology
- Biochemistry and Nutrition
  - Biochemistry
  - Nutrition
- Microbiology and Immunology
  - Microbiology
  - Immunology
- Pathology
  - General
  - Oral
- Pharmacology
  - Local Anesthesia
  - General

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Provision of Clinical Dental Hygiene Services (124 items)

- Patient Assessment
  - Medical and dental history
  - Head and neck examination
  - Periodontal evaluation
  - Oral evaluation
  - Occlusal evaluation
- Dental Radiography
  - Principles of radiophysics and radiobiology
  - Principles of radiologic health
  - Technique
  - Recognition of normalities and abnormalities
  - Emerging Technologies
- Dental Hygiene Care Planning
  - Infection control (application)
  - Recognition of emergency situations and provision of appropriate care
  - Individualized patient education
    - Planning of individualized instruction
    - Provision of instruction for prevention and management of oral diseases
      1. Dental caries
      2. Periodontal diseases
      3. Oral conditions
  - Anxiety and pain control
    - Local anesthesia
    - General (e.g., relaxation techniques)
  - Recognition and management of patients with special needs
  - Dental hygiene treatment strategies
      1. Diagnosis
      2. Treatment plan
      3. Case presentation
- Periodontal Disease Management
  - Etiology and pathogenesis of periodontal diseases
  - Prescribed therapy
    - Nonsurgical periodontal therapy
    - Surgical support services
    - Chemotherapeutic agents
    - Implant care
  - Reassessment and evaluation
  - Maintenance
    - Preventive Agents
  - Fluorides
    - Mechanisms of action
    - Toxicology
    - Methods of administration
  - Pit and fissure sealants
  - Other preventive agents (e.g., emerging materials)
- Supportive Treatment Services
  - Properties and manipulation of materials
  - Polishing natural and restored teeth
  - Making of impressions and preparation of study casts
  - Emerging technologies
- Professional Responsibility
  - Ethical principles
  - Regulatory compliance
  - Patient and professional communication
  - Documentation and risk management

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Research Principles and Community Health (20 Items)

- Research principles
  - Analyzing Scientific Literature
  - Understanding Statistical Concepts
  - Applying Research Results
- Community health
  - Promoting health and preventing disease within groups
  - Assessing, designing, implementing, and evaluating community programs

Case Based Items (150 items)

The NBDHE's case-based component includes 150 items involving 12 to 15 dental hygiene patient cases. These cases present information dealing with adult and child patients. Cases may involve patients of varying types, including geriatric, adult-periodontal, pediatric, special needs, medically compromised, and others. A medically compromised patient is one whose health status may require modification of standard treatment or special consideration. The patient information is presented by means of patient histories, dental charts, radiographs, and clinical photographs.

Case-based items address knowledge and skills required in the following areas:

- Patient assessment
- Dental radiography
- Dental hygiene care planning
- Periodontal disease management
- Preventive agents
- Supportive treatment services
- Professional responsibility

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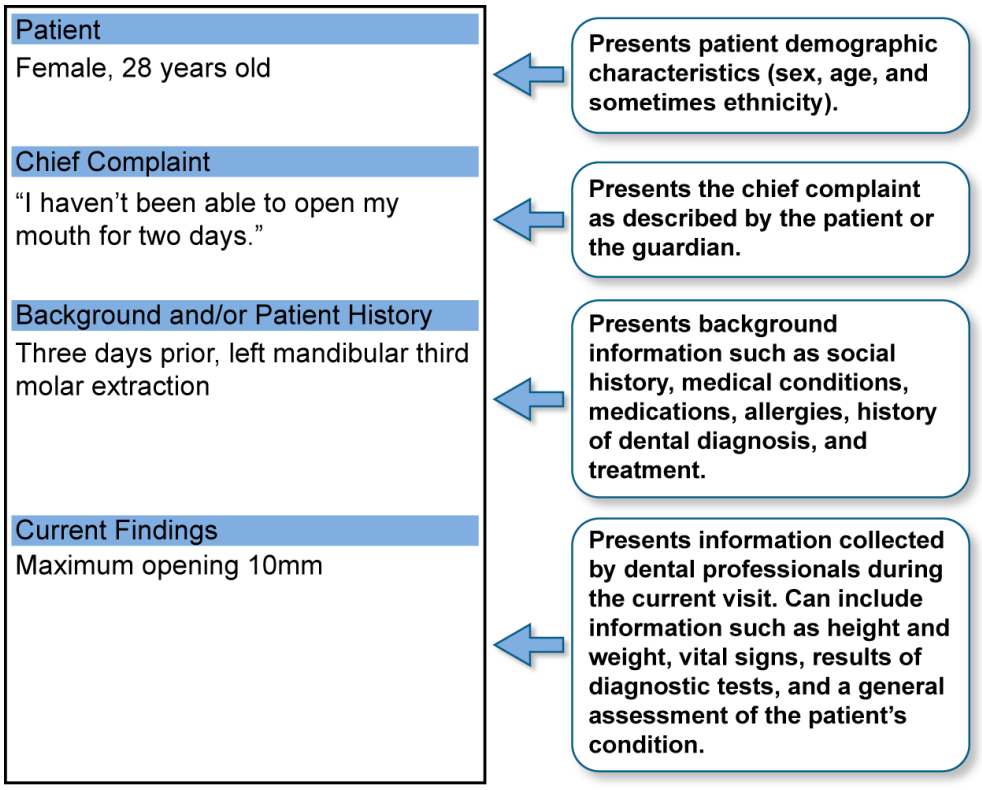
PATIENT BOX

Some questions in this examination involve a patient box. The patient box presents information available to the practitioner at the time of the visit. If no information is presented in a given area of the patient box, assume the information is either unknown or is not available. For example, if no allergies are listed, assume the patient has no known allergies at the time of visit. Always consider information presented in the patient box when answering questions and pay close attention to all provided patient information.



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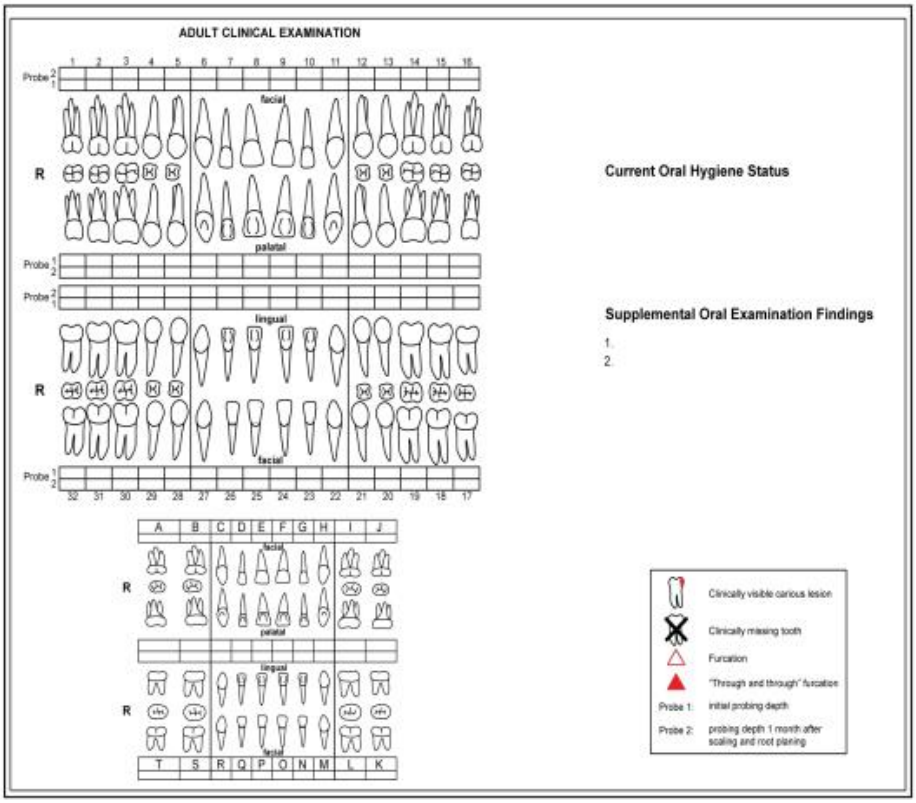
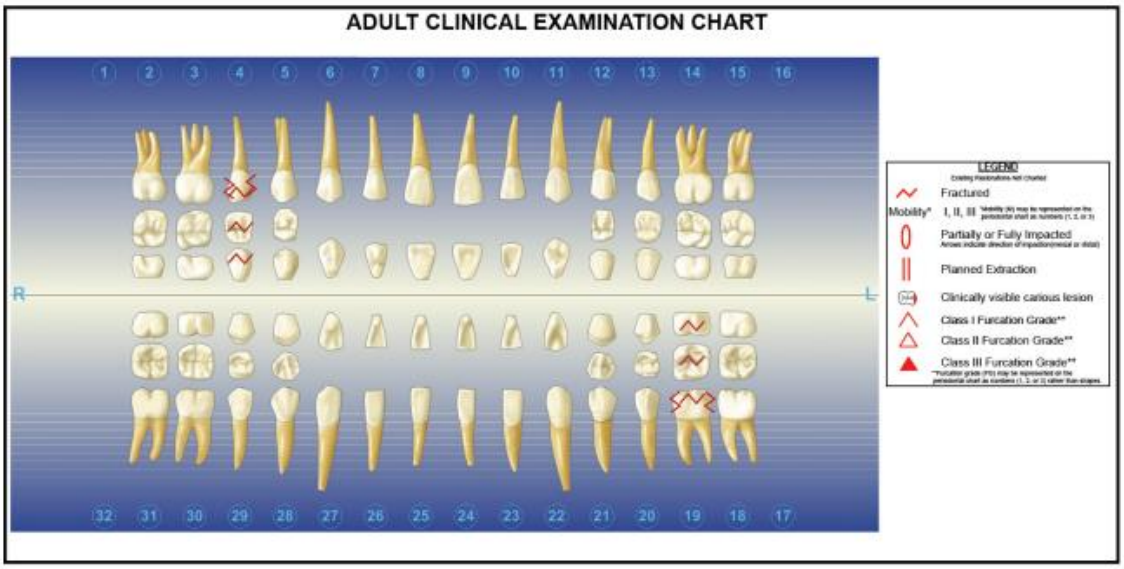
DENTAL CHARTS

Some items may involve dental charts. Below are samples of the types of dental charts used within the examination.





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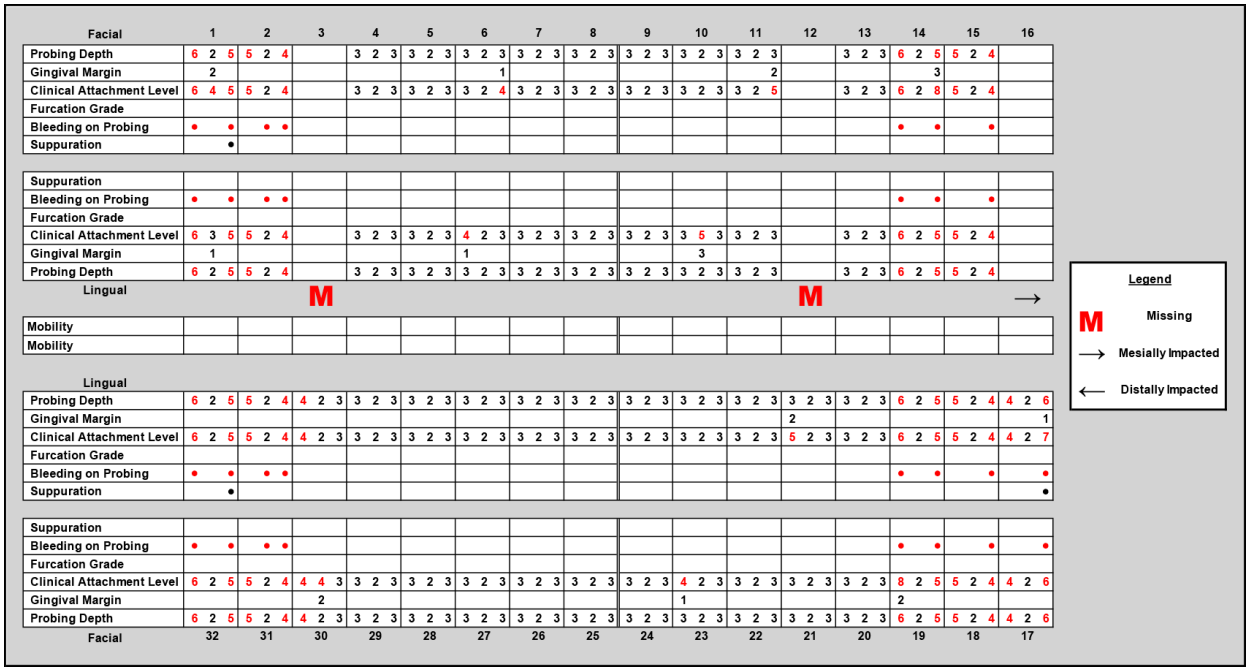

TESTLET

A testlet consists of a case study or problem with a set of associated test questions. The testlet format is used for NBDHE items appearing in the Community Health/Research Principles section. A sample testlet appears below.

SAMPLE TESTLET ON COMMUNITY HEALTH/RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

A dental hygienist employed at a public health clinic in a rural county of the United States is assigned the project of developing a preventive dental health program for a sub-group of the population.

COMMUNITY PROFILE: The primary employers in this county have been coal mining companies. The unemployment rate in the county has increased by 32 percent since the closing of the coal mine companies.

- The median age of the population is 46. In the county there are five general dentists, three dental hygienists, and one public health-centered dental clinic. The clinic employs a full-time dentist and dental hygienist. The public health clinic sees low-income children and senior citizens on a sliding-fee schedule.
- The dental hygienist employed by the public health clinic conducts dental screenings for kindergarten students each year. The mean deft scores for the kindergarten students for the last three years are: d = 1.02, e = 0.87, f = 4.22.
- The community does not have water fluoridation because of multiple water sources. The state funds a 0.2%-sodium fluoride rinse program in grades K-5. The state mandates that a dentist or a dental hygienist perform deft/dmft/DMFT and GI indices on all students in grades 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, and 10. On a yearly basis, all pathology is brought to parents' attention and referred to a dental professional.

1. Which population group is dentally underserved in this community?
    a. Adult age
    b. Geriatric age
    c. Early childhood age
    d. Elementary school age

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2. What would be the next step for the dental hygienist to take in program planning after selecting the target population?
    a. Appraise the program.
    b. Define goals for the program.
    c. Compile data on the target group population.
    d. Develop educational components.

3. Each of the following is perceived as a barrier to dental care for this community EXCEPT one. Which is the EXCEPTION?
    a. Lack of water fluoridation.
    b. Maldistribution of providers.
    c. Lack of affordable services.
    d. Loss of income and insurance.

4. What can be stated about the deft scores of the kindergarten students?
    a. Early exfoliation
    b. High decay rate
    c. Late eruption pattern
    d. Treatment needs are being met.

5. How often should the fluoride rinse for grades K-5 be performed?
    a. Daily
    b. Weekly
    c. Monthly
    d. Three times a week
    e. Based on the caries rate of the child.

SAMPLE ITEM FORMATS

A multiple-choice examination item consists of a stem, which poses a problem, followed by a list of possible answers. The stem of an examination item is usually either a question or an incomplete statement. For NBDHE purposes, an item must have at least three and not more than five possible responses. Only one of the responses is considered the correct or best option.

Completion items require the correct completion of a concept or idea.

The sensation of touch, pain, pressure, or temperature is determined by the

A. degree of myelinization of a nerve fiber.
B. frequency of the stimulation to a nerve fiber.
C. method of stimulation of a nerve fiber.
D. strength of the stimulation to a nerve fiber.

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Question items communicate a problem or set of circumstances.

Which muscle(s) does the phrenic nerve innervate?

A. Abdominal
B. Diaphragm
C. Internal intercostal
D. Sternocleidomastoid

Negative items are characterized by a word such as EXCEPT or NOT in the stem. These key words are capitalized.

Each of the following is affected by saliva EXCEPT one. Which is the EXCEPTION?

A. Carbohydrate breakdown
B. Dental caries
C. Oral microflora
D. Protein digestion

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Commonly used acronyms and abbreviations may appear on the examination. Please refer to the *Acronyms and Abbreviations* document posted at JCNDE.ADA.org/NBDHE/NBDHE-prepare.

EXAMINATION PREPARATION AND RESOURCES

All examination questions are reviewed annually by a team of subject matter experts before they are used for examination purposes. This process helps to ensure that questions reflect the most recent research and guidelines. For information about how and when newly emerging guidelines are incorporated into the examination, candidates should review the document entitled *Recent and Forthcoming Updates to Examinations* posted at JCNDE.ADA.org.

The JCNDE does not endorse or recommend any specific texts or other teaching aids (e.g., review courses) that are advertised as NBDHE preparation materials.

A number of resources are used by subject matter experts to create examination questions. These resources include, but are not limited to, those provided below.

- Reference Texts for the NBDHE

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CONFIDENTIALITY OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS

Examination items represent confidential, copyrighted intellectual property. Obtaining, using, or distributing examination questions — also referred to as examination items — is strictly prohibited, regardless of the method employed (memorization, recording, copying, or other means). This prohibition includes the discussion, distribution, or online posting of memorized examination questions or answers, in whole or in part.

The use or sharing of examination questions violates the examination regulations and rules of conduct of this testing program. Such activities impede the accurate measurement of candidate skills and threaten the validity and credibility of the examination. Since all examinations are copyrighted property, these prohibited activities also violate federal copyright laws.

The Department of Testing Services investigates all reports of candidates' alleged production, misuse, or sharing of confidential examination materials, and will pursue formal action against anyone who violates examination regulations or federal copyright law. Violations could result in the voiding of examination results, legal action, or other appropriate penalties.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS, PRACTICE TEST MODULES, AND TEST ADMINISTRATION TUTORIAL

Candidates interested in preparing for this examination may download the NBDHE Sample Questions (PDF) that are available for use by stakeholders and communities of interest. These are available at no charge, and were developed by NBDHE test constructors to help familiarize candidates with the types of questions and question formats that appear on the NBDHE.

In addition to the aforementioned sample questions, the JCNDE has also developed NBDHE Practice Test Modules that may be helpful to candidates as they prepare to take the NBDHE. Neither the sample questions nor the practice modules are intended to provide an indication of how students will perform on the official NBDHE, nor should any corresponding results be used to make comparisons with actual examination results. There is no penalty for guessing. Results from the Full NBHDE Practice Test will include the total number of correct responses (i.e., the overall raw score), as well as raw scores for each major area. Results from each specific module will simply include the total number of correct responses for the major area covered within the module. Results are for personal use only. The modules/sections in the practice test have fewer items than the actual examination. Practice test content may or may not reflect the types of questions currently appearing on the examination and recent advances in the profession.

The NBDHE Sample Questions and Practice Test Modules are protected by U.S. copyright laws. The corresponding content included is intended for use by students for individual study. This content may not be reproduced in any format, whether paper or electronic, without the expressed written permission of the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE). Any unauthorized use or disclosure of JCNDE content could result in civil liability, criminal penalties, or other appropriate penalties.

Candidates may choose to complete individual modules and/or comprehensive practice tests. The preceding are available for purchase at home.pearsonvue.com/JCNDE-NBDHE.

At the Pearson VUE test center (pearsonvue.com/NBDHE), candidates will be given an opportunity to take a brief, optional tutorial before beginning the examination. The tutorial provides the opportunity to become familiar with the steps involved in proceeding through the examination.

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RESULTS INFORMATION

SCORING OF EXAMINATION

The examinations of the JCNDE are all criterion-referenced, with the minimum passing score for each examination determined by subject matter experts through rigorous standard-setting activities. On a periodic basis, passing standards for each examination are separately reviewed and updated by subject matter experts and the JCNDE itself, in order to reflect any changes in the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to safely practice.

National Board Examination results are reported as either “pass” or “fail,” based on a candidate’s performance with reference to the corresponding standard established for the Examination Program. Results are reported only as “pass” for candidates who achieve passing scores. For remediation purposes, the JCNDE provides performance information to candidates who have failed the examination. For the NBDHE, this information is provided at an overall level, for the thirteen (13) discipline areas, and for the case area. The determination as to whether a candidate has either passed or failed the examination is based solely on the overall scale score (i.e., not on subarea scales). The overall scale score achieved is provided to unsuccessful candidates in their results report. With respect to candidates who tested prior to 2012, numerical scores for prior attempts are still reported.

While examination results are reported as “pass” or “fail,” the underlying mechanism for determining the “pass/fail” result involves computation of a quantitative scale score that is subsequently evaluated against a minimum passing scale score (i.e., the standard). Using scale scores, it is possible to meaningfully evaluate and compare the performance of candidates. Scale scores range from 49 to 99, with a score of 75 representing the minimum passing score. Scale scores are not raw scores (i.e., the number of questions answered correctly). A scale score of 74 does NOT mean that a candidate would have passed the examination if they had answered one more question correctly. When standards are updated, a corresponding modification is made to the scoring scale, so that a scale score of 75 continues to reflect the minimum passing score.

Many different forms of the examination are available for administration, so that from a test security perspective, candidates do not all see the same set of questions when they take the examination. Each examination form in turn includes questions that enable the Examination Program to place scores from different forms of the examination on a common measurement scale, thereby adjusting for any minor differences in form difficulty. Because of this adjustment, applicant results and scores have the same meaning, regardless of the particular examination form that was administered.

Candidate results are computed based on the responses provided by the candidate, considered against the examination form scoring key. Candidates are not penalized for guessing.

Some questions on the examination are experimental and are not scored. The data collected on unscored questions is used to determine whether the question is appropriate for use in future test construction. Unscored questions look the same to candidates as scored questions.

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RESULTS AUDITS

As a routine part of quality assurance procedures, results are audited before they are distributed. Candidates can also request to have their examination results audited or checked for accuracy an additional time, beyond that indicated above. To request this second audit, login to your account and follow the audit request instructions. Additional fees will apply (see the “Examination Fees" section of this Guide). Results audits require approximately four to six weeks to complete and must be requested within 30 days of the reporting date indicated on the official report of results.

RESULTS REPORTS

Examination results undergo a series of quality assurance checks before they are released. The Examination Program Governing Body strives to report examination results within four weeks of a candidate’s examination date. In most cases, results are reported within three weeks. Results can be viewed online by signing into your DENTPIN account (ADA.org/DENTPIN).

By signing their application, candidates educated by accredited programs (either currently enrolled or who have graduated within the last five years) give express permission for their results to be shared with the program dean and the dean’s designee(s).

Results are provided to others if permission is granted in the form of a results report request from the candidate, or if such delivery is consistent with or required by JCNDE policy.

If misconduct has occurred concerning a past administration, at the discretion of the JCNDE results reports may contain information concerning the incident (see “Examination Regulations” and “Rules of Conduct”).

After receiving their results report, candidates may request that additional reports be sent to other entities.

Fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable. All fees are in US dollars.

Results report requests can be made by signing into your DENTPIN account (ADA.org/DENTPIN) and going to the ‘Requests’ tab. DTS will provide a history of results to dental and dental hygiene boards and any additional recipients indicated.

Sco*res cannot be voided at the request of a candidate after completing any part of the examination.*

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ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The JCNDE does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status. To participate in the NBDHE, a candidate must qualify through one of the following provisions:

Dental Hygiene Student

A student in a dental hygiene program accredited by CODA is eligible for examination when the dental hygiene program director (or a designee) certifies that the student is prepared in all NBDHE disciplines. If the dental hygiene program is accredited by CODA, the approval of the director (or the designee) meets this requirement.

Graduate of an Accredited Program

A dental hygienist who is a graduate of a dental hygiene program accredited by CODA during the time the dental hygienist was enrolled is eligible for examination following the JCNDE's receipt of evidence of graduation.

To fulfill this NBDHE eligibility requirement, one of the following is required: a copy of a dental hygiene program diploma or a copy of a final transcript with the conferred degree. If a candidate submits an application without proof of graduation, the application will not be processed. Recent graduates who are retaking the examination must also provide proof of graduation. Proof of graduation should be uploaded into the 'Files' section of your account or emailed to NBexams@ADA.org in an email that includes your DENTPIN.

Graduate of a Nonaccredited Program

A dental hygienist who is a graduate of a U.S. or Canadian dental hygiene education program that was not accredited during the time the dental hygienist was enrolled is eligible for examination only if the program was equivalent to an accredited program (see summary of accreditation standards). Accreditation standards in effect at the time the candidate applies for examination are used in evaluating the program.

To fulfill this NBDHE eligibility requirement, the following is required:

1. A letter of recommendation from the dean of an accredited dental school or the director of an accredited dental hygiene program, certifying that the nonaccredited program met each of the requirements in terms of length of study, subjects, functions, and hours.
2. A letter of recommendation from the secretary of a board of dentistry of a U.S. licensing jurisdiction, certifying that the nonaccredited program met each of the requirements in terms of length of study, subjects, functions, and hours.

The following provisions are required for the verification of educational credentials obtained from nonaccredited dental hygiene schools — schools not accredited by the CODA or the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC).

- Candidates must have official dental hygiene school transcripts verified by Educational Credential Evaluators Inc. (ECE).
- If a candidate does not have a DENTPIN, they must register to receive one through the DENTPIN homepage at ADA.org/DENTPIN prior to submitting an ECE report. The Department of Testing Services will discard ECE reports that cannot be matched to a DENTPIN® using the candidate's supplied name and date of birth.

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ECE prepares evaluation reports that identify U.S. equivalents of educational qualifications earned in other countries. To be eligible, the obtained ECE report must indicate that the candidate has graduated and that their dental hygiene education was equivalent to the education they would have received at a CODA-Accredited school.

Educational Credential Evaluators Inc.

P.O. Box 514070, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3470

414.289.3400 or www.ece.org

1. Contact Educational Credential Evaluators Inc. (ECE) and request a General Report. The ECE evaluation report request will describe what documents are required, the manner in which to submit them to ECE, and the applicable fee. To request an evaluation report, visit ECE.org, select “Start Your Evaluation Request”, and request that a General Evaluation report be sent to the JCNDE.
2. Only official reports electronically transmitted from ECE to the Department of Testing Services will be accepted. Personal copies are not acceptable.
3. The Department of Testing Services will not process an examination application before the ECE Evaluation Report is received.
4. The name on the ECE report must match the name on the application exactly. Any name changes must be accompanied by legal documentation.

The full accreditation standards for dental hygiene education programs is available to download from the Current Accreditation Standards page on CODA.ADA.org/accreditation. Graduates must be competent in problem solving strategies related to comprehensive patient care and management of patients.

A dental student from an accredited dental school is eligible for examination if the dean of the dental school certifies that the student has completed the equivalent of a CODA-accredited dental hygiene program. The means of fulfilling this requirement is a letter from the dean of the accredited dental school.

Dental Student

A dental student is eligible for examination if the eligibility requirements for the INBDE are met. This provision does not apply to a graduate of a nonaccredited dental program currently enrolled in an accredited program.

Dentist (Graduate of an Accredited or Nonaccredited Dental Program)

A dentist is eligible for examination if the eligibility requirements for the INBDE are met. This does not apply to a graduate of a nonaccredited dental program currently enrolled in an accredited program.

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ELIGIBILITY FOR RE-EXAMINATION

Candidates who have passed the NBDHE may not retake the examination unless required by a state board or relevant regulatory agency.

Candidates who have not passed the NBDHE may apply for re-examination. An examination attempt is defined as any examination administration where the candidate has been seated at a computer at a test center and electronically agreed to the confidentiality statement to start the examination.

Candidates must wait a minimum of 60 days between each unsuccessful NBDHE attempt, with a maximum of four (4) such administrations permitted during any one-year period. If a candidate completes the maximum four (4) administrations during any 12-month period, they will not have an opportunity to take a fifth attempt until 12 months have passed from the first testing attempt within the aforementioned 12-month period. The preceding restriction is not subject to appeal.

Under the JCNDE's Five Years/Five Attempts Eligibility Rule, candidates must pass the examination within a) five years of their first attempt or b) five examination attempts, whichever comes first. Subsequent to the fifth year or fifth attempt, candidates may test once every six (6) months after their most recent examination attempt.

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EXAMINATION INFORMATION

EXAMINATION FEES

Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. All fees are in U.S. dollars.

FEE TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FEE AMOUNT
Examination Fee	This fee includes official results reporting to the candidate, three licensing jurisdictions (provided result report requests are made at the time of application), and the candidate's dental hygiene program (CODA accredited program).	$600
Processing Fee for International Candidates	This processing fee applies to candidates who are students or graduates of a dental hygiene program that is not accredited by CODA.	$435
Results Report Fee (optional)	This fee covers a single results report for a recipient **NOT** selected at the time of application.	$55 per report
Results Audit Fee (optional)	DTS is willing to audit a candidate's results if the request is received within 30 days of the reporting date on the official results report.	$105
NBDHE Certificate	Candidates can order an 8.5 x 11" National Board Certificate with optional frame. To purchase, candidates must log in with their DENTPIN.	Log in using DENTPIN.
Eligibility Extension Fee	Candidates can extend their eligibility period for a fee. The extension is for 45 days and is available once per application.	$150

RESCHEDULING FEES

Candidates may reschedule testing appointments for a fee of $25. The rescheduled date must fall within the authorized eligibility period. Rescheduling fees are subject to change. Sales tax may apply to cancellation and rescheduling fees. Rescheduling must occur through the Administration Vendor.

LATE ARRIVAL OR NO-SHOW FEES

If a candidate fails to appear for a scheduled testing appointment, or if a candidate presents more than 30 minutes after the scheduled start time and is refused admission, their full testing fee will be forfeited.

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ELIGIBILITY EXTENSION REQUESTS

Candidates may request a 45-day extension (weekends and holidays included) to their eligibility window by logging into their account. The Eligibility Extension Request is an option under ‘Submit Request.’

Candidates may request only one extension per application and cannot have an examination appointment currently scheduled. Any candidate with a currently scheduled appointment must cancel that appointment before proceeding with an extension request; failure to do so will result in the extension request being denied. The eligibility extension request does not supersede any other rules regarding a candidate’s eligibility.

Candidates interested in a 45-day extension must pay a corresponding fee. This fee must be paid at the time the extension request is submitted. This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.

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ADMINISTRATION SCHEDULE

The following table provides the administration schedule for the NBDHE. The NBDHE contains 350 questions that are administered in two separate sessions, with an optional 30-minute scheduled break between the sessions. Within each of these two sessions, candidates will also have an opportunity to take an optional 15-minute scheduled break. The time available to answer test questions is seven (7) hours and 30 minutes. The total administration time is nine (9) hours, including the optional tutorial, scheduled breaks, and post-examination survey. No questions are presented on screen during scheduled breaks.

NBDHE ADMINISTRATION SCHEDULE		
Optional Tutorial		15 minutes
Session One	**Discipline-based questions (100)** Scheduled Break (optional) **Discipline-based questions (100)** **Please note: the 3 hours and 30 minutes is for <u>all</u> 200 questions presented in Session One. After the optional scheduled break, the timer will continue with any time that is remaining in Session One.**	3 hours 30 minutes (plus 15-minute scheduled break)
Scheduled Break (optional)		30 minutes
Session Two:	**7-8 Patient Cases (Approximately 75 questions)** Scheduled Break (optional) **7-8 Patient Cases (approximately 75 questions)** **Please note: the 4 hours is for <u>all</u> 150 questions presented in Session Two. After the optional scheduled break, the timer will continue with any time that is remaining in Session Two.**	4 hours (plus 15-minute scheduled break)
Post-examination Survey (optional)		15 minutes
Total Time		**9 hours**

Once a candidate begins their testing session, test items will be presented one at a time on their computer screens. In some cases, candidates may experience a lag between items during testing, while a given item is loaded onto the computer screen. It is important to note that the test timer is designed to pause while items are loading on the screen. Any time that passes while items load will <u>NOT</u> count against the total test time.

Taking a break at any time other than at a scheduled break will be considered an “Unscheduled Break.” During an Unscheduled Break, candidates may NOT access personal belongings or prohibited items, study, refer to notes or texts, use a telephone, eat, or drink any food or beverages, or leave the test center.

Locker access during an unscheduled break is strictly prohibited.

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APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Before applying to take this examination, candidates must first obtain a Dental Personal Identification Number (DENTPIN®). Register for a new DENTPIN or retrieve an existing DENTPIN at ADA.org/DENTPIN.

The DENTPIN is a unique personal identifier used by U.S. dental and dental hygiene education systems and standardized testing programs, such as the Dental Admission Test (DAT), Advanced Dental Admission Test (ADAT), and the Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) — as well as application services such as the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Postdoctoral Application Support Service (ADEA PASS), the ADEA Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (ADEA AADSAS), the Texas Medical & Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS), the ADEA Centralized Application for Advanced Placement for International Dentists (ADEA CAAPID), and the ADEA Dental Hygiene Centralized Application Service (ADEA DHCAS). In each case, the DENTPIN is used to uniquely identify individuals, and for the confidential and secure reporting, transmission, and tracking of test scores and academic data.

Once a DENTPIN is obtained, candidates can submit an application through the Examination Program website. A new application and fee must be submitted before each testing attempt. A submitted application will be processed only if the candidate meets all eligibility requirements for testing. Application processing takes place Monday through Friday during standard US business hours.

After DTS processes a candidate's application, that candidate is eligible to test for a six-month period, unless other considerations — including retest rules and program requirements — limit the eligibility period to a shorter timeframe.

If a candidate does not take the exam during their eligibility window, the application fee is forfeited, and the candidate will need to submit a new application and payment in order to sit for the examination.

During the application and testing process, candidates will be required to provide their legal name, DENTPIN, address, date of birth, and other requested information to allow proper identification by the Examination Program. **ALL submitted information must be accurate.** When including a middle name, candidates must use either their full middle name or their middle initial. The falsification of personal information is a serious matter. If it is determined that a candidate deliberately falsified personal information in the DENTPIN system, examination application, or at the test center, scores will be voided, and all schools will be notified. Possible repercussions associated with deliberate falsification include a required two-year waiting period before taking the examination again, or a complete ban from the Examination Program and any other examination program implemented by DTS.

If the name on a candidate's application fails to EXACTLY match the name appearing on IDs brought to the Administration Vendor test center, the candidate will NOT be permitted to test. As a result, the testing appointment and application fee will be forfeited, and the candidate will be required to submit a new application and fee before taking the examination.

Candidates are responsible for identifying any changes and corrections to their application (such as name, birth date, etc.) and submitting corresponding requested updates at least two weeks prior to their testing appointment. These changes require candidates to use the 'Update Detail' feature available by signing in to their account on ADA.org/DENTPIN and uploading any appropriate supporting documentation, such as a marriage certificate or court documents. Changes must be requested at least ten (10) business days prior to a scheduled test date.

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Candidates are encouraged to consider their choice of testing appointment date carefully, as any last-minute requested changes (e.g., for medical reasons, personal reasons, or due to a missed testing appointment) may not be approved.

TEST CENTER PROCEDURES

The Administration Vendor will electronically capture the identity of each candidate biometrically (e.g., through photograph, fingerprint, or palm vein scan) before candidates can proceed with testing. Candidates must consent to these procedures before they are permitted to test. Electronic capture of biometric data allows for a more efficient return to testing after breaks. Biometric and other identifying information will be retained by the Administration Vendor and will be utilized for identity verification at potential future test administrations (e.g., retesting).

Administration Vendor staff will visually inspect eyeglasses and hair accessories as part of check-in procedures. Staff may also use an electronic detection wand to scan for electronic devices. Jewelry, except for wedding and engagement rings, is prohibited. Updates to security protocols at check-in may change with little to no advance warning. Candidates can view current check-in procedures at the Administration Vendor's website.

Administration Vendor staff will observe candidates at all times during the testing appointment. This observation includes staff walking through the secure testing room, as well as video recording of the candidate's examination session. Administration Vendor staff are required to report behavior that might represent a violation of rules and regulations.

Administration Vendor staff are not authorized to answer questions from candidates regarding examination content, examination software, examination program policies, and scoring.

IDENTIFICATION POLICY

When you arrive at the administration vendor test center to take your examination, two original and current forms of identification (ID) — one primary and one secondary — will be required. An expired ID WILL NOT be accepted, even if that ID is accompanied by temporary identification or documentation that a new, valid ID has been requested.

The primary ID must be a government issued ID with your photograph, name, and signature. Examples of acceptable primary IDs include—but are not limited to—a driver's license, passport, or passport card. All IDs, with the exception of passports, must be in English.

The secondary ID must contain your name and signature. Examples of secondary IDs include — but are not limited to — debit cards, library cards, or a credit card.

Only physical forms of IDs will be accepted by test center staff. Digital or paper copies of IDs will not be accepted.

WARNING! Information in your DENTPIN record and submitted application (e.g., your name) must match your IDs exactly or you will be denied admission to testing and forfeit your testing and application fee.

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RESCHEDULE OR CANCEL A TESTING APPOINTMENT

To reschedule or cancel a testing appointment, candidates must either use the scheduling tools on the Administration Vendor website or contact the Administration Vendor using the contact information provided on the Administration Vendor website. This must be done in advance of the testing appointment. Additional fees apply and must be paid directly to the Administration Vendor (see the “Examination Fees” section of this Guide). Local test centers where candidates complete their examination cannot schedule, reschedule, or cancel your appointment. Appointments must be canceled or rescheduled by the business day prior to the scheduled test, and at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled appointment. Candidates will receive a confirmation notice when rescheduling their testing appointment; please retain a copy of this notice.

NO-SHOW POLICY

Candidates who do not appear for a scheduled testing appointment and do not cancel or reschedule their appointment by the required time in advance of the test date will forfeit all testing fees. These candidates will be required to submit a new application and provide corresponding payment to schedule a new appointment.

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EMERGENCIES ON THE DAY OF A TESTING APPOINTMENT

If an emergency occurs on the day of a testing appointment that prevents a candidate from sitting for their examination, a written request for relief must be submitted to DTS. This request should include applicable documentation and be sent to testingproblems@ADA.org within five business days of the scheduled appointment.

Examples of emergencies and applicable documentation include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Sudden illness on the examination day*. Provide a doctor's note or hospital records confirming that you were treated on the day of the examination.
- *Death in the family on the examination day.* Provide a copy of an obituary, prayer card, funeral service program, or death certificate confirming that the relative passed away or services were held on the day of the examination.

Testing appointments affected by emergencies occurring prior to the day of the scheduled appointment should be handled through the Administration Vendor's rescheduling and cancellation process indicated previously.

TESTING PROBLEMS ON THE DAY OF THE TESTING APPOINTMENT

If a candidate encounters a problem during their examination, the administration should not be resumed until the issue has been documented and resolved by the test center administrator. If a candidate continues to have issues with their testing experience after having requested such assistance, they should again alert test center staff and request that staff resolve the issue. If the issue persists, the candidate should immediately discontinue testing. Candidates who continue to test despite the presence of continued, significant issues waive their right to appeal for a remedy on the basis of those encountered issues. Concerns not resolved at the time of testing must be submitted in writing within five business days of the testing appointment to testingproblems@ADA.org.

Candidates who encounter problems as indicated above must contact testingproblems@ADA.org directly, and state the specific relief being requested. Upon receipt of directly communicated information, DTS will conduct an investigation and notify the candidate of the outcome. Candidates with documented, unresolved testing issues could be offered the courtesy of a retest within 30 days. If the candidate accepts the retest courtesy, the retest will replace the results of the initial test, and the initial test results will be voided. Candidates who continue to test despite severe issues — and particularly those who continue to test, wait for their results to be released, and call DTS afterwards upon receipt of a poor score — are unlikely to obtain the remedy they seek.

Test center incident reports submitted on behalf of the candidate — and comments submitted by the candidate via post examination surveys — are considered indirect communication to DTS. These indirect communications may be considered by DTS as part of its general quality assurance procedures but would not result in specific relief for the candidate.

Examination results cannot be canceled or adjusted under any circumstances.

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TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

The Examination Program provides reasonable and appropriate testing accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. These accommodations occur for individuals with documented disabilities or medical conditions who demonstrate a need for accommodation, request an accommodation prior to testing, and who are approved by the Examination Program to receive accommodations based on the information submitted.

Testing accommodations are offered to those with a qualified disability or a medical condition in order to offer equal access to testing. Candidates must request testing accommodations with each application. However, for subsequent administrations, candidates will not be required to submit additional documentation covering the same disability or condition.

Information concerning specific accommodations provided will not be shared outside of DTS, the test center, and the Examination Program, and will not be indicated in examination results.

In considering a request from a candidate with a disability, the Examination Program is guided by a focus on validity. Testing accommodations are provided so all candidates have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, as opposed to having the measurement of their knowledge and skills inappropriately reflect a disability.

To determine whether a candidate qualifies for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, or as a result of a current medical condition, the Examination Program requires a complete evaluation of the candidate and a completed and signed Testing Accommodations Request Form. A healthcare professional appropriately qualified to evaluate the disability or medical condition must conduct the evaluation. For more information on accommodations and an explanation of how to request testing accommodations, please consult the Testing Accommodations Request area on the Examination Program website; see the links named “Apply to Take the NBDHE.”

If you have a documented disability recognized under the Americans with Disabilities Act and require testing accommodations, you must submit the following prior to testing:

1. A completed test application.
2. The Testing Accommodations Request Form through your DENTPIN account.
3. Documentation to support the testing accommodation request.

You may submit your testing accommodation request in one of the following ways.

Before applying to test

- You may submit your testing accommodation request prior to submitting your examination application. The Examination Program will review your request, and if approved, the Examination Program will add the approved testing accommodation to your record after you complete your examination application.
- To submit a testing accommodation request before applying to test, please sign into your DENTPIN account and click “Submit Request” from the top ribbon menu. From the dropdown menu, select “Accommodations Request”.
- Complete and submit the Testing Accommodation Request Form. This web page includes a file uploader that will allow candidates to attach the required supporting documentation.
- Requested testing accommodations should align with the identified functional limitation(s), so that the adjustment to the testing procedure is compliant with federal guidelines.

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OR

While applying to test

- During the application submission process, select “Yes” when asked “Are you requesting testing accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act?”
- Fill out the Testing Accommodation Request in the examination application, which will appear after the payment page. This web page will include a file uploader that will allow candidates to attach required supporting documentation.
- Requested testing accommodations should align with the identified functional limitation(s), so that any adjustment to the testing procedure is compliant with federal guidelines.

Candidates can schedule a testing appointment AFTER testing accommodation requests have been approved. Testing accommodations cannot be added to a previously scheduled testing appointment. If candidates schedule testing appointments before testing accommodations are approved, candidates will be required to cancel the appointment and pay a cancellation fee. Candidates requesting accommodations must receive their eligibility email with approved accommodations before scheduling a testing appointment. Please email testingaccommodations@ada.org **with any questions on this process.**

ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF DOCUMENTATION

Acceptable forms of documentation include the following:

A. **A copy of a current evaluation** report (within the past five years) from the appropriate healthcare professional. The document must be on an official letterhead, and should include **the professional’s credentials, signature, address, and telephone number**. The report must indicate **the candidate’s name, date of birth, and date of evaluation**. The report should include:
   - The specific **diagnostic procedures or tests** administered. Diagnostic methods used should be appropriate to the disability and in alignment with current professional protocol.
   - The **results** of the diagnostic procedures and/or tests and a comprehensive interpretation of the results.
   - The specific **diagnosis of the disability**, with an accompanying description of the candidate’s limitations due to the disability.
   - A summary of the complete evaluation with recommendations for the specific accommodations and how they will reduce the impact of identified functional limitation.

B. **Documentation of any previous accommodations** provided by educational institutions or other testing agencies. If no prior accommodations were provided, the licensed professional should include a detailed explanation as to why no accommodations were given in the past and why accommodations are needed now.

UNACCEPTABLE FORMS OF DOCUMENTATION

Please do **not** submit the documents indicated below. They will not be accepted.

- Handwritten letters from healthcare professionals. Letters must be typed.
- Handwritten patient records or notes from patient charts. Records must be typed.
- Diagnoses or letters written on prescription pads
- Self-evaluations
- Research articles
- Original documents (submit copies only)
- Previous correspondence to the Examination Program (DTS maintains copies of all correspondence)

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EXAMINATION REGULATIONS AND RULES OF CONDUCT

RULES OF CONDUCT

Rules have been established that govern the administration of this examination to ensure results accurately reflect candidates' skills. Examination regulations and rules of conduct help preserve the integrity of the examination process and provide standardized examination administration conditions that yield valid and reliable results.

The Examination Program bears no responsibility for inaccurate information or inappropriate permissions received from test center administrators. It is your personal responsibility to understand and comply with the examination regulations indicated in this guide. If a candidate's conduct is determined to violate the terms set forth in this guide, the Examination Program will act to strictly enforce its policies and procedures.

Accessing official examination content prior to testing, breaching the confidentiality of examination content, or any attempt to subvert the examination process represent violations of test regulations. Conduct occurring before, during, or after testing that violates the examination regulations and rules of conduct could result in invalidation of examination results and other penalties.

Candidates must be truthful in completing the application and must abide by all instructions regarding examination conduct. Failure to comply with the examination regulations and rules of conduct could result in a determination of the presence of an irregularity, and examination results could consequently be voided. If results are voided as a result of an irregularity, candidates could be prohibited from testing for a specified time period or, in egregious cases, from retesting at all. Additionally, candidates could face civil or criminal prosecution.

By applying for the examination, candidates agree to abide by the following Rules of Conduct:

1. The candidate certifies that they are registering for this examination for the purpose indicated in the "Purpose of the National Board Examinations" section of this candidate guide. The examination may not be taken on behalf of anyone else or for any reason other than for the purpose indicated. Candidates may not take the examination to practice or to obtain an advance review of the content.
2. Candidates are not allowed to complete an examination for any reason other than that indicated by the Examination Purpose. If available information suggests a previously eligible candidate might be completing an examination for other purposes, the NBDHE Program may revoke the candidate's eligibility, and the candidate could be required to re-establish eligibility to take the examination.
3. Candidates will not give, receive, or obtain any form of unauthorized assistance prior to the examination, during the examination (e.g., in the testing room or when on a break), or subsequent to the examination.
4. Candidates will maintain the confidentiality of examination content at all times. Candidates will not reproduce or attempt to reproduce examination materials through memorization, recording, copying, or other means. Candidates will not provide information concerning examination content that might affect the examination's ability to accurately assess candidates' skills. For example, Candidates will neither make use of nor participate in the sharing or distribution of information regarding examination content or answers (via electronic means or otherwise).
5. Candidates will not bring any unauthorized materials, as listed in the "Examination Regulations" and "Rules of Conduct" section of this guide, into the secure testing area. All unauthorized materials must be placed in an assigned locker and must not be accessed during testing.
6. Candidates will not remove information about the examination (written, printed, recorded, or other) from the test center.
7. Candidates will comply with Administration Vendor test center policies and procedures and will not create a disturbance in the test center.

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8. Candidates will not tamper with the computer testing equipment and facilities.
9. Candidates will cooperate fully with any investigations involving testing irregularities and agree to have their examination analyzed to detect aberrancies.
10. This is a secure examination protected by U.S. copyright laws. Any unauthorized disclosure of the examination's content could result in civil liability, criminal penalties, voiding of examination results, or other appropriate penalties.

Examination content (in whole or in part) is prohibited from being disclosed before, during, or after the examination to anyone, including but not limited to family, friends, classmates, colleagues, or test preparation organizations. This applies to any content disclosed through discussions, emails, in writing, online (e.g., blogs, social media, websites), or otherwise.

Candidates who receive unreleased examination content (e.g., test questions) should immediately contact DTS at testsecurity@ADA.org, and should NOT review the materials they have received. Candidates who have been found to be in possession of such information or to have participated in the distribution of this information may have their examination results voided. Penalties might be imposed subsequent to discovery and investigation of the original incident, which could occur years after the incident itself.

Candidates are encouraged to report any activities where information about examination questions is disclosed, so that DTS can investigate and take any necessary action. Report such activity to DTS at testsecurity@ADA.org.

PRIVACY AND SECURITY

The Examination Program will maintain the privacy and security of candidates' personal information using industry standard methods. DTS will collect and retain personal information to serve candidate needs, administer the examination, fulfill Examination Program responsibilities (e.g., to maintain the integrity of the test and detect and prevent unlawful activity), and fulfill legal requirements. Examination results shall be retained indefinitely, along with testing records and candidates' personal information to the extent consistent with applicable law.

Before the examination is administered, candidates will be required to provide a written release concerning the collection of their biometric information. Biometrics are collected by the Administration Vendor for purposes of verifying identity and detecting and preventing unlawful activity. The Administration Vendor is required to store data securely consistent with applicable law.

As applicable and in accordance with the purpose of each specific Examination Program, examination results will be released or reported to state boards, education programs, or other entities upon written candidate authorization or designation by electronic means through the electronic application or score report request form. Examination results may be released or reported in the absence of such authorization when policies indicate that such notification is appropriate (e.g., notification of state boards concerning an irregularity). Examination results may be released to education programs to enable those programs to understand student outcomes. For research and policymaking purposes, in its sole discretion the Examination Program may release results —with personally identifying information removed — to individuals or entities that the Examination Program deems legitimately interested. Information regarding privacy policies is made available to all candidates and the public.

The ADA provides information technology support for the Examination Program and uses data security procedures to protect the integrity of personal and examination information. Security safeguards include administrative, technical, and physical safeguards over data and data processing systems. For information on policies relating to your use of the ADA website, please refer to the Privacy Notice and Terms of Use available at ADA.org.

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EXAMINATION MISCONDUCT

The Examination Program strives to report results that accurately reflect the skills and performance of each candidate. The standards and procedures for administering each examination are intended to provide candidates with a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate their skills, and to facilitate accurate evaluation of those skills.

The Examination Program reserves the right to withhold, void, or invalidate any result when, in the Examination Program's judgment, it is reasonable to question the validity of the result. Reasons for withholding, voiding or invalidating results, or imposing other appropriate penalties could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unusual answer patterns
- Atypical score increases from one examination attempt to another.
- Discrepancy in, or falsification of, a candidate's identification.
- Information indicating that a candidate has engaged in misconduct or a violation of the examination regulations, rules of conduct, or test center procedures.
- Sharing remembered examination questions or answers. This includes sharing through social media platforms, online discussion forums, or other means.
- Taking an examination on behalf of another individual or having another individual take an examination on your behalf.
- Falsification of application information or supporting documents.
- Falsification of a candidate's results or results report.
- Inconsistent performance on different sections of the examination from one examination attempt to another.
- Improper access to secure examination content.
- Evidence concerning the presence of an examination administration irregularity.
- Any other information indicating the results might not be valid.

When examination results are voided or invalidated, the candidate is notified in writing. This notice includes information about the decision and the procedure for appeal. Results will remain voided until an appeal process has been completed, or the time for appeal has expired.

When previously reported results are voided, the score report recipient will be notified in writing that the result has been voided.

If it is determined a candidate has engaged in irregular behavior, information regarding this determination becomes a part of the candidate's record. At its sole discretion, the Examination Program may elect to send a summary report documenting the incident to legitimately interested parties. This would include all parties to whom a candidate has instructed results be sent (both currently and in the future).

In situations where an irregularity has occurred, individuals who are involved or implicated with respect to the occurrence of the irregularity, or who are reasonably believed to have witnessed the irregularity, could be asked to provide information concerning the irregularity.

The Examination Program reserves the right to pursue other remedies, including prosecution of anyone whose conduct unlawfully undermines the security of the examination or the integrity of the examination process.

No personal items are permitted in the secure testing area. Any personal belongings brought to the test center must be stored in a designated locker; storage is limited. Personal belongings may be inspected. Notes or any

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materials accessed during the examination or on an unscheduled break could be confiscated. Accessing personal belongings or a locker during an unscheduled break violates the examination regulations. Test administrators are NOT authorized to provide permission to candidates to access personal belongings or lockers during an unscheduled break.

Items that are prohibited from the secure testing area include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Books, notes, study materials, scratch paper, tissues, and markers
- Personal earplugs and headphones NOT provided by the Administration Vendor.
- Dental instruments, models, or materials
- Slide rules, paper, calculating devices, rulers, and other measuring devices (except those items approved in advance under testing accommodations)
- Electronic devices such as cell phones, recording devices, iPods, tablets, and headsets
- Tote bags, purses, wallets, backpacks, and briefcases
- Highlighters, pens, erasers, pencils, dictionaries, and translators
- Food, candy, gum, and beverages (except those items approved in advance under testing accommodations)
- Outerwear, such as coats, jackets, gloves, or head coverings (religious attire is allowed)
- Good luck charms, statues, religious or spiritual items, and similar objects
- Watches (digital, analog, or smart) or timing devices (a timer is provided on the computer screen during the examination)
- Magnifying devices
- Jewelry (except for wedding and engagement rings)

The test center will provide a laminated notebook and one low-odor fine tip marker during the examination. Used notebooks will be replaced by test center staff upon request. Materials for scratch work can vary by test center. Some candidates may receive a note board instead of a notebook, and/or different writing instruments. Scratch paper, pencils, and markers not furnished by the testing center are prohibited.

Candidates may not write in the notebooks, or on any other test center provided materials, before the test begins or during scheduled breaks. The notebooks/note boards should not be folded, bent, distorted, or modified in any manner. Markers cannot be used on any surface other than the notebook/note boards. Candidates may not touch the monitor during the examination. All items provided must be returned to the test administrator before leaving the test center. Test center notebooks/note board(s) will not be stored for multiple day examination use. Any notes taken will be surrendered at the end of each testing day and erased.

Candidates may not engage in conversation with others during testing or while on an unscheduled break. Discussing the examination is strictly prohibited.

Test center administrators will report the activity of candidates who take unscheduled breaks.

During an unscheduled break, candidates may NOT access personal belongings or prohibited items, study or refer to notes or texts, use a telephone, eat or drink any food or beverages from lockers, or leave the test center. Test administrators are NOT authorized to provide permission to engage in these activities.

Although the examination is administered under strict supervision and with security measures in place, examination irregularities can sometimes occur. Examination results could be voided based upon a breach of examination security, invalid examination conditions, or candidate violations of the examination regulations, rules

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of conduct, or test center procedures. If irregularities are detected during an administration, or if evidence of irregular behavior is disclosed when the examination is scored or afterward, those involved will have their examination results voided and face appropriate penalties.

Failure to comply with examination regulations, rules of conduct, and test center procedures could result in a determination of the presence of an irregularity, and examination results could be withheld, canceled, considered invalid, or another appropriate penalty could be imposed. Candidates might also be directed to leave the test center before the examination is completed. If results are withheld or invalidated, or if other penalties are imposed as the result of an irregularity, candidates could be prohibited from testing and/or other appropriate penalties could be imposed.

IRREGULARITIES AND APPEALS

An irregularity is defined as a situation in which there could be a question about the validity of examination results in accurately reflecting the ability and skills of a candidate.

For example, such questions could be raised when:

- There is communication between candidates during the testing session.
- Unauthorized assistance occurs.
- Candidates have inappropriate access to examination content (e.g., remembered questions or answers are shared by email, online posting, or other means).
- Conduct prohibited by the examination regulations, rules of conduct, or test center procedures occurs, or examination administration disruptions are present, including natural disasters and other emergencies.

When an irregularity is identified, results for the candidate(s) involved will be voided pending resolution of the corresponding appeal(s). If an appeal is denied or no appeal is filed, the results of the candidate(s) involved could remain voided and/or other appropriate remedies imposed.

Rule violations and/or irregularities occurring in one Examination Program implemented by DTS may result in penalties that impact a candidate's ability to test in another Examination Program implemented by DTS.

Candidates whose results are subject to being voided are notified by written correspondence and provided with a copy of the *Limited Right of Appeal for Examination Candidates (*full document listed below*).* **Appeals must be submitted in writing within 30 days of notification of the irregularity. Appeals must clearly state the specific relief being requested and include corresponding arguments, evidence, and documentation in support of the request.**

The candidate will be notified of the appeal decision within 60 days after receipt of the appeal.

When considering an appeal, the Examination Program strives to ensure that examination results accurately reflect candidates' skills, and that the appealing candidate has an opportunity equal to, but not greater than, the opportunity provided to other candidates.

Results will be voided when there is a reasonable and good faith basis to do so. If it is determined that voiding results is not warranted under the circumstances, the results will be released.

Candidates should be aware that irregularities - other than natural disasters and emergencies beyond the control of the candidate - are considered to be a serious breach of the examination process.

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The Examination Program strives to handle irregularities and their investigation in a confidential, professional, fair, and objective manner.

Candidates should be aware that reports of irregularities may have consequences beyond the voiding of results or the imposition of other appropriate penalties.

- Information regarding irregularities may be brought to the attention of school authorities, regulatory agencies, or other entities, by other sources.
- Additional information concerning a candidate may surface within the context of an investigation into an irregularity.

Candidates are encouraged to report suspicious activity and observations of rules violations to DTS at testsecurity@ADA.org.

NON-APPEALABLE POLICIES

The JCNDE considers certain policies to be non-appealable. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- The 60-day wait period between administrations.
- Testing more than four (4) times in a 12-month period.
- The Five Years/Five Attempt six month wait period.
- The nullification of a test result or reimbursement of a paid administration due to complaints about test questions or accompanying stimulus materials (e.g., an image).
- Exceptions to the educational degree confirmation policy (i.e., for candidates educated by non-CODA accredited programs).
- The outcome of an audited test result.
- An adjustment or modification to a test score.

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LIMITED RIGHT OF APPEAL FOR EXAMINATION CANDIDATES

The Governing Body recognizes that strict application of *Rules* and/or *Policies* for the NBDHE may, because of unusual circumstances, impose an unusual burden on one or more candidates. In these situations, the Governing Body may consider an appeal.

Requests for an appeal pertaining to test results must be initiated within 30 days of receiving test results or, in the case of withheld results, within 30 days of receiving written notice that results are being withheld. In the event that the Governing Body has given notice that previously released results are to be invalidated or voided, the request for appeal must be submitted within 30 days of that notice. In this case, a request for appeal will stay the action to invalidate or void the results until such time as the appeal is decided or the time for submitting a request for appeal has expired. A request for an appeal must be submitted in writing and must include adequate supporting documentation. The request for an appeal must indicate the specific relief requested.

A request for an appeal will first be screened by the Chair of the Governing Body, in consultation with the Director of the Governing Body. At the Chair's sole discretion, the Chair may 1) grant the appeal, 2) deny the appeal, or 3) forward the appeal to the full Governing Body for its consideration. If during the Governing Body's deliberations credible information becomes available indicating an error was made in the decision involving the candidate's case, the Chair in consultation with the Director may end the deliberations and grant the appeal. At the Chair's discretion, the Chair may delegate the screening of appeals to another member of the Governing Body.

In rendering a decision with respect to appeals—and particularly in situations where results have been withheld—the touchstone and foremost consideration is the validity of examination results, in alignment with the purpose of the examination. The Governing Body strives to be fair and objective in its decision-making process, as it remains true to its mission. When considering appeals, the Governing Body avoids favoritism and strives to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and equally.

If the issue presented in an appeal is likely to recur, the Governing Body may consider a change in its *Rules* and/or *Policies*. The granting of an appeal will be considered a precedent only if a change in *Rules* and/or *Policies* is also adopted. The candidate will be notified of Governing Body action within 60 days after receipt of the written request for an appeal.

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ARBITRATION REQUIREMENT

Arbitration has become an increasingly common way to resolve legal differences. Generally speaking, the advantages of arbitration over traditional lawsuits are that arbitration is less expensive and issues are resolved in less time. If a candidate wishes to pursue a dispute that has not been resolved by the appeal process mentioned above and detailed in the Limited Right of Appeal for Examination Candidates, the candidate must use the procedure described in the following Agreement to Arbitrate.

AGREEMENT TO ARBITRATE

1. In the event that any legal dispute arises between you and the Examination Program, in connection with your participation in this Examination Program, where that dispute is not resolved by the appeals process detailed in this Guide and elsewhere, you agree that the exclusive means for resolving the dispute shall be Binding Arbitration as described by the terms of this Agreement. This means that you waive the rights you may have to resolve the dispute in a court of law, or by any other means that might otherwise be available to you.

2. The American Dental Association ("ADA") agrees to be similarly bound except that the ADA reserves its full rights to pursue injunctive and other appropriate relief in any state or federal court in cases of unfair competition or violations of, or threats to violate, any intellectual property rights of the ADA. With respect to any action filed by the ADA pursuant to this paragraph 2, you consent to submit to the jurisdiction of the state or federal court in which the ADA seeks relief.

3. Arbitration proceedings initiated pursuant to this Agreement to Arbitrate shall be conducted in accordance with the then current Consumer Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator's award shall be binding and may be entered as a judgment in any court of competent jurisdiction. Information about the American Arbitration Association, its rules, and its forms are available from the American Arbitration Association website, ADR.org.

4. In the event of Arbitration, and except to the extent the Consumer Arbitration Rules provide otherwise, the parties shall bear their own costs and attorneys' fees associated with the Arbitration proceedings, unless the arbitrator directs one of the parties to pay the other's costs, or attorneys' fees, or both.

5. To the fullest extent permitted by law, no Arbitration brought pursuant to this Agreement shall be joined to any Arbitration involving any other party whether through "Class Arbitration" proceedings or otherwise.

6. This Agreement is part of the application to take this examination. Your assent to be bound by it is a requirement for taking the examination, but you can only sit for the examination if you also fulfill all other conditions imposed by the Examination Program.

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