

# EXAMINEE HANDBOOK



# NABNE®

NORTH AMERICAN BOARD OF NATUROPATHIC EXAMINERS

*Ensuring the Professional Qualifications of NDs*

## **AUGUST 2023 NPLEX® PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE EXAMINATION**

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## IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

May 1-31, 2023	Application period for the <b>August 2023</b> NPLEX
May 31, 2023	Deadline for submission of a <i>Testing Accommodations Request Form</i> and <b>all documentation</b>
May 31, 2023	Deadline for submission of a <i>Courtesy Accommodation Request Form</i>
June 21, 2023	Posting of <i>Registration Status</i> for the <b>August 2023</b> NPLEX to online <i>Profiles</i> on the NABNE website
July 24, 2023	Posting of <i>Admission Tickets</i> for the <b>August 2023</b> Examinations to online <i>Profiles</i> on the NABNE website
August 1, 2023	<b>Biomedical Science Examination</b>
September 20, 2023	Posting of <b>unofficial August 2023</b> P/F exam results in online <i>Profiles</i>
September 21, 2023	Mailing of <b>official</b> reports of <b>August 2023</b> exam results to examinees
October 30, 2023	Deadline for submitting a <i>Manual Scoring Request</i> for an examination taken in <b>August 2023</b>

## WHAT'S NEW IN AUGUST 2023

### Beginning with the August 2023 NPLEX administration:

- The cost to take the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination has increased (see *NABNE FEES*, page 4).
- August 2023 will be the last time that the NPLEX will be administered at a test site in Connecticut (CT).
- Cancellation and refund policies have been updated (See *CANCELLATION*, page 5 and *REFUNDS*, page 4).
- Requests for courtesy accommodations must be submitted to NABNE via the ***Courtesy Accommodation Request Form*** no later than **May 31, 2023** (see *COURTESY ACCOMMODATIONS*, page 16).
- Examinees are not allowed to bring their own noise-canceling or noise-reducing headset into the testing room. You can still submit a *Courtesy Accommodation Request Form* to request a noise-reducing headset, which NABNE will provide, by submitting a ***Courtesy Accommodation Request Form*** no later than **May 31, 2023** (see *COURTESY ACCOMMODATIONS*, page 16).

### NABNE COVID-19 POLICY

NABNE continues to monitor and comply with CDC/PHAC and local COVID-19 prevention guidelines and restrictions during the administration of the NPLEX. We will continue to update our website if new information that impacts the August 2023 NPLEX administration becomes available.

When you apply to take the NPLEX in August 2023, you must acknowledge and accept that, even with CDC/PHAC, government, and local COVID-19 prevention guidelines and restrictions in place, there will still be some risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission. Although NABNE will not require masks at the test site, examinees and staff may choose to wear well-fitting masks to protect themselves and others.

NABNE has developed the following policies to protect examinees and staff at the test sites from transmission of SARS-CoV-2. If you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, have had symptoms of or have tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to the following policies to determine if you will be allowed admittance to the examination(s).

**If you have** been less than 6 ft. (2 m.) away from a person infected with COVID-19 (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period in **the 10 days prior to the exam administration**, you will **not** be admitted to the NABNE test site, unless:

- It has been at least 7 days since your last exposure, and you have received a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)

OR

- You have had a negative SARS-CoV-2 test within the 72 hours before your first examination (bring a copy or present a photo of your test result when you check in at the NABNE test site)

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 in the 10 days prior to the exam administration, you will not be admitted to the NABNE test site, unless:

- It has been at least 5 days since your symptoms first appeared

AND

- You have been without a fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher) for 48 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications

AND

- Your other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving (A loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.)

OR

- You have had a negative SARS-CoV-2 test within the 72 hours before your first examination (bring a copy or present a photo of your test result when you check in at the NABNE test site).

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

The *NABNE Examinee Handbook* contains information with which all applicants should be familiar. It describes NABNE policies, guidelines, and recommendations. **The policies in this handbook apply to all applicants who will be taking or retaking any NPLEX examinations in August 2023.** (The NABNE Examinee Handbook will be updated for subsequent exam administrations.)

## OVERVIEW

About NABNE and NPLEX .....	1
The NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination .....	1

## ELIGIBILITY TO TAKE THE NPLEX

Approved Naturopathic Medical Programs .....	2
Part I Eligibility Requirements .....	2

## APPLICATION TO TAKE THE NPLEX

Confidentiality .....	3
Application Process .....	3
NABNE Fees .....	4
Refunds .....	4
Reporting an Address or Name Change .....	5
Cancellation .....	5

## PREPARATION TO TAKE THE PART I EXAMINATION..... 6

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE NPLEX

NABNE Test Sites .....	7
NABNE Obligation to Administer Examinations .....	7
Part I - Biomedical Science Exam Dates and Schedules .....	7
Admittance to the Examinations .....	8
Testing Procedure .....	9
NABNE Testing Regulations.....	10
Irregular Behavior .....	11
Consequences of Irregular Behavior.....	12

## POST-EXAMINATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Part I Passing Standards .....	13
Reporting of Exam Results .....	13
Re-examination Policies.....	14
Manual Scoring Requests.....	14
Issues and Appeals .....	14

## TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Courtesy Accommodations.....	15
Off-the-Testing Clock Breaks or Extended Testing Time.....	15
Testing Accommodations that Address Functional Disabilities.....	15

## OVERVIEW

### ABOUT NABNE AND NPLEX

**NABNE** (the North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners) is an independent, nonprofit organization formed as a service to the naturopathic profession and the agencies that license/register naturopathic physicians. NABNE serves regulatory authorities by qualifying applicants to take the NPLEX (Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examinations), administering the examinations, and sending exam results and transcripts to regulatory authorities.

The five-member NABNE Board works with an Advisory Council comprised of representatives of:

- ❑ The Federation of Naturopathic Medicine Regulatory Authorities (FNMRA) representing the state/provincial naturopathic regulatory authorities
- ❑ The Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME)
- ❑ The Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges (AANMC)
- ❑ The Council of Chief Academic and Clinical Officers (CCACO) representing the nine CNME-approved naturopathic medical programs
- ❑ The Naturopathic Medical Student Association (NMSA)
- ❑ The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP)
- ❑ The Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors (CAND)
- ❑ The naturopathic profession at large

#### NABNE:

- Qualifies applicants to take the NPLEX
- Administers the NPLEX
- Sends exam results to examinees and regulatory authorities
- Manually verifies responses on answer sheets upon request

#### NPLEX:

- Surveys the profession to determine the competencies that an entry-level ND must master
- Publishes the competencies on which examinees will be tested
- Develops the NPLEX
- Establishes the passing score
- Scores the NPLEX

**NPLEX** (Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examinations) is an independent, nonprofit organization whose purpose is to prepare valid and reliable biomedical science examinations that assess the readiness of students to enter the clinical phase of training (Part I), and clinical science examinations that assess the entry-level competence of candidates who plan to become licensed/registered naturopathic physicians (Part II). The NPLEX Council of Exam Chairs oversees the exam development process.

### THE PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE EXAMINATION

The Part I - Biomedical Science Examination may be taken after you have completed all biomedical science coursework at an approved naturopathic medical program (ANMP). The Part II - Clinical Science Examinations may be taken after you have passed the Part I Examination and have graduated from an ANMP.

## APPROVED NATUROPATHIC MEDICAL PROGRAMS

To be eligible to take the NPLEX, you must have completed the appropriate academic requirements at an **approved naturopathic medical program (ANMP)**. An ANMP is a program that has accreditation or pre-accreditation from the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME) and offers a minimum four-academic-year, in-residence curriculum in biomedical science and clinical didactic studies, as well as clinical (experiential) training leading to an ND degree.

### Accredited Naturopathic Medical Education Programs (ANMPs):

- Bastyr University - Washington State Campus (BU): Kenmore, Washington
- Bastyr University - California Campus (BUC): San Diego, California
- Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine - Boucher Campus (CCNM - Boucher): New Westminster, British Columbia
- Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine - Toronto Campus (CCNM - Toronto): Toronto, Ontario
- National University of Health Sciences (NUHS): Lombard, Illinois
- National University of Natural Medicine (NUNM): Portland, Oregon
- Sonoran University of Health Sciences (SUHS), *formerly Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine*: Tempe, Arizona
- Universidad Ana G. Mendez (UAGM): Caguas, Puerto Rico

### Previously Accredited Naturopathic Medical Education Programs (ANMPs) No Longer in Operation or Have Merged with Another Institution:

- Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine
- University of Bridgeport College of Naturopathic Medicine

## PART I ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

You are eligible to take the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination if you:

- Have completed all biomedical science coursework at an approved naturopathic medical education program (ANMP)

AND

- Are currently enrolled in, on an approved leave of absence, or have graduated from an ANMP
  - If you graduated more than five (5) years ago, contact NABNE regarding additional requirements.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The information you provide to NABNE as part of the online application process is confidential and used only in conjunction with the NPLEX. All administrative and testing personnel who have access to your personal information observe NABNE's confidentiality policy.

When you apply to take the NPLEX, you will be asked to provide your entire Social Security Number (SSN) or Social Insurance Number (SIN). Your entire SSN or SIN is used to uniquely identify you in our records only. You will be required to fill in only the last five digits of your SSN or SIN on every answer sheet you complete.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

You can apply online to take the **August 2023** Part I - Biomedical Science Examination **May 1-31, 2023**. NABNE recommends that you submit your application **within the first two weeks of May**. If you wait until May 31st to apply and need technical assistance in order to submit your application, NABNE staff may not be available to help you. **It is your responsibility to follow the instructions required to complete your application.**

Before you begin your application:

- Review the current *Examinee Handbook* for the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination.
- Create an online *Profile* and password for the **CURRENT exam administration**. You must create a new online *Profile* and password every time you apply to take the NPLEX. **DO NOT create more than one *Profile***, because this will cause problems when it's time to access your *Registration Status* or download your *Admission Ticket*.

When you apply to take the examination:

- Complete the *Part I - Biomedical Science Exam Application* using the appropriate link on the dashboard of your online *Profile*.
- Upload an image of the current government-issued photo ID you will use to gain admittance to the examination(s) (e.g., driver's license, government-issued ID card, passport photo page, or passport card).
  - Both the **first** and **last** names on the ID you upload must **exactly** match the first and last names you enter on the application form. You are not required to include your full middle name on the application.
- Upload an image of documentation that verifies an official name change made since the last time you applied to take the NPLEX (e.g., marriage license, name change order, etc.).
- Pay all fees in U.S. dollars, using a debit or credit card. The NABNE payment system accepts Visa and MasterCard only. **Payment must be made at the time of application.**
- Review your entries for accuracy. You will not be able to edit, delete, or change the application after you click SUBMIT. Report corrections to your application by contacting NABNE.



After you submit your application:

- Check your email for your *Confirmation Receipt*.** If you do not receive your *Confirmation Receipt* within the next several minutes, be sure to check your spam folder.
- Download the *NPLEX Blueprint and Study Guide*** from the link provided in the confirmation email you receive after you submit your application online.
- Log into your online *Profile* after June 21, 2023** to check your registration status. NABNE will be working directly with the registrar from your ANMP regarding receipt of the letter of verification required to establish your eligibility to take the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination. When NABNE has received this letter and all materials required to complete your application, you will be approved to take the examination.
- Log into your online *Profile* after July 24, 2023** to print your *Admission Ticket*. To be admitted to the examination, **you will be required to present a printed copy of your *Admission Ticket*.**

## NABNE FEES

You must submit all applications, as well as requests for study guides, transcripts, and manual scoring via the NABNE website. All fees must be paid in **U.S. dollars** via NABNE's secure online payment system using a debit or credit card. The NABNE payment system accepts Visa and MasterCard **only**.

Part I - Biomedical Science Examination .....	US\$615
Cancellation ( <i>for applications cancelled before the application period ends</i> ).....	US\$75
Manual Scoring .....	US\$50
Study Guide ( <i>Paid to receive a study guide requested outside of the application process</i> ) .....	US\$5

## REFUNDS

NABNE will not refund amounts less than US\$10.

If you submit the *Cancellation Form* to NABNE:

- BEFORE the application period ends**, you will be refunded the fees you paid, minus a \$75 *Cancellation Fee*.
- AFTER the application period ends and within 24 hours of the exam date**, you will be refunded the following amount:

Part I - Biomedical Science Examination .....	US\$225
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## REPORTING AN ADDRESS OR NAME CHANGE

It is your responsibility to ensure that NABNE has your current mailing address and valid information regarding your legal name. Without your current mailing address, NABNE cannot be responsible for ensuring that you receive your exam results in a timely manner. If the first and last names on your current government-issued photo ID do not **exactly** match the first and last names you have provided in your online application or *Name Change Form*, you will not be admitted to take the examination.

If you have had a change of address since the time you submitted an application, notify NABNE using the online *Address Change Form*.

If you have had a legal name change since you last applied to take the NPLEX, notify NABNE using the online *Name Change Form*. When you complete this form, you will be required to upload a copy of:

- Documentation verifying your official name change (marriage license, name change order, etc.)
- One piece of current government-issued photo ID (driver's license, government-issued ID card, passport photo page, or passport card issued under your **new** name)

## CANCELLATION

NABNE does not move examinations to the next administration or transfer fees to later exam dates.

To cancel an examination, you must complete and submit the *Cancellation Form* via the link in the **Applicant Portal** on the NABNE website within 24 hours of your exam date. Your name will be removed from the roster and you will not be admitted to the examination(s). If you cancel your registration, but re-apply at a later date, you will be required to complete and submit a new application and fees.

If you cancel an examination:

- BEFORE** the application period ends, you will be refunded the fees you paid, minus a \$75 *Cancellation Fee*.
- AFTER** the application period ends and within 24 hours of the exam date, you will be refunded the following amount(s):

Part I - Biomedical Science Exam Fee.....US\$225

## PREPARATION TO TAKE THE PART I EXAMINATION

The 200-question Part I - Biomedical Science Examination is an integrated examination designed to test your knowledge of structure/function (anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry & genetics) and disease/dysfunction (microbiology & immunology and pathology).

The first step in preparing to take the Biomedical Science Examination is to review the official ***NPLEX Blueprint & Study Guide for the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination***. All exam questions are multiple-choice with one correct answer and three distractors; however, the way the questions are asked may take any of several forms.

As part of your application to take the NPLEX, you will receive a free PDF download of the current *NPLEX Blueprint & Study Guide* for the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination. The study guide is copyrighted, however, and may not be distributed.

If you are not applying to take the Part I Examination, but wish to obtain a PDF of the study guide, you may submit your request and payment via the NABNE website, using the *Study Guide Order Form*.

The *NPLEX Part II Blueprint and Study Guide* is updated regularly. A study guide ordered prior to the current application period may not contain updated blueprint changes.

Study guides produced by individuals or organizations who are not affiliated with NPLEX can be useful in preparing to take the examination. NPLEX cannot warrant, however, that the information contained in these materials is representative of the content of the NPLEX examinations.

# ADMINISTRATION OF THE NPLEX

## NABNE TEST SITES

NABNE is taking steps to comply with CDC/PHAC, government, and local COVID-19 prevention guidelines and restrictions during the administration of the NPLEX. When you choose a NABNE test site, you acknowledge that you might be prevented from taking the examination(s) because of local, regional, public health, or government restrictions that are beyond the control of NABNE.

In **August 2023**, the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination will be administered at the following test sites:

WESTERN TEST SITES		EASTERN TEST SITES	
AZ	Tempe, Arizona	CT*	Trumbull, Connecticut
BC	Vancouver, British Columbia	IL	Glen Ellyn, Illinois
CA	San Diego, California	ON	Toronto, Ontario
OR	Portland, Oregon	PR	Caguas, Puerto Rico
WA	Bellevue, Washington		

\* This will be the last time NABNE offers a test site in Connecticut (CT).

## NABNE OBLIGATION TO ADMINISTER EXAMINATIONS

NABNE shall not be held responsible if the NPLEX cannot be administered due to any circumstances beyond the control of NABNE that would make it inadvisable, illegal, unsafe, or impossible to administer the examinations at the pre-determined time or on the pre-determined date. These circumstances include, but are not limited to: COVID-19 restrictions, inclement weather, floods, earthquakes, fires, other natural disasters, power failures, strikes, curtailment of transportation systems, epidemics, accidents, explosions, riots or civil disorder, terrorism, acts of war or other national emergencies, or if the test site at the sponsoring institution is closed or compromised. If any of these events occur, your only recourse will be to take the examinations at the next regularly scheduled administration.

## PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE EXAM DATES AND EXAM SCHEDULES

The Part I - Biomedical Science Examination will be administered two times each year, on the first Tuesday in February and on the first Tuesday in August. In **August 2023**, the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination will be administered according to the following dates and schedules.

### THERE ARE DIFFERENT EXAM SCHEDULED FOR THE EASTERN AND WESTERN TEST SITES!!!

Be sure you follow the correct exam schedule for the specific test site you have selected.

**Allow sufficient time to arrive at the test site on the day of your examination. You are expected to be at the test site and ready to check in at the BEGINNING of the period for *Admission and Seating*.** If you arrive **after** the *Admission and Seating* time indicated on the exam schedule, you will not be admitted to take the current or subsequent section(s) of the examination.

## EASTERN TEST SITES (CT, IL, ON, PR)

### Tuesday, August 1, 2023

8:45 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.	Admission and Seating
9:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Biomedical Science Examination</b>
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Break
1:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Admission and Seating
1:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	<b>Biomedical Science Examination - Section 2</b>

## WESTERN TEST SITES (AZ, BC, CA, OR, WA)

### Tuesday, August 1, 2023

7:45 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.	Admission and Seating
8:15 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	<b>Biomedical Science Examination - Section 1</b>
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Break
12:00 p.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Admission and Seating
12:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	<b>Biomedical Science Examination - Section 2</b>

## ADMITTANCE TO THE EXAMINATIONS

Because the NPLEX is administered in public facilities, NABNE must comply with the policies of sponsoring institutions, many of which ban the use of scented personal products. **NABNE has adopted a fragrance-free policy at all test sites.** Due to chemical sensitivities of other examinees and testing personnel, we ask that you refrain from using fragrances (e.g., essential oils, perfume, after-shave, and cologne) or strongly scented personal products (e.g., powder, hair spray, deodorant, etc.) during the days of the examination(s). If you use noticeably scented products, the proctor may refuse to admit you to the testing room.

Before you leave home to go to the test site, be sure you have your **current government-issued photo ID** (e.g., driver's license, government-issued ID card, or passport), and a **printed copy of your *Admission Ticket***.

You will be admitted to the testing room only if you have been approved to take the examination(s) and you have:

- A printed copy of your *Admission Ticket*
- One piece of **current photo ID**
  - The **first** and **last** names on your photo ID must **exactly** match the first and last names on your *Admission Ticket*. Because you are not required to include your middle name on the application, it will not appear on your *Admission Ticket*.

**Keep your *Admission Ticket* and photo ID with you at all times during the testing period.** You will need to refer to your *Admission Ticket* when filling in the ID information on every answer sheet you complete.

## TESTING PROCEDURE

The Part I - Biomedical Science Examination will be administered in two sections, according to the *PART I - BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE DATES AND EXAM SCHEDULES*, on page 8. You will be allowed 2½ hours (150 minutes) to complete each 100-question section.

**Before the testing period begins**, you will receive an answer sheet and exam booklet, and will be given instructions by the proctor. **You must not open the exam booklet until you are instructed by the proctor to do so.**

**After the testing period begins**, the proctor will write the beginning time and the ending time on the white board. In addition, the proctor will verbally announce when there are 60, 30, 15, 5, and 1 minute(s) remaining in the testing period. If you choose to wear earplugs, it is your responsibility to track the time remaining in the testing period. Pay attention to the announcements and manage your time accordingly, as **you will not be allowed to transfer answers from the test booklet to your answer sheet after the proctor has announced the end of the testing period.**

**During the testing period**, you will be permitted to leave the room only if you are accompanied by a proctor. Before you leave the room for **any** reason, you will be required to turn in all exam materials to a proctor. It is important to remember that you will **not** be given extra time to make up for time lost due to breaks that you take during the testing period.

When you complete your answer sheet, keep these guidelines in mind:

- Use only the pencil provided by NABNE.
- Complete all personal identification sections of the answer sheet using information **EXACTLY as it appears on your Admission Ticket**. Complete this information correctly and consistently on every answer sheet to ensure that your results are attributed to you.
- Fill in the bubbles darkly and completely. A mark that is too light or fills only part of the bubble may be interpreted by the optical mark reader as unanswered, and you might not be given credit for your intended answer.
- Record **ALL** your answers on the answer sheet. You are allowed to write in your exam booklet, but you will be given credit for **only** the answers you have recorded on your answer sheet.
- Make sure you have marked your answer for each question on the correct line of your answer sheet. For example, marking the answer for question #4 in a bubble on the line designated for question #5 will cause all your remaining answers to be marked on the incorrect line.
- Erase all stray marks or smudges on your answer sheet.
- Do not fold or bend your answer sheet.

Some of the questions will be very challenging. You do not need to answer every question correctly to pass. While you should have no trouble completing the entire examination in the time allotted, some questions will require more time to answer than others, and spending too much time on one question may cause you to feel pressured to speed through the rest. When you encounter a question for which you do not know the answer with certainty, try to eliminate some of the responses. If, after eliminating one or two of the response alternatives, the correct answer is still not apparent, mark your best guess from among the remaining choices and return to the question later if time allows. It is in your best interest to answer **every** question, even if it is a guess, because any question on the answer sheet you leave blank will be marked as incorrect.

**At the end of the testing period**, you will be instructed to close your exam booklet and put down your pencil. After the proctor has announced the end of the testing period, **you will not be permitted to mark additional responses on your answer sheet.**

After you have completed the examination, you will be allowed to leave the room when the proctor has verified that you have turned in your answer sheet and exam booklet, and have signed and dated the *Affirmation of Compliance*.

## **NABNE TESTING REGULATIONS**

NABNE testing regulations require that you:

- ❑ **Keep your *Admission Ticket* with you at all times during the testing period.** You will be permitted to take into the testing room **only**:
  - *Your Admission Ticket*
  - One piece of current government-issued photo ID (e.g., driver's license, government-issued ID, passport photo page, or passport card)
  - A non-alcoholic beverage in a closed (non-breakable) container
  - A face mask
  - Reading glasses
  - One pair of foam earplugs

You will be required to show all items to a proctor before you will be allowed to enter the testing room.

- ❑ **Leave ALL other personal belongings in the designated area outside of the testing room.** Before you check in for an examination, turn off all electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, pagers, etc.) and leave them in the designated area outside the testing room. You will not be allowed access to your personal belongings, and will not be permitted to use any communication device at **any** time during the testing period. NABNE testing personnel will ensure that your belongings are secure during the testing period **only**.

**If you are found to be in possession of any of the following items during the testing period, either inside or outside of the testing room, you could be dismissed from the examination:**

- Electronic devices, including cell/mobile phones, listening devices (e.g., ear pieces, headphones, etc.), pagers, PDAs, laptop computers, electronic tablets, MP3 players, calculators, digital watches, recording or filming devices, radios, etc.
- Books, notes, study materials, scratch paper
- Backpacks, handbags, briefcases, wallets
- Coats, heavy jackets, gloves (You will be allowed to keep a sweater or light jacket with you in case the room temperature changes.)
- Headwear (e.g., hats, caps, hoods, except those worn for religious purposes)
- Sunglasses, visors
- Tissue, writing instruments, erasers; these will be provided by NABNE

You will not be allowed to bring food inside the testing room. If you need to eat, take medications, or have access to medical supplies during the testing period, you must leave these items with a proctor at the registration table when you check in for an examination. **These items must be clearly labeled with your first and last name** before you leave them with a proctor.

- ❑ Present your *Admission Ticket* and current government-issued photo ID to a proctor to gain admittance to each section of the examination.
- ❑ Enter the testing room immediately after you check in for the examination. Once you have checked in and have entered the testing room, you will not be allowed to leave without the permission of the proctor. You should use the restroom **before** you check in.
- ❑ Follow all testing regulations set forth in this *Examinee Handbook*, as well as all instructions given by the proctor(s). A violation of any such regulation or instruction regarding any part of the examination process may result in dismissal from the current and/or any subsequent sections(s) of the examination. Other sanctions may also be imposed, including but not limited to nullification of exam results, forfeiture of exam fees, preclusion from taking future NPLEX examinations, and/or notification of legitimately interested entities (e.g., your naturopathic medical school, the Federation of Naturopathic Medicine Regulatory Authorities, etc.).
- ❑ Read, sign, and date the *Affirmation of Compliance* on the back cover of your exam booklet prior to the beginning of each examination. NABNE will not release exam results without having a signed and dated *Affirmation of Compliance* on file for each section/examination you take.
- ❑ Return all exam materials to a proctor before you leave the testing room at any time. When you have finished the examination, you will be allowed to leave the room only when the proctor has verified that you have turned in your answer sheet and exam booklet, and have signed and dated the *Affirmation of Compliance*.

## IRREGULAR BEHAVIOR

Irregular behavior refers to violations or attempted violations of the rules regarding any part of the examination process. This includes, but is not limited to:

- ❑ Violations before the testing period:
  - Accessing unauthorized study materials
  - Providing false information on the application
  - Providing false admittance information

If, in advance of the exam administration, you know that organized or widespread cheating is occurring (e.g., an illegal study guide containing actual exam questions is circulating), or is going to occur (e.g., examinees plan to exchange information during the examination), you should contact NABNE immediately.

- ❑ Violations during the testing period:
  - Impersonating an examinee or engaging an impersonator
  - Possessing unauthorized items in the testing room or accessing them during the testing period
  - Failing to adhere to a proctor's instructions or requests
  - Communicating with other examinees during the testing period
  - Copying answers or allowing answers to be copied by another examinee during the testing period
  - Accessing written notes or electronic information during the testing period
  - Reproducing exam content manually or electronically



- Taking exam materials from the testing room at any time before, during, or after the testing period

If you have knowledge that any of these violations are occurring during the exam administration, you should notify the head proctor immediately.

❑ **Violations after the testing period:**

- Reproducing exam questions, by any means, including reconstruction from memory
- Communicating about exam questions and/or answers with other examinees, potential examinees, or formal or informal test preparation groups
- Altering exam results or transcripts

If, after the exam administration, you have reason to believe that there has been such a violation, you should contact NABNE immediately.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF IRREGULAR BEHAVIOR**

If evidence is found of a breach in the security of exam materials **before** an exam administration, and such evidence suggests that the behavior is organized and/or may involve a number of examinees, NABNE reserves the right to cancel the exam administration. If evidence is found of a breach in the security of exam materials **after** an exam administration, and such evidence suggests that the behavior was organized and/or may have involved a number of examinees, NABNE reserves the right to nullify the exam results of some or all examinees.

If violations are observed **during** the exam administration, the head proctor will report them to NABNE, and an investigation will ensue. If it is determined that there is sufficient evidence of irregular behavior, the violator will be advised of the nature of the evidence and will be given an opportunity to respond in writing. If exam results have not been reported previously, they will be withheld during any further investigation or review, and the violator may not be permitted to take subsequent examinations until a final decision regarding irregular behavior has been made.

If, upon review of the available information, it is determined that irregular behavior has occurred, the violator's exam results may be nullified, they may be prohibited from taking the NPLEX in the future, special administrative procedures may be implemented for any future examinations, and/or notice regarding the determination and the sanctions imposed may be provided to legitimately interested entities, including all transcript recipients.

If the irregular behavior involves the unauthorized reproduction and/or distribution of exam materials, or the dissemination of specific exam content, NABNE may pursue every legal means available to protect copyrighted materials.

The actions described above do not preclude NABNE from seeking legal redress against the violator.

## PART I PASSING STANDARDS

The Part I - Biomedical Science Examination is a single, integrated examination that is designed to test your knowledge of biological structure/function and disease/dysfunction. To pass the examination, you must be able to demonstrate concurrent competence in both **general** exam areas (GEAs): **Structure/Function** and **Disease/Dysfunction**. You have passed the NPLEX Part I -Biomedical Science Examination when you have correctly answered at least the number of questions that NPLEX subject matter experts (licensed/registered NDs) have determined is required to demonstrate competence in each of the two **general** exam areas. You are required to pass both general exam areas within the same exam administration in order to pass the examination.

## REPORTING OF EXAM RESULTS

Approximately six (6) weeks after the exam administration, your **unofficial** exam result (Pass/Fail only) will be posted to the dashboard of your online *Profile*. You will be notified by email when your result can be viewed online. An **official** hard copy of your exam result will be sent to you by regular mail within the same week.

NABNE will make every attempt to ensure that the exam result posted online is correct; however, because implementation of this feature requires manual transfer of data (which introduces the possibility of human error), **NABNE cannot guarantee that the information posted online is accurate.** NABNE suggests that you **do not** make any decisions based on these results.

The **official** report of the Part I - Biomedical Science exam result you receive in the mail will provide information regarding your overall passing status, and will include a visual scale that illustrates your performance in each of the two **general** exam areas, relative to the minimum percentage of questions you must correctly answer to pass that **general** exam area.

- ❑ **Comprehensive Mastery** indicates, with either a **P** (Pass) or **F** (Fail) designation, whether or not you have passed the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination. You have passed the Part I - Biomedical Science Examination when you have achieved a **P** (Pass) in both of the two **general** exam areas:
  - **Structure/Function**, which reflects the result you achieved on the exam questions that pertain to anatomy, biochemistry & genetics, and physiology
  - **Disease/Dysfunction**, which reflects the result you achieved on the exam questions that pertain to microbiology & immunology and pathology

If you fail the examination, your report will also provide a visual scale that illustrates the strength of your performance in each of the five **specific** exam areas relative only to your performance in the other **specific** exam areas.

Exam results are the property of the examinee. NABNE serves as an unbiased repository of those results. To avoid possible misinterpretation and to protect your privacy, **exam results will not be reported to you by phone, fax, or email.**

## RE-EXAMINATION POLICIES

If you do not pass both of the two **general** exam areas (Structure/Function or Disease/Dysfunction), you will be required to retake the entire Part I - Biomedical Science Examination.

## MANUAL SCORING REQUESTS

Every answer sheet used for an NPLEX Examination is scanned by a state-of-the-art optical mark reader, and errors are reviewed by the scanning operator. The possibility of a scanning error is negligible. However, you may request a manual scoring from the most recent exam administration to verify that the answers you marked on your answer sheet(s) correctly match the answers recorded by the scanner. You will be notified of the results of this manual scoring; however, you will **not** receive additional information regarding your exam results (e.g., numerical scores, specific questions answered incorrectly, etc.).

If you would like to receive a manual scoring of an examination you take in **August 2023**, you must submit your request and payment online **no later than October 30, 2023**. The *Manual Scoring Fee* of **US\$50** must be paid using a debit or credit card.

## ISSUES AND APPEALS

Because NPLEX uses an extensive post-test analysis process (including statistical analysis of individual questions), the exam results sent to you reflect changes made after post-test analysis of questions that did not perform as expected. Consequently, **NABNE does not change exam results.**

If you wish to appeal a **policy** decision, you must submit your appeal to NABNE in writing, addressed to the Executive Director of NABNE. Your appeal will be presented to the NABNE Board. The Board will make every effort to respond to you with a decision within six (6) weeks of receipt of your appeal.

### NABNE - Appeals

Suite 119, #321  
9220 SW Barbur Blvd.  
Portland, OR 97219  
Attn: Executive Director

## TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

The accommodations granted by your approved naturopathic medical program (ANMP) might not be the same as those granted by NABNE.

**COURTESY ACCOMMODATIONS** (for limitations that require only minor adjustments to the standardized testing environment)

If you have a limitation (e.g., a fractured arm, an advanced pregnancy, etc.) that does not rise to the level of a functional disability but requires a minor alteration of the standardized testing conditions, NABNE will work with you and the testing facility to provide physical arrangements to meet your needs. These types of limitations do not require extensive evaluation by a specialist because they require only minor modification of a **physical** component of the testing environment (e.g., sitting in the front row to minimize distractions, a special pillow to sit on, etc.). You still might be required to submit a note from your physician or other professional. To receive the **Courtesy Accommodation Request Form**, contact NABNE at [testingaccommodations@nabne.org](mailto:testingaccommodations@nabne.org). You must submit a **Courtesy Accommodation Request Form** to NABNE by **May 31, 2023**.

Examinees are not allowed to bring their own noise-canceling or noise-reducing headsets into the testing rooms. You can still submit a **Courtesy Accommodation Request Form** to request a noise-reducing headset, which NABNE will provide.

### OFF-THE-TESTING-CLOCK BREAKS OR EXTENDED TESTING TIME

These requests are **not** courtesy accommodations. If you are requesting extended testing time or off-the-testing-clock breaks, you must request and complete the **Testing Accommodations Application** packet, and you must be evaluated by a qualified professional (e.g., a neuropsychologist) who can provide objective evidence (results of psycho-educational testing) of a functional limitation that requires you receive off-the-testing-clock breaks or extended testing time.

**TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS THAT ADDRESS FUNCTIONAL DISABILITIES** (for disabilities or limitations that require accommodations that alter the standardized testing environment)

In general, a **disability** is defined as a physical, cognitive, or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of an individual's major life activities. Not all disabilities, however, impact an examinee's ability to access (take) a multiple-choice examination. To be granted testing accommodations by NABNE for the administration of the NPLEX, you must submit objective evidence (e.g., results of a psycho-educational assessment) of a disability that causes functional limitations relevant to taking a non-speeded, multiple-choice examination. The NPLEX is a non-speeded, multiple-choice examination that requires you to be able to read and comprehend text. The examinations do not require math calculation, oral fluency, or compositional writing.

Providing accommodations to an examinee who does *not* have a disability is likely to provide an advantage which other examinees have not received, therefore compromising the reliability and validity of the exam. Regulatory authorities rely on NABNE to provide reliable and valid exam results.

## DEADLINES TO APPLY FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION

To apply for testing accommodations, you must request the current *NABNE Applicant Testing Accommodations Request* forms by emailing [testingaccommodations@nabne.org](mailto:testingaccommodations@nabne.org). The forms will be available approximately 10 weeks before May 31, 2023.

To have your application for testing accommodations be considered for the **August 2023** exam administration, you must register to take the upcoming NPLEX and NABNE must receive, **no later than May 31, 2023**, all required documentation, establishing that:

- You are an individual who has current functional impairments that arise because of a disability.
- These impairments cause functional limitations that impact your ability to access a non-speeded, multiple-choice examination.

AND

- The requested testing accommodations are reasonable and address the specific functional limitations relevant to taking a non-speeded, multiple-choice examination.<sup>1</sup>

If NABNE has not received your testing accommodations application or **current** forms with **complete documentation** by **May 31, 2023**, your request will not be evaluated in time for the upcoming exam administration.

If the documentation submitted to NABNE by the deadline is not sufficient to establish that you have a disability that impacts your ability to access a non-speeded, multiple-choice examination, it is not NABNE's responsibility to follow up and obtain the required information.

If any required documentation is received **after** the deadline, you will have the option of 1) either taking the examination(s) without the requested accommodations, or 2) cancelling your application and being refunded a portion of your fees according to the current refund policy.

**Application to request accommodations and all required documentation for the upcoming exam administration should be emailed in PDF format to [testingaccommodations@nabne.org](mailto:testingaccommodations@nabne.org) or faxed to 503-452-3943.** To ensure that your request will be evaluated in time for the August 2023 exam administration, **all documentation must be received by NABNE no later than May 31, 2023.**

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE APPLICANT WHEN REQUESTING TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

To request testing accommodations and to ensure that your request will be considered in time for the upcoming NPLEX administration, it is your responsibility to:

- Register to take an NPLEX examination.** NABNE will not consider requests for accommodations from individuals who are not registered to take an NPLEX examination.

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<sup>1</sup> A **reasonable accommodation** is an adjustment to or modification of standard testing conditions that addresses the functional limitation(s) that is (are) related to an examinee's impairment, without giving undue advantage to the examinee who receives the accommodation; without fundamentally altering the measurement of knowledge, ability, or skill that the test is intended to measure; and without imposing an undue hardship on NABNE.

- ❑ **Complete and submit all parts of the current *NABNE Applicant Testing Accommodations Request* packet by the deadline.**
- ❑ **Prepare and submit a personal statement** that specifically describes how your functional limitations impact your ability to take a multiple-choice examination. This statement is optional; it is intended to give you an opportunity to provide relevant information that might not be provided by your evaluator.
- ❑ **Retain an evaluator who is a doctoral-level practitioner** and is qualified<sup>2</sup> to assess your particular disability and complete the *NABNE Evaluator's Report Form (NERF)*. NABNE must receive the form directly from the evaluator by the deadline.
  - The objective evidence (e.g., psychoeducational testing results, imaging studies, etc.) received from the evaluator must be current. If the evaluation is **more** than five (5) years old, you will be required to have a new evaluation. If the evaluation is **fewer** than five (5) years old, contact NABNE to find out if a current evaluation is required, as **current** depends on the nature of the impairment.
  - Most people who taken an entire battery of neuropsychological or psychoeducational tests will demonstrate relative strengths and weaknesses and/or limitations in one or more areas. A few low scores are insufficient, in and of themselves, to establish the existence of a disability.

## ABOUT THE NABNE EVALUATOR'S REPORT FORM (NERF)

The NERF is designed to elicit data from your evaluator to ensure that NABNE has sufficient information to evaluate your request for accommodations. If the NERF is not fully completed or is illegible, NABNE might not be able to evaluate your request. Please refer to the NERF to understand what information NABNE is requesting from the evaluators.

The NERF does not require that the evaluator provide a diagnosis (e.g., DSM-5 or ICD code). Information about an applicant's diagnosis can be helpful in evaluating the accommodation request, but diagnosis and history may be withheld at the applicant's discretion. If the information is not provided, it may affect NABNE's ability to reasonably assess the accommodations request.

A request for testing accommodations may be denied if NABNE determines that the objective evidence provided in the NERF is 1) not adequate to substantiate the claimed disability/functional limitation(s), 2) not consistent with, or is not adequate to substantiate a claim that the disability/functional limitation is significant in the context of taking a multiple-choice examination, and/or 3) not reasonable or not appropriate to the functional limitation(s) related to your disability.

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<sup>2</sup> All evaluators must be doctoral-level practitioners. For a cognitive/developmental/psychological assessment, your evaluator must have been trained to administer and interpret psycho-educational assessments (e.g., has a PhD or PsyD in neuropsychology). For a physical/sensory assessment, your choice of evaluator depends on the type of impairment [e.g., visual impairment will be appropriately evaluated by an ophthalmologist, structural impairment will be appropriately evaluated by an orthopedic doctor or a chiropractic doctor, physical impairment (e.g., ulcerative colitis, fibromyalgia) will be appropriately evaluated by an ND, DO, or MD, etc.].

## NABNE'S REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS

Your documentation may be reviewed by one or more of NABNE's expert documentation review specialists (DRS), each of whom provides an impartial interpretation of the information provided. Every NABNE documentation review specialist has a doctoral degree (PhD, EdD, or PsyD) with specialty training in the assessment of individuals who have cognitive/developmental/psychological disabilities. All documentation review specialists have published research regarding aspects of the disability assessment process and have many years of experience reviewing evaluations such as the ones submitted by applicants for accommodations requests. Their expertise includes knowledge of current applicable legal requirements regarding the provision of accommodations. After a DRS reviews the documentation, NABNE will determine whether the request for accommodations will be granted.

For a more detailed explanation of NABNE's assessment of accommodations request, please refer to the document titled *NABNE Review of Testing Accommodations Requests*. **The accommodations granted by your approved naturopathic medical program (ANMP) might not be the same as those granted by NABNE.**

## NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

Approximately four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled exam date, you will be contacted via letter and/or email with the decision regarding your request. If your request is granted, you will be sent a memo documenting the accommodations you will be provided. You will need to sign this memo and return this document to NABNE. If your request is denied, the decision will be detailed in a letter emailed to you. Your options will be 1) either taking the examination(s) without the requested accommodations, or 2) cancelling your examination(s) and being refunded a portion of your fees according to the current refund policy.

## SUBSEQUENT TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS REQUESTS

An applicant who has been granted testing accommodations in the past will not **automatically** be granted the same accommodations for a subsequent exam administration. To request testing accommodations for subsequent exam administrations, you must submit a new *NABNE Applicant Testing Accommodations Request Form* every time you apply to take the NPLEX. Although new documentation from an evaluator **might not** be required, you are responsible for ensuring that the documentation NABNE has on file meets the requirements described above.

If your previous request for accommodations was denied, you may submit a new accommodations request for a future exam administration, **but only if the new request includes additional information**. However, further documentation will not change the outcome if the information provided in the new report is inconsistent with the claimed disability or relevant functional limitations.

## APPEALS REGARDING TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS DECISIONS

If you wish to appeal a decision regarding your testing accommodations application, you must submit your appeal to NABNE in writing, addressed to the Testing Accommodations Committee of the NABNE Board. Send your letter to [testingaccommodations@nabne.org](mailto:testingaccommodations@nabne.org). Because of the short time frame between accommodations decisions and the exam administration, the Board will not be able to respond before the upcoming exam administration, but NABNE will make every effort to provide a response to your appeal within six (6) weeks of its receipt.