

# Defining Excellence

*in Respiratory Care*



**EXCELLENCE**  
defines us.

## The National Board for Respiratory Care

The National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) shares your goal of saving and improving lives through excellence in respiratory care. Since 1960, we have been dedicated to advancing the profession through rigorous credentialing examinations and ongoing support for candidates, credentialed practitioners and educators. We support and promote excellence by:

- Providing high quality voluntary credentialing examinations for respiratory care practitioners, pulmonary function technologists and asthma educators
- Establishing standards for credentialing respiratory care professionals to work under medical direction, and supporting ethical and educational standards of respiratory care
- Advancing medicine by funding research and promoting the value of respiratory care for patients
- Cooperating closely with the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) to support respiratory care education
- Leveraging our time, knowledge and resources to continuously elevate the profession and credentialed respiratory care practitioners

The NBRC is a not-for-profit organization governed by volunteer representatives from four distinguished sponsors:

**AARC** – American Association for Respiratory Care

**CHEST** – American College of Chest Physicians

**ASA** – American Society of Anesthesiologists

**ATS** – American Thoracic Society

With experts at the helm and a mission driven by the importance of steadfast, lifelong learning, the NBRC awards credentials that are the mark of true excellence in respiratory care.

## The Benefits of NBRC Credentials

Achieving credentials from the NBRC is a challenge, a true testament of the skills and strengths required for excellence. As thousands of NBRC credentialed practitioners will attest, success instills a sense of pride and opens new possibilities for advancing into higher paying leadership positions through specialty credentialing.

The NBRC offers credentials in the following areas:

**CRT** – Certified Respiratory Therapist

**RRT** – Registered Respiratory Therapist

**RRT-NPS** – Neonatal/Pediatric Specialist

**CRT-SDS** or **RRT-SDS** – Sleep Disorders Specialist

**RRT-ACCS** – Adult Critical Care Specialist

**CPFT** – Certified Pulmonary Function Technologist

**RPFT** – Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist

**AE-C** – Certified Asthma Educator

Because all 49 states regulating the profession recognize the NBRC credentialing examinations as standards of licensure, national credentials from the NBRC make it easy to relocate from one state to another.



## Credentialing Examinations

Detailed admission requirements for each examination are provided online at [nbrc.org](http://nbrc.org).

### Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination

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CRT

The Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination (TMC) is designed to objectively measure essential knowledge, skills and abilities required of respiratory therapists at entry into practice, as well as determine eligibility for the Clinical Simulation Examination. There are two established cut scores for the TMC Examination. If a candidate achieves the low cut score, they will earn the CRT credential. If a candidate achieves the high cut score, they will earn the CRT credential AND become eligible for the Clinical Simulation Examination (provided that the candidate is eligible to earn the RRT credential).

### Clinical Simulation Examination

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RRT

Individuals who attempt and pass the Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination at the high cut score and attempt and pass the Clinical Simulation Examination will be awarded the Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential.

### Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty Examination

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RRT-NPS

The Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty Examination is designed to objectively measure essential tasks required of respiratory therapists in this specialty area and is available to all RRTs.

### Sleep Disorders Specialty Examination

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CRT-SDS

RRT-SDS

The Sleep Disorders Specialty Examination is designed to objectively measure essential knowledge, skills and abilities of respiratory therapists in this specialty area of sleep disorders testing and therapeutic intervention. Available to CRTs who have held the credential for a minimum of six months and RRTs who have held the credential for a minimum of three months or for those CRTs and RRTs having graduated from an accredited respiratory care program with a sleep add-on track.

## Adult Critical Care Specialty Examination

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RRT-ACCS

The Adult Critical Care Specialty Examination is designed to objectively measure essential knowledge, skills and abilities required of respiratory therapists in this specialty area and is available for individuals who have held the RRT credential for a minimum of one year.

## Pulmonary Function Technology Examination

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CPFT

RPFT

The Pulmonary Function Technology Examination is designed to objectively measure essential tasks required of pulmonary function technologists and is available to all graduates of accredited respiratory care education programs, CRTs and RRTs, and some individuals with varying levels of education and clinical experience. If a candidate achieves the low cut score, they will earn the CPFT credential. If a candidate achieves the high cut score, they will earn the CPFT and RPFT credentials.

## Asthma Educator Specialty Examination

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AE-C

The Asthma Educator Specialty Examination is designed to measure comprehensive, current knowledge of asthma pathophysiology and management including developmental theories, cultural dimensions, the impact of chronic illness, and principles of teaching-learning.



## **Availability of Examinations**

NBRC credentialing examinations are available at over 300 secure testing locations throughout the country and select international sites. Examinations are administered daily by computer, Monday through Saturday, during morning and afternoon sessions. Exams are easy to schedule, and because long-distance travel is usually not required, costs are minimal.

Candidates may apply for an examination online, and once eligibility is confirmed, candidates can schedule a convenient testing appointment online.

The NBRC's testing agency, PSI, administers the credentialing examinations through its national network of computerized assessment centers. For more information about our testing agency, visit PSI's website or [nbrc.org](http://nbrc.org).

## **NBRC Credentialing and State Licensure**

The NBRC cooperates with states that have enacted legislation to regulate the practice of respiratory care. To ensure the value and recognition of the voluntary national credentials, the NBRC has adopted policies that permit the Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination to be administered on behalf of state agencies for legal credentialing. Candidates for state licensing apply according to procedures established by the state; direct questions about state licensing to the responsible state agency.

## **ICE Membership and NCCA Accreditation**

Our membership in the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) signifies our commitment to assessing competency and protecting the quality and safety of respiratory patient care. As a member of ICE and the only accredited body for respiratory care, we maintain unconditional compliance with stringent testing and measurement standards. All NBRC credentialing examinations are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and reviewed every five years as part of the accreditation renewal process.

In addition, PSI – the professional testing agency contracted by the NBRC to assist in the administration of respiratory care credentialing examinations – is also a sustaining member of ICE. PSI provides secure, reliable, and highly credible testing services that meet the highest professional and ethical standards.

## **Candidate Handbook and Application Brochure**

This helpful publication is available to candidates for credentialing and others at no charge. It contains the admissions policies for all NBRC examinations, examination applications, and detailed information about NBRC examination policies, and judicial and ethics policies. This information and links to practice examinations to help candidates prepare for the credentialing examinations are available at [nbrc.org](http://nbrc.org).

## **Free Practice Examinations Online**

The NBRC is one of the few certifying boards providing practice examinations for its credentialing examinations at no charge to candidates. These multiple choice practice examinations are equal in content to the actual credentialing examinations, except for the AE-C practice examination. Also available is a one-problem simulation exercise to familiarize candidates with the format of the Clinical Simulation Examination (CSE) and the functionality of the software used to administer the CSE. The practice examinations are available at [nbrc.org](http://nbrc.org).

## **Online Self-Assessment Examinations Available**

Anyone preparing to take an NBRC examination can assess how they may perform before actually attempting a credentialing examination by taking the official NBRC Self-Assessment Examinations (SAEs). SAE questions duplicate content and design of the actual credential examinations. The feedback from the SAE



provides an opportunity to evaluate and remedy less-than-desirable examination performance before taking the credentialing examination. The official SAEs are the only products that provide the respective examination committees' rationale for the best response to each question.

Official SAEs are available for purchase online through the NBRC's testing agency, PSI. Go to [schedule.psiexams.com](https://schedule.psiexams.com) or [nbrc.org](https://nbrc.org) to order an SAE today.

## **Judicial and Ethics Policies**

Credentialed practitioners in the national groups of CRTs, RRTs, Neonatal/Pediatric Respiratory Care Specialists, Sleep Disorders Specialists, Adult Critical Care Specialists, CPFTs, RPFTs, and Asthma Educator Specialists, as well as candidates for credentialing, are expected to adhere to the highest professional and ethical standards. The Board of Trustees has approved the following general reasons for refusal of applications for credentialing or for which credentialed individuals may be disciplined by the NBRC's Judicial and Ethics Committee:

- Obtaining or attempting to obtain Certification, Registration, Recertification or Re-registration by fraud, deception or artifice, or knowingly assisting another person in the same.
- Unauthorized use of a credential certificate or falsification of credentials or any other NBRC documents.



- Unauthorized possession and/or distribution of any official NBRC testing or examination materials to include copying and/or reproduction of any part of NBRC examination questions or problems.
- Credentialed practitioners and/or examination candidates may be disciplined for offenses related to their practice of respiratory therapy, pulmonary function technology and/or asthma education which gives cause to question the individual's ability to practice in a safe and competent manner. Such offenses include, but are not limited to:
  - Conviction in a court of law, after all appeals have been exhausted, of a drug- or alcohol-related offense that would cause question as to the individual's ability to appropriately interact with patients and others on the job; a job-related offense indicating the individual's intentional negligence and/or purposeful misconduct that results in endangering the health and/or safety of a patient; or, an act of physical violence (murder, assault, rape, robbery, etc.) that would cause question as to the individual's ability to appropriately interact with patients and others on the job.
  - Revocation or denial of a license to practice respiratory therapy, pulmonary function technology and/or asthma education, or another health-related profession, by an authorized state agency.
  - Voluntary surrender of a license to practice respiratory therapy, pulmonary function technology and/or asthma education, or another health-related profession, by a credentialed individual and/or examination candidate to an authorized state agency after the filing of a complaint proceeding by an authorized state agency alleging job-related offenses.
  - Use of any authorized designation (CRT, RRT, CRT-NPS, RRT-NPS, CRT-SDS, RRT-SDS, RRT-ACCS, CPFT, RPFT, or AE-C) in any unauthorized manner, including, but not limited to, disparaging usage or usage for commercial gain.

The NBRC has also established operating policies and procedures to guide the conduct of hearings in judicial and ethics matters, specify disciplinary actions, establish an individual's right to counsel and stipulate appeal mechanisms. These procedures are designed to provide maximum fairness to credentialed practitioners and candidates, as well as contribute to the health, safety and welfare of the public.

## **Visit Us Online**

For more information about the NBRC and our ongoing commitment to respiratory care professionals, visit [nbrc.org](http://nbrc.org).



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**EXCELLENCE** defines us.