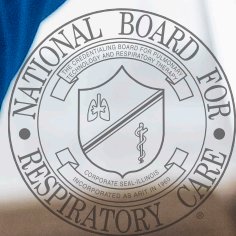


# Candidate Handbook



**EXCELLENCE**  
defines us.



This handbook contains applications and important information for ALL credentialing programs. You may wish to retain this information for future reference.

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To schedule an examination appointment, contact:  
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 Website: test-takers.psiexams.com/nbrc

The National Board for Respiratory Care, Inc.  
 10801 Mastin St., Suite 300 • Overland Park, KS 66210-1658  
 Phone: 913.895.4900 • Fax: 913.712.9283  
 Email: info@nbrc.org • Website: nbrc.org

## The NBRC

The National Board for Respiratory Care, Inc. (NBRC) shares your goal of protecting patients' lives. As a voluntary health credentialing board, the NBRC prepares and conducts examinations for respiratory therapists, pulmonary function technologists and asthma educators. Since 1960, the NBRC has been dedicated to ensuring excellence through rigorous and comprehensive credentialing examinations, as well as ongoing professional growth opportunities and educational programs. Nearly 30,000 candidates are tested annually, seeking the NBRC badges of distinction in six specific areas of respiratory care. Once earned, NBRC credentials provide the recognition respiratory care practitioners deserve for their hard work and dedication to the field.

The NBRC is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised of representatives from the NBRC's four sponsors: the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC), the American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST), the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) and the American Thoracic Society (ATS). A Public Advisor is also elected by the Board to provide a consumer perspective.

## Scope and Purpose

The NBRC has established multiple credentialing programs with varying eligibility pathways in recognition of the diversity in education and experience of qualified applicants. NBRC credentials demonstrate a commitment to patient safety by allied health professionals who perform respiratory care in the United States.

The NBRC awards eight credentials, which have different eligibility criteria:

- Eligibility for the following credentials achieved by general respiratory therapists is based on completion of education.
  - Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT)
  - Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT)
- Eligibility for credentials achieved by pulmonary function technologists is based on experience or achievement of CRT or RRT credentials.
  - Certified Pulmonary Function Technologist (CPFT)
  - Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist (RPFT)
- Eligibility for credentials achieved by respiratory therapists in one of the following specialties is based on holding the CRT or RRT credential for a period of time.
  - Adult Critical Care Specialty (RRT-ACCS)
  - Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty (RRT-NPS)
  - Sleep Disorders Specialty (CRT-SDS and RRT-SDS)
  - Asthma Educator Specialty (AE-C)

## Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT)

Professionals who earn the CRT credential have obtained sufficient clinical skills through the education program from which they graduated and sufficient knowledge mastery to provide competent respiratory care at entry into practice. Knowledge domains, include, but are not limited to evaluating patient information, troubleshooting devices, performing procedures, and implementing therapeutics. Most CRTs

are employed in medical-practice settings such as inpatient hospitals; some CRTs are employed in outpatient clinics, free-standing diagnostic centers, and device manufacturing.

## Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT)

Compared to CRTs, RRTs have demonstrated a higher level of proficiency by achieving a higher score on the same examination taken by CRTs and through additional evaluation of knowledge about facilitating the care of patients with a variety of needs. Professionals who earn the RRT designation have obtained sufficient clinical skills through the education program from which they graduated and sufficient knowledge mastery to provide competent respiratory care. Knowledge domains, include, but are not limited to evaluating patient information, troubleshooting devices, performing procedures, and implementing therapeutics. Most RRTs are employed in medical-practice settings such as inpatient hospitals; some RRTs are employed in outpatient clinics, free-standing diagnostic centers, and device manufacturing.

## Certified Pulmonary Function Technologist (CPFT)

Professionals who earn the CPFT credential have obtained sufficient clinical skills through the education program from which they graduated or from experience in pulmonary function testing plus they have sufficient knowledge mastery to provide competent diagnostic testing. Knowledge domains include but are not limited to testing instrumentation, testing procedures, and management of testing results. CPFTs are employed in laboratories within medical-practice settings, specifically in hospitals or free-standing facilities.

## Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist (RPFT)

RPFTs have demonstrated a higher level of proficiency by achieving a higher score on the same examination taken by CPFTs. Professionals who earn the RPFT credential have obtained sufficient clinical skills through the education program from which they graduated or from experience in pulmonary function testing plus they have sufficient knowledge mastery to provide competent diagnostic testing. Knowledge domains include but are not limited to testing instrumentation, testing procedures, and management of testing results. RPFTs are employed in laboratories within medical-practice settings, specifically in hospitals or free-standing facilities.

## Adult Critical Care Specialist (ACCS)

Professionals who earn the RRT-ACCS credential have obtained sufficient clinical skills through the education program from which they graduated and sufficient mastery of specialty knowledge to provide competent critical care to adults. Knowledge domains include but are not limited to critical care of the respiratory system, general critical care principles, and medical ethics. Most RRT-ACCSs are employed in medical-practice settings such as inpatient hospitals although some work in specialized facilities where patients receive mechanical ventilation support over a long term.

## Neonatal/Pediatric Specialist (NPS)

Professionals who earn the RRT-NPS credential have obtained sufficient clinical skills through the education program from which they graduated and sufficient mastery of specialty knowledge to provide competent critical care to neonatal and pediatric patients. Knowledge domains include but are not limited to critical care, general care, and medical ethics. Most RRT-NPSs are employed in medical-practice settings such as inpatient hospitals.

## Sleep Disorders Specialist (SDS)

Professionals who earn the CRT-SDS and RRT-SDS credentials have obtained sufficient clinical skills through the education program from which they graduated and sufficient mastery of specialty knowledge to provide competent care to patients who are tested for sleep disorders. Knowledge domains include but are not limited to facilitating the testing for sleep disorders, summarizing testing results, managing admirative responsibilities in a testing center, and assisting implementation of a treatment plan. Most CRT-SDSs and RRT-SDSs are employed in medical-practice settings such as inpatient hospitals and free-standing centers.

## Asthma Educator Specialist (AE-C)

An asthma educator is an expert in teaching, educating, and counseling individuals with asthma and their families in the knowledge and skills necessary to minimize the impact of asthma on their quality of life. The educator possesses comprehensive, current knowledge of asthma pathophysiology and management including developmental theories, cultural dimensions, the impact of chronic illness, and principles of teaching-learning. The educator is knowledgeable about objective and subjective evaluations used to diagnose asthma and assess its control. The educator capably instructs individuals with asthma on the optimal use of medications and delivery devices particularly explaining technical concepts to individuals in language each can understand. The educator conducts thorough assessments of individuals and families to identify strengths and resources as well as negative psychological factors, the social and economic impact of asthma, educational needs, and barriers to optimal healthcare and self-management. The educator works with an individual with asthma, his/her family, and other healthcare professionals to develop, implement, monitor, and revise an asthma action plan customized to the individual's needs, environment, disease severity, and lifestyle to optimize the individual's self-management skills. The educator monitors asthma education program outcomes and recommends modifications to improve quality and effectiveness. The educator serves as a resource to the community by providing information about asthma as well as healthcare and community resources. A primary job responsibility of the asthma educator specialist is the provision of asthma coordination and counseling services.

## Accreditation

The NBRC is a member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (I.C.E.), and all examination programs are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA): CRT, RRT, CPFT, RPFT, Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty, Sleep Disorders Specialty, Adult Critical Care Specialty and Asthma Educator Specialist. Accreditation by NCCA signifies unconditional compliance with stringent testing and measurement standards among national certification organizations. This recognition attests to the NBRC's continued efforts to maintain the quality and integrity of examination programs on behalf of the respiratory care profession.

## This Handbook

To support you in achieving your goals as a credentialed respiratory care practitioner, the NBRC created this handbook to serve as your guide to applying and preparing for the credentialing examinations. It contains the NBRC's admissions and examination policies, applications for testing, and other important information

about the content of the respective examinations. These materials in no way substitute for a thorough education or your commitment to study, but they can help your confidence and ability to perform your best on the examinations.

Detailed content outlines, web-based practice examinations, and self-assessment examinations for all examinations are available on the NBRC's website at [nbrc.org](http://nbrc.org).

## Testing Agency

NBRC's testing agency, PSI, assists in the administration, scoring and analysis of the credentialing examinations. PSI is a leader in the testing industry, offering certification, licensing, talent assessment and academic solutions worldwide.

## Nondiscrimination Policy

The NBRC and its testing agency do not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

## Special Examination Accommodations

The NBRC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and ensures that no disabled individual is deprived of the opportunity to take an examination solely by reason of that disability. Special examination arrangements may be made for these individuals. If you require special accommodations, complete the Request for Special Examination Accommodations and Documentation of Disability-Related Needs forms included in this handbook and submit them to the NBRC.

If you have not previously been provided accommodations for an NBRC examination, you must complete and submit the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form PRIOR to applying and making payment. If the form is not received prior to making payment and scheduling a testing appointment, approved accommodations will not be provided for your scheduled examination.

## NBRC Credentials, Examinations, and Admissions Policies

Preparing for your credentialing examination is hard work but well worth it. As hundreds of thousands of NBRC-credentialed practitioners will attest, success instills a sense of pride and can open new opportunities for professional advancement. Each examination is developed by a committee of respiratory care practitioners, pulmonary function technologists, asthma educators or physicians who serve as content experts. All examinations are based on national job analysis research. Examination questions are submitted from practitioners throughout the country; item writers are provided detailed instructions for developing appropriate questions. The questions are reviewed, revised, and approved by examination committees. Staff also review and edit the questions for conformity to testing and measurement principles and assist the examination committees in selecting and assembling final versions of the examinations.

## Pretesting on NBRC Examinations

### Multiple-Choice Examinations

All multiple-choice examinations contain questions that are being pretested for use in future versions of the examinations. Pretesting questions allows examination committees to collect meaningful statistics about new questions that may appear as scored questions on future examinations. With pretesting methodology, examinees are ensured their scores are the result of sound measurement practices and that scored questions reflect current practice.

Pretesting is accomplished by interspersing new questions throughout the examination so candidates will answer them with the same care they would questions to be scored. These questions are not scored as part of the candidate's credentialing examination, and they do not affect an individual's pass/fail status. The statistical performance of the pretest questions is later evaluated. Questions that perform well can be included on a future examination as scored questions.

To keep content of examinations secure and reflective of current practice, new questions must continuously be developed and introduced in versions of the examination. Pretesting is an accepted psychometric practice and it assures candidates receive immediate scores using only previously used questions. The following table illustrates the number of pretest and scored questions in the multiple-choice credentialing examinations:

| Examination | Total Questions  |                   | Candidates Must Answer |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
|             | Scored Questions | Pretest Questions |                        |
| TMC         | 140              | 20                | 160                    |
| NPS         | 150              | 20                | 170                    |
| SDS         | 160              | 20                | 180                    |
| ACCS        | 150              | 20                | 170                    |
| PFT         | 100              | 15                | 115                    |
| AE-C        | 150              | 25                | 175                    |

### Clinical Simulation Examination (CSE)

Scores from the Clinical Simulation Examination (CSE) are based on responses to 20 problems. Two additional pretest problems are included but do not count in the scoring of the examination. Pretesting permits evaluation of problem fairness before use for credentialing purposes. Pretest problems are randomly embedded and are not identified in the examination, so candidates will complete all problems with the same level of effort.

## Admissions Policies

### Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination (TMC)

The TMC Examination is designed to objectively measure essential knowledge required of respiratory therapists at entry into practice, as well as determine eligibility for the Clinical Simulation Examination. There are two cut scores for the TMC Examination. If a candidate achieves the low cut score, he or she will earn the CRT credential. If a candidate achieves the high cut score, he or she will earn the CRT credential AND become eligible for the Clinical Simulation Examination (provided the candidate is eligible to earn the RRT credential).

### Admission Policy

1. Be 18 years of age or older.

**and**

2. Be a graduate of and have a minimum of an associate degree from an entry into practice respiratory therapy education program supported or accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).

**or**

3. Be a CRT for at least four years prior to applying for the examinations associated with the RRT credential. In addition, the applicant shall have at least 62 semester hours of college credit from a college or university accredited by its regional association or its equivalent. The 62 semester hours of college credit must include the following courses: anatomy and physiology, chemistry, microbiology, and mathematics.

**or**

4. Be a CRT for at least two years prior to applying for the examinations associated with the RRT credential. In addition, the applicant shall have earned a minimum of an associate degree from an accredited entry-level respiratory care education program.

**or**

5. Be a CRT for at least two years prior to applying for the examinations associated with the RRT credential. In addition, the applicant shall have earned a baccalaureate degree in an area other than respiratory care and shall have at least 62 semester hours of college credit from a college or university accredited by its regional association or equivalent. The 62 semester hours of college credit must include the following courses: anatomy and physiology, chemistry, microbiology, and mathematics.

**or**

6. Hold the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists (CSRT) RRT credential.

## Clinical Simulation Examination

### Admission Policy

1. Be a CRT and have successfully completed the Therapist Written Examination (WRRT) or the Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination (TMC) at the high cut score.

**and**

2. Be a graduate of and have a minimum of an associate degree from an entry into practice respiratory therapy education program supported or accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).

**or**

3. Be a CRT for at least four years prior to applying for the examinations associated with the RRT credential. In addition, the applicant shall have at least 62 semester hours of college credit from a college or university accredited by its regional association or its equivalent. The 62 semester hours of college credit must include the following courses: anatomy and physiology, chemistry, microbiology, and mathematics.

**or**

4. Be a CRT for at least two years prior to applying for the examinations associated with the RRT credential. In addition, the applicant shall have earned a minimum of an associate degree from an accredited entry-level respiratory care education program.

**or**

5. Be a CRT for at least two years prior to applying for the examinations associated with the RRT credential. In addition, the applicant shall have earned a baccalaureate degree in an area other than respiratory care and shall have at least 62 semester hours of college credit from a college or university accredited by its regional association or equivalent. The 62 semester hours of college credit must include the following courses: anatomy and physiology, chemistry, microbiology, and mathematics.

or

6. Hold the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists (CSRT) RRT credential.

### **Neonatal/Pediatric Respiratory Care Specialty Examination**

The Neonatal/Pediatric Respiratory Care Specialty Examination is designed to objectively measure essential tasks required of respiratory therapists in this specialty area.

#### **Admission Policy**

1. Be an RRT.

### **Sleep Disorders Specialty Examination**

The Specialty Examination for Respiratory Therapists Performing Sleep Disorders Testing and Therapeutic Intervention is designed to objectively measure essential knowledge, skills and abilities required of respiratory therapists in this specialty area.

#### **Admission Policy**

1. Be a CRT or RRT having completed a CoARC accredited respiratory therapist education program including a sleep add-on track.

or

2. Be a CRT for at least 6 months prior to applying for the examination.

or

3. Be an RRT for at least 3 months prior to applying for the examination.

### **Adult Critical Care Specialty Examination**

The Adult Critical Care Specialty Examination is designed to objectively measure essential knowledge, skills and abilities required of respiratory therapists in this specialty area.

#### **Admission Policy**

1. Be an RRT for at least one year prior to applying for the examination.

### **Pulmonary Function Technology Examination**

The Pulmonary Function Technology (PFT) Examination is designed to objectively measure essential tasks required of a pulmonary function technologist. If a candidate achieves the low cut score, he or she will earn the CPFT credential. If a candidate achieves the high cut score, he or she will earn the CPFT and RPFT credentials.

#### **Admission Policy**

1. Be 18 years of age or older.

and

2. Be a graduate of and have a minimum of an associate degree from an entry into practice respiratory therapy education program supported or accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).

or

3. Be a CRT or RRT.

or

4. Complete 62 semester hours of college credit from a college or university accredited by its regional association or its equivalent, including college credit level courses in biology and mathematics.

or

5. Be a CPFT if seeking the RPFT credential.

### **Asthma Educator Specialty Examination**

The Specialty Examination for Asthma Educators 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.

#### **Admission Policy**

1. Be issued a current, active, unrestricted license or credential from the United States in one of the following:

Physicians (MD, DO)

Physician Assistants (PA-C)

Nurses (RN, LPN, NP)

Respiratory Therapists (RRT, CRT)

Pulmonary Function Technologists (RPFT, CPFT)

Pharmacists (RPh)

Social Workers (CSW)

Health Educators (CHES)

Physical Therapists (PT)

Occupational Therapists (OT)

Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT, AEMT)

Paramedics

Speech-Language Pathologists (CCC-SLP)

or

2. Have a minimum of 1,000 hours of direct patient asthma education, counseling or coordinating services prior to applying for the examination.

## **Education and Clinical Experience Requirements**

### **Definition of Graduation**

The graduation date is the date on which the degree was conferred by the program's educational sponsor, not the date on which the student fulfilled all program requirements.

### **Education**

To enforce the requirement of 62 semester hours of college credit, the NBRC will accept credit hours obtained at any public or private postsecondary vocational and/or technical school or institution, community or junior college, or university accredited by an agency recognized by either the Council for Higher Education (CHEA) or by the U.S.

Department of Education (USDE), provided the course work is listed on an official transcript reflecting either semester hours or quarter hours of credit. All course work must be completed before applying for the examination.

**Candidates should obtain an official transcript to keep for their own records.**

### **Verification of Clinical Experience: TMC, CSE & PFT**

Eligibility requirements may contain admissions provisions which specify varying amounts of clinical experience. Completion of the required length of clinical experience by the time of application for testing must be verified by the candidate's Medical Director in Section 5 of the application. The following definitions of Medical Directors are provided to help applicants identify the appropriate professional required to document their clinical experiences.

**The Medical Director of a Respiratory Care Department/Service** shall be a licensed physician member of the active medical staff who has special interest and knowledge in the diagnosis, treatment, and assessment of respiratory problems and shall be responsible for the quality of respiratory care services provided in the inpatient, ambulatory care and/or home care settings. The physician shall be accountable to the medical staff and to the hospital administration for activities within the department.

In those instances where a respiratory care practitioner is actively employed in an area not under the direction of the Respiratory Care Department/Service, verification of clinical experience/active employment may be accomplished by one of the following:

**Medical Director of a Special Care Area** – shall be a licensed physician member of the active medical staff who is knowledgeable in the diagnosis, treatment, and assessment of respiratory problems and shall be responsible for the quality of respiratory care or pulmonary function technology services provided. The physician shall be accountable to the medical staff for activities within the Special Care Area.

**Medical Director of a Home Care/Ambulatory Service** – shall be a licensed physician knowledgeable in the diagnosis, treatment, and assessment of respiratory problems. The physician shall be responsible through the generation of appropriate policies for assuring that the quality of care provided to home care patients is comparable to that provided to inpatients, hospital ambulatory care patients, and emergency care patients in hospitals and that each patient receiving respiratory home care services is under the care of a licensed physician who has the primary responsibility for the patient's care. The physician shall have authority at the policy-making level of the company to carry out this responsibility.

### **AE-C**

Completion of the required 1,000 hours of direct patient asthma education, counseling or coordinating services by the time of application must be verified by the candidate's immediate supervisor in Section 6 of the application.

## **Credential Maintenance Program (CMP) Requirements**

For everyone whose mission involves protecting patient lives by ensuring quality respiratory care in the field, we all have one thing in common: EXCELLENCE defines us. At the NBRC, our commitment to excellence includes providing the tools, options and support you need to maintain your credentials.

Each credential issued by the NBRC is awarded for a term of five years, calculated from the end of the calendar month in which the credential was issued. The five-year credential cycle is confirmed by survey responses of individuals participating in the credential maintenance program as the rate of change in underlying knowledge and pace of change in practice.

### **Three Options for Maintaining your Credential(s)**

You may choose from the following three options to maintain your credentials every five years beyond the initial credentialing date:

#### **Option 1**

##### **Complete assessments and/or submit CE.**

Quarterly assessments are a component of the CE option to maintain credentials through the promotion of learning. The goal in using assessments is to strengthen the relationship between competencies of credential holders and expectations linked to those credentials. Assessment content will focus on tasks that put patients at risk and have a high pace of change. Practitioners are not required to take the assessments but are encouraged to do so to demonstrate their competency and knowledge. CE requirements are based on assessment performance. If assessment performance is high enough, no documentation of CE will be required to renew credentials. Other performance results will require practitioners to document either 15 or 30 CE credits for credential renewal.

Acceptable education requires participation in an educational activity directly related to respiratory therapy, pulmonary function or diagnostics technology, neonatal/pediatric, sleep testing and interventions, adult critical care, and asthma education depending on your credential(s). This includes any of the following:

- **Lecture** – A discourse given for instruction before an audience or through teleconference
- **Panel** – A presentation of multiple views by several professionals on a given subject with none of the views considered a final solution
- **Workshop** – A series of meetings for intensive, hands-on study or discussion in a specific area of interest
- **Seminar** – An advanced study or discussion in a specific field of interest
- **Symposium** – A conference of more than a single session organized for discussing a specific subject from various viewpoints and by various presenters
- **Online Education** – Includes materials such as text, Internet or CD, provided the proponent has included an independently scored test as part of the learning package

NBRC only accepts courses approved by state licensing boards in the United States for the purposes of respiratory care licensure and course credits from the American Association for Respiratory Care Continuing Respiratory Care Education Program (AARC-

CRCE®) as fulfillment of the Credential Maintenance Program requirements for CE. Submitting and tracking your CEUs is fast and easy with the NBRC online practitioner portal for credentialed practitioners.

For individuals holding only the AE-C credential, continuing education requires the CEUs be in content areas specific to asthma education. See the detailed content outline online at nbrc.org. Continuing education must be approved by a provider on the Recognized Provider list below, accredited and approved education institutions, or State Boards of Nursing.

- Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Accredited or Approved Providers
- Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) Accredited or Approved Providers
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
- American Association of Respiratory Care (AARC) and respiratory care organizations granting Continuing Respiratory Care Education (CRCE) credits
- American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Nurses Association (ANA)
- American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Accredited or Approved Providers
- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)
- American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)
- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA)
- Council on Continuing Medical Education (CCME-AOA) Approved Sponsors / American Osteopathic Association (AOA)
- National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS)
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
- Association of Asthma Educators

Continuing education activities (but not academic credit-granting courses) provided through accredited academic institutions within the United States or its territories granting degrees related to professional practice are also accepted (e.g., continuing education activity provided by an accredited academic institution's School of Nursing, Nutrition, Social Work, Medicine, Pharmacy, etc.).

Several state boards of licensure require AE-C continuing education for renewal of licensure. Acceptance by a state board of licensure does not guarantee that a continuing education program meets NBRC's criteria. The state board of licensure MUST be accredited or approved by one of the recognized provider(s) for an activity to be considered for renewal of certification.

If you choose Continuing Education (Option 1) to maintain your NBRC credential(s), you must submit your continuing education units (CEUs) and applicable fees online at nbrc.org prior to your credential expiration date. Failure to comply by the deadline will result in the expiration of your credential(s).

Once all of your CE requirements have been met, a digital version of the certificate recognizing that accomplishment will be available in the Practitioner Portal and you may purchase a printed copy of your certificates and a wallet card as well.

## Option 2

**Retake and pass the respective examination for the highest credential held that is subject to the Credential Maintenance Program. AE-C credential holders must retake and pass the AE-C examination to comply with Option 2 of the CMP.**

To recertify using this option, you must retake the examination during the last year of your five-year credential period. A new five-year period will begin on the date you successfully pass the examination. If you hold multiple credentials from the NBRC and elect to maintain your credentials through the examination option, you must successfully complete the examination for the highest level credential held that is subject to the Credential Maintenance Program.

## Option 3

**Pass an NBRC credentialing examination not previously completed.**

Passing an NBRC credentialing examination that you did not previously complete automatically extends the recredentialing period of all other NBRC credentials you hold for an additional five years (starting when you earn a new NBRC credential). As a result, all of your NBRC credentials will have the same expiration date, allowing you to simultaneously maintain all credentials in the future.

### What to do if your credential expires:

#### Credential expiration occurred less than six months ago:

You have the option of entering your CEUs online and paying a \$250 reinstatement fee. Please note: this is a completely online process and CEUs must have been earned during the 5-year credential term.

#### Credential expiration occurred more than six months ago:

You are required to apply as a new applicant and meet all admission policies in effect at that time. If you have more than one expired credential, you must apply for and pass all examinations to reinstate all expired credentials.

## NBRC 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 licensure apply according to procedures established by the state; questions concerning legal credentialing should be directed to the responsible state agency.

## Application Procedures and Examination Policies

### Online Application Is An Option for All NBRC Exams

If you hold a credential with the NBRC or have previously attempted an examination, log in or create an account at [nbc.org](http://nbc.org) to apply for an examination. Once logged in, a list of examinations you may apply for will be displayed. If the examination you wish to apply for is not listed, you may submit a paper application form (available as part of this handbook and online at [nbc.org](http://nbc.org)) with documentation of eligibility.

If you are a recent graduate from an accredited educational program, an email will be sent to you when your school submits your graduation information electronically. Use the link and temporary password in your email to establish an account. If you do not receive an email with this information, please contact your school to verify your graduation record has been sent to our office.

### Filing Your Application and Notification of Eligibility

There are no application deadlines and candidates who meet the admission requirements for an examination may submit their applications at any time online at [nbc.org](http://nbc.org). A paper application is included in the back of this handbook. It is YOUR responsibility to ensure that the application and all supporting documents have been properly completed and that the information provided is accurate. Your careful attention will enable prompt and efficient processing. Please allow 5-7 business days for processing of paper applications. Applications that are found to contain inaccurate or untruthful responses may be denied. When the admission requirements are satisfied, the applicant may register by one of the following methods:

#### 1. Apply online.

Visit [nbc.org](http://nbc.org) to complete an application online. Once you complete the online application process you will receive an immediate response. You will either be notified of additional information required to complete the application process or you will be prompted to schedule your examination appointment.

Online application submission is available for all individuals paying the examination fee by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover).

or

#### 2. Mail or fax your application form.

Complete all sections of the application form. Mail or fax it to the NBRC with the required documentation to the address indicated on the form. Sending your application by express mail does not mean that it will be processed in an express manner. Approximately 5-7 business days after receipt, an

email notice of acceptance will be sent. If your application is accepted, you will receive an email with instructions to submit your payment. If eligibility cannot be confirmed, an email explaining why the application is incomplete will be sent. If you do not receive a confirmation of eligibility or an incomplete notice within two weeks after mailing your application, contact the NBRC. If your application is not on file, you will be asked to send a replacement application form and fee.

The confirmation notice will contain a toll-free telephone number and website for you to schedule an examination appointment.

### Scheduling an Examination Appointment

Examinations are administered by computer at nearly 300 secure testing locations across the United States and internationally. Examinations are administered by appointment only Monday through Saturday.

### Holidays

Examinations will not be offered on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

The above is not necessarily a complete list of days a PSI testing site may be closed.

All individuals are scheduled for examination appointments on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Application Expiration

In most cases, once your application is accepted you have 90 calendar days to take the examination. Your assigned eligibility period is provided onscreen at the time of application. If you fail to schedule an examination appointment within your assigned eligibility period, you will forfeit the application and all fees paid to take the examination. A complete application and new examination fee are required to reapply for an examination.

### Name and Address Changes

**You are responsible for notifying the NBRC should your name and/or address change at any time before or after you become credentialed.** Failure to do so may result in missing information necessary to maintain your credential. **You are responsible for the maintenance of your credential even if you do not receive a courtesy notice.**

Please notify us of any address or email changes; you may update your profile as follows:

- online at [nbc.org](http://nbc.org)
- email [info@nbc.org](mailto:info@nbc.org)
- call NBRC Customer Care at 913.895.4900

Name changes must be made by calling NBRC Customer Care at 913.895.4900.

## Examination Fees

| Exam | First-Attempt Fee | Repeat-Attempt Fee |
|------|-------------------|--------------------|
| TMC  | \$190             | \$150              |
| CSE  | \$200             | \$200              |
| PFT  | \$200             | \$170              |
| NPS  | \$250             | \$220              |
| SDS  | \$300             | \$250              |
| ACCS | \$300             | \$250              |
| AE-C | \$350             | \$250              |

Examination fees may be submitted by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover), personal check, cashier's check, or money order payable to NBRC. Do not send cash. If you submit a money order or cashier's check, keep your receipt as proof of payment. Postdated checks are not an acceptable form of payment.

**A \$25 NSF fee will be charged for any declined credit card or check returned unpaid to the NBRC for any reason.** You must send a certified check or money order for the amount due, including the NSF fee, to the NBRC to cover returned checks or declined credit card transactions.

## Transfer and Refund of Fees

The NBRC's policies regarding transferring and/or refunding examination fees are below. **Examination fees are not refundable or transferable once eligibility is determined.**

- Candidates may reschedule their examination appointment on **one** occasion to another date (within the 90-day eligibility period) without penalty by contacting the testing agency at least **one** business day prior to their scheduled appointment. Holidays are not considered business days.
- Candidates who fail to appear for an examination appointment or arrive at the Assessment Center more than 15 minutes late for their appointment will not be tested, will not receive a refund, and cannot transfer their fees to a future examination appointment. Individuals who are late or miss an examination appointment will be required to submit another application and fee.
- Candidates who are hospitalized or experience a death in the immediate family that prevents them from attempting the examination, may transfer their examination fees and reschedule the examination appointment. This policy is strictly enforced, and proof of the candidate's hospitalization or a death in the immediate family is required. After approval by the NBRC, the candidate may schedule another appointment for the examination.

## Assessment Center Locations

Assessment Centers have been selected to provide accessibility to the most candidates in all states and major metropolitan areas. Addresses for each location are available on the testing agency website at [test-takers.psiexams.com/nbrc](http://test-takers.psiexams.com/nbrc).

The NBRC and the testing agency are concerned with providing the best Assessment Center facilities possible for candidates attempting NBRC examinations. Candidates can assist the NBRC and the testing agency in this endeavor by answering the questions about the examination environment and facilities following the examination questions in the computerized examination.

## Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, the NBRC and PSI will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling, of an examination at a particular Assessment Center. The examination will usually not be rescheduled if the proctor is able to open the Assessment Center.

Candidates may visit PSI's website at [test-takers.psiexams.com/nbrc](http://test-takers.psiexams.com/nbrc) prior to the examination to determine if any Assessment Centers are closed. Every attempt will be made to administer all examinations as scheduled. However, should an examination be canceled at an Assessment Center, all scheduled candidates will be contacted about rescheduling their examinations.

## Release of Information

The NBRC and its testing agency are committed to protecting the confidentiality of candidates' records and have adopted policies to ensure their privacy. Information about candidates and their examination results are not released by telephone under any circumstances. However, nothing in these policies prohibits transfer of data in the custody of the testing agency to the NBRC. Candidates' examination results and credentialing status may be released to state licensure agencies, accredited respiratory care education programs, and the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).

## Verification of Scores

In computer-based testing, the computer accepts responses from a keyboard or mouse in digitized form. As a result, computer-based testing eliminates problems that may have previously arisen with scanning paper-and-pencil answer sheets, since all responses are recorded by candidates during their examinations. However, verification of examination scores from electronic responses can be requested in writing for a fee of \$25. Requests must be submitted to the testing agency, in writing, within 12 months after the examination. Submit requests and payment by check or money order within 12 months of taking the examination to:

**PSI**  
**18000 W. 105th St.**  
**Olathe, KS 66061**

## Duplicate Score Reports

You may request an additional copy of your score report for \$25 per copy. Submit requests and payment by check or money order within 12 months of taking the examination to:

**PSI**  
**18000 W. 105th St.**  
**Olathe, KS 66061**

The request must include:

- Your name
- Your Social Security Number
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date and type of exam taken

Sign and date your request. Duplicate score reports are mailed within approximately 2 weeks after receipt.

## Cancellation of Scores

The NBRC and its testing agency are concerned with only reporting valid results. On rare occasions, circumstances may make examination results invalid. The NBRC and/or its testing agency reserve the right to cancel or withhold any examination result if, in their sole opinion, there is cause to question the validity of the scores. Scores declared invalid and canceled by the NBRC and/or its testing agency may be grouped into two categories:

1. Doubts may be raised about the validity of a candidate's result because of suspected misconduct; in such circumstances, a candidate is expected to cooperate with the investigation. If a result is canceled because of suspected misconduct, the NBRC will investigate such matters to determine if the candidate will be eligible for re-examination.
2. A result may be rendered invalid because of circumstances beyond the candidate's control, such as computer failure. The testing agency will investigate such situations. When such occurrences result in canceling a result, the NBRC is notified that there is no reportable result for reasons beyond the candidates' control. In this event, the testing agency arranges a free examination.

In addition to the reasons listed in this section, the NBRC may cancel or invalidate examination results if, upon investigation, NBRC policies outlined in this publication are found to have been violated.

## Graduation, Eligibility and CEU Audits

Random audits of first time exam candidates and renewing practitioners is a routine part of NBRC's commitment of ensuring public safety and complying with standard regulatory practices.

Individuals are not notified in advance of being audited. Audits are conducted randomly upon receipt of electronic graduation information, application information or after submission of CEUs for credential maintenance.

Those selected for audit are notified via email and have a period of two weeks to submit the required documentation.

For initial application audits, candidates will be notified if the following documentation is required:

- official transcripts
- proof of license or credential

Those selected for audit may be required to pay a fee to other institutions to obtain proof of graduation. These third-party fees will not be refunded by NBRC.

For credential maintenance audits, the following documentation is required:

- copies of CE certificates, including AARC transcripts of CRCEs

**Candidates should obtain an official copy to keep for their own records.**

NBRC will review audit documentation and respond within approximately two weeks after receipt of documentation. Those who pass the audit will be informed via email. Those who do not pass the audit will be sent a letter notifying them of their ineligibility for future examinations or revocation of their credential, if applicable. Failure to respond to an audit, pass an audit or provide the required information in a timely manner will result in revocation of certification.

Notification of certification revocation may be sent to the state licensing agency, as appropriate. No refunds will be issued in the case of failure or non response to an audit. Revocation of certification may be appealed. Refer to the Appeals section below for more information.

## Appeals

A request for reconsideration allows an individual to appeal an adverse non-disciplinary decision made as part of the examination eligibility, examination testing, or credential maintenance processes. Situations in which an individual may appeal under this policy, include but are not limited to:

- being deemed ineligible to take an exam
- concerns about an unsuccessful exam result
- test site issue ending in an unsuccessful result
- medical or personal emergency
- denial of credential maintenance

## Request for an Appeal

The NBRC provides an appeal mechanism for reconsideration of an adverse decision as part of the examination eligibility, examination testing, and credential maintenance processes. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate the appeal process. The formal request for an appeal must be submitted in writing to the NBRC Admissions Committee within thirty days of an adverse decision. The request should state the reason for the appeal and how the appeal applies to the published requirements. Please send written requests to the NBRC Executive Office, 10801 Mastin St., Suite 300, Overland Park, KS 66210-1658.

## Appeal Decisions

A decision made by the Admissions Committee is final and no further appeal requests will be considered.

## Inactive Eligibility Records

An application on file in the Executive Office shall be considered inactive after one year has elapsed without the applicant being scheduled for an examination or providing any indication of a desire to attempt an examination. When a file is inactivated, all application fees shall be forfeited and the candidate shall be required to submit a new application and fee and to provide documentation of eligibility under current admission policies to re-enter the examination system.

## Judicial and Ethics Policies

Applications for examinations may be refused if the NBRC

receives evidence to indicate the applicant may have committed any of the following violations:

1. Obtaining or attempting to obtain Certification, Registration, Recertification, or Reregistration by fraud, deception, or artifice.
2. Knowingly assisting another person or other persons in obtaining or attempting to obtain Certification, Registration, Recertification, or Reregistration by fraud, deception, or artifice.
3. Failure to follow examination security protocols.
4. Unauthorized use of a Certification or Registry certificate or falsification of credentials, or any other NBRC documents.
5. 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.
6. Credentialed practitioners and/or examination candidates may be disciplined for offenses related to their practice of respiratory therapy and/or pulmonary technology 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:
  - a. 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.
  - b. Conviction in a court of law, after all appeals have been exhausted, of 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.
  - c. Conviction in a court of law, after all appeals have been exhausted, of 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.
  - d. Revocation or denial of a license to practice respiratory therapy and/or pulmonary technology, or another health related profession, by an authorized state agency due to:
    - i. 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.
    - ii. 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.
    - iii. 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.
  - e. Voluntary surrender of a license to practice respiratory therapy and/or pulmonary technology, 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:
    - i. 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.

- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.
- f. Use of any authorized designation (CRT, RRT, CRT-NPS, RRT-NPS, CRT-SDS, RRT-SDS, RRT-ACCS, CPFT, RPFT, and AE-C or any other designation granted by the NBRC) in any unauthorized manner, including, but not limited to, disparaging usage or usage for commercial gain.

If the NBRC determines that any evidence warrants additional consideration, the applicant will be notified and will have an opportunity to present information on their behalf. Upon receiving information from all parties involved, the Judicial & Ethics Committee will either issue a decision or recommend that a formal hearing be conducted and a final decision made by the Judicial and Ethics Committee.

## The Day of the Examination

### Identification Requirements

You need to present two forms of identification to be allowed to test, one with a current photograph. Both forms of identification must be current and include your current name and signature. Bring two pieces of identification including ONE of the following:

1. driver's license with photograph
2. state identification card with photograph
3. passport
4. military identification card with photograph

The second form of identification must display your name and signature for signature verification.

**YOU MUST PRESENT PROPER IDENTIFICATION IN ORDER TO TEST. A temporary driver's license or any other temporary form of identification (e.g., employment and student I.D. cards) are not acceptable.**

### At An Assessment Center

Report to the Assessment Center no later than your scheduled testing time; ANYONE WHO ARRIVES MORE THAN 15 MINUTES AFTER THEIR SCHEDULED TESTING TIME WILL NOT BE ADMITTED.

After your identification has been verified and you have signed the roster, you will be directed to the examination room and assigned to a testing computer. You will be instructed to enter your identification number on the computer screen. Your photograph taken before beginning the examination will appear in the upper right corner of the computer screen during your examination, and it will be printed on your score report.

## Security

PSI administration and security standards are designed to ensure each candidate is provided the same opportunity to demonstrate his or her ability. The Assessment Center is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes.

The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- Examinations are proprietary. No personal belongings, including cell phones, smart phones or other electronic devices are allowed in the testing room. You will be asked to return them to your car or turn them to the off position and place them in a locker provided by the site. If your electronic device rings, vibrates or makes any noise during the examination, you will be dismissed from testing and no refund will be provided.
- No calculators are permitted.
- No guests, visitors or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.

## Personal Belongings

All personal belongings must be placed in the secure storage provided at each site prior to entering the examination room. You will not have access to these items until after the examination is completed and you may be asked to raise your pants legs and/or empty your pockets. Personal belongings include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- Electronic devices of any type, including cellular / mobile phones, recording devices, electronic watches,
- cameras, pagers, laptop computers, tablet computers (e.g., iPads), music players (e.g., iPods), smart watches, radios, or electronic games.
- Bulky or loose clothing or coats that could be used to conceal recording devices or notes. For security purposes outerwear such as, but not limited to: open sweaters, cardigans, shawls, scarves, hoodies, vests, jackets and coats are not permitted in the testing room. In the event you are asked to remove the outerwear, appropriate attire, such as a shirt or blouse should be worn underneath.
- Hats or headgear not worn for religious reasons or as religious apparel, including hats, baseball caps, or visors.
- Other personal items, including purses, notebooks, reference or reading material, briefcases, backpacks, wallets, pens, pencils, other writing devices, food, drinks, and good luck items.

Once you have placed everything into the locker, you may be asked to pull your pockets out to ensure they are empty. If all personal items will not fit in the locker you will not be able to test. The site will not store any personal belongings.

If any personal items are observed in the testing room after the examination begins, the administration will be forfeited.

## Examination Restrictions

- Pencils will be provided during check-in.
- You will be provided with one piece of scratch paper at a time to use during the examination. You must return the scratch paper to the proctor at the completion of testing, or you will not receive your score report.

- No documents or notes of any kind may enter or be removed from the Assessment Center.
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Eating, drinking or smoking will not be permitted in the Assessment Center.
- You may take a break whenever you wish, but you will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks.

## Misconduct

If you engage in any of the following conduct during the examination you may be dismissed, your result will not be reported and examination fees will not be refunded. Examples of misconduct are when you:

- create a disturbance, are abusive, or otherwise uncooperative;
- display and/or use electronic communications equipment such as pagers, cellular/smart phones, tablets;
- talk or participate in conversation with other examination candidates;
- give or receive help or are suspected of doing so;
- leave the Assessment Center during the administration;
- attempt to record examination questions or make notes;
- attempt to take the examination for someone else; or
- are observed with personal belongings;
- candidates are only allowed to write on their provided scratch paper once the exam time has started.

## Copyrighted Examination Questions

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of the NBRC. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part, without written permission. Doing so may subject you to severe civil and criminal penalties.

## Sample Examination

Prior to attempting the examination at an assessment center, you will be given the opportunity to practice taking an examination on the computer. The time you use for this practice session is NOT counted as part of your examination time, and it in no way affects your examination score. When you are comfortable with the computer-testing process, you may quit the practice session and begin the timed examination.

## Timed Examination

Before beginning the examination, instructions for taking the examination will be provided on-screen. The following time limits are in effect:

| Examination                     | Testing Time |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Therapist Multiple-Choice       | 3 hours      |
| Clinical Simulation             | 4 hours      |
| Pulmonary Function Technologist | 2 hours      |
| Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty    | 4 hours      |
| Sleep Disorders Specialty       | 4 hours      |

|                               |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Adult Critical Care Specialty | 4 hours   |
| Asthma Educator Specialty     | 3.5 hours |

The computer will monitor the time you spend on the examination. The examination will terminate at the allotted time limit. If you wish to keep track of the time during the examination, you may click on the "Time" box in the lower right-hand corner of the screen. A digital clock will indicate the time remaining for you to complete the examination. You may toggle this feature on and off as you desire.

## After You Finish the Examination

After you have completed the examination, your score report will be sent by email to the address on file with PSI. If you don't receive your score report within 24 hours, contact PSI at 833.256.1424, or examschedule@psionline.com.

For examinations containing multiple-choice items, scores will be reported as raw scores. Each item is worth one point, so the sum of correct responses is a raw score. Your total score determines whether you pass or fail the examination after a comparison to the cut score. The cut score for a multiple-choice type of examination is the result of a study that is intended to define the minimum acceptable performance level and link this level to an examination score by relying on data collected from a panel of subject matter experts.

The cut score for the Clinical Simulation Examination is linked to decisions made by the examination committee about whether each positively-scored option is required as a demonstration of minimal competence or could be forgiven. Although the simulation examination will contain distinctly different sections in which information is gathered and other sections in which decisions will be made, points associated with a candidate's set of responses will be summed across the whole examination to yield one score that will be compared to the cut score. The comparison of your score to the cut score will determine whether you pass or fail.

## If You Pass the Examination

Successful candidates will receive the appropriate credential as described in the handbook section titled Scope and Purpose, and a digital version of the certificate recognizing that accomplishment will be available in the Practitioner Portal. A free printed copy of that certificate and a wallet card may be requested within one year of earning the credential. The NBRC's credential designations are federally registered trademarks and accordingly, must be used in the manner in which they were registered (see Recognition and Use of Credentials). Only those individuals who have passed the respective examinations are authorized to use the credential acronyms. Your credential date will be listed as the date you passed the examination.

## If You Do Not Pass the Examination

Candidates may reapply by one of the following methods:

1. **Online at nbrc.org** two business days after an exam is completed.
2. **Mail or fax a paper application** found in the candidate handbook or online at nbrc.org.

Failing candidates may repeat an examination by submitting an

application form and the appropriate fee. **There is a waiting period between attempts. See table below.**

| Examination | Initial Attempts Without Waiting | Days Between Each Subsequent Attempt |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| TMC         | 3                                | 120                                  |
| CSE         | 3                                | 120                                  |
| PFT         | 2                                | 180                                  |
| NPS         | 2                                | 180                                  |
| SDS         | 2                                | 180                                  |
| ACCS        | 2                                | 180                                  |
| AE-C        | 2                                | 180                                  |

## If You Do Not Appear for Testing

If you do not appear to take the examination for which you are scheduled, you must reapply for another examination, forfeit the fee for the examination that you missed, and submit the fee for the examination for which you will be scheduled. You may reapply online at nbrc.org.

## Examination Preparation

### Examination Content

To begin your preparation in an informed and organized manner, you should know what to expect from the actual examination in terms of the content areas and complexity levels tested. The detailed content outlines available at nbrc.org describe the content areas and complexity levels covered on each examination. The outlines can be used to get a general impression of the examination, and with closer inspection, can give you specific study direction. For example, you can determine the relative weight of each content area on the examination by reviewing the number of questions in each section. The detailed content outline presents the specific patient care settings and content areas available for testing.

### Cognitive Levels

While evaluating the detailed content outline of an examination, you may see the following terms used to describe complexity levels from the perspectives of those who produce, and take, the examination.

**Recall** describes the ability only to retrieve or recognize specific facts, which keeps these items short and simple.

**Integration** describes the ability to react to new or changing situations. Items describing these situations are typically longer and more complex than items associated with the cognitive level of recall. Integration items will be distinguished using the following terms:

- » **Application** describes the ability to relate facts to one another, interpret a group of facts, or reach helpful conclusions.
- » **Analysis** describes the ability to judge what is the best action that solves a problem described by a group of facts.

## Study Suggestions

The purpose of each credentialing examination is to assess whether a person is competent to perform in a job or a role at least to the expected level. Examinations are designed to assess content that is critical for performance, which means that some less critical, foundational content will not be tested. Rather than study every fact about a topic, study what will contribute to successful performance. The NBRC does not endorse or support any review programs.

## Study Resources

Study resources are available on our website under Resources in the Document Library at [nbc.org/resources](http://nbc.org/resources).

## Practice Examinations

### Multiple-Choice Examinations

Practice examinations are computerized and available in web-based format at [nbc.org](http://nbc.org). They are designed to simulate taking an examination, and the software is identical to that which is used for the live credentialing examinations. The actual credentialing examinations have time limits for completion, so allow yourself no more than the allotted time to simulate actual examination conditions. These questions sample the scope of content tested on the actual examination. It is suggested that you take these examinations, print the Performance Report, and identify the correct answer for any question you may have missed or were unable to answer.

### Clinical Simulation Examination (CSE)

The practice examination for the Clinical Simulation Examination is a one-problem simulation exercise. Candidates for the CSE should be aware that the purpose of this practice simulation is to familiarize them with the format of the examination and the functionality of the software. The difficulty of this practice simulation is not a reflection of the difficulty of the simulations on the actual examination. Candidates are encouraged to review information elsewhere in this handbook for specific information about the content of the CSE.

### Self-Assessment Examinations

Anyone preparing to take an NBRC examination can assess how he or she will perform before attempting a credentialing examination by taking the official NBRC Self-Assessment Examinations (SAEs). SAEs duplicate content and design of the credentialing 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 only available in web-based format for purchase online through the NBRC's testing agency, PSI. Visit [test-takers.psiexams.com/nbc](http://test-takers.psiexams.com/nbc) to order an SAE.

### Study Sequence

Using the practice examination and the SAEs, you can review hundreds of questions just like those on the actual credentialing examination. The following sequence may assist you in identifying content areas where additional study might be beneficial.

1. Read the NBRC Candidate Handbook and examination supplements completely.
2. Take the computerized practice examination under simulated examination conditions, free of distractions, and observing the established time limit.
3. Review the Performance Report after completing the practice examination and identify content areas where examination performance could be improved.
4. Review all questions answered incorrectly to determine topics where further study is needed.
5. Take at least one version of the SAE.
6. Review all questions answered incorrectly in the SAE as well as the explanations to determine where additional study would improve examination performance.

## Examination Software

### Multiple-Choice Examinations

During the examination, only one question will be presented on the screen at a time. The question number appears in the lower right portion of the screen. The entire question will usually appear on-screen. If a question contains more text than can appear on screen at the same time, a scroll bar will be available on the right side of the screen to allow viewing of the rest of the question. After you have reviewed the question, indicate your choice by entering the letter of the option you think is the correct answer (A, B, C or D) or click on the option using the mouse. The response you have chosen will appear in the lower left portion of the screen. To change your answer, simply enter a different option by clicking on the option using the mouse or by pressing the A, B, C or D key. You may change your answers as many times as you wish during the timed testing period.

You may leave an examination question unanswered and return to it later. You may also bookmark questions for later review by clicking in the blank square to the right of the Time button. Clicking on the double arrows (>>) advances to the next unanswered or bookmarked question on the examination. To identify all unanswered and bookmarked questions, repeatedly click on the double arrows (>>). When you have completed the examination, the number of examination questions you answered is reported. If you have not answered all questions and you have time remaining, return to the examination and answer those questions. Be sure to answer each examination question before ending the examination. There is no penalty for guessing.

You may provide online comments about any question by clicking on the Comment button to the left of the Time button. This opens a dialogue box where you may type your comments.

A "Help Screen" will be accessible to you throughout the examination to explain the usage of the keyboard and navigating through the examination.

**NOTE: A virtual calculator function is integrated into the software of the examination. You can use the calculator onscreen during your examination.**

To familiarize yourself with the examination software, we encourage you to complete a free practice examination available on our website at [nbc.org](http://nbc.org).

## Clinical Simulation Examination

Three windows appear on the screen at all times during a simulation examination (see Figure 2). The **Scenario Window** section is displayed across the top of the screen; the candidate's picture is displayed in the upper right-hand corner of this window. Each simulation begins with a brief paragraph in this window that provides preliminary information about the patient; subsequent sections contain information about the changing patient situation. A scroll bar is available when necessary to view all text. Each **Scenario Window** will also provide the candidate with specific instructions about whether to "CHOOSE ONLY ONE" response in the section or to "SELECT AS MANY" responses as appropriate to gather information.

The **Options Window** is displayed as the lower left portion of the screen and contains all options (choices or possible responses) from which to choose in the current section. A scroll bar is also available when necessary to view all options.

The **Simulation History Window** is displayed as the lower right portion of the screen. This window can be displayed in two formats using the button labeled "Current Section/Simulation History" located at the top of this window. When in the "Current Section" mode, the options chosen in the current section and the results for each choice are displayed in this window. When in the "Simulation History" mode, the scenarios from all previous sections as well as the options chosen and their results are displayed in the window. A scroll bar is available on the right side of this window to review previous scenarios and/or options and results.

Once you have read the scenario for each section and determined which option(s) are appropriate for selection, you can simply click the box to the left of the option to "choose" it. Immediately, the option selected and the results for that option appear in the right-hand **Simulation History Window**. After you select or "choose" an option, you cannot reconsider and "unselect" it, since the information from that option has been revealed.

In sections where you are instructed to "SELECT AS MANY as you consider indicated," you should select all of the options believed appropriate at the time and then click the "Go To Next Section" button at the bottom left of the screen to continue to the next section. A dialog box will appear requesting that you confirm you wish to continue to the next section and warning that returning to this section to make additional choices will not be possible. By selecting "Yes," the software automatically takes you to the next section of the patient simulation.

In sections where you are instructed to "CHOOSE ONLY ONE unless directed to make another selection," you should carefully review each option and then choose the one best option. A dialog box will then appear to present the results for the choice or request that you select another response in the section.

You are allowed four hours to complete all 22 problems (20 scored problems and two pretest problems) in the CSE. A clock button appears in the lower right portion of the screen; this displays the time remaining for the examination. You may toggle the clock button to display or hide the time remaining in the examination session.

A "Help Screen" will be accessible to you throughout the simulation examination to explain how to navigate through the examination.

**NOTE: A virtual calculator function is integrated into the software of the examination. You can use the calculator onscreen during your examination.**

To familiarize yourself with the examination software, we encourage you to complete a free practice examination available on our website at [nbc.org](http://nbc.org).

## Recognition and Use of Credentials

A listing of credentialed practitioners is maintained by the NBRC and may be reported in its publications and/or listed on its website. Credential status is available to the public through the online credential search at [nbc.org](http://nbc.org).

NBRC credentials are not punctuated with periods. The specific credential will be noted on the certificate and wallet card.

The proper use of each credential is as follows:

- **CRT:** Chris Smith, CRT
- **RRT:** Chris Smith, RRT
- **CPFT:** Chris Smith, CPFT
- **RPFT:** Chris Smith, RPFT
- **NPS:** Chris Smith, CRT, CRT-NPS or RRT, RRT-NPS
- **SDS:** Chris Smith, CRT, CRT-SDS or RRT, RRT-SDS
- **ACCS:** Chris Smith, RRT, RRT-ACCS
- **AE-C:** Chris Smith, RRT, AE-C
- **Multiple Credentials:** Chris Smith, RRT, RPFT, RRT-NPS, RRT-ACCS

The proper order to list credentials among academic and other recognitions is as follows:

1. Highest earned degree
2. Licensure
3. State designations or requirements
4. National certifications
5. Awards and honors
6. Other recognitions





# Therapist Multiple-Choice & Clinical Simulation Examination Application, continued

## 4. SIGNATURE

I certify that I have read the [NBRC Candidate Handbook](#) and believe that I comply with all of the admission policies for the examination for which I am applying. I certify that the information I have submitted in this application and the enclosed documents are complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that, if the information I have submitted is found to be incomplete or inaccurate, my application may be rejected or my examination results may be delayed, not released, or invalidated by the NBRC.

I attest that the following are true:

- I understand that I have an assigned eligibility period and failure to schedule an examination appointment within the assigned period will result in expiration of the application and forfeiture of examination fees.
- I understand the examination restrictions and penalties for misconduct during testing.
- I understand my activity during testing will be monitored.
- I understand that all NBRC examination content is copyrighted intellectual property and misuse of examination content will subject me to civil and/or criminal penalties.
- I understand the [Judicial and Ethics Policies](#) of the NBRC.
- I agree that the NBRC may release information about my credentialed status to state agencies that regulate the practice of respiratory care, accredited respiratory care education programs, and the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).
- I acknowledge that being randomly selected for a graduation or CEU audit will require me to provide official transcripts and/or copies of my CEU documentation.
- I understand that the email address I provide with my application will be used to provide notifications about the status of my application and/or credential.
- I understand that I am responsible for notifying the NBRC of any change in my mailing and/or email address, and the NBRC shall not be held responsible for non-receipt of official notices due to my failure to provide a current mailing and/or email address.

---

Name (please print)

---

Signature

---

Date

## 1. PERSONAL INFORMATION

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Social Security Number                                  | Gender (Male/Female)                |
| Name (Last, First, Middle Initial, Former Name)         |                                     |
| Mailing Address (Street Address)                        |                                     |
| Mailing Address (City, State, Zip/Postal Code, Country) |                                     |
| Home Telephone Number                                   | Cell Phone Number <b>(Required)</b> |
| Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)                              |                                     |
| Email Address <b>(Required)</b>                         |                                     |

## 2. EXAMINATION INFORMATION

### Examination Fees and Payment Information

**Do not submit payment with this application.** If your application is accepted, you will receive an email with instructions to submit your payment. Refer to the Candidate Handbook for a current list of examination fees.

### Special Testing Accommodations

Do you have a disability that requires special accommodations during testing?  Yes  No

If yes, complete the [REQUEST FOR SPECIAL EXAMINATION ACCOMMODATIONS form](#) in the Candidate Handbook and enclose it with your application. **If you have not previously been provided accommodations for an NBRC examination, you must complete and submit the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form PRIOR to applying and making payment.** If the form is not received prior to making payment and scheduling a testing appointment, approved accommodations will not be provided for your scheduled examination.

## 3. ELIGIBILITY STATUS (CHECK ONLY ONE BOX)

- I am applying as a **first-time applicant** (provide your eligibility status information in the respective examination box(es) that follow).
- I am applying as a **repeat applicant**. Repeat applicants are not required to provide eligibility information.
- I am applying to retake an examination to **comply with CMP requirements**:
  - My credential has not expired.
  - My credential has expired. New applicant fee applies.

- Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty Examination Eligibility – New Applicant Only (check only one box)**
  - I am an RRT
- Sleep Disorders Specialty Examination Eligibility – New Applicant Only (check only one box)**
  - I am a CRT or RRT and completed a CoARC or CAAHEP accredited respiratory therapy education program including a sleep add-on track.
  - I have been an RRT for at least three months.
  - I have been a CRT for at least six months.
- Adult Critical Care Specialty Examination Eligibility**
  - I have been an RRT for at least one year.
- PFT Examination Eligibility – (check only one box)**
  - I have a minimum of an associate degree from an accredited respiratory therapy education program.
  - I am a CRT, RRT or CPFT.
  - I have completed 62 semester hours of college credit from an accredited college or university, including college credit level courses in biology and mathematics.
- Asthma Educator Specialty Examination Eligibility – New Applicant Only (check only one box)**
  1. I have a current, active, unrestricted license or credential from the United States in one of the following:
    - Physicians (MD, DO)
    - Physician Assistants (PA-C)
    - Nurses (RN, LPN, NP)
    - Respiratory Therapists (RRT, CRT)
    - Pulmonary Function Technologists (CPFT, RPFT)
    - Pharmacists (RPh)
    - Social Workers (CSW)
    - Health Educators (CHES)
    - Physical Therapists (PT)
    - Occupational Therapists (OT)
    - Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT, AEMT)
    - Paramedics
    - Speech-Language Pathologists (CCC-SLP)

**or**

2. I have a minimum of 1,000 hours of direct patient asthma education, counseling or coordinating services prior to applying for the examination.



## Request for Special Examination Accommodations

If you have a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, complete this form and the Documentation of Disability-Related Needs on the reverse side and submit it for approval **PRIOR to applying and making payment**. If the form is not received prior to making payment and scheduling a testing appointment, approved accommodations will not be provided for your scheduled examination. Please allow **5-7 business days** for processing. The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and your need for accommodation in testing will be treated with strict confidentiality.

### Applicant Information

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

|                          |            |               |
|--------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Last Name                | First Name | Middle Name   |
| Address                  |            |               |
| City                     | State      | Zip Code      |
| Daytime Telephone Number |            | Email Address |

### Special Accommodations

I request special accommodations for the examination below.

- Therapist Multiple-Choice (TMC)
- Clinical Simulation (CSE)
- Pulmonary Function Technology (PFT)
- Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty (NPS)
- Sleep Disorders Specialty (SDS)
- Adult Critical Care Specialty (ACCS)
- Asthma Educator Specialty (AE-C)

Please provide (check all that apply):

- \_\_\_\_\_ Reader
- \_\_\_\_\_ Extended testing time (time and a half)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reduced distraction environment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other special accommodations (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Mail completed form to NBRC, 10801 Mastin Street, Suite 300, Overland Park, KS 66210-1658, or email to [apply@nbrc.org](mailto:apply@nbrc.org). If you have questions, call the NBRC at 913.895.4900.*

## Documentation of Disability-Related Needs

If you have a learning disability, a psychological disability, or other disability that requires an accommodation in testing, please have this section completed by an appropriate professional (doctor, psychologist, psychiatrist) to certify that your disabling condition requires the requested examination accommodation. **If you have existing documentation of the same or similar accommodation provided for you in another examination situation, you may submit such documentation in addition to completing the "Professional Documentation" portion of this form.**

### Professional Documentation

I have known \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ in my capacity as a  
Candidate Name Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
My Professional Title

The candidate discussed with me the nature of the test to be administered. It is my opinion that, because of this candidate's disability described below, he/she should be accommodated by providing the special arrangements listed on the reverse side.

Description of Disability: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ License # (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Mail completed form to NBRC, 10801 Mastin Street, Suite 300, Overland Park, KS 66210-1658,  
or email to [apply@nbrc.org](mailto:apply@nbrc.org). If you have questions, call the NBRC at 913.895.4900.





**Executive Office**

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