

Intent

The intent of this policy is to establish that National Registry cognitive and psychomotor examination results are considered valid for 24 months.

Scope

This policy is specific to the eligibility requirements and process to gain initial certification. This applies to all certification levels.

Definitions

Eligibility requirements: Requirements that must be satisfied for certification to be issued as specified for each certification.

Components of the examination: Each identified examination requirement, including cognitive examination and each station of the psychomotor examination.

Policy

Passing scores on cognitive and psychomotor examinations can be applied to applications for initial certification for up to 24 months from the date of the successful examination. The application and passing scores for all stations and components of the examination must be achieved within this single 24-month period. This applies to all levels of National Registry certifications. All other requirements for eligibility must also be met, including successful completion of all requirements for each respective level of certification within the established time period from course completion.

The end of the month will be used as the deadline for use of examination results. For instance, a passing cognitive examination on June 1, 2019 would be valid until June 30, 2021.

Exams cannot be applied to an application for initial certification after more than 24 months. Any exam component that is outside of the 24-month period cannot be used for that application.

This policy will become effective for candidates with a course completion date of November 2018 or later. The prior 12-month time period for valid examination results applies to courses that end before November 2018, extending the time period after November 2019.

Rationale

A 24-month time period for valid examination results is consistent with other time periods used by the National Registry, including course completion and duration of certification. This simplifies processes for

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians® <small>THE NATION'S EMS CERTIFICATION™</small>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Time Period for Valid Examination Results</h2>		
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registrants, staff and stakeholders. The prior mix of a one-year standard for examination results and a two year standard for course eligibility caused significant confusion among candidates and stakeholders.

Research has consistently shown degradation of required knowledge over time. A 2011 study of medical students and physicians showed relatively little degradation in knowledge of basic sciences for the first two years and later degradation was slowed by rehearsal of information. The authors noted, “When rehearsal during the retention interval is controlled for, it appears that little knowledge is lost for 1.5–2 years after it was last used.” (Custers & Ten Cate, 2011). A 2007 study of the elapsed time of paramedic training completion until taking the examination showed a statistically significant decline in the score on a linear examination of 0.009% per day. The authors noted, “Based on this model, it would take 17 months before a paramedic’s predicted score would fall below the passing standard.” (Fernandez & Studnek, 2007). Both of these published studies support a time frame of 24 months or less to pass the cognitive and, if applicable, psychomotor portions of the National Registry examination.

States use an EMS licensure period of two to five years. The 24-month time period for which the examinations are considered valid is a balance of operational needs for a consistent time period with the suggestion of knowledge decay shown by research.

Related Policies and Procedures

Eligibility for Certification

References

Custers E. J. & Ten Cate, O. T. (2011). Very long-term retention of basic science knowledge in doctors after graduation. *Medical Education*; 45, 422–430.

Fernandez, A. R. & Studnek, J. R. (2007). The Association between a candidate’s score on the national certification examination and the elapsed time from course completion to completion of the cognitive examination. Oral presentation at the annual symposium of the National Association of EMS Educators. (<https://www.nremt.org/rwd/public/document/research>) *Prehospital Emergency Care*,11,489-493.

Document History

- 2018-06-15 Board motion authorizing 24-month time period for valid exam results.
- 2018-07-23 Advisory input from NASEMSO Personnel Licensure Council.
- 2018-07-27 Advisory input from National Registry State EMS Official Advisory Group.
- 2018-11-05 Policy developed and approved.