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# NBOME

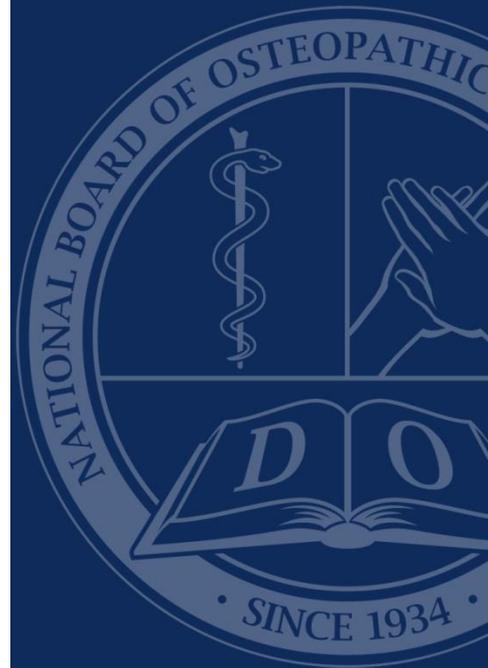
NATIONAL BOARD OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL EXAMINERS

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Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test

Test Administration Guide



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## **I) Overview**

The purpose of this document is to provide a reference to the college of osteopathic medicine (COM) for the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test (COMAT) administration.

### **A. Description of the COMAT Series**

The NBOME's COMAT series currently includes eight core clinical disciplines. Each discipline is designed for standardized assessment in core osteopathic medical disciplines, such as end-of-course or clinical rotation student assessment. They assess an osteopathic student's achievement level on those disciplines, with an emphasis on clinical application.

Each examination in the series has osteopathic principles and practice integrated throughout, making it the obvious choice for COMs for student assessment needs.

- COMAT is the only osteopathically distinctive discipline-specific examination series
- COMAT is presented in a style and format comparable to the COMLEX-USA licensure series
- Feedback for COMs includes school summary reports and individual student score reports after each administration; scores are compared with national performance
- COMAT was created to reflect osteopathic physician practice
- COMAT is written by osteopathic subject matter experts
- COMAT is reflective of COM curricula
- Each COMAT examination consists of 125 items that must be completed within 2 hours and 30 minutes. There is a separate 5-minute tutorial before beginning each examination

### **B. Faculty Review**

The NBOME provides approved COM faculty members the opportunity to conduct a review of COMAT to enable them to better understand the examination format.

Each examination has 35 items and an allotted time of 2 hours and 30 minutes. The content and format of items are a sample of what is delivered to the examinees. Faculty members are required to maintain strict confidentiality of the material contained in the Faculty Review.

### **C. COMAT Use Policy**

The NBOME develops and provides to COMs the COMAT series for administration by the colleges to assess the osteopathic medical knowledge of osteopathic medical students in the following disciplines: Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Surgery, Psychiatry, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Osteopathic Principles and Practice, and Emergency Medicine.

COMAT is made available to the COM for the purpose of the COM's confidential administration of those examinations to its osteopathic medical students. The COM shall fully cooperate with all of the NBOME's requirements or requests in order for the NBOME to maintain the security and integrity of the COMAT series.

## **II) College of Osteopathic Medicine Roles and Responsibilities**

### **A. COMAT Coordinator**

The COMAT Coordinator is designated by the dean and has a commensurate level of authority. The primary responsibilities of the COMAT coordinator are to:

- Ensure that the security of all examination content is maintained at all times
- Oversee administrative tasks for the local provision of services, particularly online ordering of the examinations

- Vet proctors, create proctor logins in NBOME Client Registration System dean's page (dean's page), and ensure that proctors are present during examinations
- Vet location, create locations in the dean's page, and ensure that locations continue to meet minimum testing requirements
- Designate secondary personnel to ensure the examination administrations are in compliance
- Ensure that all COMAT examinations are administered in a secure, proctored setting
- Ensure that examinees follow test day rules and procedures
- Report any suspicious activities observed during an administration to the NBOME immediately
- Conduct investigations regarding irregular behavior, if necessary, and promptly provide the NBOME with the outcome of any such investigation
- Cooperate with the NBOME in any investigation of a possible security breach
- Collaborate with proctors where your student(s) are doing rotations to make arrangements for your students to test
- Order examination reviews for faculty and proctor the examination reviews
- Establish and monitor COMAT invoices and payment

#### **B. Candidates**

Candidates are expected to do the following:

- Confirm if the COM will be providing a computer or iPad; if own equipment is used, run a system check and download the secure browser prior to examination date
- Review the COMAT tutorial prior to examination date
- Respect the use of the COMAT series and avoid all irregular conduct in the "Conduct" section of the COMAT Test Administration Guide

### **III) Eligibility**

Examinee must be enrolled in a college of osteopathic medicine, accredited by the American Osteopathic Association Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation. All registrations are approved by the COMAT Coordinator.

### **IV) Delivery Options**

#### **A. COM Approved Location**

The COMAT series must be administered in a secure, proctored setting. The COMAT Coordinator will have access to the dean's page, which houses all of the system applications in support of test administration. The COM must be in strict compliance with the procedures outlined in this Test Administration Guide.

##### **a) PC/MAC**

Delivered via a secure browser on a desktop or laptop computer provided by either the COM or student.

##### **b) Apple iPad.**

Delivered through the NBOME's custom iPad application on any standard Apple iPad device.

#### **B. Prometric Testing Center**

COMAT administration is available at the Prometric network of secure testing centers. Prometric testing may be preferred for students serving on clinical rotations in a distributed hospital network or for those located at a site without web-based test delivery capability. This option

requires advance planning to schedule testing appointments and an additional administrative fee for the Prometric seat. See Registration and Scheduling section.

## **V) Registering and Scheduling**

### **A. Registration Overview**

#### **a) COM Approved Location**

The NBOME has provided a means for the COM to designate students for individual COMAT disciplines. It is available through the COMAT tab on the dean's page. Detailed procedures supporting this process will be provided to the COMAT Coordinator during the onboarding process.

- The registration includes selecting the student from the class list, choosing the subject, assigning location and proctor
- The COM selects a list of students using the "Set Exams" function in the dean's COMAT page
- The COM selects the COMAT exam(s) that will be administered, and designates students to take the exam
- Apple iPads follow the same registration process as COM approved locations

#### **b) Prometric Testing Center**

The NBOME has provided a means for the COM to designate students for an individual COMAT discipline. It is available through the COMAT tab on the dean's page. Detailed procedures supporting this process will be provided to the COMAT Coordinator during the onboarding process.

- The COM selects a list of students using the "Register/Schedule COMAT" function in the Dean's COMAT page. The COM can designate any students who will be taking COMAT in the coming test period and can add a student record or change a student record based on any changes in the schedule
- The COM selects the COMAT examination(s) that will be administered, and designates students to take the examination. Once the examination has been assigned, a scheduling link will appear in the student's CRS account. Using the provided link, students will be able to navigate to Prometric website and select a location within the date range set by the COM

### **B. Scheduling for COMAT**

#### **a) COM Approved Location**

The COMAT Coordinator establishes a date range for an upcoming administration as part of the registration via the CRS. The registration includes selecting the student from the class list, choosing the subject, and assigning location and proctor.

#### **b) Prometric Testing Center**

The COMAT Coordinator sets a date range for students to choose. Students will then receive an email notification to schedule with Prometric. Students must schedule with Prometric at least 5 days before the examination date.

### **C. Test Accommodation Requests**

The COM is and shall be solely responsible for the determination of the eligibility or right of any COM student who requests an accommodation for COMAT. The COM is and shall be solely responsible for all costs to provide an accommodation required by law to a COM student. The

NBOME will make a good faith effort to provide such reasonable test accommodations that the COM determines are warranted for the examinee.

#### **D. Rescheduled, Cancelled, or Missed Scheduled Examination**

##### **a) COM Approved Location**

COMs can make changes to a scheduled examination date at any time unless the examination is in progress. A missed examination can be rescheduled for a new date at no cost to the COM.

##### **b) Prometric Testing Center**

COMs can make changes to a scheduled examination date up to 30 days prior to their examination date at no cost to the COM. For any appointment moved or cancelled less than 30 days prior to the scheduled examination date, COMs will be assessed the full Prometric seat fee.

#### **E. Retaking an Examination**

##### **For All Approved Locations**

A student is allowed to attempt a COMAT discipline up to 10 times. COMs should only allow students to retake a COMAT discipline examination after receiving the result.

### **VI) Examination Preparation and Readiness Check**

#### **A. COM Responsibilities**

See "COMAT Coordinator" section under "COM Roles and Responsibilities."

#### **B. Proctor Responsibilities**

The NBOME requires that all COMAT discipline examinations be proctored by a COM-approved proctor. The primary responsibilities of the COMAT proctor include:

- Secure a quiet location to administer the COMAT examination
- Follow the proctor guidelines and conduct the examination according to the specified procedures
- Run system checks prior to COMAT administrations and ensure that the secure browser has been downloaded to all work stations used for testing
- Resolve any issues identified during the system check prior to the COMAT examination administration
- Plan the admission and dismissal of examinees to ensure test security and minimal disturbance
- Prevent or minimize any disturbances to examinees during the test administration
- Ensure that examinees are monitored throughout the examination, including examinees receiving special accommodations, to ensure the security and integrity of the examination

#### **C. Candidate Responsibilities**

See "Candidates" section under "COM Roles and Responsibilities"

### **VII) Examination Administration**

#### **A. Arrival and Identification**

##### **a) COM Approved Location**

While the NBOME recommends that all candidates arrive at least 30 minutes prior to their examination time, it is up to the COM to establish the window of time a student has to show up for an examination. Proctors will be responsible for verifying the identity of

all candidates sitting for the COMAT discipline examination.

**b) Prometric Testing Center**

Candidates must arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled test administration, and must bring with them one piece of identification, which must be a valid government-issued picture ID with signature, such as a current driver's license or passport.

A candidate whose name is changed by marriage or for some other reason must notify the NBOME at least 5 business days in advance of testing if he or she is to be tested under the new name. Any candidate presenting an ID that does not match the name in the NBOME Client Registration System will not be permitted to take the examination and will be considered a "No Show" for all purposes.

**B. Late Arrival**

**a) COM Approved Location**

The COM will determine whether a candidate is allowed to sit for the examination upon late arrival.

**b) Prometric Testing Center**

Any candidate who arrives at the designated testing center up to 30 minutes after the scheduled start time for a COMAT discipline examination and requests to take the examination will be permitted to do so, but only if the testing center is able to deliver the examination in its entirety.

**C. No Outside Information or Access**

**a) COM Approved Location**

During the full test session, a candidate will not be permitted access to any information or data not listed in the NBOME's candidate materials list, including but not limited to any access to a cellular phone or PDA, text, notes or other materials, and may not communicate in any manner with anyone outside the testing center.

**b) Prometric Testing Center**

During the full test session, a candidate will not be permitted access to any information or data not provided to the candidate by the NBOME or Prometric at the testing center, including but not limited to any access to a cellular phone or PDA, text, notes or other materials, and may not communicate in any manner with anyone outside the testing center. Candidates are required to place all personal property, including watches, in the secure lockers provided at the testing centers. Candidates are permitted to access their personal property after completing their examination.

**D. Special Assistance**

**a) COM Approved Location**

A candidate may not have in the test area assigned to the candidate any family member, assistant, or other person for any reason except as specifically approved by the NBOME as a test accommodation unless approved by the COM as a special accommodation.

**b) Prometric Testing Center**

Even though a candidate may not be a "person with disability" for purposes of the American's with Disabilities Act (see Test Accommodation policy above section), the NBOME may provide limited special assistance if sufficient notification is provided to the NBOME. Under no circumstance may the testing center professional staff permit any

additional time to take the examination or modify the examination or testing conditions in any way that would alter the standards for measurement of the knowledge or skill being tested by the examination. Examples of special assistance that may be permitted include but are not limited to the use of ear plugs, dietary needs, or taking of medication.

### **E. Interruption of Examination or Computer Malfunction**

#### **For All Approved Locations**

In the event of an examination interruption, the proctor will determine whether the examination will resume from the point the examination was stopped and if the examination interruption will still permit the examination to be administered in its entirety.

If the examination is interrupted for a period of time that will not permit the examination to be administered in its entirety, or the examination is canceled for emergency or safety purposes, any portion of the examination to the extent completed will be voided and not reported, and a new appointment to take the examination will be scheduled without any additional fee.

### **F. Missing Data or Score**

#### **For All Approved Locations**

If a candidate's score or data from a COMAT discipline examination is missing for any reason, including but not limited to electronic loss or transmission or computer failure, no score will be recorded or reported for the candidate.

The COM may reschedule the examination for the next available test date without any additional fee.

### **G. Cancellation Due to Inclement Weather, Other Force Majeure**

#### **a) COM Approved Location**

If a candidate is unable to test due to inclement weather, force majeure, or other event beyond the control of the COM, the examination can be rescheduled at no cost to the COM.

#### **b) Prometric Testing Center**

In the event of severe inclement weather, force majeure, or other event beyond the control of the NBOME or Prometric, the NBOME or Prometric may in its sole discretion cancel a scheduled examination. If this occurs, candidates should contact the COM to arrange a new period of eligibility. The NBOME or Prometric will, when feasible, make information available to candidates on the status of the examination.

### **H. Emergency Evacuation**

#### **For All Approved Locations**

Candidates will follow the emergency evacuation instructions of the testing site.

### **I. Test Day Issues**

If a candidate encounters test day issues they should immediately report the problem to their proctor or Prometric testing center staff. After reporting the incident to the staff on premises, the student will then need to inform their COM of the incident. The NBOME will work with the COM to review the issue and follow up as needed.

## **J. Conduct**

If the NBOME determines in its sole discretion that a candidate committed or contributed to any Irregular Conduct in connection with the application, registration, or taking of an examination, the NBOME may void the candidate's examination or score, report the incident to the candidate's school, and/or take any other action the NBOME in its sole discretion deems appropriate.

The COM agrees to fully cooperate with any NBOME investigation of any possible irregularities in test administration, candidate behavior, breach of test security, or confidentiality. Failure to fully cooperate can result in sanctions, including examination failure, notation of irregular conduct, suspension of eligibility, or permanent loss of eligibility to challenge a future COMAT discipline examination.

The term "Irregular Conduct" includes but is not limited to:

- Copy, fraud, deceit, or other dishonest conduct
- Refusal to provide proper ID or permit photo documentation or other identification for ID verification at any time
- Disruption of another candidate or candidates
- Harassment of any employee or representative of the NBOME or Prometric, verbally or physically at any time (i.e., before, during, or after any examination)
- Communication or attempts to communicate with others during the examination, other than authorized testing center professional staff
- Removal of or attempts to remove any test material, scrap paper, or white board from the assigned test area
- Damage to property
- Noncompliance with testing center rules and regulations and security requirements, including operating testing center equipment with reasonable care
- Providing or receiving unauthorized information about the content of an examination
- Communication or attempts to communicate about the content, format, or specific test items with another candidate or with any outside source or party, including the use of telephones, personal computers, Internet access, test review companies, or any other means (at any time, either before, during, or after any examination)
- Use of or availability to access any unauthorized device, text, note, or other material that could assist the candidate in taking the examination
- Providing false admittance information or altering applications, score reports, transcripts, or certificates
- Providing false or forged identification on presentation for testing at a testing center.
- Harming or threatening to harm the testing center professional staff, other examinees, testing center employees, NBOME personnel, or their agents verbally or physically, including telephone encounters regarding scheduling, scores, or score reporting
- Violation of the NBOME's non-disclosure or confidentiality policies or the candidate's non-disclosure agreement at any time
- Violation of any of the Terms and Conditions, policies, rules, procedures, or obligations of candidates
- Bringing personal property into the test area that is considered by the NBOME to violate the security of the examination
- Leaving his or her assigned test area during the administration of any COMAT discipline examination
- Other behavior as deemed by the NBOME to be unethical or unprofessional

Any proctor, testing center professional staff, or other Prometric staff who suspects Irregular Conduct by a candidate during the administration of the COMAT discipline examination will report that information to the NBOME. Also, candidates who directly observe Irregular Conduct must report such activity to the proctor, testing center professional staff, Prometric, or the NBOME.

**K. Refuse to Administer Examination**

The NBOME may in its sole and absolute discretion refuse to administer or provide any of its examinations to any person, with or without cause. If the NBOME determines not to provide its examination to any person and he or she has registered or scheduled to take an NBOME examination and paid a registration or other fee to the NBOME, the only recourse that person shall have against the NBOME is a refund of the registration or other fee paid to the NBOME.

**L. Voided Examination Administration**

The NBOME can void an examination requested by the COM. Candidates may not void their COMAT discipline examination score for any reason.

**VIII) Fees**

**A. Fees**

The fees for all COMAT subject examinations will follow the pricing structure set forth on the NBOME website unless otherwise noted on the COMAT contract.

**B. Rescheduling and Cancellation Fee**

The rescheduling and cancellation fees for all COMAT subject examinations will follow the pricing structure set forth on the NBOME website.

**C. Invoice**

All fees are invoiced after the examination administrations are issued to the COM. The NBOME will not collect any fee directly from the students.

**IX) Score Reporting**

The NBOME provides summary reports for single COMAT administrations, as well as cumulative reports for subjects within an academic year. Reports for single administrations may include a score roster, a frequency table, an item key phrase report, and a school-level performance summary with a graphic profile for school performance on subtopics. Cumulative reports summarize school performance from the beginning of the academic year. They may include the above features, plus a school-level performance summary with a graphic profile for school performance on subtopics during the academic year.

The NBOME processes responses from computer-delivered COMAT administrations each week, then releases scores the following day, typically on Thursday afternoons. Reports are scheduled to be released 5 to 10 business days after administration regardless of number of schools, tests, examinees, and any combination of these factors.

Reported scores for existing subjects are standard scores, which account for minor differences in difficulty between forms. Standard scores are set to have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 10, based on a representative norming sample. Standard score scales are reviewed annually, and may be reestablished at the discretion of the NBOME. Reported scores for new subjects are percent correct scores. After one year, percent correct scores are converted to

standard scores, and all subsequent reported scores for the subject are standard scores.

Both single administration and cumulative reports are posted to a secure website, which the NBOME maintains. The NBOME will provide each COM with access to their site to review, print, and archive the reports. The NBOME will post student score reports to the COM, and the COM will decide whether and how to distribute student score reports. The NBOME will not send COMAT student score reports to students directly.

**A. Score Confirmation**

The NBOME will confirm a COMAT examination score if a COMAT coordinator submits a written request to the NBOME for score confirmation within 30 days after the scores are released. Individual students may not request score confirmations. The fee per examination score confirmation is \$25, and the request must be accompanied by a check or credit card payment information. A score confirmation entails retrieving the original test responses, checking for any testing or data abnormalities, rescoring using a process different from the operational scoring process, and comparing the rescored results with the originally reported scores. Results of a score confirmation will be sent to the COMAT coordinator by Client Services within two weeks of the request.

**X) NBOME and ITS Administration Support**

The NBOME will provide telephone support for all COMAT administrations between the hours of 7 AM-7 PM (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday with the exception of 2017-2018 NBOME holidays.

COMAT administration will not be available on all Saturdays and Sundays and the following NBOME Holidays	
2017	
July 3 <sup>rd</sup> – July 14 <sup>th</sup>	COMAT Blackout
Monday, September 4 <sup>th</sup>	Labor Day
Thursday, November 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Thanksgiving
Friday, November 24 <sup>th</sup>	Day after Thanksgiving
Monday, December 25 <sup>th</sup> – Sunday, December 31 <sup>st</sup>	Christmas/New Year Holiday
<i>The NBOME will be closed between Christmas and New Year's day.</i>	
2018	
Monday, January 1 <sup>st</sup>	New Year's Day
Monday, February 19 <sup>th</sup>	President's Day
Friday, March 30 <sup>th</sup>	Good Friday
Monday, May 28 <sup>th</sup>	Memorial Day

In addition to the NBOME Client Services telephone support, our strategic partner ITS will also be available to provide technical support during the same window of time. The NBOME Client Services Department can be reached at (866) 479-6828 between 7 AM and 7 PM Eastern Time, and ITS can be reached at (800) 514-8494 between 8 AM and 8 PM Eastern Time.