

# COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information 2021–2022

Effective 07/01/2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Important Legal Notice To Candidates**

**Inquiries**

**Introduction**

**Terms & Conditions**

**Description of Examinations**

**COMLEX-USA Eligibility**

**Registration and Scheduling**

**Examination Administration**

**Examination Scores**

**Release of Certified Transcripts**

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## Important Legal Notice to Candidates

Every individual who intends to purchase or take a COMLEX-USA examination must first carefully read the most recently published COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information (BOI) and immediately advise the NBOME of any question or concern they may have regarding the examination, the conduct required of candidates, or their legal obligations to the NBOME. The NBOME does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

As a condition of providing any COMLEX-USA examination to an individual who intends to purchase or take the examination ("candidate"), the candidate must establish or have established a current account with the NBOME and accept and agree to the Terms and Conditions required of candidates who desire to purchase or take a COMLEX-USA examination. By establishing an account with the NBOME, the candidate agrees that he or she is and shall be legally bound by all the terms, conditions, procedures, and obligations of a candidate as set forth in the most recently published BOI online at [www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org). The candidate also is and shall be legally bound by all the Terms and Conditions which they specifically accepted and agreed to when the candidate established an account with the NBOME or purchased any COMLEX-USA examination.

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# Inquiries

Inquiries should be directed to: **NATIONAL BOARD of OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL EXAMINERS, INC.**

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## Client Services

Toll-free: (866) 479-6828 | Fax: (773) 714-0606

Hours: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm (CT) Monday - Friday except NBOME holidays.

Candidates may email [clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org) to request additional information. A candidate should refer to his or her NBOME ID number when making inquiries. Registration and scheduling for all COMLEX-USA examinations can be completed online at the client registration system portal account page in accordance with the requirements set out in this *Bulletin of Information*.

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## Corporate Offices and Conference Center

8765 West Higgins Road  
Suite 200  
Chicago, IL 60631

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## Executive Offices

101 West Elm Street  
Suite 230  
Conshohocken, PA 19428

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# Introduction

The National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, Inc. (NBOME) is a nonprofit corporation, organized under the laws of the state of Indiana. The mission of the NBOME is to protect the public by providing the means to assess competencies of osteopathic medicine and related health care professions.

COMLEX-USA (Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States of America) is a national, standardized assessment series designed for licensure for the practice of osteopathic medicine. It includes three levels using a primary care approach to patients with the distinctiveness of osteopathic medicine fully integrated throughout, COMLEX-USA assesses osteopathic medical knowledge, knowledge fluency, clinical skills, and other competencies essential for practice as an osteopathic generalist physician.

COMLEX-USA is recognized by the Federation of State Medical Boards and is accepted for physician licensure in all 50 states and some international jurisdictions. The primary purpose of the COMLEX-USA examination program is for licensure of osteopathic physicians seeking to practice osteopathic medicine.

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# Terms and Conditions

Candidates are legally bound by the following Terms and Conditions:

## **1. Bulletin of Information (BOI)**

The candidate shall comply with all the terms, conditions, procedures, and obligations of a candidate as set forth in this BOI.

## **2. Duty to Maintain Confidentiality**

The candidate shall not in any manner whatsoever discuss, disclose, paraphrase, publish, or otherwise make known to anyone any test item, information relating to any NBOME examination, or other confidential property belonging to the NBOME that is not publicly available on the NBOME website.

## **3. Test Preparation**

The candidate shall not in any manner whatsoever contribute to or participate in the development or administration of any test preparation service or enterprise which provides or is seeking to provide preparation for NBOME examinations, either directly or indirectly, for a period of at least eighteen (18) full months, following the latest date any NBOME examination was taken by the candidate. The candidate shall promptly report to the NBOME any solicitation that they may receive, or have knowledge of, for the services of the candidate from any test preparation company or enterprise.

## **4. Duty to Cooperate with Investigations**

The candidate shall fully cooperate with any NBOME investigation of actual or alleged irregularities in test administration, candidate behavior, and/or breach of test security or confidentiality. Failure to fully cooperate may result in sanctions, including examination failure, notation of irregular conduct, suspension of eligibility, or permanent loss of eligibility to take any COMLEX-USA examination.

## **5. Confidential Property**

All examinations of the NBOME and its means and methods for test development and methodology for testing and scoring examinations, and all related data and other information, are the sole and confidential property of the NBOME. The candidate has no right, title, or interest whatsoever in, or access to, any examination or other confidential property belonging to the NBOME, except only confidential access to an examination during the administration of the examination to the candidate as permitted by the NBOME and under strict supervision of the NBOME or the NBOME's testing contractor. The candidate acknowledges that any breach under Sections 2 or 5 of these Terms and Conditions will cause irreparable harm for which damages would not be an adequate remedy, and, therefore, the NBOME will be entitled to injunctive relief with respect thereto in addition to any other remedies available.

## **6. No Warranty; Limitation of Liability**

Except as expressly and unambiguously stated in this BOI, the NBOME makes no warranty whatsoever, expressed or implied. Any damage or loss to the candidate, or others claiming for the candidate, caused by the NBOME or any of its employees, officers, directors, or agents is limited to a refund by the NBOME to the candidate of any fee paid by or for the candidate to the NBOME, which refund shall be the sole and exclusive remedy of the candidate or others for any wrong claimed against the NBOME or its employees, officers, directors, or agents, provided neither the NBOME nor its employees, officers, directors, or agents shall be liable to the candidate or any other person for any indirect, consequential, punitive, or unforeseeable damages in any event.

## **7. Release for Prior Acts or Omissions**

By purchasing a COMLEX-USA examination, the candidate thereby unconditionally releases and discharges the NBOME, its employees, officers, directors and agents (Released parties) from any and all claims, liabilities, damages, or losses whatsoever, known or unknown, that arise out of or are related to any act or omission, including any negligent or other wrongful act or omission, of any or all of the Released parties, that occurred prior to the date the candidate purchased that examination.

## **8. Choice of Law**

The provisions, terms and conditions of this BOI, including Terms and Conditions accepted by the candidate, shall be governed by and construed only under the laws of the state of Indiana. Any claim by or for the candidate against the NBOME or its employees, officers, directors, or agents, and any claim by the NBOME against the candidate, arising out of or relating to any COMLEX-USA examination, shall be considered and resolved only under the laws of the state of Indiana (to the exclusion of the laws of any other state, and without regard to the conflict of law provisions or law of any state), or under any applicable federal law.

## **9. Forum Selection, Personal Jurisdiction**

The candidate expressly agrees that any claim, demand, or complaint whatsoever by or for the candidate against the NBOME, or any of its employees, officers, directors, or agents, shall be brought only in a court of competent jurisdiction located in Marion County, Indiana, to the exclusion of all other courts and jurisdictions. The candidate acknowledges and agrees that the NBOME is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation in the state of Indiana, that

NBOME examinations are administered throughout the United States, that it is reasonable for the laws of the state of Indiana, the place of incorporation of the NBOME, to be applicable, and for any claim, demand, or complaint by the candidate against the NBOME, its employees, officers, directors, or agents to be brought only in a court of competent jurisdiction located in Marion County, Indiana. The candidate expressly agrees and submits to the jurisdiction of courts of competent jurisdiction located in Marion County, Indiana.

## **10. Violation by Candidate**

If the candidate violates any of their obligations to the NBOME, including but not limited to these Terms and Conditions, the NBOME may in its sole discretion consider such violation to be Irregular Conduct and not score or void the score of the candidate's examination and assign a "fail" score, and/or impose other sanctions, as the NBOME may determine in its sole discretion, in addition to all other remedies available to the NBOME, including injunctive relief, monetary damages, costs, and reasonable attorneys' fees. The candidate also acknowledges and agrees that the NBOME likely will have no adequate remedy at law and is or shall be entitled to injunctive and/or other equitable relief, and shall not be obligated to post any bond, to prevent or limit violation by the candidate of their obligations to the NBOME.

## **11. Attorneys' Fees, Costs**

The NBOME has the right to recover from the candidate all attorneys' fees and costs incurred by the NBOME (or others acting on behalf of the NBOME) to enforce the candidate's obligations under the BOI, to recover damages or other losses from the candidate for violation by the candidate of their obligations under the BOI, or to defend any claim made by or for the candidate against the NBOME or its employees, officers, directors, or agents.

## **12. Miscellaneous**

The BOI is legally binding upon the candidate, their heirs, estate, successors and assigns, and any person or entity acting for the candidate. No provision, term, or condition may be waived by the NBOME without the express written consent of an authorized officer of the NBOME. If any provision, term, or condition of the BOI is unenforceable for any reason, the remaining provisions, terms, and conditions shall remain in full force and effect, as if the unenforceable provision did not exist.

The candidate acknowledges and agrees that the NBOME may provide certain personal information to (and receive such information from) medical schools and residency programs in order to process applications, determine eligibility to take NBOME examinations, and for academic and residency application and matriculation purposes. This includes but is not limited to the provision of COMLEX-USA scores and results to medical schools or residency programs and the sharing of academic student records and related information by medical schools or residency programs with the NBOME.

## **13. Amendments**

The NBOME may in its sole discretion, at any time, without the consent of any candidate, amend the terms, conditions, procedures, and/or obligations of candidates set forth in the BOI, by publishing the amendment on the NBOME website, [www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org); provided any amendment shall not alter any obligations relating to any COMLEX-USA examination taken by the candidate prior to publication of the amendment on the NBOME's website.

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# Description of Examinations

## About COMLEX-USA

The COMLEX-USA examination series is designed to assess the osteopathic medical knowledge, knowledge fluency, and clinical skills considered essential for osteopathic generalist physicians to practice. The foundation of COMLEX-USA is the osteopathic philosophy which consists of four tenets: whole-person health care, underlying structure-function relationships and the interdependence of body systems, self-healing and self-regulatory mechanisms of the body, and the full scope of the osteopathic approach to patient care, including osteopathic manipulative medicine.

The COMLEX-USA program is an examination sequence with three levels. This progressive nature of the COMLEX-USA examinations ensures the consistency and continuity of the measurement objectives of the osteopathic medical licensing examinations. A brief description of the examination blueprint is provided below and includes explanations of each examination component, including what constitutes a passing score. The COMLEX-USA examinations are administered only in the English language.

Each COMLEX-USA examination is administered in a standardized, time-measured environment. The ability to recall, interpret, process, and apply clinical knowledge and skills without hesitation and in a fluid manner (“knowledge fluency”) is fundamental to an osteopathic generalist physician’s competence to practice osteopathic medicine and therefore is one of the fundamental competencies the COMLEX-USA examinations assess.

The [blueprint](#) contains two dimensions, outlining competency domains and clinical presentations. While all examination Levels have a two-dimensional blueprint structure, the depth and emphasis of each Level parallels the candidate’s educational experiences and clinical responsibilities.

For more information on [all COMLEX-USA examinations](#), including the full examination blueprint, registration, practice materials, and updates, visit the NBOME website.



### COMLEX-USA LEVEL 1 · Assessment of Foundational Biomedical Sciences and Osteopathic Principles and Practice

#### DESCRIPTION

A one-day, computer-based assessment that integrates the foundational biomedical sciences and osteopathic principles with clinical knowledge and other physician competencies relevant to addressing clinical presentations and promoting health in supervised clinical practice settings.

#### Foundational Biomedical Sciences

- Anatomy
- Behavioral Science
- Biochemistry
- Microbiology
- Osteopathic Principles and Practice
- Pathology
- Pharmacology
- Physiology
- Public Health

#### FORMAT

- Two computer-based test sessions of four hours each taken on one day (8 hours' exam time) administered in a secure, time-measured environment.
- 352 questions based on the competency domains and clinical presentations for osteopathic medical practice.
- Test questions are single-best answer, multiple-choice format and may include audio-visual elements.
- Examples of test question types in Level 1 are found on the website under [Practice Exams](#).
- Breaks are only permitted as outlined under the section [Examination Administration](#) in this BOI.

Section	Questions	
1	44	<b>Morning Session: 4 Hours' Total Testing Time</b> Questions can be answered, reviewed, and changed one section at a time. Individual sections are not timed.
2	44	
Authorized 10-minute break		
3	44	
4	44	
<b>Authorized 40-minute lunch break</b>		
5	44	<b>Afternoon Session: 4 Hours' Total Testing Time</b> Questions can be answered, reviewed, and changed one section at a time. Individual sections are not timed.
6	44	
Authorized 10-minute break		
7	44	
8	44	

## PASSING

Passing Level 1 indicates that the candidate has demonstrated competence in the foundational biomedical sciences and osteopathic principles and related physician competency domains for osteopathic medical care of patients as required to enter supervised patient care settings and to continue lifelong learning.

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## COMLEX-USA LEVEL 2-CE ·

# Assessment of Fundamental Clinical Sciences for Osteopathic Medical Practice

### DESCRIPTION

A one-day, computer-based assessment that integrates application of knowledge in clinical and foundational biomedical sciences and osteopathic principles with other physician competencies related to the clinical care of patients and promoting health in supervised clinical settings. These competency domains include application of osteopathic medical knowledge, osteopathic patient care, osteopathic principles and practice, communication skills, systems-based practice, practice-based learning and improvement, professionalism, and ethics.

### Clinical Sciences Disciplines

- Emergency Medicine
- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Obstetrics/Gynecology
- Osteopathic Principles and Practice
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry
- Surgery

### FORMAT

- Two computer-based test sessions of four hours each, taken on one day (8 hours' exam time), administered in a secure, time-measured environment.
- 352 questions based on the competency domains and clinical presentations for osteopathic medical practice.
- Test questions are single-best answer, multiple-choice format and may include audio-visual elements.
- Examples of test question types in Level 2-CE are found under [Practice Exam on the website](#).
- Breaks are only permitted as outlined under the section [Examination Administration](#) in the BOI.

Section	Questions	
1	44	<b>Morning Session: 4 Hours' Total Testing Time</b> Questions can be answered, reviewed, and changed one section at a time. Individual sections are not timed.
2	44	
Authorized 10-minute break		
3	44	
4	44	
<b>Authorized 40-minute lunch break</b>		
5	44	<b>Afternoon Session: 4 Hours' Total Testing Time</b> Questions can be answered, reviewed, and changed one section at a time. Individual sections are not timed.
6	44	
Authorized 10-minute break		
7	44	
8	44	

## PASSING

Passing Level 2-CE indicates that the candidate has demonstrated competence in the clinical sciences and osteopathic principles and related physician competency domains for osteopathic medical care of patients as required to enter into supervised graduate medical education settings and to continue lifelong learning.

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## **COMLEX-USA LEVEL 2-PE ·**

### **Assessment of Fundamental Clinical Skills for Osteopathic Medical Practice**

**NOTE:** The COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE has been indefinitely suspended since March 2020 due to restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fundamental osteopathic clinical skills competencies remain an important part of the COMLEX-USA series. The NBOME Special Commission for Osteopathic Medical Licensure is exploring permanent replacement options for evaluation of these skills. There are temporary attestation pathways in place for the Classes of 2020-2022. Please see Eligibility section for more information.

#### **Fundamental Osteopathic Clinical Skills**

- Physician-Patient Communication
- Interpersonal Skills
- Professionalism
- Medical History-Taking and Physical Examination Skills
- Osteopathic Principles and Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT)
- Documentation Skills (including synthesis of clinical findings, integrated differential diagnosis, and formulation of a diagnostic and treatment plan)

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## COMLEX-USA LEVEL 3 ·

# Assessment of Competencies for Osteopathic Medical Practice

### DESCRIPTION

A two-day computer-based examination assessing competence in the foundational competency domains required for generalist physicians to deliver safe and effective osteopathic medical care and promote health in unsupervised clinical settings. Competency domains assessed include application of osteopathic medical knowledge, osteopathic patient care, osteopathic principles and practice, communication skills, systems-based practice, practice-based learning and improvement, professionalism, and ethics. Competency assessment occurs in the context of clinical and patient presentations and systems-based practice as required for entry in the unsupervised practice of osteopathic medicine as an independently practicing osteopathic generalist physician and for readiness for lifelong learning and practice-based learning and improvement.

### FORMAT

- Four computer-based test sessions of 3.5 hours each taken over two days (two sessions per day).
- Administered on consecutive days (or within a 14-day window) in a secure, time-measured environment.
- 420 questions in the multiple-choice question format (MCQ) and test questions related to approximately 26 clinical decision-making (CDM) cases. These are related to diverse and representative clinical presentations and seven competency domains for osteopathic medical practice.
- Test questions are predominantly in the single-best answer and multiple-choice formats and may include audio-visual elements.
- CDM question formats include extended multiple-choice (selection of more than one answer from an extensive list that may contain more than one correct answer) and constructed response (short-answer) test questions.
- Examples of test question types in Level 3 are found under [Practice Exam on the website](#).
- Breaks are permitted only as set forth under the section [Examination Administration](#) in the BOI.

Section	Questions	
1	70 MCQs	<b>Morning Session: 3.5 Hours' Total Testing Time</b> Questions can be answered, reviewed and changed one section at a time. Individual sections are not timed.
Authorized 10-minute break		
2	70 MCQs	
<b>Authorized 40-minute lunch break</b>		
3	70 MCQs	<b>Afternoon Session: 3.5 Hours' Total Testing Time</b> Questions can be answered, reviewed and changed one section at a time. Individual sections are not timed.
Authorized 10-minute break		
4	70 MCQs	
Section	Questions	
5	13 CDM Cases	<b>Morning Session: 3.5 Hours' Total Testing Time</b> Questions can sometimes be answered, reviewed and changed within a CDM case. However, within some CDM cases, question responses cannot be reviewed or changed after a certain point. Individual subsections are not timed.
Authorized 10-minute break		
6	13 CDM Cases	
<b>Authorized 40-minute lunch break</b>		
7	70 MCQs	<b>Afternoon Session: 3.5 Hours' Total Testing Time</b> Questions can be answered, reviewed and changed one section at a time. Individual sections are not timed.
Authorized 10-minute break		
8	70 MCQs	

## PASSING

Passing Level 3 indicates that the candidate has demonstrated competence in the foundational competency domains required for generalist physicians to deliver safe and effective osteopathic medical care of patients as required for entry into the unsupervised practice of osteopathic medicine and to continue lifelong learning and practice-based learning and improvement.

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# COMLEX-USA Eligibility

## Requirements

A candidate must meet the requirements outlined below. Examinations must be taken in sequence and each Level passed before the candidate is eligible to take the next Level.

### Prerequisites

#### COMLEX-USA Level 1

- Completion of the first year of study at an *accredited COM*<sup>1</sup>
- Attestation by the COM that the candidate is in good academic and professional standing<sup>2</sup>

#### COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE

- Passing of COMLEX-USA Level 1
- Completion of the second year of study at an *accredited COM*<sup>1</sup>
- Attestation by the COM that the candidate is in good academic and professional standing<sup>2</sup>

#### COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE

- Effective March 2020, the exam was indefinitely suspended



### COMLEX-USA Level 3

- Passed COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE
- Passed Level 2-PE or meeting attestation requirements as outlined below:  
Class of 2020, 2021: Attestation by COM Dean that you have graduated and have demonstrated the fundamental osteopathic clinical skills necessary for graduation  
Class of 2022: Enhanced Attestation by COM Dean that you have graduated and have demonstrated the fundamental osteopathic clinical skills necessary for graduation
- Graduation from an *accredited COM*<sup>1</sup>
- Earned a DO degree
- Attestation by a program director<sup>3,4</sup> in an ACGME-accredited residency program; that the candidate is in good academic and professional standing<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An *accredited COM* is a college of osteopathic medicine (COM) accredited by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA).

<sup>2</sup> “Good academic and professional standing” denotes that the candidate meets the academic and professional requirements of the college of osteopathic medicine or residency program and is eligible to continue as a student or resident in the program.

<sup>3</sup> Individual who meets the requirements and qualifications as deemed by the ACGME as the director of a residency program and designated with authority and accountability for the operation of a residency/fellowship program.

<sup>4</sup> Candidates not in a residency program, refer to Temporary Alternate Attestation pathway below.

**VERIFICATION:** All levels require the COM dean’s office to confirm eligibility requirements are met.

**NOTE:** Attestation by a residency program director that a candidate is in good academic and professional standing in an ACGME-accredited residency program is required for Level 3 eligibility for graduates after 2018. This attestation does not expire unless rescinded by the program director and is good for up to the six-attempt limit and four attempts in any 12- month period. An attestation can be provided by a program director up to six months after a candidate leaves or graduates from a program.

The NBOME recommends but does not require that a candidate has completed six months in a residency program prior to taking the Level 3 examination. The exception to this is that candidates who have previously failed COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE examination and have not had an opportunity to retake the exam are required to complete six months of residency, and satisfy all other requirements as stated above.

### **Pathway Attestations for the Classes of 2020 and 2021**

On March 11, 2021 the Special Commission on Osteopathic Medical Licensure Assessment announced three temporary eligibility pathways for the class of 2020 and 2021 for the COMLEX-USA Level 3. Below are the requirements for each of these pathways.

Pathway 1 (Traditional): for the Classes of 2020 and 2021 who have taken and passed COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE (as for prior DO graduates)

- Passed both COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE and Level 2-PE
- Graduation from an accredited college of osteopathic medicine (COM) with a DO degree as attested by the COM dean who will attest, "You are acknowledging that each student submitted is in good academic and professional standing, meets the requirements to graduate from your COM and that they have demonstrated the fundamental osteopathic clinical skills necessary for graduation."
- Attestation by the residency program director of an ACGME-accredited program that you are in good academic and professional standing
- Six months of GME completion prior to taking COMLEX-USA Level 3 (Recommendation ONLY)

Pathway 2: for the Class of 2021, who have never taken COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE

- Passed COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE
- Graduation from an accredited college of osteopathic medicine (COM) with a DO degree as attested by the COM dean who will attest, “You are acknowledging that each student submitted is in good academic and professional standing, meets the requirements to graduate from your COM and that they have demonstrated the fundamental osteopathic clinical skills necessary for graduation.”
- Attestation by the residency program director of an ACGME-accredited program that you are in good academic and professional standing
- Six months of GME completion prior to taking COMLEX-USA Level 3 (Recommendation ONLY)

Pathway 3: for the classes of 2020 and 2021, who have unsuccessfully attempted (failed) COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE

- Passing COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE
- Graduation from an accredited college of osteopathic medicine (COM) with a DO degree as attested by the COM dean who will attest, “You are acknowledging that each student submitted is in good academic and professional standing, meets the requirements to graduate from your COM and that they have demonstrated the fundamental osteopathic clinical skills necessary for graduation.”
- Attestation by the Residency Program Director of an ACGME-accredited program that you are in good academic and professional standing
- Six months of GME completion prior to taking COMLEX-USA Level 3 (Required)

### **Pathway for Enhanced Attestation for the Class of 2022**

**In June 2021**, the Special Commission on Osteopathic Medical Licensure Assessment announced **the requirements for an enhanced attestation by the COM dean** for a temporary eligibility pathway for the Class of 2022 for the COMLEX-USA Level 3. Below are the requirements for this pathway.

- Passing COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE
- Graduation from an accredited college of osteopathic medicine (COM) with a DO degree as attested by the COM dean who will provide an enhanced attestation that, “You are acknowledging that each student submitted is in good academic and professional standing, meets the requirements to graduate from your COM and that they have demonstrated the fundamental osteopathic clinical skills necessary for graduation.”
- Attestation by the residency program director of an ACGME-accredited program that you are in good academic and professional standing
- Six months of GME completion prior to taking COMLEX-USA Level 3 (Recommendation Only)

### **Temporary Alternate Pathway Attestation**

For those candidates who are not in any residency program and therefore unable to attain a residency program director attestation, the NBOME has created a temporary alternate pathway. The NBOME will accept a request from a dean of a college of osteopathic medicine for a temporary alternate pathway for COMLEX- USA Level 3 attestation for candidates who graduated in 2018 or later. This temporary alternate attestation will be reviewed during 2021 to determine if it will continue in 2022. The dean will attest to the candidate's good academic and professional standing based on the conditions outlined in the petition guidelines. Read the [petition guidelines](#) and download the petition form.

### **Temporary Alternate Pathway Attestation (Dean's Level 2-PE Verification)**

For candidates who failed the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE examination and did not have the opportunity to retake and pass, their deans will need to provide a Dean's Verification Attestation to confirm they have the fundamental osteopathic clinical skills necessary to graduate. With this verification attestation we would no longer require six months of GME training prior to taking the Level 3 examination. All other conditions noted above for the original Temporary Alternate Pathway Attestation will apply to this new attestation and the petition guidelines will include the additional criteria used by the dean to provide this Dean's Level 2-PE Verification.

### **Grandfathered Attestation**

For candidates who graduated in 2017 or earlier the NBOME has created a "grandfathered" attestation for Level 3 eligibility. Candidates must have been previously eligible to take the COMLEX-USA Level 3 examination, request to waive the Residency Program Director Attestation and did or did not participate in a residency program. This grandfathered eligibility attestation includes all requirements for other attestations such as multiple attempts up to our six attempt limit and a limit of four attempts in any twelve month period.

## Additional Information

All candidates must:

- Establish or maintain an online account with the NBOME (see also [Registration and Scheduling](#)).
- Agree to the Terms and Conditions described herein.
- Provide proof of identity at the time of the examination (see also Examination Administration).
- Understand and agree that no candidate may take any Level examination for practice or to improve their score for any purpose other than to pass a previously failed examination or an examination where the score has been voided.

## Sequence of Examinations

COMLEX-USA is a three-level examination sequence that must be taken in order as follows. All eligibility requirements are outlined above.

### Examination Sequence

In order to take	A candidate
<b>COMLEX-USA LEVEL 1</b>	Must meet all eligibility requirements to begin the examination sequence
<b>COMLEX-USA LEVEL 2-CE</b>	Must meet all eligibility requirements and have taken and passed COMLEX-USA Level 1
<b>COMLEX-USA LEVEL 3</b>	Must meet all eligibility requirements and have taken and passed COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Level 2-CE

## Retaking An Examination

If a Candidate's Score	Levels 1, 2-CE AND 3
<b>IS PASSING</b>	Candidate is not permitted to retake examination to improve their score
<b>IS FAILING</b>	Candidate may retake examination a maximum of four times in any 12-month period
<b>IS NOT SCORED</b>	Candidate may retake examination a maximum of four times in any 12-month period

### LIMITED NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS

Candidates taking COMLEX-USA examinations are limited to a total of six (6) attempts for each examination.

### EXCEPTION TO SIX-ATTEMPT LIMIT

The only consideration for an exception to this policy for one additional attempt beyond the six-attempt limit is at the explicit request of a Medical Licensing Agency.

For the NBOME to waive the limitation of a maximum of six attempts for any COMLEX-USA examination, candidates are required to:

- Obtain a written petition for waiver from a Medical Licensing Agency;
- Submit written documentation from the COM confirming the candidate remains in good academic and professional standing.

#### **NOTICE of PLANNED CHANGE to POLICY:**

Effective July 1, 2022, candidates taking COMLEX-USA examinations will be limited to a total of four (4) attempts for each examination (COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE, and Level 3), including but not limited to all attempts prior to July 1, 2022. After June 30, 2022, no candidate will be allowed to take any examination more than four (4) times without obtaining approval from the NBOME.

## **CHANGE IN ELIGIBILITY STATUS**

### **If a COM, residency program director or the NBOME deems a candidate ineligible before administration of an examination**

- The candidate may not take the examination.
- The candidate is required to promptly notify the NBOME in writing via email of ineligibility to [clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org)
- If the NBOME is notified that the candidate is ineligible for any reason and the examination was administered, the examination will not be scored. If the examination was administered and the examination was scored and released, the score will be voided.
- If irregular conduct is found to have occurred, the NBOME transcript and other test administration records will be annotated with this information. See also “[Irregular Conduct.](#)”
- COM must remove eligibility from the NBOME Portal.

### **To request a refund if the candidate becomes ineligible after the administration, the candidate must:**

- Provide a written explanation satisfactory to the NBOME, within 30 days of the date notified ineligible to take the examination.
- At the NBOME’s discretion, all or a portion of exam fees paid may be refunded.
- Fees outlined in “Candidate Rescheduled, Canceled, or Missed Scheduled Examinations” apply.
- If not in compliance with the terms herein, all fees paid by or for the candidate will be forfeited.
- Please contact NBOME Client Services ([clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org)) should you have questions.

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# Registration and Scheduling

## Registration Overview

Once a candidate is approved to take the examination by their COM, and they intend to take a COMLEX-USA examination, the candidate must set up an online account with the NBOME and agree to the Terms and Conditions contained therein. With this account, a candidate can register, schedule, or cancel a COMLEX-USA examination by accessing the NBOME website ([www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org)) and logging in to the NBOME Portal. Because dates and seats are limited, a candidate should schedule an examination at least 90 days in advance of the desired test session.

Testing dates for COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE, and Level 3 are available for scheduling up to six months in advance. The [examination calendar](#) can be found on the NBOME website.

Examination fee information for each specific examination can be found under Registration & Scheduling on our website—examination fees for each COMLEX-USA examination: [Level 1](#), [Level 2-CE](#), [Level 2-PE](#) and [Level 3](#).

## Test Accommodation Requests

If a candidate is a person with disabilities as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended, and has established an account with the NBOME, is eligible for the examination and affirmatively has accepted the Terms and Conditions online, they may apply to the NBOME for reasonable accommodations under the ADA if needed for a COMLEX-USA examination to be offered in a place and manner accessible to the candidate.

Any candidate requesting an accommodation under the ADA must:

- Download the appropriate [form and instructions](#) and carefully review the instructions, and complete the form.
- Compile and provide credible and objective documentation to substantiate that the candidate is a “person with disability” as defined by the ADA, including the candidate’s physical or mental impairment(s), how the impairment(s) substantially limits the candidate’s ability to access the examination as is compared with most people in the general population, and why the requested accommodation(s) is necessary and reasonable for the examination to be accessible to the candidate.
- Include with the completed application form a personal statement that elaborates or further explains the information requested on the application form.



- Submit the completed form and all supporting documentation to the NBOME by email to [testacc@nbome.org](mailto:testacc@nbome.org) (preferred method) or by U.S.P.S. certified mail return receipt requested or other commercial carrier at 101 West Elm Street, Suite 230, Conshohocken, PA 19428.

A completed application with full supporting documentation is generally evaluated and a decision rendered by the NBOME within approximately seventy-five (75) days of its receipt by the NBOME; however additional processing time may be required if additional documentation is needed.

If the candidate does not provide complete information and supporting documentation within thirty (30) days of receipt by the candidate of any notification that the application is incomplete, the NBOME will close the candidate's request and notify the candidate that the case has been closed. The candidate may subsequently submit a new application for test accommodations.

### **Scheduling**

A candidate may not schedule an accommodated examination unless and until the candidate receives written approval of the accommodation from the NBOME. Nonetheless, pending NBOME's consideration of a request for accommodation(s), a candidate may schedule a standard (non-accommodated) examination. However, if an accommodation is later approved by the NBOME, and the candidate has not taken the examination, the candidate may need to reschedule depending on the nature of the approved accommodation(s). See "Candidate Rescheduled, Canceled, or Missed Scheduled Examinations."

If an accommodation is approved by the NBOME for a candidate to take a COMLEX-USA examination, the candidate must contact [Client Services](#) to arrange for administration of that examination or other instructions regarding the accommodation.

If the candidate chooses to schedule and takes a standard (non-accommodated) examination while their request for accommodation and any accommodated examination is pending, the candidate's application of an accommodation will be deemed to have been withdrawn and the NBOME will score the standard (non-accommodated) examination and report the candidate's score in the manner set forth herein.

### **Reconsideration**

If an application for accommodation is not approved as requested, and the candidate thereafter obtains new information and/or documentation supporting their request and which addresses the NBOME's concerns, the candidate may request the NBOME to reconsider its decision. Any request for reconsideration must be in writing and submitted to the NBOME by email at [testacc@nbome.org](mailto:testacc@nbome.org). Requests for reconsideration are subject to the same level of review as initial applications and are generally evaluated and a decision reported by the NBOME within approximately seventy-five (75) days of the NBOME's receipt of the request.

## Candidate Rescheduled, Canceled or Missed Scheduled Examinations

The process and fees associated with candidates that reschedule, cancel, or miss scheduled examinations differ by the examination type and lead time.

**For COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE, and Level 3, candidates may reschedule as follows:**

### **More than 30 days before the scheduled date**

- Reschedule or cancel online
- No fee due
- Receive a refund for the full amount for cancellations

### **6 to 30 days before the scheduled date**

- Reschedule or cancel online
- \$85 fee due to Prometric for COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE
- \$170 fee due to Prometric for COMLEX-USA Level 3
- Receive a refund for the remainder for cancellations

### **1 to 5 days before the scheduled date**

- Cancel online
- Forfeit \$250 of the registration fee for COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE
- Forfeit \$350 of the registration fee for COMLEX-USA Level 3
- Receive a refund for the remainder for cancellations

### **Within 24 hours of the scheduled date**

- Candidate is a “No Show”
- Forfeit \$400 of the registration fee for COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE
- Forfeit \$500 of the registration fee for COMLEX-USA Level 3
- Receive a refund for the remainder for cancellations

## **Request for Waiver of Rescheduling/Cancellation Fee**

If the candidate reschedules, cancels, or is considered a “No Show” because of circumstances beyond their control, and [submits a request](#) to the NBOME in writing no later than 30 days following the scheduled/missed administration, the NBOME in its sole discretion may waive and/or refund all or a portion of the rescheduling/cancellation fee. Please contact NBOME Client Services ([clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org)) should you have questions.

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# Examination Administration

## Arrival

Candidates must arrive 30 minutes before the start of the scheduled examination administration. Special site-specific requirements may be enforced as required by local, state, or federal mandates (i.e., social distancing, masking, etc.)

## Identification

Candidates must bring one piece of identification, which must be a valid government-issued photo ID with signature, such as a current driver's license, military ID, or passport, and will be scanned and retained by the NBOME. If the identification does not include a signature, candidate must provide a secondary form of identification with a signature.

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

All candidates will be digitally photographed and may be biometrically scanned (such as fingerprint) as part of the registration process. This identification will be required to enter and exit the testing room.

## Attire

Candidates should dress comfortably.

## Late Arrival

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

Any candidate who arrives later than 30 minutes past the scheduled start time and is not permitted to take the examination shall be considered a "No Show" unless the test center is able to deliver the examination in its entirety. The candidate must re-register to take the examination and pay all required fees.

## No Outside Information or Access to Personal Items

During the full test session, a candidate will not be permitted access to any information or data (except for information or data provided to the candidate by the NBOME or Prometric at the test center) and the candidate may not communicate in any manner with anyone outside the test center. Candidates are required to place all personal property, including watches, in the secure lockers provided at the test center. For Authorized Breaks (defined in “Breaks” section below) on the COMLEX-USA Levels 1, 2-CE, and 3 examinations, candidates will be permitted access to their lockers for food, drink, medicine, and other stored items including electronic devices such as cell phones. Candidates may only access personal items, including study materials or electronic devices during Authorized Breaks. Any candidate found with prohibited materials or otherwise in violation of the terms herein may be considered to have committed or contributed to irregular conduct regardless of the intent of the candidate. In such cases the candidate may be removed from the testing area, and a notation of irregular conduct may be made on the examination record. See also “[Irregular Conduct](#).”

## Breaks

Computer-based examinations have three (3) Authorized Breaks candidates may choose to take during the course of the exam day: one (1) 40-minute lunch break and two (2) additional 10-minute breaks (one each scheduled during the morning and afternoon sessions). An Authorized Break is time scheduled by the NBOME throughout the COMLEX-USA Level 1, 2-CE and 3 examinations to allow candidates to exit the testing room. Authorized Breaks provide the candidate with a planned break from the timed exam, enabling the candidate time for lunch or to attend to personal matters. Authorized Break time does not count against total examination time, and candidates may choose to bypass these breaks. However, if the Authorized Break time is exceeded, the additional time will be deducted from the remaining examination time. Remember that when you re-enter the testing room after any break, you will need to show a valid ID and your fingerprint will be taken. Please allow sufficient time to check in and be seated. Any individual leaving the testing area at any time other than during an Authorized Break will be reported.

Any additional break time which may be provided to a candidate as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act is not covered within this section as separate instructions for the utilization of those breaks are provided to those candidates on an individual basis.

## Food and Drink

Candidates are not permitted to bring food or drink into the testing room. Food and drink must be stored in the assigned locker that candidates can access during the Authorized Breaks. If a candidate has a medical need that requires food or drink during the testing period, they must submit the request in writing to the NBOME in advance for consideration.

## Must Be Unaccompanied

A candidate may not have in the testing 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.

## Special Assistance

Unauthorized possession of personal items in the secure testing area is prohibited. A candidate requiring the use of personal items for medical reasons during testing must contact the NBOME at least four weeks before their test date. Even though a candidate may not be a person with disability in accordance with the provisions of the ADA, the NBOME may provide limited special assistance if sufficient notification is provided to the NBOME. See also “[Test Accommodation Requests](#)” herein. The test center professional staff may permit or provide special assistance in accordance with the business parameters established between the test center provider and the NBOME; however, under no circumstance may the test 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 other special assistance that may be permitted include but are not limited to the use of ear plugs, dietary needs, taking of medication, breast pumps, or checking blood glucose during the exam.

## Test Content Comments

Candidates are encouraged to report to the NBOME any comments regarding examination content in the item notes fields that are available during the examination, or in the post-examination surveys. These comments are reviewed by NBOME staff on a regular basis.

## Emergency and Evacuation

In the event of an emergency during administration of a COMLEX-USA examination, the NBOME (either directly or through Prometric) will endeavor to protect the safety of all candidates and staff while preserving the integrity of the examination. All candidates are required to follow the test center professional staff’s instructions and obey test center placards for their safety and the safety of others.

If as a result of the emergency or evacuation the examination cannot be completed in its entirety or the data from the examination is irretrievable, the examination will not be scored. The candidate may schedule a new appointment to test on a mutually agreeable future date without incurring an additional fee. Please contact NBOME Client Services ([clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org)) should you have questions.

If a candidate has completed a valid examination before the emergency or evacuation, and the data from the examination are retrievable, the candidate’s examination may be scored and reported.

## Missing Examination Data

If a candidate’s examination data is missing, the examination may not be recorded or reported for the candidate.

## **Cancellation Due To Inclement Weather or Other *Force Majeure***

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 may schedule a new appointment to test on a mutually agreeable future date without an additional fee. Candidates may not be reimbursed for any travel or lodging expenses in the event that a test is canceled under these circumstances. Please contact NBOME Client Services ([clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org)) should you have questions.

## **Test Center Contact Information**

The specific test center contact information for examinations is provided on the electronic receipt candidates receive as confirmation of a scheduled test date. Candidates should retain a copy of the receipt for future reference.

For information about the possible cancellation of an examination, candidates should visit the [Prometric website](#) or call 800-633-3926 to learn if the test center will be open for examination administration.

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# Adverse Testing Conditions

During an examination administration, unanticipated circumstances may arise. Candidates must obey all test center professional staff instructions for the safety of all affected by an emergency.

Some events may be considered to be an Adverse Testing Condition (“Adverse Testing Condition” or “ATC”). An ATC is a situation that occurs during an examination administration that the NBOME determines, in its sole discretion, is outside the control of the candidate and interrupts the normal administration of the examination and substantially affects the candidate’s performance on the examination. Examples include delayed start of an examination, test interruption, equipment/technical malfunction, and/or test center environment.

If during an examination a candidate brings to the attention of the test center professional staff any testing condition that they believe has or will substantially and adversely affect their performance on the examination, and the condition is not resolved to the reasonable satisfaction of the candidate at the test site, the candidate may either:

CONTINUE THE EXAMINATION or WITHDRAW FROM THE EXAMINATION

**In either case, the candidate must:**

1. Promptly report any interruption of the examination to the test center staff on the day of the examination.
2. Directly provide to the NBOME, via email to [clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org), credible and verifiable written evidence of the incident within 10 calendar days following the date of the examination. Simply making a comment in the post examination survey regarding any possible ATC does not qualify as written notification.

The NBOME will initiate a review. The NBOME will place the scoring process “on hold” until the NBOME has completed its review of the matter.

After completing its review of an alleged ATC, the NBOME in its sole discretion may proceed with scoring or not scoring the examination and offer the candidate the opportunity to retake the examination in part or in its entirety as determined by the NBOME in its sole discretion.

If the candidate fails to so notify both the test center staff and the NBOME of any claimed ATC, the candidate thereby waives any claim or right to any recourse they have against the NBOME; Prometric; or their employees, agents, or representatives arising out or relating to that claimed ATC.

If an ATC at a test center is universally adverse to all or most candidates, as determined by the NBOME in its sole discretion, the NBOME may offer to all candidates so affected an option to reschedule the examination for a mutually agreeable future date without the candidate incurring any additional fee. For any rescheduling thereafter, the candidate will be responsible for the associated fees. If the NBOME is unable to reschedule the examination when this option is offered, then it is the responsibility of the candidate to make the new test appointment for a mutually agreeable future date.

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# Irregular 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 in its sole discretion take one or more of the following actions:

- Void the candidate's examination and score or not score any examination.
- Deem the candidate to have failed the examination and enter a "fail" score on the candidate's examination record and NBOME transcript.
- Annotate the candidate's examination record and NBOME transcript for the examination as "Irregular Conduct." For instances where the conduct is deemed less severe, the NBOME has the discretion to annotate the candidate's examination record, ERAS transcript, and NBOME transcript with "Other" to document this conduct.
- Suspend, revoke, or refuse to provide any score report or NBOME transcript to a candidate or any third party.
- Deny any application by the candidate to take any NBOME examination.
- Report the incident to the candidate's school or graduate medical education program and/or to any licensure board or state or national jurisdiction, agency or authority.
- And/or take any other action the NBOME in its sole discretion deems appropriate.

The candidate shall fully cooperate with any NBOME investigation of any possible irregularities in examination 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 take a future COMLEX-USA examination.

The term "Irregular Conduct" includes any behavior on the part of any candidate that violates the integrity or security of the examination, behavior that is disruptive to administration of the examination, or behavior deemed by the NBOME in its sole discretion to be inappropriate in connection with the application, registration, taking, administration, integrity, and security of any NBOME examination. Such behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Copying, fraud, deceit, or other dishonest conduct.
- Refusal to provide proper identification or permit photo documentation or other identification for verification at any time.
- Disrupting another candidate or candidates.
- At any time (i.e., before, during, or after any examination) verbally or physically harming or threatening to harm the test center professional staff, other examinees, test center employees, or NBOME personnel, representatives or agents, during telephone and in-person encounters regarding scheduling, scores, or score reporting.
- Communication or attempts to communicate with others during the examination other than authorized test 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.
- Non-compliance with test center rules and regulations and security requirements, including operating test center



equipment without 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 use of cell phones, personal computers, internet access, test review companies, or any other means) at any time, either before, during, or after any examination.
- Using or having available or access to any unauthorized device, text, notes, or other material that could assist the candidate in taking the examination.
- Providing false admittance information or altering or misrepresenting information in applications, score reports, transcripts, or certificates.
- Providing false or forged identification upon presentation for testing at a test center.
- Violation of the NBOME's non-disclosure or confidentiality policies or the candidate's non-disclosure agreement at any time.
- Any violation of the Terms and Conditions, policies, rules, procedures, or obligations of candidates set out in the Bulletin of Information (BOI) as published at the time of the violation.
- Bringing personal property into the test area is considered by the NBOME to violate the security of the examination.
- Leaving their assigned test area during the administration of any COMLEX-USA examination.
- Other behavior as deemed by the NBOME to be unethical or unprofessional.

**NOTE:** Candidates are under both proctor and electronic surveillance during administration of the COMLEX-USA examinations at all test centers.

Any test center professional staff or other Prometric staff who suspects Irregular Conduct by a candidate during administration of the COMLEX-USA examinations will report that information to the NBOME. Also, candidates who directly observe Irregular Conduct must report such activity to the Prometric test center professional staff.

NBOME reviews all Irregular Conduct reports and may pursue any and all actions it deems appropriate for or in connection with any Irregular Conduct, including but not limited to any damages or losses incurred by NBOME, including its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, caused by the candidate's Irregular Conduct, and injunctive or other equitable relief without bond or other security.

Copying, reproducing, verbally discussing, relaying, or recording test items or test content, in addition to violating security, may result in action by the NBOME against the candidate for violation of copyright laws and/or other action by the NBOME allowed by law.

A candidate who is notified that they have, or is believed to have been, engaged in Irregular Conduct, or is being investigated for alleged Irregular Conduct, will have 10 calendar days from the date of such notification to submit in writing, including email, and be received by the NBOME, a personal statement signed by the candidate of their position on the claimed or possible Irregular Conduct, and any and all information known or available to the candidate that they believe is relevant to the matter. After receipt of the candidate's statement and any information, or the lapse of the 10-day response period, whichever is earlier, the NBOME will determine whether the candidate has engaged in Irregular Conduct and, if so, what action the NBOME will take. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the NBOME may in its sole discretion take any action it deems appropriate prior to the submittal of any statement by the candidate to protect the NBOME and the integrity of its examinations.

Decisions regarding Irregular Conduct are determined solely at the discretion of the NBOME and all such decisions of the NBOME are final.

Due to the nature of the process involved in reports of Irregular Conduct of a candidate or investigation of such conduct or any complaint in connection with the administration of a COMLEX-USA examination, an investigation of any actual or suspected Irregular Conduct may delay the release of any score of a candidate. The NBOME will not release a score, if any, while the matter is under investigation. If a score release is expected to be significantly delayed because of an investigation for reasons of alleged Irregular Conduct, the NBOME will notify the candidate and give the reasons for the investigation.

Information relating to any Irregular Conduct or behavior of a candidate and any action taken by the NBOME in response to a candidate's Irregular Conduct or behavior may become part of the permanent record of the candidate maintained by the NBOME and available to third parties. Every candidate authorizes the NBOME to release any or all of the candidate's personal statement or other information provided by the candidate and any action taken by the NBOME relating to the candidate's actual or alleged Irregular Conduct or behavior to the candidate's medical school, residency program director, any licensing board, authority, or other person(s) or entity or entities deemed appropriate by the NBOME or required by law, without prior notice to or the consent of the candidate.

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## Other Unprofessional Conduct

NBOME deems professionalism to be an important competency of an osteopathic physician, and a candidate must demonstrate professionalism at all times. Unprofessional conduct includes:

- The use of foul, lewd, improper, or culturally insensitive statements or behavior toward test center employees, other examinees, NBOME personnel, representatives or agents, including during telephone and in-person encounters regarding scheduling, scores, or score reporting before, during, or after any examination.
- Any conduct or behavior deemed by the NBOME to be inappropriate or unprofessional for an osteopathic physician.
- Violation by the candidate of any of the Terms and Conditions as set out in NBOME's Bulletin of Information (BOI) that was in effect when the violation occurred.

When any unprofessional conduct comes to the attention of NBOME, NBOME at its sole discretion may take any action it deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, any action for Irregular Conduct and/or any of the following:

- Record the name of the candidate, nature of the behavior or conduct, and the time and conditions under which the behavior or conduct occurred.
- Notate the candidate's record to reflect the unprofessional conduct.
- Record and store conversations or other documentation that are considered to be unprofessional.
- Record the punitive action, if any, taken against a candidate, including, but not limited to, a period of suspension or permanent ineligibility to test.
- Void and/or not score any examination taken by the candidate, deem the candidate to have failed the examination, report "fail" as the result of the examination, and annotate the candidate's examination record for the examination with an "I" as Irregular Conduct.
- For instances where the conduct is deemed less severe, NBOME has the discretion to annotate the candidate's examination record with "Other" to document this conduct.
- Notification to the office of the dean of the college of osteopathic medicine and/or the director for medical education of the graduate medical education program where the candidate is matriculated or enrolled.

As with other Irregular Conduct, information relating to a candidate's unprofessional conduct may become part of the permanent record of the candidate maintained by NBOME. NBOME may in its sole discretion release any or all of the candidate's information or action(s) taken by NBOME relating to the candidate's Irregular Conduct or unprofessional conduct to the candidate's medical school, residency program director, any licensing board, authority, or other person(s) or entity or entities deemed appropriate by NBOME or as required by law, without prior notice to or the consent of the candidate.

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# Security and Confidentiality

All examinations, examination materials, answer sheets, grading materials, and clinical materials used in the COMLEX-USA examinations or other examinations of NBOME are the sole and exclusive property of the NBOME. All examinations of NBOME are protected by the copyright laws of the United States. Candidates have no right, title, or interest in or access to any examination of the NBOME, or to NBOME's means and methods for test development or its methodology of testing and scoring, or to any data or information relating to any examination of NBOME. All rights are reserved by NBOME. Only authorized test center professional staff or other authorized agents or employees of NBOME shall have custody or control of the examination and the examination materials.

NBOME is not affiliated with, does not sanction, and does not endorse any commercial enterprise that purportedly offers COMLEX-USA test preparation courses or materials. For self-assessment purposes, NBOME publishes and makes available to candidates its COMSAE examination series and tutorials.

Candidates may have access to the examination only while it is being administered and only under the supervision of authorized test center professional staff. Post-examination access to, discussion of, or review by candidates, or any person on behalf of the candidates, of the examination or examination material is strictly prohibited.

Any discussion or disclosure of any aspect of the test items or the clinical cases or standardized patients either during the examination or after the examination is strictly prohibited. Candidates shall not discuss, disclose, paraphrase, publish, or otherwise make known to anyone, including another professional student, any test item, or information relating to any NBOME examination or other confidential property belonging to NBOME. Any violation by a candidate of this confidentiality agreement will be considered Irregular Conduct and be dealt with as prescribed in "Irregular Conduct" and/or as otherwise determined by NBOME. NBOME shall also be entitled to recover from the candidate all its damages and losses, including reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, caused by any Irregular Conduct of the candidate. Every candidate also agrees and acknowledges that NBOME may have no adequate remedy at law and in its sole discretion is entitled to injunctive and/or other relief to prevent or limit any disclosure of test items or other confidential property of NBOME, in addition to its damages or losses, including its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred by NBOME as a result of any action taken to defend or protect its confidential property. See also sections 2 and 5 of the [Terms and Conditions](#).

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## Refusal to Administer Examination

NBOME may in its sole and absolute discretion refuse to administer or provide any of its examinations to any person for failure to meet the eligibility requirements or to adhere to the terms of this BOI, including but not limited to Irregular Conduct or Other Unprofessional Conduct. If NBOME determines not to provide its examination to any person who has registered or scheduled to take a NBOME examination and paid a registration or other fee to NBOME, the only recourse that person shall have against NBOME is a refund of the registration or other fee paid to NBOME by the candidate.

# Examination Scores

The number of test items answered correctly (the raw score) is converted to a 3-digit standard score for the purposes of making the NBOME's pass/fail decisions and for reporting the results.

The conversion for standard scores involves information about the performance of candidates that have taken these examinations previously:

Passing Scores	
COMLEX-USA Level 1	400
COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE	400
COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE	Pass
COMLEX-USA Level 3	350

For information on converting a COMLEX-USA score to a percentile score and using the COMLEX-USA Percentile Score Conversion Tool, refer to [COMLEX-USA Percentile Scores](#) on the NBOME website.

For state medical and osteopathic medical licensing board purposes, a passing score on COMLEX-USA is equivalent to the historic 2-digit standard score of 75.

**NOTICE of PLANNED CHANGE to POLICY:**

NBOME will change from reporting three-digit numeric scores to reporting only "Pass" or "Fail" for COMLEX-USA Level 1 examinations administered effective May 1, 2022.

## Scoring

### All Levels

The percentage of candidates that pass or fail a COMLEX-USA examination is not predetermined. The pass/fail standard is criterion-based. A candidate's score for any COMLEX-USA examination is based solely on a candidate's performance on the total examination, not on performance in individual content areas. The COMLEX-USA examination score reports include performance profiles summarizing relative strengths and weaknesses for areas designated on the blueprint.

Items that may be included in the examination solely for research or pre-testing purposes will not be included in the candidate's score.

### Level 2-PE

For COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE, details about examination scoring are available in the [Orientation Guide](#) and at the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE pre-examination and post-examination [FAQ](#), which can be found on the NBOME website. Level 2-PE is a conjunctive pass or fail criterion-based examination.

## Setting the Minimum Pass/Fail Standard

Consistent with many other national high-stakes examinations for physician licensure worldwide, the NBOME follows industry standard best practices in determining minimum pass/fail standards for its COMLEX-USA examinations, for periodic review, and, if needed, for resetting current standards. Typically every three to five years, the NBOME reviews the standards for minimum competency required to pass COMLEX-USA examinations. This process, referred to as "standard setting," may result in a change in the "cut score" needed to pass an examination. The NBOME reserves the right to review the minimum passing standards for any NBOME examinations at any time, and minimum passing standards may be adjusted without notice before score release. A notice of adjustments is posted on the NBOME website. To learn more about the NBOME's process for standard setting, refer to the Standard Setting section of the NBOME website for all Levels.

## Primary Intended Use and Secondary Uses of COMLEX-USA Examination Scores

The primary intended use of COMLEX-USA is for initial licensure of osteopathic physicians for the practice of osteopathic medicine. Recognized and important secondary uses of the COMLEX-USA examination program include the following: advancement and promotion, including graduation, of students in osteopathic medical schools; direct evidence of student learning and outcomes research by osteopathic medical schools and of residents in graduate medical education programs; uses by residency program directors as part of eligibility criteria for entry into graduate medical education programs; and advancement, promotion, and assessment of medical knowledge competencies for program completion by residents in graduate medical education programs. The NBOME advises against the use of any evaluation instrument for which there is insufficient validity evidence.

## Score Reporting

Candidates will be notified by email when their scores have been released. Candidates may access their pass/fail status and/or scores for any COMLEX-USA examination through the Portal on the NBOME website. The office of the dean at a candidate's college of osteopathic medicine may access this information for their students using a secure school page on Portal.

Each candidate acknowledges and agrees that the NBOME will provide the candidate's COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE, and Level 2-PE examination score reports to the candidate and office of the dean of the candidate's school and the NBOME will provide the COMLEX-USA Level 3 examination score reports to the candidate and the office of the dean of the candidate's school of graduation, the program director, director of medical education, or designated institutional official of the candidate's graduate medical education program. Each candidate acknowledges and agrees that their examination records may be provided to additional third parties as provided in the Bulletin of Information (BOI) (including but not limited to as specified in the Privacy and Use of Candidate Data section herein) and in the [NBOME Privacy Notice](#) posted on the NBOME website.

No COMLEX-USA scores will be reported by telephone, email, or fax.

For candidates tested before July 1, 2012, a reprint of the score report may be requested in writing (including email).

Score Reports are generally posted to the candidate's account at "View Score Report" and the secure school page of the NBOME Portal. Specific score release target dates for COMLEX-USA scores, based on dates of test administration, can be found under Score Release Dates on the NBOME website.

**Score report release may be subject to delays that are contingent upon candidate scheduling, standard setting, and other variables.**

## Examination Record Annotations

On occasion, scores may be released with the following annotations:

**I – Irregular Conduct** which occurred on the part of the candidate. Candidate conduct which may be considered irregular is described under "Irregular Conduct." Authorized persons may obtain further information regarding this annotation by contacting the NBOME.

**O – Other Condition(s)** which occurred during the administration of an examination and resulted in the examination not being scored, or the examination was scored after being administered or taken by the candidate under different or unusual conditions. Authorized persons may obtain further information regarding this annotation by contacting the NBOME.



## Posting Scores on NBOME Portal

In addition to the information below, please see the score release schedule on the NBOME website.

The score release dates for candidates taking COMLEX-USA Levels 1, 2-CE and 3 from the first and second testing windows are anticipated to be slightly longer than usual to allow sufficient time to statistically validate candidate performance for the new testing cycle, which began on May 4, 2021 for Level 1, June 15, 2021 for Level 2-CE and January 19, 2021 for Level 3. The additional time allows for a reliable scoring process, and is dependent on the number of candidates who test in a given period. Therefore, these dates reflect our best prediction of anticipated numbers of examinations administered in the first two testing windows. Please see the COMLEX-USA score release web pages for specific score release information.

## Score Confirmation

Before releasing examination results or posting score reports, the NBOME conducts a thorough quality assurance process to ensure scoring accuracy.

Any candidate who wishes to have their examination results reviewed one extra time may request a score confirmation, for a fee of \$75.

Confirmation for any COMLEX-USA examination can be provided by request, if submitted within 120 days of the examination. Requests are processed through your NBOME account, located within the 'View Scores' section. The option for submitting this request is listed at the bottom of the page. The NBOME does not release information about the scoring of individual examination questions.

COMLEX-USA computer-based examination score confirmation is limited solely to a review of the candidate's recorded responses and is unlikely to change the candidate's score. We verify that candidate responses were graded against the scoring key for the exam form that was assigned to the candidate.

## Privacy and Use of Candidate Data

It is the policy of the NBOME that candidate scores and other confidential data, including personally identifiable information, provided by the candidate or about the candidate, will be protected from improper access, use, or disclosure and will not be released to any third party, except as provided or authorized in the Bulletin of Information (BOI), or at the request of the candidate, or as required by law; provided the NBOME may use a candidate's de-identified score or other candidate data or information for research or other purposes related to the mission of the NBOME without notification to or the permission of the candidate unless and until the candidate specifically notifies the NBOME in writing that their score, data, and information may not be used by the NBOME for research or other purposes.

For more information please see [NBOME's Privacy Notice](#) on our website.

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## Release of Certified Transcripts

Candidates who have completed COMLEX-USA examinations after 1990 may request a certified (official) transcript by logging into the Portal, using the “Purchase Transcripts” tab, and completing the electronic request form and payment.

Candidates who completed COMLEX-USA examinations (or its predecessors) before 1990 may either download, complete, and email a paper form or utilize the electronic version noted above, paying the required fee of \$60. No requests for transcripts will be taken by telephone or fax.

COMLEX-USA transcripts contain scores and pass/fail status for all COMLEX-USA examinations taken and score interpretation annotations/notes. A candidate’s certified transcript is the only verification of scores the NBOME considers acceptable by Medical Licensing Agencies and the Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS).

The normal processing time for a certified transcript is 3-5 business days following receipt of request and payment.

All certified transcripts will be mailed by first-class mail unless otherwise arranged with the NBOME.