



## WHAT IS ABO & NCLE

The American Board of Opticianry & National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc. (ABO-NCLE) is a national, not-for-profit organization which administers voluntary competency certification examinations for dispensing Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians. ABO-NCLE is the **only** Opticianry Examination Organization in the United States that has received Accreditation as a Certifying Organization, pursuant to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO/IEC 17024:2012). These independent standards provide verification of the viability and credibility of the certification programs utilized for certification, including candidates for licensure.

## ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook provides important information about the ABO-NCLE policies, processes, and procedures for those interested in taking the **American Board of Opticianry Practical Exam (ABOP)** and the **National Contact Lens Examiners Practical Exam (NCLEP)** and an overview of information on renewing certification.

More detailed ABO-NCLE testing and renewal information, including information related to specific exams— such as test content outline, references, and other important information — can be obtained at ABO-NCLE’s website at [www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org) or by calling 1.703.719.5800.

## NAMES OF EXAMS

ABO-NCLE offers two different Computer Simulated Skills and Knowledge Examinations. The American Board of Opticianry Practical Exam (ABOP Exam) is designed as a supplement for those Opticians who have successfully completed the ABO-NCLE’s National Opticianry Certification Examination (NOCE). The National Contact Lens Examiners Practical Examination (NCLEP Exam) is designed as a supplement for those Contact Lens Technicians who have demonstrated competency by successfully completing the ABO-NCLE’s Contact Lens Registry Examination (CLRE). Candidates for the ABOP Exam and NCLEP Exam must be currently Certified by the ABO or NCLE, as applicable, to be eligible to take the ABOP Exam and/or the NCLEP Exam. When registering for the ABOP Exam and/or the NCLEP Exam, candidates must demonstrate that they have successfully completed the NOCE or CLRE, as applicable, and candidates need to use care in making sure that they register for the correct examination.

## WHAT IS PRACTICAL CERTIFICATION?

Certification is the process by which a non-governmental agency or an association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications. Practical Certification is utilized by licensing states to demonstrate skills and abilities attendant to the practice of Opticianry and Contact Lens Technology and can also be utilized for demonstration to private entities as validation of practical competence, recognition of application of knowledge to actual skill sets, and/or for regulation. It can be mandatory or voluntary. Practical Certification validates an individual’s hands-on knowledge and skills in a defined role and clinical area of practice, based on predetermined standards.



## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the American Board of Opticianry & National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc., is to promote excellence in the professions of Opticianry and Contact Lens Technology through credentialing programs. ABO-NCLE's internationally renowned accredited credentialing programs certify and recognize individual Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians. It also offers approval of educational courses and materials in order to assure the continuing education of Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians. ABO-NCLE's Certification Programs enable Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians to demonstrate their expertise and validate their knowledge to employers and patients. Through targeted exams that incorporate the latest practice standards, the ABO-NCLE Certification processes identify qualified Ophthalmic Dispensers at various levels of knowledge and proficiency for the consumer and for the ophthalmic community by (1) certifying those who pass the professionally developed examination(s) as "Certified Opticians" and/or "Certified Contact Lens Technicians" and (2) requiring approved levels of continuing education for recertification.

The ABOP Exam and NCLEP Exam have been specifically designed to supplement a candidate's demonstrated proficiency by providing for application of knowledge demonstrated through successful completion of the NOCE or CLRE, to skills and abilities, through virtual demonstrations, video patient interactions, instrumentality identification, and similar demonstrations of Opticianry and/or Contact Lens technical skills and abilities.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

ABO-NCLE endorses and adheres to the principles of equal opportunity. ABO-NCLE does not discriminate against any individual because of age, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or veteran status, or any other protected status.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to take the ABOP Exam and/or NCLEP Exam, a candidate must have successfully completed the ABO-NCLE's NOCE and/or CLRE, as applicable. If the licensing board of the state where the candidate works has regulations or statutory requirements that are different than ABO-NCLE's, the state requirements supersede those of ABO-NCLE. Practical Certification, through administration of the ABOP Exam and/or NCLEP Exam is an assessment of each candidate's basic skills and abilities relative to the job functions and responsibilities of a typical Optician and/or Contact Lens Technician and is determined based upon knowledge that an Optician and/or Contact Lens Technician should have on the first day of practice without supervision. Please note that considerations related to each candidate's background including but not limited to criminal history, are deferred to prospective employers and, where applicable, state licensing boards for individual determination.

## HOW ARE EXAMS DEVELOPED?

All ABO-NCLE Certification Examinations, including the ABOP and NCLEP, are developed consistent with the technical guidelines recommended by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (AERA, APA, NCME; 1999). Each examination is developed by ABO-NCLE in cooperation with a Content Expert Panel (CEP) composed of carefully selected Subject Matter Experts (SME) in the field. CEPs analyze the professional skills and abilities from job task analyses, which provide the evidence for the test content outline (also called the test blueprint). Test questions or "items" are written by Certified Opticians and Certified Contact Lens Fitters/Technicians in their discipline who have received training by ABO & NCLE



staff and Prometric in writing items. The items are then reviewed by the CEP to ensure validity and psychometric quality before being used as scored items on the actual examinations. ABO-NCLE adheres to a variety of guidelines during the development of items to ensure that the items are appropriate for the Practical Exam Certification exams. This includes editing and coding items, referencing items to the approved test content outlines and reference books, and screening items for bias and stereotypes. Items for the Practical Certification Examinations are selected that reflect the test content outline and item distributions. The validity and reliability of the exams are monitored by ABO-NCLE staff. Certification examinations are updated approximately every two to three years.



## OVERVIEW OF THE ABOP AND NCLEP

General Information	
Eligibility	Candidates must demonstrate successful completion of the ABO-NCLE's NOCE and/or CLRE, be currently Certified by ABO-NCLE in the field of practice, as applicable.
Target group	ABO and/or NCLE Certified Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians who work in any type of practice site in the U.S., who desire to demonstrate skills and abilities applicable to Opticianry and Contact Lens Technology.
Test sites	More than 300 Prometric Test Centers
Number of times per year that exam is offered	Quarterly, in February, May, August and November
Fee to change exam testing window, date, time or location.	\$50 – the candidate is responsible for paying the fee themselves.
Exam format	Secure computer-based examination utilizing pictorial, virtual, video, audio, and hot-spot technologies.
Number of questions	30 questions, based upon pictorial, virtual, video, audio, and hot-spot technologies.
Length of exam	60 minutes
Quality Assurance	
Exam based on practice analysis	YES – conducted 2019
Advice/oversight by panel of experts	YES
Committed to following Standards of Education and Psychological Testing published by the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education	YES
Exam items approve by panel with wide range of experience in the field	YES
All exam items pretested	YES – through years of statistical analyses and review of knowledge-based questions
Complete item analysis conducted for all exams	YES



Exam Security	
Eligibility verified at time of exam	Pre-registration required; approved government-issued photo identification must be shown at test center.
Procedure for rotating and retiring items	YES
Procedure for equating multiple versions of the exam to assure that they present equal challenge to candidates	YES
Proctors trained to follow procedures and to handle emergency situations	YES
Stringent computer encryption programming	YES
Exams sent to site before the day of the exam	No; the exam, sent in a secure, encrypted format is downloaded at the center only after the candidate checks in and their identification is verified
Extra printed exams must be accounted for and destroyed if not used.	No, this is not necessary because the exam is computer-generated only.
Services for Candidates and Others	
Candidates with disabilities accommodated in compliance with ADA	YES
Website for exam information	<a href="http://www.abo-ncle.org">www.abo-ncle.org</a>
Exam results reported to candidates	Candidates will typically receive a preliminary indication of the results, unless the exam is not subject to instant results. On occasion, ABO-NCLE is required to undergo "health checks" and the results may not be available for between four to six weeks after the close of the testing window (typically February and May administrations). There is no guarantee of preliminary results; official results will be released as soon as possible after appropriate analysis and review is completed.
Exam registration/cancellation	Only the candidate can register and/or cancel exam

## THE EXAMINATIONS

The sixty-minute examinations are designed and developed by groups of Certified Opticians and Contact Lens Fitters/Technicians with assistance from an independent testing service. The purpose of the ABOP Exam and NCLEP Exam are to apply the knowledge previously demonstrated by the candidates to skills and abilities associated with the performance of tasks required for the professional practice of Opticianry and/or Contact Lens Technology.

The examinations are developed for Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians from all practice settings in the United States. They are based on hands-on knowledge from many different optical situations. There is nothing tricky about the examination. Questions are created to test the ability of a candidate to apply knowledge previously demonstrated through successful completion of the NOCE and CLRE basic examinations to real-life scenarios that would be expected to be encountered by a practicing



Optician and/or Contact Len Technician/Fitter on the first day of employment in his or her practice without supervision.

Exam questions fall into three general types: 1) those that require immediate recognition of the correct response through correct identification of instrumentality and basic problem solving, 2) those that require understanding and/or utilization of basic instrumentality; 3) those that require candidates to comprehend patient interaction and demonstrate appropriate problem-solving based upon information presented by video vignettes of patient interactions; and 4) those that require recognition of basic fundamental knowledge in the field of Opticianry and/or Contact Lens Technology.

## EXAM REGISTRATION

- A. **Completion of the registration form.** The ABOP and NCLEP are offered at over 300 testing centers quarterly – in February, May, August, and November. Candidates must register on the ABO-NCLE website ([www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org).) The locations of the test centers can be found on the Prometric website. To schedule your exam, you must first register and pay for the exam on the ABO-NCLE website. You will receive a confirmation email for the exam for which you registered. You need to save this document. 48 hours after registering you will be able to schedule your exam at one of over 300 Prometric testing centers by using the scheduling link found on the email confirmation. Only the candidate can register for an exam and the candidate is the only one that can schedule an exam.
- B. **Information Required.** Candidates must provide their full legal name, address, telephone numbers, e-mail address and demographic information. Candidates should also indicate whether they qualify for special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. There is a special accommodation form on our website to download and request the available accommodations. **Giving an accurate e-mail address and telephone number are mandatory.**
- C. **Payment.** The ABOP and the NCLEP cost \$75 each and are payable by credit card at the time the candidate registers online. There is also a late fee of \$35 per exam that must be paid if the registration is not completed by the registration deadline but is completed by the late registration deadline date.
- D. **Transferring Exams.** Candidates who are unable to take the exam(s) after paying and registering, can transfer to the next available testing window. Candidates are required to call the ABO-NCLE office and pay a \$75 transfer fee before the last day of the current testing window they are originally registered for. Candidates who are unable to take the exam(s) after Scheduling an exam, and needs to re-schedule their scheduled exam within the same testing window, may go the Prometric scheduling page, make changes to their scheduled exam and pay a fee of \$50.00. Only the candidate can make schedule changes. There are NO refunds or exceptions.
- E. **Cancellation by Prometric.** Testing centers may close without notice in the case of inclement weather, a state of emergency, or other unforeseen events. In this case, the candidate will be allowed to reschedule at a convenient time and location with the exam fee credited to the future exam appointment. Candidates should verify that the center is open by calling directly before the appointment day and time.
- F. **Special Testing Accommodations.** ABO-NCLE and its testing vendor make every effort to reasonably accommodate candidates with documented disabilities as defined by the Americans



with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability as defined under the ADA, you must notify ABO-NCLE by submitting the special accommodations form located on the ABO-NCLE website regarding your request, signed by your physician or a qualified healthcare professional. The letter must list the following information in order to be considered:

- A specific diagnosis and date of your diagnosis
- Specific and current findings that support your diagnosis
- A description of your substantial day-to-day functional limitations resulting from your stated disabilities
- Specific recommendations for your testing accommodation(s) including a detailed explanation of why each such accommodation is needed. If the accommodation includes extra time, please indicate the amount of additional time requested.

*Important Note: Additional information may be requested after a review of your information*



# National Opticianry Competency Examination (NOCE)

## Practical Test Specifications

### (30 questions)

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#### **Domain I. Ophthalmic Optics (8 questions)**

1. Lens types (i.e., single vision, multifocals)
2. Calculating prismatic effects
3. Neutralization of lenses
4. Ophthalmic Formulas
  1. Prentice's rule
  2. Vertical imbalance
  3. Vertex compensation
  4. Centration (e.g., horizontal and vertical)
  5. Power in oblique meridians

#### **Domain II. Instrumentation (9 questions)**

1. Use of lens power measuring devices (e.g., focimeter, lensmeter)
2. Use of Lens Measurement Devices
  1. Lens clock
  2. Calipers
  3. Millimeter ruler
  4. Circumference gauge
3. Dispensing Instrumentation
  1. Corneal reflex pupilometer
  2. Hand tools used to adjust eyewear (e.g., pad pliers, angling pliers, etc.)
  3. Digital measurement system

#### **Domain III. Dispensing Procedures (7 questions)**

1. Fitting, Adjusting, and Measuring
  1. Fitting or adjusting of frames (e.g., size, vertex distance, pantoscopic tilt)
  2. Proper positioning of multifocals, optical centers, and major reference points
  3. Frame measurements (e.g., eyesize, bridge size, temple length, distance between lenses and effective diameter).
  4. Frame alignment and the fitting triangle
  5. Procedures used to adjust eyewear (e.g. facial structure, facial asymmetry, weight distribution and pressure)
  6. Lens parameters (e.g., circumference, blank size, centration, distance between centers, major reference points)





**Domain IV. Laws, Regulations, and Standards (6 questions)**

1. Applicable national guidelines, laws, regulations, and standards (e.g., OSHA, ANSI, FDA, EPA, HIPA)



# Contact Lens Registry Examination (CLRE) Practical Test Specifications (30 questions)

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## **Domain I. Ocular Anatomy, Physiology, and Pathology (6 questions)**

1. Structure and Function of the Eye as Related to Contact Lens Wear
  1. Adnexa
    - a. Quality, volume and function of tear film (e.g., layers, glands, lacrimal lake, break-up time)
    - b. Function and appearance of lashes (e.g., conditions, irregularities)
  2. Anterior Segment
    - a. Corneal anatomy (e.g., layers, dioptric power, size, radius of curvature, thickness, topography, limbal zone)
    - b. Anatomy, appearance, and function of the anterior chamber
  3. Posterior Segment
    - a. Anatomy, physiology, and function of the crystalline lens
  
2. Pathology
  1. Contact Lens Related Conditions and Pathology
    - a. Keratoconus
    - b. Neovascularization
    - c. Bullous keratopathy
    - d. Corneal dystrophies
    - e. Corneal edema
    - f. Corneal infiltrates and ulcers
    - g. Corneal scarring
    - h. Keratoplasty
    - i. Refractive surgeries
    - j. Microbial keratitis (e.g., viral, bacterial, fungal, acanthamoeba)
    - k. Herpes simplex and zoster
    - l. Pterygium
    - m. Pinguecula
    - n. Conjunctivitis
    - o. Giant papillary conjunctivitis (GPC)
    - p. Blepharitis
    - q. Ptosis
    - r. Iris defects (e.g., coloboma, aniridia)
    - s. Albinism
    - t. Nystagmus
    - u. Exophthalmus
    - v. Media opacities
    - w. Motility problems (e.g., extropion, entropion)



## **Domain II. Instrumentation for Measurement and Observation (6 questions)**

1. Measurement
  1. Keratometer (ophthalmometer) (e.g., calibration, procedures, readings, interpretation)
  2. Corneal topography (e.g., procedures, readings, map interpretation)
  3. Optical coherence tomography (e.g., anterior segment evaluation, contact lens clearance, landing zones)
  4. Normal and abnormal findings based on instrument readings and test/evaluation outcomes
  5. Schirmer's tests #1 and #2
  6. Tear film break-up time (BUT)
2. Observation
  1. Slit lamp (biomicroscope) operation (e.g., focus, illumination, procedures)
  2. Slit lamp (biomicroscope) evaluation with contact lens (e.g., fluorescein pattern, external observations)
  3. Slit lamp (biomicroscope) evaluation without contact lens (e.g., staining patterns, pathology)
3. Lens Modification/Verification
  1. In-office modifications (e.g., polish lenses, taper edges)
  2. Fluorescent tubes used to determine proper blend on bevel of contact lens
  3. Radioscope (optic spherometer) (e.g., operation, evaluation, verification)
  4. Lensometer (focimeter) (e.g., operation, evaluation, verification)
  5. Other Verification Instruments (e.g., thickness gauge, measuring magnifier, diameter gauge)
  6. Evaluation of parameters and compliance with all ANSI Z80 standards (e.g., base curve, power, diameter)

## **Domain III. Prefitting (6 questions)**

1. Evaluation of Data
  1. Factors Relevant to Successful Contact Lens Wear
    - a. Lifestyle (e.g, occupation, environment, hobbies, wear schedule)
    - b. Medical (e.g, adnexa, diseases, medications, allergies, gender, age)
    - c. Motivation
    - d. Relationship between corneal measurements, patient prescription, and current lens parameters
2. Material and Design
  1. Special lens designs (e.g., lenticular, torics, bifocal/multifocal, aspheric, hybrid, scleral, quadrant specific, orthokeratology)
  2. Lens material and design recommendations based upon prefit evaluation

## **Domain IV. Diagnostic Fitting (6 questions)**

1. Fluorescein pattern evaluation procedures
2. Aspects of contact lens wear and fit (e.g., movement, centration, overall stability/axis rotation)
3. Evaluation of patient subjective responses (e.g., patient comfort/discomfort, visual acuity)



### **Domain V. Follow-Up (6 questions)**

1. Subjective Findings
  1. Dryness
  2. Lens awareness
  3. Fluctuating or blurry vision
  4. Pain
  5. Photophobia
  
2. Objective Findings
  1. Steep lens, rigid and soft
  2. Flat lens, rigid and soft
  3. Everted lens
  4. Corneal/conjunctival staining
  5. Injection
  6. Corneal edema
  7. Discharge
  8. Vision loss
  9. Lid problems (e.g., swelling, Giant papillary conjunctivitis [GPC], ptosis)
  10. Superior Epithelial Arcuate Lesion (SEAL)
  11. Contact Lens Associated Red Eye (CLARE)
  12. Vascularized Limbal Keratitis (VLK)
  13. Superior Limbic Keratitis (SLK)
  14. Contact Lens Peripheral Ulcer (CLPU)
  15. Dimple veiling
  16. Smile staining
  17. Mucin Balls
  18. Microbial Keratitis
  19. Acanthamoeba keratitis
  20. Dendritic ulcer
  21. Corneal infiltrates
  22. Corneal dellen
  23. Corneal staining (e.g., arcuate 3 & 9 o'clock, foreign body, and superficial punctate keratitis [SPK])
  24. Corneal molding/warpage
  
3. Assessment
  1. Techniques of conducting a gross evaluation of proper contact lens movement without the use of instrumentation
  2. Normal and abnormal adaptation findings based on instrumentation readings and test/evaluation outcomes
  3. Types of fluorescein evaluation procedures (e.g., ocular staining, tarsal plate evaluation, fluorescein patterns)
  4. Visual acuity and overrefraction

\* The contents of these Examinations were derived from those portions of the NOCE and CLRE Job Task Analyses that are capable of being evaluated through practical means. Instead of evaluating the candidate's knowledge of Opticianry and/or Contact Lens Technology, these on-line Practical



Examinations are designed to evaluate the skills and abilities of a candidate, based upon the knowledge previously demonstrated through the successful completion of the NOCE and CLRE Examinations.



## COMPUTER-BASED EXAMINATION DETAILS

**The exams are offered in computer-based format. There is a tutorial that explains the Prometric test site features. It is highly recommended that you take the time to review the tutorial. There is time built in to the exam time, so that exam time is not used while viewing the tutorial. Key points concerning computer-based examinations are as follows:**

Extensive familiarity with computers is not required but use of a computer keyboard and mouse should be within the experience of all candidates.

There are “practice areas” available on the ABO-NCLE website, at [www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org), allowing candidates to familiarize themselves with the virtual portions of the ABOP and NCLEP. The candidate should be prepared to click on the arrow button to play videos of certain patient interaction scenarios, and should be able to identify, by proper utilization, optical instrumentality.

The proctors at the exam sites are not expected to provide detailed assistance to candidates. It is not their responsibility to help on things such as navigating through the exam or resolving any misjudgments made by the candidate.

Candidates need to carefully read the on-screen messages to respond correctly.

Computer-based testing options include the ability to navigate forward and backward through the exam, mark items for further review and then review answered, unanswered and marked items.

Items must be reviewed or changed prior to the expiration time. Once an exam has ended, candidates cannot return to the questions. The examination screen contains a timer showing the time remaining for the current exam.

A listing of completed questions, incomplete questions, and marked items can be accessed by clicking the “Flag” button.

Candidates may end the exam by clicking “Finish.” Once “Finish” is clicked, the candidate will not be able to return to any part of the exam. Note: there is a pop-up box to confirm that the candidate truly wishes to end the exam. Clicking “No” will return the candidate to the review screen for further review.

Questions left unanswered will be considered incorrect. When there are unanswered items, additional time will not be allowed for completion, nor will there be any refund of fees or credit toward future fees.



## THE DAY OF THE EXAM

### What to Bring

When you arrive at the test center, you must present one form of acceptable identification from the list below:

- Driver's license issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles in one of the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, or one of the U.S. territories
- State identification (non-driver) issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles in one of the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, or one of the U.S. territories
- Passport
- U.S. military identification

Your identification must be valid (unexpired) and contain both your signature and a recent (no more than 10 years old) photograph. The name appearing on the valid identification must appear exactly as you registered for the exam. All identification must be in English and signed in English. If you are currently serving in the U.S. military and are testing outside of the United States, the District of Columbia, and/or the U.S. territories, then you are required to provide a valid U.S. military identification. If your valid military identification does not have both your signature and a recent photograph, you will need to provide additional identification that meets the aforementioned requirements. The only identification acceptable in test centers outside of the United States, the District of Columbia, and/or the U.S. territories is a valid passport for candidates who cannot provide a valid U.S. military identification.

If you do not bring an acceptable identification, you will not be admitted to the test and your eligibility window will end. You will be required to submit additional documentation and fees to schedule a new testing date. Please contact ABO-NCLE for details.

It is not necessary for you to bring the ABO-NCLE Authorization to Test Notice to the test center, and it will not be counted as an acceptable form of identification.

Candidates should report promptly to the assigned center at least 30 minutes prior to their appointed time. This allows time for completing the registration process which includes verifying the candidate's identification. Candidates who arrive 10 minutes or more after their appointment time will be considered tardy and will not be permitted to test and there will be no refund or credit toward future fees.

In the online examination registration process, the candidate will be asked to attest to having read the Practical Examination Candidate Handbook, including the full Agreement at the end of this booklet, and to agree to be bound by the conditions listed.

During the exam, candidates must comply with directions/instructions of the test proctors. Those who do not follow the instructions may be subjected to dismissal from the center and/or having his/her examination invalidated.



Personal items, such as cell phones, any PDAs, or any other electronic devices, pagers, writing instruments or paper, purses, hats, bags, books are not allowed in the testing room. Sweaters and jackets must be worn if taken into the exam room. Prometric testing center locations provide a secure locker for the Candidate's belongings. However, the Candidate is responsible for the security of his or her belongings.

Candidates are prohibited from communicating with other candidates by any means, verbal or written, for any purpose.

Candidates must conduct themselves in a civil manner at all times when on the premises of the testing center. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards other candidates or staff members may result in criminal prosecution.

Persons not scheduled to take a test are not permitted to wait in the test center.

Candidates will not be permitted to continue testing if they violate any of the provisions or rules established by ABO-NCLE or the test centers.

Occasionally, problems occur during the administration that may impede the examination process. Weather problems, mechanical failures, hardware and software problems, and human errors, have the potential of interfering with all or part of the exam process. When such problems occur, ABO-NCLE will review all information at its disposal. An opportunity for re-examination may be offered at the discretion of ABO-NCLE. A re-examination shall be the candidate's sole remedy.

ABO-NCLE shall not be liable for inconvenience, expense or other damage caused by any problems in the administration or scoring of an examination, including the need for retesting or delays in score reporting. Under no circumstances will ABO-NCLE reduce its standards as a means of correcting a problem in the examination administration.

Candidates who experience incidents or irregularities during the testing must immediately inform the Prometric on-site proctors. If it is determined that an incident or irregularity had the potential of influencing a candidate's performance, the candidate will have two options: (1) to be retested during the next exam administration; or, (2) to have the examination scored.

## **RULES FOR TAKING THE ABOP and/or NCLEP CERTIFICATION EXAMS**

- Sufficient time has been provided for you to respond to all questions. You are advised not to spend an inordinate amount of time on individual questions until you have had an opportunity to respond to every question. Time is not intended to be a factor in the examination.
- All instructions given by the proctor must be followed in order to ensure proper processing of your examination results.
- All candidates will be checked-in at the test site prior to being admitted to the examination room. You are required to place all personal possessions in a designated area.





- All ABO-NCLE exams are “closed book.” Books, paper, PDAs, cell phones, or electronic or other devices or resources are not allowed. Failure to follow these instructions can result in your scores being revoked and may prohibit you from retesting or taking any other ABO-NCLE certification examinations.
- There is an “on-screen” scientific calculator that can be utilized during the exam.
- No test materials, documents, or memoranda of any sort may be removed from the examination room or retained. You may not copy any test questions or make any notes regarding the content of the examination. If you attempt to do so, your results will be invalidated, and you may be prohibited from retesting or taking any other ABO-NCLE certification examinations.
- No food or drink, including water, may be taken into the testing room. You may leave the testing room to use the restroom or get a drink of water, but you will need to sign out according to the instructions that will be explained at the test site. Your testing time will not be increased to accommodate a break. If you have a medical condition and cannot comply with this rule, you must apply for special testing accommodations.
- Please verify that you have been given the correct examination that you are eligible to take.
- You may not ask questions concerning content of the examination during the examination period.
- During the examination, you must not give help to or receive help from others. Proctors are required to report any incident in which there is evidence of irregular behavior. Any such reports could result in the invalidation of your test scores and/or other sanctions.

## HOW ARE EXAMS SCORED?

ABOP and NCLEP Certification Examinations are criterion-referenced tests, which means that a Candidate’s performance on the examination is not compared to that of other Candidates in determining the Candidate’s pass/fail status. In a criterion referenced test, a Candidate must achieve a score equal to or greater than the minimum passing score for the examination. The minimum passing score represents the absolute minimum standards that the Candidate must achieve to demonstrate the ability to practice the profession safely and competently. With the guidance of a measurement expert (e.g., a psychometrician), a panel of Subject Matter Experts in the fields of Opticianry and Contact Lens Technology/Fitting set the minimum passing score for each ABO-NCLE examination. In setting the minimum passing score, ABO-NCLE uses the Modified Angoff Method, which is well-recognized within the measurement field.

Each exam contains at least 25 scored test items that count towards the final score. Since the ABOP and NCLEP are contingent upon successful completion of the NOCE and/or CLRE Examinations, validation is based, in part, upon a candidate’s demonstrated knowledge in the prerequisite examinations.



## EXAMINATION RESULTS

Candidates will typically receive a preliminary indication of the results, unless the exam is not subject to instant results. On occasion, ABO-NCLE is required to undergo “health checks” and the results may not be available for between four to six weeks after the close of the testing window (typically February and May administrations). There is no guarantee of preliminary results; official results will be released as soon as possible after appropriate analysis and review is completed. State licensing boards will receive rosters of Candidates from their states that have passed and not passed the on-line practical exam in their state. If candidates want their results sent to another state’s licensing board, they need to contact ABO-NCLE to make this request. A certificate suitable for framing will be emailed to those candidates who pass the exam using the name given when they registered.

## RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND RETENTION

ABO-NCLE Record Retention Policy is to collect and maintain all records necessary to fulfill the legal requirements for record retention and disposition. This includes all information submitted in support of initial certification and certification renewal. The names of candidates for an exam or names of individuals not passing an exam or individual test scores are not released.

Certificant and Candidate information and On-Line Practical Certification Examination results are maintained indefinitely in the ABO-NCLE Certification database. The records are password protected and accessible only to staff involved with the Certification process. Applications for the On-Line Practical Certification Examination are all completed electronically, and securely stored in an electronic format. In the unlikely event that any hard copy applications or supporting documents are received, information is manually entered into the ABO-NCLE Certification database and the hard copies are maintained for a minimum of five years and are subsequently destroyed in a secure fashion. In addition, ABO-NCLE maintains electronic records of all customer activity and on-line applications within its database system.

## MAINTAINING YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

### **Change of Address**

It is critical that you inform ABO-NCLE of any modification to your e-mail address, since that is the official method of communication with Certificants.

If you have attained Certification with ABO-NCLE, and need to change any of your contact information, please log into your account at [www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org). If you are an exam candidate, please log into your exam log-in, through the appropriate link, and make any necessary modifications in that database.

### **Change of Legal Name**

Requests for legal name change due to marriage, divorce, or a court-approved legal name change must be sent in writing with a copy of the marriage certificate, divorce decree, or court-approved legal name change document. For Opticians or Contact Lens Fitters/Technicians who have applied in the past under one name and are currently applying under a different name, please note that ABO-NCLE requires copies of legal name change documents before proceeding with the application process. Send a request for legal name change, by mail, with accompanying documentation to:



ABO-NCLE Practical Certification  
ATTN: Name Change  
6506 Loisdale Road, Suite 330  
Springfield, VA 22150

If you are currently Certified and have already been issued a wall certificate but wish to order a duplicate wall certificate with your new legal name, please contact ABO-NCLE at 703.719.5800 to obtain a new certificate.

## RETESTING

The examination's regularly-administered examination periods are February, May, August, and November. ABO-NCLE believes that it is important for candidates who fail an examination to have adequate time to properly review the study materials and prepare themselves for the examination. In order to assure both the security of the examination itself, and to assure adequate preparation time for the candidates, if a candidate fails an examination during one of the regular examination periods, or at a special event occurring between one of those periods, he or she may retest at the next regularly-administered examination period.

## APPEALS

Candidates receiving a non-passing result may request that the examination result be verified. Candidates must request this result verification in writing, via e-mail to [exams@abo-ncle.org](mailto:exams@abo-ncle.org). All requests for verification must be made within three (3) months of publication of the examination score.

## DENIAL, SUSPENSION, AND REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

Certification can be denied, suspended, or revoked for cause, including but not limited to the following:

- Determination that initial certification was improperly granted
- Falsification or misstatement of information on any Certification-related document
- Providing false or misleading information
- Misrepresentation
- Cheating or assisting others to cheat
- Causing, creating, or participating in an examination irregularity
- Assisting others to wrongfully obtain initial Certification
- Failure to comply with the scope and standards of practice in an area in which ABO-NCLE Certification is held
- Conduct unbecoming of the Opticianry and Contact Lens Technology professions



## REPORTING REVOCATION

- To Licensing Authorities: Suspension and revocation of certification is reported to licensing authorities.
- To Others: ABO-NCLE may report suspension or revocation of certification to employers, legal authorities, and other third parties, including but not limited to, law enforcement officers or agencies.

## MISREPRESENTATION OF THE ABO-NCLE CREDENTIAL

If an individual is identified or recognized as misrepresenting themselves as Certified when in fact they are not, the Board of Directors of the ABO & NCLE has an obligation to take appropriate steps to protect the credential and will undertake all appropriate measures to assure such misrepresentation is dealt with promptly.

## CANDIDATE AGREEMENT

By taking this examination, I hereby acknowledge that I understand the following:

1. That these examinations are the exclusive property of the American Board of Opticianry and National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc.
2. That these examinations and items contained therein are protected by federal copyright law. No part of these examinations may be copied, reproduced in part or whole by any means whatsoever, including memorization.
3. That the theft or attempted theft of any examination material is punishable as a felony.
4. That my participation in any irregularity occurring during this examination, such as giving or obtaining authorized information or aid, as evidenced by observation or subsequent statistical analysis, may be sufficient cause to terminate my participation, invalidate the results of my examination or take other appropriate action.

***Candidate agrees that by registering for any of the ABO and/or NCLE Examinations, the Candidate acknowledges receipt and review of this ABO-NCLE On-Line Practical Exam Candidate Handbook and agrees to be bound by its terms as of the date of registration and as of the date of examination.***