

2020 IM-ITE Information and Frequently Asked Questions

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The three manuals developed by the NBME are important to read and contain step-by-step information for conducting remote testing. They will be a vital compliment to the Chief Proctor's Manual. They include:

- *Quick Guide for Remote Proctoring* (with Web Conferencing). This instructional guide will go over the steps the Chief proctor needs to take for remote testing prior to and during test day, with cross-references to the Chief Proctor's Manual to complete steps that are the same for both in-person and remote testing. This guide should be read first.
- *Instructions on Using Third-Party Conferencing Applications for Remote Proctoring*. This guide will provide step by step instructions for configuring and working within Zoom, Webex, and Microsoft Teams to monitor the exams. This guide should be read second.
- *Examinee Instructions* (with Web Conferencing) includes step-by-step instructions the examinees will have to implement prior to and during the examination during remote testing. **Email these instructions to examinees.** This guide should be read third.

It will also be critically important that Chief proctors first schedule a mock test session with proctors and/or IT staff to practice using the video conferencing software and chief proctor application. Once proctors are comfortable with the remote setup, a second mock session can be scheduled with examinees if time permits.

Proctoring & Testing

1. Question: Do I need to be concerned with the remote proctoring guidelines and instructions if I plan on administering the examination on site, in person but with social distancing?

Answer: No, guidelines for remote proctoring apply only to those who will be using one of the three acceptable third-party software applications to facilitate remote proctoring and testing. Rules and guidelines for traditional testing are included in the Chief Proctor's Manual.

2. Question: What tips do you have to ensure I am as prepared as I can be for remote testing?

Answer: Chief proctors can best prepare by making sure they have implemented two important steps prior to their scheduled test dates: (1) Carefully read through the three instruction guides; and (2) conduct mock test sessions prior to the exam until you are comfortable with the process.

3. Question: I wasn't aware my residents could take this exam remotely. Is it too late to change from in-person or remote?

Answer: No, it is not too late to decide whether you want to choose in-person or remote testing. However, you should be sure to allow yourself enough time before your scheduled test dates to conduct mock runs of testing with other proctors and IT staff to practice using the video conferencing software concurrently with the Chief Proctor Resource software to ensure you are familiar with its functionality, and, ideally, to also conduct a practice exam with the examinees, time permitting.

4. Question: Can my residents and the assigned proctor both participate in the exam from their homes?

Answer: Yes, your residents and assigned proctor can take the exam from their homes, using one of the three permitted third-party video conferencing applications in the guidelines provided in the *Instructions on Using Third-Party Conferencing Applications for Remote Proctoring*.

5. Question: How can examinees communicate to proctors securely?

Answer: Examinees can communicate their questions to proctors via the chat function of the conferencing software (before the exam) or by using a cell phone (during the exam).

6. Question: How many examinees can one proctor monitor?

Answer: It is recommended that each proctor monitor no more than 25 examinees.

7. Question: Can more than two proctors share proctoring responsibilities by splitting the proctoring sessions into two shifts on the same exam day?

Answer: Yes, it is possible for a Chief proctor to split their shift with another proctor by designating a specific time that the second-shift proctor will take over. It is important that the Chief proctor does not leave the test during the test session until the other proctor has arrived and is able to take over proctoring the exam.

8. Question: Will one proctor be able to monitor in-person and remote examinees at the same time on the same computer?

Answer: It is not recommended that a single proctor monitor both in-person and remote examinees. Separate proctors should be assigned for remote versus in-person administrations

9. Question: Is it necessary for the chief proctor to have two computer screens when using the remote proctoring/testing option?

Answer: While not required, if the proctor has access to a second computer or a second monitor, they can view the conference software and Chief Proctor Resource site by displaying one on each device.

10. Question: Normally the Secure Browser application does not allow for viewing the person through the computer's camera, and the video must be turned off. Are you allowing that feature?

Answer: Yes, we have modified the Secure Browser to allow the use of Microsoft Teams, Webex, and Zoom. When an examinee launches the test with one of these applications running in the background, the Secure Browser will allow these applications to run. All other video conferencing, screen capture, or recording applications are not allowed and will be blocked.

11. Question: Can the examinees access the video conferencing application's chat functionality during the exam?

Answer: The chat feature of Zoom, Webex, and Microsoft Teams will be functional prior to the exam but not accessible during the exam. The only way examinees can communicate to their proctors during the examination is by cell phone.

12. Question: Do examinees need to have video cameras for the video conferencing application to function and do they need to have their audio turned on?

Answer: Yes, students will need to have a computer video camera to use Zoom, Webex, or Microsoft Teams if the Chief Proctor prefers them to launch the video conference software from their computers. The audio settings for the video conference meeting should be configured to mute examinees upon entry to the session. To assure the proper configuration settings, Chief proctors should review the pre-test day and test day meeting settings for Zoom, Webex, or Microsoft Teams

in the *Instructions on Using Third Party Conferencing Applications for Remote Proctoring*.

13. Question: How can I be sure that all examinees are able to launch and access the test while simultaneously having their video conferencing software running?

Answer: It is very important for Proctors to schedule and conduct a Practice Exam with their examinees to become familiar with using the conferencing software in conjunction with the Chief Proctor Resource site prior to a live administration (see Chief Proctor Manual Section 1, Unit 4: Practice with the Chief Proctor Software). This will provide both the proctors and examinees with comfort using these concurrently operating applications.

14. Question: Is it necessary for the examinees to have two computer screens, one for taking the test and one for being monitored by the computer's camera?

Answer: No, it is not necessary for examinees to have two computer screens (one for taking the test and one for being monitored) because the video conferencing software will run in the background on the examinee's computer while they are testing within the secure browser application that launches the exam. However, it is up to the institution's chief proctor to decide whether they would like to require the examinee to run the video conferencing application on the examinee's cell phone or tablet to gain a different view of the examinee while the examinee uses their laptop for taking the exam via the secure browser application.

15. Question: Can examinees use cell phones to join the video conference session and position it so we can see their computer screen, keyboard, and surrounding area?

Answer: If the Chief proctor prefers it, it is acceptable for examinees to use secondary devices, such as smartphones or tablet devices, to run the video conferencing software. However, proctors will need to monitor this secondary device to ensure that such devices are used strictly to monitor them as they take the exam.

16. Question: We are conducting the exam in two different conference rooms on the same day. Will a co-proctor and I be able to monitor the two separate test sessions on the same day and time?

Answer: Yes, two proctors can simultaneously conduct the exam in two different testing rooms on the same day; however, only the Chief proctor can start the exam for all testing rooms. To set up separate testing rooms, follow the instructions given

in the Chief Proctor's Manual, page 10 (Workstation Certification Process/Facility Confirmation Process).

17. Question: When should we provide the Examinee Instruction Sheets to examinees if they are testing remotely?

Answer: The Remote Examinee Instructions (which includes the system requirements and web conferencing instructions) can be sent along with the Examinee Laptop Workstation information. The Examinee Instruction Sheets (which includes the examinee's name, ID and the instructions for launching the test), can be sent two days prior to test day.

Technical Questions

18. Question: How are technical difficulties handled by the proctor during the remote proctoring/testing option?

Answer: The chief proctor should secure an institutional IT staff person with admin privileges to assist with technical issues. Prior to test day during the Workstation Certification Process, the examinee, who is responsible for administering the Workstation Certification utility with the remote testing option, can call or text the chief proctor or institutional technical support staff person to help troubleshoot any potential issues. On test day, the examinee, who launches the secure browser and starts up the exam, will also need to call or text the chief proctor or the institutional technical support staff person to alert them to technical issues. The chief proctor or technical support person can also contact NBME for further technical support at 215-243-3919 or nbmewebtest@nbme.org prior to test day (e.g., Workstation certification issues) OR on test day at 215-243-3707.

19. Question: If examinees are testing remotely and experience technical issues during testing, will NBME be available to provide technical support or will that be solely the responsibility of our institution.

Answer: Examinees must text or call the chief proctor or institutional technical support staff person for troubleshooting any issues they encounter. The chief proctor or technical support person can then contact NBME for further technical support at 215-243-3919 or nbmewebtest@nbme.org prior to test day (e.g., Workstation certification issues) OR on test day at 215-243-3707.

20. Question: How will our IT support staff be able to assist examinees with issues on a personal laptop or PC? If examinees are remote and experience an issue with a recording program how can they bring their laptop to the proctor?

Answer: Examinees can consult with their institutional technical support staff person to help resolve any potential issues. Unlike in-person testing, examinees **MUST** have their cell phones available to text or call the proctor or institutional technical support staff person to trouble-shoot potential issues.

For remote administrations, examinees and not the institutional technical support staff person, are responsible for performing the Workstation Certification Process. However, if a recording program is detected prior to test day during workstation certification or the examinee is locked out of the Examinee Laptop Workstation Utility, both remote and local examinees will see a message advising them to bring their laptop to the proctor. For remote examinees, the proctor should create and certify a remote test room using the IT version of the Workstation Certification Utility without testing any computers and forward the workstation certification ticket number to the examinee. This is necessary so that the examinee can access the utility to view and disable the recording application prior to test day. Detailed instructions on this process can be found on page 9 “Disabling recording applications/programs prior to test day” in the ACP Proctor Quick Guide for Remote Proctoring. The Examinee Instructions also include information about this process.

If a recording program is detected on test day, prior to exam launch, review and follow the instructions on page 11 “Recording Program detected on Test Day prior to exam launch” in the ACP Proctor Quick Guide for Remote Proctoring.

21. Question: If the examinee encounters a malfunction of the software and the IT issue cannot be resolved after intervention from the proctor, my institutional technical support staff person, or NBME technical support, is there a way to close the exam and have the student take it again?

Answer: While we don’t anticipate encountering an issue that cannot be resolved during testing, if this should occur, the examinee, in consultation with the chief proctor, can be instructed to close the exam by holding down the **Ctrl+Shift+Q** keys. This action will close the web browser, stop the exam timer, and save the examinee’s progress. The examinee can resume testing on another day during the testing window with the remaining time allotted on the clock. However, the proctor or technical support person should contact NBME before making a decision to end

the examinee's test session to ensure all troubleshooting steps have been taken and that the exam progress will be saved appropriately.

22. Question: What happens if the examinee's screen freezes or their computer crashes during the examination?

Answer: If the examinee's screen freezes or their computer crashes during the test, instruct them to hold down the **Ctrl+Shift+Q** keys. This key sequence will close the exam. Once the exam is closed, you can approve the examinee to restart the exam. (See the entry on "Approving Restarts" on page 12 in the troubleshooting section of the ACP Proctor Quick Guide for Remote Proctoring.)

23. Question: What happens if an examinee experiences connectivity issues?

Answer: Examinees should review the system requirements located on page 3 of the Examinee Instructions (with Web Conferencing). To ensure appropriate connectivity, a network bandwidth of 256Kbps or higher per workstation (including Internet access) is required. Examinees can check with the Chief proctor or IT staff to interpret the results of this check as needed. In addition, during Workstation Certification, examinees will run a sample exam to ensure there are no connectivity issues.

24. Question: What happens if the remote workstation does not work on test day?

Answer: In the remote proctoring/testing option, examinees are responsible for running the Workstation Certification Process prior to test day and launching a sample exam to ensure their laptops meet the appropriate technical requirements and that the exam software functions properly. If they encounter a problem during test day, examinees must communicate the issue to the chief proctor or institutional technical support person via chat (before the exam) or cell phone (during the exam) to resolve the problem.

25. Question: What do you suggest we use for the workstation numbers if giving an exam remotely?

Answer: Examinees can use their initials, first initial and last name, or any combination of alphanumeric characters for the workstation ID.

26. Question: Will our IT department be required to certify all personal laptops for remote use?

Answer: Workstation certification is required for each examinee laptop that will be used for testing. However, unlike in-person testing, remote proctoring and testing will require examinees, not the institutional technical support person, to run the workstation certification utility. Chief proctors will send an email with the Workstation Certification Laptop Check and instructions to examinees (see Chief Proctor Manual Section 1, Unit 2: Workstation Certification) prior to test day. Examinees can call or text their institutional technical support staff person for trouble-shooting any issues that arise during the workstation certification process. To assist examinees with troubleshooting issues related to workstation certification prior to test day, see the troubleshooting section in the *ACP ITE Proctor Quick Guide for Remote Proctoring*.

27. Question: When should the workstation certification of personal laptops be completed by examinees?

Answer: Examinees should complete workstation certification at least one week prior to test day.

28. Question: Do we need to run Workstation Certification on examinees' smart phone?

Answer: No. Workstation Certification is only required for the workstation where the candidate will be taking the examination. Cellphones are only required for communicating with the proctor or running the video conferencing applications.

29. Question: What can I do if examinee personal laptops cannot be supported by my institution's IT Department?

Answer: If the institution does not provide technical support for laptops that are owned by the examinees, versus institutionally owned computers, it is up to the institution to either allow the examinees to borrow institutionally owned laptops for the exam or to revert to allowing examinees to test onsite with social distancing measures.

30. Question: What should I do if an examinee is testing but I can no longer see their video feed?

Answer: If an examinee is testing and their video feed goes dark or you lose video conferencing visibility, call or text the examinee and advise them that they can stop the clock and close out of the exam by holding down **Ctrl+Shift+Q**. Once the examinee is out of the exam, instruct the examinee to reconnect to the video

conference session and follow the instructions on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** of the Chief Proctor's Manual for approving a restart.

Ultimately, if you continue to have difficulty with the examinee's video feed but they are continuing to test successfully, you have the authority and flexibility, as chief proctor, to determine whether you are comfortable with them continuing their testing session or closing the exam and continuing testing on another date within the window. Factors such as how much of the exam they have completed, how difficult it has been for them to maintain video connectivity, and how many days are left in the exam window should be considered in making your final determination.

General Questions

31. Question: How can I be assured that my examinees are not cheating (i.e., having someone join them in the room after the exam launches; looking material up on another computer, etc.)?

Answer: The remote proctoring/testing option offered for 2020 is an interim measure that was created in response to COVID-19 to enable programs to continue the self-assessment testing of residents using the IM-ITE, and, as such, the timing did not allow for development of built-in security protocols. For this reason, it is important for programs to remind residents that the IM-ITE is an educational exercise, not a high-stakes examination, to be used strictly for self-assessment purposes. With this perspective in mind, residents should be encouraged to perform to the best of their ability to demonstrate their current knowledge which is the best way to provide their educators with an honest assessment of their knowledge so that learning gaps can be addressed. However, as educators, you should review the scores for those who tested remotely in 2020 within the context of the unique circumstances surrounding this year's examination, recognizing the absence of built-in security protocols, particularly when comparing the 2020 remote scores to those of other years.

32. Question: Do we need to communicate to ACP or the NBME if we decide to test remotely with virtual proctoring?

Answer: No. Use whatever method works best for your program, whether on-site with social-distancing, remote-testing, or a combination of both.

After having read the manuals and FAQs, please feel free to direct your questions to the following:

- Technical questions concerning workstation certification, proctoring software, or the administration of the exam: nbmewebtest@nbme.org or 215-243-3919.
- Questions concerning policy or other issues: IM-ITE@acponline.org.
- IM-ITE web site: www.acponline.org/imate.