

## Web-Conferencing Coming for Test Administrations

Today you are receiving more information about the ability to deliver NBME assessments remotely and through web-conferencing that you and your colleagues helped NBME identify. This alternative approach will be available on **Tuesday, April 7** and is a short-term solution intended to help faculty and students continue their medical education while social distancing during Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

### Note about Security

The opportunity to administer assessments remotely uses readily available technology. It also relies on your institution's honor system and codes of conduct since this new mode for exam delivery will not involve high-security remote proctoring tools. Your institution should manage proctoring to the best of its ability.

### Approved Web-Conferencing Tools

Schools who wish to deliver NBME assessments to students in dispersed remote locations, including students' residences, can now proctor the exam through commercial video conferencing software. These commonly used web-conferencing platforms are approved by NBME to facilitate remote observation:

- Microsoft Teams - *recently approved*
- Zoom
- Cisco WebEx

If your institution would prefer to use a different web-conferencing platform to remotely monitor your examinees, please contact us at [NBMEwebtest@nbme.org](mailto:NBMEwebtest@nbme.org) so that we may evaluate its operational and security feasibility during testing.

Web-conferencing platforms have different plans and account settings for maximum simultaneous connections, use of Internet bandwidth, duration of audio/video sessions, etc. Because of this, we encourage school proctoring staff to review exam parameters (e.g., exam length, duration, simultaneous examinees) with school technical staff to ensure your local web-conference setup will support your test administrations. For example, the free tier of Zoom has a 40-minute limitation on meeting duration.

### Before Getting Started

Please review the information below to determine if this opportunity is appropriate for your medical school. If web-conferencing administration is a solution to your needs, also orient your proctoring and technology teams about the program prior to administering an exam remotely.

The experience varies significantly from in-person testing and every institution has its own infrastructure requirements. Holding a practice run with your team members is advised. We also recommend adding 30 minutes before each administration to ensure students are prepared to launch the exam.

### Web-Conferencing and Remote Proctoring Instructions

Below are new instructions for proctors and examinees:

- [Instructions on Using Third Party Conferencing Applications for Remote Proctoring](#)
- [Quick Guide for Administration of Assessments for Remote Proctoring](#) (for Proctor use)
- [Examinee Instructions](#)

Important notes about web-conferencing for remote proctoring:

- The Quick Guide listed above is a supplement to Web-Based and IFOM Chief Proctor Manuals.
- NBME will modify the secure delivery technology to allow schools and institutions to monitor examinees via commercial video conferencing software.
- Because of the challenge inherent in closely monitoring multiple video feeds via web-conference, proctors should remotely observe no more than 25 examinees testing at a time. It will be up to schools to manage proctoring to the best of their ability.

- Caution is advised when interpreting individual student performance as well as when comparing scores to scores from previous administrations.
- Caution is also advised when making inferences based on the national or international comparative data provided on score reports and norm tables.

### Subject Examinations

NBME® Subject Examinations will be available for ordering and administration through the web-conference option beginning **April 7**. All exams will be offered except the following:

- Ambulatory Care
- Histology
- Introduction to Clinical Diagnosis

The ordering process remains the same. For programs requiring an immediate solution for Ambulatory Care, we suggest Medicine as a potential alternative.

**PROMETRIC:** Prometric centers in the United States or Canada remain closed for a period of 30 days, starting **March 18**, based on guidance related to COVID-19. Please check the Prometric website ongoing for updates.

### Customized Assessments

For subscribing institutions to Customized Assessment Services, 12 fixed-test organ system exams will be available for remote administration starting on **April 7**. Detailed information will follow to administrators and faculty enrolled in the program.

### International Foundations of Medicine

Web-conferencing for remote proctoring of **International Foundations of Medicine's web-based** Basic Science Examinations (in English only) and Clinical Subject Examinations (in English and Spanish) will be available beginning **April 7**.

**Paper Examinations:** Institutions considering IFOM exam administrations by paper anytime in 2020 must contact [ifom@nbme.org](mailto:ifom@nbme.org) to discuss their interest **before** placing orders.

**Individual Testing at PROMETRIC:** Many Prometric centers around the world are closed, and all centers in the United States or Canada are closed for a period of 30 days, starting **March 18**, based on guidance related to COVID-19. Please check the Prometric website for updates.

The individual IFOM testing window has been extended by 2 months, to **July 15** to enable examinees to contact Prometric and reschedule their exams if needed. For assistance, contact [ifomtestadmin@nbme.org](mailto:ifomtestadmin@nbme.org).

We recognize that this is an extraordinary time. Thank you for your patience while this new delivery mechanism was developed. Our team is available to provide assistance as you test the new web-conferencing capability with your institution's infrastructure. We also commit to develop a more robust remote proctoring system for the future.

Please feel free to contact us at [assessmentsservices@nbme.org](mailto:assessmentsservices@nbme.org) with any assessment program questions and [NBMEwebtest@nbme.org](mailto:NBMEwebtest@nbme.org) for web-conferencing with remote proctoring assistance.

With best regards,

*Aggie Butler*

Agata Butler, PhD  
Vice President, Academic and Professional Programs  
NBME  
3750 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
[abutler@nbme.org](mailto:abutler@nbme.org)