COVID-19 UPDATES  
ADA Department of Testing Services (DTS)  
February 10, 2021

This document presents the latest available information concerning the impact of COVID-19 on examination programs implemented by the ADA’s Department of Testing Services (DTS), on behalf of governing bodies such as the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE), the ADA Board of Trustees, the ADA Council on Dental Education and Licensure (CDEL), and the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO). This document is updated regularly. Changes to this document are also noted on the final page of this document, for ease of review.

DTS staff are operating at full capacity and are available to assist with any testing questions or issues. Please contact staff via phone, email or by clicking the GET HELP button on the right side of most DTS web pages.

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Read this document in full for the most up-to-date information regarding your testing program, or click on a subject below for more information.

**Breaking News**
New information not shared in previous versions of this document that may significantly affect candidates and examination programs.

**Safety Considerations**
General information, updates, and recommendations based on current CDC guidelines.

**General Information on Examination Administrations**
Details pertaining to all examination programs regarding appointments, cancellations, and other information.

**Program Modifications**
Specific updates for each individual examination program.

**Prometric Testing Center Policies and Procedures**
Prometric administers the DAT, OAT, NBDE Part II, INBDE, and DLOSCE.

**Pearson VUE Testing Center Policies and Procedures**
Pearson VUE administers the ADAT and NBDHE.

Please follow all CDC recommendations regarding personal healthy and community safety. Visit the [American Dental Association’s COVID-19 web page](https://www.ada.org/coronavirus), which serves as a Coronavirus Resource Center for oral health care professionals.
**Breaking News**
***NEW*** As a direct result of state and county social distancing guidelines, NBDHE testing appointment availability has been substantially reduced at sites across the US, with most Pearson VUE sites operating at 50% capacity or less. For more information, please see the *Program Modifications* section of this document.

***NEW*** As of December 31, 2020, the NBDE Part I has been discontinued and is no longer available for administration.

**Safety Considerations**
DTS strongly recommends all candidates schedule and take their examinations as soon as possible to avoid possible test center restrictions as the pandemic continues to create restrictions.

**General Information on Examination Administrations**
Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, DTS has worked closely with our testing vendors – Pearson VUE and Prometric – to ensure candidates are able to take admissions and licensure examinations on time in safe testing environments.

All DTS examinations are considered essential programs by Prometric and Pearson VUE. This designation allows candidates to sit for their examinations as long as the testing center is open and appointments are available to candidates.

Candidates may find it helpful to keep checking the testing vendor’s website for earlier appointments, as availability is changing regularly as states reopen and expand services. Candidates should also not forget to check for available appointments for openings that are quite soon; late cancellations by candidates testing in other programs can result in open seats. Candidates who are unable to travel for an examination due to illness, increased travel restrictions, or concerns regarding personal health must email testingproblems@ada.org, providing the candidate’s DENTPIN and an explanation of the situation.

There are no current delays to scoring or reporting of candidate results.

**Program Modifications**

**ADAT:** No specific changes at this time. Please see the [ADAT web pages](https://www.adat.org) for additional details and to register for a testing appointment.

**DAT:** No specific changes at this time. Please see the [DAT web pages](https://www.adat.org) for additional details and to register for a testing appointment.

**OAT:** No specific changes at this time. Please see the [OAT web pages](https://www.adat.org) for additional details and to register for a testing appointment.

**NBDE PART II:** The requirement that the NBDE Part II be administered on consecutive days has been suspended. Candidates taking the NBDE Part II can now schedule the second day of testing within 14 days of their first day of testing.

Please see the [NBDE web pages](https://www.adat.org) for additional details and to register for a testing appointment.
**NBDHE:** Short-form administrations of the NBDHE can now be scheduled and completed. These forms require less than four hours to complete, and are available at thousands of Pearson VUE Authorized Test Centers located throughout the US. This is in addition to the 280+ Pearson Professional Centers that are owned and operated by Pearson VUE that currently administer the NBDHE. More information can be found on the [NBDHE Quick Facts](#) and [Short-Form FAQs](#).

**Pearson VUE Test Center Site Capacity Limited Due to COVID-19 Restrictions**

As a direct result of state and county social distancing guidelines, testing appointment availability has been substantially reduced at sites across the US, with most Pearson VUE sites operating at 50% capacity or less. Additionally, test center site capacity continues to fluctuate as guidelines are further modified at the state and county level, and as Pearson VUE extends testing hours where this is possible. In light of the situation, the Department of Testing Services (DTS) recommends the following:

- Candidates should schedule their testing appointments as soon as possible to avoid delays in testing.
- Candidates who have already scheduled appointments may wish to revisit their scheduling periodically to see if an earlier appointment may be available, as Pearson VUE adjusts to meet the demand.
- Candidates whose six-month eligibility window is about to expire are invited to contact DTS at testingproblems@ada.org if they are experiencing scheduling issues.
- Candidates experiencing general difficulties obtaining an NBDHE testing appointment are welcome to contact DTS at nbexams@ada.org.
- When reaching out to DTS, candidates should make sure to include their DENTPIN, preferred testing location (including city and state), and the date range in which they are trying to take the exam.

**A NOTE ON THE NBDHE FAILURE RATE:** Some candidates who have recently taken the NBDHE have reached out to DTS expressing concern that the short-form-NBDHE might be yielding higher failure rates than expected. DTS has conducted psychometric investigations correspondingly, permitting DTS to meaningfully compare the performance of the standard and short forms. These investigations have found no meaningful differences between these sets of forms; to clarify, DTS’ analyses show that candidates who attempted the NBDHE later in 2020 have been more likely to fail, regardless of whether they attempted the full-length examination or the shortened form.

DTS suspects the elevated failure rates observed toward the end of 2020 occurred because candidates were further removed from their academic studies and corresponding clinical experiences, and performed less well on the examination as a result. Candidates are encouraged to bear this in mind as they prepare for the NBDHE, making sure to devote the time that is needed so they can demonstrate the performance level that subject matter experts have determined is necessary for safe practice.

Please see the [NBDHE web pages](#) for additional details and to register for a testing appointment.

**INBDE:** The INBDE launched on August 1, 2020. Testing appointments are available.
Please see the [INBDE web pages](https://www nbde org) for additional details and to register for a testing appointment.

**DLOSCE:** Candidates may schedule an appointment for the next DLOSCE testing window:

- April 1 – May 4, 2021

The number of test centers capable of administering the DLOSCE has expanded substantially, and continues to grow. A list of Prometric testing centers available for the DLOSCE is available on the DLOSCE website. Candidates are invited to continue to review this list to locate a convenient test center.

The following states have adopted regulations which permit the acceptance of the DLOSCE: Alaska, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Oregon, and Washington. In some states, passage of the DLOSCE only partially fulfills the clinical examination requirement for licensure. Please refer to each dental board’s website for specific details, clarifications, and updated policies, and any additional testing that may be required in each state.

The JCNDE would like to assist those in the military services who are interested in challenging the DLOSCE, but are finding it difficult to do so given scheduling conflicts involving the DLOSCE testing windows and officer training requirements (e.g., ODS). Individuals in this situation are encouraged to contact the Department of Testing Services (DTS) at testingproblems@ada.org. DTS will work with these individuals to coordinate DLOSCE administrations outside of the standard testing windows indicated above.

Please see the [DLOSCE web pages](https://www.dlosce.org) for additional details and to register for a testing appointment.

**Prometric Testing Center Policies and Procedures**

The information below concerns candidates who are taking the following examinations:

- Dental Admission Test (DAT)
- Optometry Admission Test (OAT)
- National Board Dental Examination (NBDE) Part II
- Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE)
- The Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE)

Prometric continues to provide in-center testing where possible in the U.S. and Canada. Rescheduling fees are in place and are incurred in accordance with established program policies. Candidates who need reimbursement for rescheduling an appointment due to COVID-19 illness or impact should follow Prometric’s standard escalation procedure, detailed on the Prometric website.

Prometric continues to utilize the safety plan and [enhanced test center policies](https://www.prometric.com) developed with Johns Hopkins and other experts to ensure the safest test center experience for candidates and staff.

For specific information related to Prometric testing appointments, test centers or policies, please visit the [Prometric website](https://www.prometric.com). Candidates should visit the [Prometric website](https://www.prometric.com) for a list of test
Prometric has provided the following resources to assist candidates:

- **COVID-19 Strategies**: provides the most current information on Prometric's operation status and safety measures.
- **Site Openings List**: provides a running list of Prometric's current open/scheduled-to-open sites and their resumption test date. This list is updated daily to reflect any changes in status, and is evaluated for further additions on a rolling basis.
- **Social Distancing Policies**: provides a detailed look at Prometric standard and social distancing policies, as well as procedural modifications that candidates are expected to follow while at the test center.
- **Test-Taker FAQ**: provides answers to frequently asked questions.

**Pearson VUE Testing Center Policies and Procedures**
The information below concerns candidates who are taking the following examinations:

- Advanced Dental Admission Test (ADAT)
- National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE)

**Testing centers are open in all states.** Due to the ongoing pandemic, governments may at any time reinstate measures limiting operations in testing centers. Pearson VUE continues to monitor the situation and available recommendations, and will adjust testing capacity and/or operations accordingly. These adjustments may require additional cancellations of candidate appointments. **Candidates should refer to the Pearson Vue Coronavirus Update webpage for the most updated information regarding test centers in specific states.**

Pearson VUE has outfitted all test centers with health and safety necessities, such as hand sanitizer, disinfectant, etc., so that operations can continue. Additionally, all candidates are required to wear a face mask and respect social distancing requirements. Pearson VUE monitors restrictions and makes adjustments as necessary.

For specific information related to Pearson VUE testing appointments, test centers or policies, please visit the [Pearson VUE website](https://www.pearsonvue.com). DTS staff does not have information regarding the open or closed status of specific test centers.
Change Log

02/10/2021 Update to the NBHDE section: Pearson VUE Test Center Site Capacity Limited Due to COVID-19 Restrictions

1/19/2021 The NBDE Part I has been discontinued; all mention of the examination has been removed from this document. Information has been added to the Program Modification regarding NBDHE failure rates.

12/4/2020 Updates were made to the layout of this document.

10/9/2020 Updates were made to the DLSOCE fee for 2021 and DLOSCE testing dates; candidates are now able to schedule appointments during two testing windows.

9/4/2020 Updates were made to the layout of this document.

7/30/2020 Updates were made to all sections of this document. Updates were made to the Test Administration Vendors section regarding availability at Pearson VUE testing centers. Previous versions of this report stated that Prometric would reinstate its cancellation and rescheduling fees on August 1, 2020; that date has been changed to August 3, 2020, and the new date is now reflected in this document. The first DLOSCE testing window has closed. The short-form-NBDHE is now available for administration.

7/16/2020 Updates were made to the Test Administration Vendors section regarding the Prometric policy on rescheduling fees. Updates were also made to this section regarding appointment availability at Pearson VUE testing centers. The INBDE has been added to various areas within this document.

6/25/2020 Updates were made to the Test Administration Vendors section regarding appointment availability at Prometric and Pearson VUE testing centers. Updates were made to the DLOSCE section regarding 1) states that currently accept the DLOSCE for licensure purposes, and 2) testing for those in the military.

6/18/2020 Updates were made to every section of this document. Key changes include the release of the DLOSCE and news concerning the release of the short-form-NBDHE.

5/28/2020 Update to the DLOSCE section regarding the application for 2020 testing appointments.

5/26/2020 Update to the Test Administration Vendors section regarding Prometric testing centers. Additional links to DLOSCE webinar recordings were provided.

5/21/2020 Update to the Test Administration Vendors section regarding Prometric and Pearson VUE testing centers. Specific updates to the NBDHE program were shared. Links to DLOSCE webinar recordings were provided.

5/7/2020 Update to the Test Administration Vendors section regarding Prometric and Pearson VUE testing centers. Two DLOSCE webinars were announced.
4/30/2020 Update to the *Test Administration Vendors* section regarding Pearson VUE reopening schedules and personal protection requirements for candidates.

4/27/2020 Update to the *Examination Eligibility* section regarding an extended administration window for ADAT, DAT, and OAT candidates. Relabeled this section “*Examination Eligibility and Program Modifications*” and provided additional program modification information within this section. Update to the *Test Administration Vendors* section concerning test center openings.

4/10/2020 Update to *Test Administration Vendors* section (Prometric). Significant updates to the *Examination Eligibility* section regarding the extension of the NBDE Part I for all candidates.

4/7/2020 Update to *Test Administration Vendors* section (Pearson VUE).

4/2/2020 Updates to the *Breaking News* and *Examination Eligibility* sections; notification of release of the DLOSCE; notification of suspension of operations of Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE); extension of NBDE Part I discontinuation date to 10/31/2020 for candidates trained by CODA accredited dental programs.

3/20/2020 Significant updates to the *Examination Eligibility* section; inclusion of excerpt from Prometric communication; minor changes to the sequence of presented information in the *Test Administration Vendors* section, for ease of reading; creation of a *Change Log* to facilitate review of changes to this document.