

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES HANDBOOK



NABNE®

NORTH AMERICAN BOARD OF NATUROPATHIC EXAMINERS

Ensuring the Professional Qualifications of NDs

FEBRUARY 2024 NPLEX® TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES HANDBOOK

Suite 119, #321, 9220 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland, Oregon 97219
testingaccommodations@NABNE.org www.nabne.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE	3
UNDERSTANDING THE STANDARD TESTING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT	4
Courtesy Accommodations	4
UNDERSTANDING NABNE TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS	5
Definition of Testing Accommodations	5
Available Testing Accommodations	5
Which Candidates Should Request Testing Accommodations?	6
Qualifying Disabilities	6
REQUESTING TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS	7
Required Forms	7
Objective Evidence Required	7
Optional Supporting Documentation	7
Currency of the Evaluation and Supporting Documentation	7
Evaluator’s Documentation – Who is a “Qualified Professional”?	8
SUBMITTING A REQUEST FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS	8
Deadlines	8
Timeline from Submission to Decision	9
Consideration of Testing Accommodations Requests	10
Withdrawal of Request for Testing Accommodations	10
Approval of Request for Testing Accommodations	10
Denial of Request for Testing Accommodations	10
Appeals Regarding Testing Accommodations Decisions	10
Subsequent Administrations of the NPLEX and Testing Accommodations Requests	10
Confidentiality and Information Releases	11
Applicability of NABNE Policies	11

PURPOSE

The North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners (NABNE) is committed to providing all examination candidates an equitable opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities in the examination setting. NABNE provides reasonable and appropriate testing accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the United States (US) and in accordance with applicable human rights and accessibility legislation in Canada.

Testing accommodations should remove barriers to examinee performance. They should neither advantage nor disadvantage any examinee. Testing accommodations are purposely designed to remove obstacles that are presented by an individual's disability, without modifying the nature or level of the qualification that is being assessed and without compromising the reliability or validity of the Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examination (NPLEX). Regulatory authorities rely on NABNE to provide reliable and valid examination results.

If a candidate has a disability, the candidate may request testing accommodations to provide equal access. NABNE will consider testing accommodations requests for the NPLEX from eligible candidates who have a demonstrated disability and need for accommodation if the requests are:

- Reasonable and properly documented
- AND**
- Do not fundamentally alter the examination
- AND**
- Do not jeopardize exam security or validity

**Testing accommodations should remove barriers to examinee performance.
They should neither advantage nor disadvantage any examinee.**

**Testing accommodations are purposely designed to remove obstacles
that are presented by an individual's disability, without modifying the nature
or level of the qualification that is being assessed and without
compromising the reliability
or validity of the NPLEX.**

Regulatory authorities rely on NABNE to provide reliable and valid examination results.

UNDERSTANDING THE STANDARD TESTING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT

The NPLEX Part I - Biomedical Science Examination is administered in two (2) sections (morning and afternoon) on the same day. Examinees are allowed 2½ hours (150 minutes) to complete each 100-item section. There is a 1-hour break between the morning and afternoon sections of the examination.

The NPLEX Part II – Core Clinical Sciences Examination is administered in three (3) sections over a period of three (3) days, one section each day. Examinees are allowed 3 ½ hours (210 minutes) to complete each 135-item section.

The NPLEX Part II – Clinical Elective Examinations (Acupuncture, Elective Pharmacology, Minor Surgery, and Parenteral Medicine) are administered on separate days. Examinees are allowed 1½ hours (90 minutes) to complete the 75 items in each Part II – Clinical Elective Examination.

NABNE allows examinees to bring a closed container with a non-alcoholic beverage into the testing room. Please refer to the [NABNE Examinee Handbook](#) for more details about what is allowed into the standard testing room and what is not allowed.

NABNE allows examinees to use the restroom, access water, food, medications, or other supplements at any time during the testing session, outside of the testing room; however, the testing clock does not stop. Examinees will not be given additional time for breaks taken during the testing period either in or outside of the testing room. The NPLEX is not a speeded examination. The time allotted for the examination is designed to allow examinees to attend to their biological needs for food, drink, medications, stretching, and/or the restroom.

COURTESY ACCOMMODATIONS

Courtesy accommodations minimally alter the standard testing environment, if at all. Please note that candidates must request courtesy accommodations.

Some examples of a courtesy accommodation include:

- Bringing a pillow, stool, or other equipment for physical comfort
- Requesting a noise-reducing headset issued by NABNE
- Being seated in a particular area (e.g., near the door, or in the back) of the standard testing room
- Wearing a continuous glucose monitor or another medical device implanted in an examinee's body that has external communication capability (Bluetooth, wireless, cellular, etc.)¹
- Using a wheelchair, walker or other mobility apparatus in the testing room
- Bringing a magnifying glass

¹ A letter will be required if the examinee has an implanted medical device that has external communication capability. The letter should be emailed directly to NABNE at testingaccommodations@nabne.org **no later than the deadline** by the treating professional on office letterhead and signed by the applicant's fully licensed practicing physician or other qualified professional. The letter should be dated, have the applicant's name, and explain the necessity of the implanted device being connected to external communication during the testing session, or that the implanted device's external communication capability may be turned off for the duration of the testing session.

To request a *Courtesy Accommodations Request Form*, please contact NABNE by emailing testingaccommodations@nabne.org. The completed form may be submitted to NABNE by email at testingaccommodations@nabne.org **no later than May 31st for the August NPLEX** administration or **no later than November 30th for the February NPLEX** administration.

Please note that devices that have external communication capability such as cellular, wireless, Bluetooth, etc., may be excluded from the testing room unless approved as a reasonable courtesy accommodation. This also applies to devices that may sound audible alerts, vibrate, or otherwise emit sounds.

While NABNE aims to grant courtesy accommodations to individuals who request them, approval is not guaranteed.

UNDERSTANDING NABNE TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

DEFINITION OF TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

A testing accommodation refers to any modification to the standard administration of the NPLEX to address an examinee's disability. Testing accommodations are designed to remove obstacles that are presented by an individual's disability without modifying the nature or level of the qualification and competencies that are being assessed.

AVAILABLE TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Candidates may request testing accommodations to facilitate equal access to the NPLEX. Testing accommodations that may be provided include, but are not limited to:

- Off-the-testing-clock breaks – additional break time but unchanged total testing time
- Assistive technology or personnel
- Access to medication in the testing room
- Additional testing time of either an additional 25% (1.25 time) or 50% (1.5 time)²
- Private or semi-private testing space
- Assignment to a wheelchair-accessible room
- An exam booklet in large-point font
- Printed copy of spoken instructions with visual notification of start time, time remaining, and stop times.

Examinees are not permitted to provide their own readers, recorders, or interpreters.

² Several peer-reviewed studies show that granting extra testing time when it is not necessary impacts exam validity.

WHICH CANDIDATES SHOULD REQUEST TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS?

Candidates who have a qualifying disability should consider applying for testing accommodations. NABNE defines a “qualifying disability” as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (US) or as defined by applicable human rights legislation (Canada). Please note that all requests for testing accommodations must be supported by appropriate documentation, as outlined on pages 7 and 8 in this Handbook.

- ❑ Candidates must initiate the request for testing accommodations themselves. Requests for testing accommodations from third parties (e.g., naturopathic medical programs, instructors, healthcare providers, or relatives) are not accepted.
- ❑ Modifications to the testing environment will not be considered or approved at the test site on the day of the NPLEX administration.
- ❑ NABNE does not assess additional fees to candidates who request testing accommodations.

QUALIFYING DISABILITIES

To receive testing accommodations, an applicant must have a qualifying disability pursuant to the ADA or applicable disability legislation in Canada. That is, there must be a *documentable* physical or mental impairment that meets NABNE’s definition above.

Some conditions, such as complete blindness or deafness, are always substantially limiting. A variety of other impairments might be disabling for some individuals, though not for others, depending on the impact on their major life activities.

Testing accommodation requests require documentation from a qualified professional supporting the existence of a disability and the need for the requested accommodation. For the purposes of testing accommodations for the NPLEX, the candidate must demonstrate a disability that impairs the applicant’s ability to take a non-speeded, multiple-choice examination. The NPLEX requires examinees to be able to read and comprehend text. The examinations do not require math calculations, oral fluency, or compositional writing.

The focus and purpose of supporting documentation is to have an adequate description of the nature and extent of impairment to determine appropriate accommodations.

REQUESTING TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

REQUIRED FORMS

To request reasonable accommodations, the following must be completed and submitted to NABNE:

1. A completed and signed *NABNE Testing Accommodations Request form*. This is to be provided by the applicant; and
2. A completed and signed *NABNE Testing Accommodations Applicant Checklist*. This is to be provided by the applicant; and
3. A completed *NABNE Evaluator's Report Form (NERf)* and supporting documentation. This is to be signed by and sent by a qualified professional.

Requests for testing accommodations will not be considered until items 1, 2, and 3 above are received. NABNE will not consider incomplete requests.

Requests for testing accommodations will not be considered until items 1, 2, and 3 above are received. NABNE will not consider incomplete requests.

The information requested on the NABNE forms may be withheld at the applicant's discretion.

OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE REQUIRED

NABNE requires objective evidence in support of testing accommodations requests. The *NERf* is designed to help the qualified professional submit the information NABNE requires to appropriately assess the testing accommodations request.

OPTIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

The applicant may submit documentation of testing accommodations granted by the applicant's academic institutions, and/or testing accommodations on another standardized examinations (e.g., SAT, ACT, MCAT, USMLE, COMLEX, NCLEX), the documentation must be dated, signed by an appropriate representative, on office letterhead, and include the applicant's name.

The applicant may provide NABNE a personal statement that specifically describes how the applicant's functional limitations impact the ability to take a multiple-choice examination. This statement is not required and is intended to give the applicant an opportunity to provide relevant information that might not be provided by the qualified professional.

CURRENCY OF THE EVALUATION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

All documentation should reflect current functioning.

Testing accommodations are assessed based on the current impact of the applicant's disability on the testing activity. It is in the applicant's best interest to provide recent documentation because the manifestations of a disability may vary over time and in different settings. Certain conditions such as some physical and psychiatric conditions are subject to change and should be updated to reflect current functioning. Contact NABNE at testingaccommodations@nabne.org to find out if a current evaluation is required, as "current" depends on the nature of the impairment.

EVALUATOR'S DOCUMENTATION - WHO IS A "QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL"?

Applicants requesting testing accommodations must arrange for a qualified, appropriate professional who is familiar with the *current* impact of the applicant's disability on the applicant's ability to perform on the NPLEX or other similar timed, standardized examinations to complete and sign *NABNE Evaluator's Report form (NERf)* and provide supplemental supporting documentation. At a minimum, the professional must have demonstrated expertise *and* recognized credentials (e.g., licensure, certification, or specialized training) in the diagnosis and assessment of the disability or impairment in question. For example, for a cognitive/developmental/psychological disability, qualified evaluators must be trained to administer and interpret psychoeducational assessments and typically have a PhD or PsyD or equivalent training or experience in neuropsychology. A relative, employer, friend, or member of the same household of the applicant will not be considered a qualified professional.

The applicant's qualified professional must perform an individualized assessment of the applicant, complete, sign, and submit the *NERf* and the requested supplemental supporting documentation directly to NABNE. Recommendations made by qualified professionals are taken into consideration by NABNE; however, testing accommodations are not guaranteed.

SUBMITTING A REQUEST FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

DEADLINES

All requests for testing accommodations must be supported by appropriate documentation, as outlined above, and be received **by May 31st for the August NPLEX** administration or **Nov 30th for the February NPLEX** administration. Before a request for testing accommodations will be considered by NABNE, the applicant must be registered for the current administration of the NPLEX and, all forms and required documentation must be completed and submitted. Failure to complete and submit the required documentation by the deadline will result in no testing accommodations being provided on the day of examination(s) for that applicant.

Before a request for testing accommodations will be considered by NABNE:

- 1. The applicant must be registered for the current administration of the NPLEX**
- AND**
- 2. All forms and required documentation must be completed and submitted.**

NABNE strongly encourages applicants to submit their testing accommodations requests early in the registration window.

NABNE will initiate review of testing accommodations requests once an applicant has registered and submitted all the completed forms and required documentation. NABNE will inform applicants if additional information is needed in order to make a determination. NABNE strongly encourages applicants to submit their testing accommodations requests early in the registration window. Doing so may offer applicants whose submissions are deficient the opportunity to provide additional or clarifying information prior to the submission deadline so that it may be considered for the upcoming NPLEX administration.

If any of the completed forms or required supporting documentation is not received by the deadline, the request for testing accommodations will not be considered. NABNE must receive all the completed forms and required documentation no later than the deadline in order to properly assess the request.

If any of the completed forms or required supporting documentation is not received by the deadline, the request for testing accommodations will not be considered.

NABNE must receive all the completed forms and required documentation no later than the deadline in order to properly assess the request.

If the documentation submitted to NABNE by the deadline is incomplete or not sufficient to establish the need for the requested accommodation, the applicant has the choice to either: 1) take the examination(s) without the requested accommodations, or 2) cancel their registration and be refunded according to the NABNE’s cancellation policy.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all necessary information is submitted to NABNE. It is not NABNE’s responsibility to ask for the required information.

TIMELINE FROM SUBMISSION TO DECISION

	February NPLEX Administration	August NPLEX Administration
Submission of testing accommodations requests begins	November 1 of the previous year	May 1 of the same year
Deadline for submitting testing accommodations requests	November 30 of the previous year	May 31 of the same year
NABNE consideration of requests	December 1 to 31 of the previous year	June 1 to 30 of the same year
Notification of NABNE decisions	Approximately four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled exam date. Sometime in the first week of January	Approximately four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled exam date. Sometime in the first week of July

CONSIDERATION OF TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS REQUESTS

Requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis. All decisions are based on current NABNE policies and protocols applicable to all applicants and in accordance with the ADA in the United States or the principles of applicable human rights and accessibility legislation in Canada.

There is no guarantee that NABNE will grant the requested testing accommodations.

WITHDRAWAL OF REQUEST FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

An applicant may withdraw their request for testing accommodation at any time. To do so, the applicant must send an email to testingaccommodations@nabne.org stating that the applicant is making an informed decision to take the examination without testing accommodations.

APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

If a request is approved, NABNE will email the applicant a Decision Letter, which will have further instructions to confirm and accept the approved testing accommodations. Approval of testing accommodations is applicable only to the current examination administration.

NABNE will arrange to provide the approved testing accommodation(s) at the selected test site.

DENIAL OF REQUEST FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

If a request is not approved, the applicant will receive a Decision Letter detailing the rationale for the NABNE's decision.

APPEALS REGARDING TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS DECISIONS

If an applicant wishes to appeal a decision, the applicant must submit an appeal to NABNE in writing, addressed to the Testing Accommodations Review Committee of the NABNE Board. Please send the appeal letter via email to testingaccommodations@nabne.org. Because of the short time frame between accommodations decisions and the exam administration, the Board will not be able to respond before the upcoming exam administration, but NABNE will seek to provide a response to the appeal within six (6) weeks of its receipt.

SUBSEQUENT ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE NPLEX AND TESTING ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS

A candidate must submit a new *NABNE Testing Accommodations Request Form* every time the candidate registers to take the NPLEX and requests testing accommodations.

A NERf and supporting documentation from a qualified professional does not need to be resubmitted IF:

- The applicant's previous request for testing accommodations was approved **within the past year.**

AND

- The same testing accommodations are requested.

AND

- The applicant certifies that their degree of impairment is the same or substantially similar to that when the testing accommodation was granted.

Submission of a new *NERf* and supporting documentation may be required IF:

- The applicant's previous request for testing accommodations was approved more than one year ago.

OR

- The applicant is requesting additional or different accommodations.

OR

- The applicant's previously submitted documentation does not reflect current functioning.

OR

- The applicant does not satisfy all of the criteria listed on the previous page in the event testing accommodations were approved within the past year.

NABNE will consider the applicant's circumstances when deciding if a new *NERf* and supporting documentation will be required. Please contact NABNE at testingaccommodations@nabne.org to inquire.

If a request for testing accommodations was previously denied, applicants seeking future accommodations should submit a new request for a future exam administration, along with additional documentation or new information that is responsive to the feedback provided in the Decision Letter.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION RELEASES

All information related to the request for testing accommodations will remain confidential and be used solely for the purpose of determining the need for testing accommodations in the administration of the NPLEX.

APPLICABILITY OF NABNE POLICIES

Nothing in this Testing Accommodations for Disabilities Handbook shall diminish the applicability of the policies and procedures outlined in the [NABNE Examinee Handbook](#).