



NATIONAL BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTOMETRY PLACES HOLD ON PART I SCORES

The Board of Directors of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) has placed a hold on the release of Part I scores. This release was scheduled for May 5, 2010. The National Board is postponing the release of scores pending an investigation into evidence of possible cheating by a significant number of exam candidates. Scores will not be released until the investigation has been completed.

This examination was administered to optometry candidates at 18 different sites across the US and Canada on March 16-17, 2010. The NBEO's investigation into that exam administration is focusing on three primary concerns. The Board is investigating the possibility that some candidates may have had improper access to confidential exam items before the examination. In addition, the Board is investigating whether candidates taking the examination engaged in an organized attempt to memorize exam content in order to reproduce it for use by other students taking future administrations. The Board also is investigating the possible involvement in such activities of at least one faculty member.

Such unethical conduct, if it occurred, would constitute cheating and would be a violation of NBEO examination policies and rules binding on examination candidates. Those NBEO policies and rules were established to protect the security, integrity, and credibility of the examination.

NBEO examination candidates are not permitted to engage in any reproduction or distribution of the examination in whole or in part. In addition, prior to taking the examination, candidates agree that they will not accept, receive, or obtain any test items in whole or in part from any source prior to administration of the examination, or engage in any other unauthorized or improper actions in connection with the examination materials and/or content. Failure to abide by these agreements may result in the cancellation of scores, the barring of candidates from future exams, and/or the imposition of other

sanctions as determined by the Board of Directors. Finally, it is stated on the NBEO website and on each examination that NBEO may withhold scores at its sole discretion. NBEO's test content also is subject to copyright protection under applicable law.

Successful completion of NBEO examinations is a requirement for licensure in the practice of optometry in all 50 states. In order to meet its responsibility to provide credible examination results to jurisdictional regulatory boards, the National Board must have total confidence in its test results, which are dependent upon the highest maintenance of security involving examination content. This continuing investigation is in furtherance of that purpose and is the ultimate reason for the delayed release of scores. If the investigation reveals a breach of security, such breach will be documented and repaired, and appropriate disciplinary or enforcement action will be considered against those found to be involved in improper conduct.