



Modernization Efforts at NBEEO: Information Technology and New Expanded Testing Center

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As the optometric profession evolves, the National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEEO®) is committed to maintaining high standards to meet current and future needs. To support this, we are investing significant time and resources to strengthen our technological and physical infrastructure.

Information Technology Modernization

This transition began in 2022, when we performed a thorough review of our systems and started planning updates to our information technology infrastructure. Since 2008, NBEEO has used a customized Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software called Optometric Examination Database Information System (OEDIS). As a result of our information technology modernization efforts, we will replace and rebuild OEDIS to provide candidates with a more reliable and efficient software throughout the examination process. This work will also enhance the experience of other stakeholder groups, including regulatory boards, schools and colleges of optometry, and NBEEO subject matter experts. As you can imagine, replacing our entire technological backbone is complicated, and cannot be done overnight.

Fortunately, this transition is already under way, and you may have already noticed some improvements. In December 2023, we launched a new registration system to enhance the candidate experience by allowing us to serve more concurrent users during peak registrations, and we also streamlined the payment process. Registration sets the tone for candidates' exam experience, and we felt this was an important place to start.

Additionally, we built a new application for the Part III Patient Encounters and Performance Skills (PEPS®) Examination. This allows candidates to experience a clean, more modern exam format that balances clinical authenticity and the standardization necessary for a high stakes performance examination. The Part III PEPS exam was designed in a custom software solution independent from the OEDIS application. A critical component of our new

application has been making the examination a more true-to-life experience for our candidates. For this reason, we created an electronic health records database reflective of cases that doctors of optometry encounter in real optometric practice. Candidates are tested with cases from this database as part of their examination to diagnose and treat patients. This successful software transition is the foundation for improvements to other NBEO examinations.

Another major benefit of this modernization process will be the creation of a more automated system for scoring exams and publishing scores. As we have recently communicated [here](#), the exam scoring process is thorough and complex. This process is necessary to ensure that every candidate receives a fair assessment of their knowledge, skills, and abilities, no matter when they take their examination. While this commitment to fairness lengthens the scoring process, this new software will create a more efficient score publishing process.

In the coming year, our software solutions will be fully integrated, bringing increased efficiency to our registration and scoring process. In addition, our legacy software, OEDIS, is planned to be decommissioned from all uses by the end of 2026 to make way for more efficient replacement software.

Over the course of the next two years, NBEO will continue this modernization process. This year we expect to complete the following enhancements:

- Further expansions of the Part III PEPS testing system to allow for twice as many candidates to simultaneously perform the exam
- Improved integration with necessary software programs
- Candidate management system upgrades to simplify our exam registration and score publishing process
- In 2026, we plan to continue this transition with the following improvements:
 - Expanding improvements to each of the following exams:
 - Part I Applied Basic Science (ABS[®])
 - Part II Patient Assessment & Management and Treatment and Management of Ocular Disease (PAM[®]/TMOD[®])
 - Injections Skill Examination (ISE[®])
 - Laser and Surgical Procedures Examination (LSPE[®])
 - Online State Law Exams (OSLE[®])
 - Advanced Competence in Medical Optometry (ACMO[®])
 - Developing and launching an elevated data portal for candidates, schools and colleges of optometry, and regulatory boards.

We will provide updates as these changes are made so candidates and stakeholders can see and understand how these changes will improve their experience.

Increasing Testing Capacity

Our commitment to modernizing NBEO extends beyond an updated information technology infrastructure. We have secured a new office and testing location in Charlotte that will double our testing capacity for the Part III Patient Encounters and Performance Skills (PEPS) Examination, ensuring more candidates obtain their preferred choice for date and time. In addition, the new location will have a dedicated Laser and Surgical Procedures Examination and Injections Skill Examination suite which can operate simultaneously with the Part III PEPS examination.

NBEO rigorously explored alternate location options, considering other cities and satellite testing locations. All other options, including staying in our current location, would significantly increase costs. In fact, NBEO expects this new location to generate approximately \$4 million in savings over the next decade. Those savings will enable NBEO to contain costs in its examination process.

The new NBEO National Center of Clinical Testing in Optometry will be located at 7910 Microsoft Way, Charlotte, North Carolina 28273 and will begin hosting examination candidates beginning August 2025.

We are excited about the changes ahead for NBEO and the positive impact they will have on candidates and the public we serve. If you have any questions about the information technology updates or our new testing center, please contact us at nbeo@optometry.org.

About NBEO — Established in 1951, NBEO is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organization whose examinations are universally accepted for optometric licensure in the United States and accepted internationally. NBEO's mission is to protect the public by developing, administering, scoring, and reporting results of valid examinations that assess competency in optometry.