

March 4, 2022
Subject: Registration Update

Dear Candidates,

First, we want to again express our sincere apologies to all candidates for the inconvenience and frustrations experienced on Tuesday, February 15, when candidates were unable to access our registration site for the Part III Clinical Skills Examination (CSE), Injections Skill Examination (ISE), and Laser and Surgical Procedures Examination (LSPE).

Second, we want you to know that we take this situation, our processes and all that is required of candidates very seriously. We know how upsetting it can be when you need to perform an activity at a certain time and are unable to do so through no fault of your own.

Third, we have been working diligently to remedy the situation and had hoped to be able to communicate a new registration opening date to you by now. Unfortunately, there is not a readily accessible solution. We are, however, working through multiple alternatives to be able to deliver a registration solution that encompasses the full functionality needed by both candidates and NBEO.

What Happened

In preparation for February 15, we planned well in advance and anticipated that we would experience dramatically increased traffic to NBEO's registration site once it went live. We worked with our cloud services provider to mitigate any problems that could occur due to the anticipated increase in traffic. Unfortunately, our proactive efforts were insufficient to handle the volume of visitors to the site when registration opened at 9pm EST, and the web server stopped responding.

As quickly as possible, we sent an email to all candidates to apologize, letting them know we were working to correct the issue, and tell them that we would update them as soon as we had more information.

When it became clear that night that a fix was not immediately available, we sent a second email to all candidates to again apologize and let them know that we needed to cancel the opening of registration that evening. We also advised candidates that we would provide a minimum of two weeks' advance notice of a new registration date to allow candidates time to plan and prepare.

Early on Wednesday, February 16, we emailed the American Optometric Student Association (AOSA) to inform them what had transpired the night before. AOSA confirmed the stresses that many candidates experienced while trying to access the registration site, which is certainly understandable. We all rely heavily on online tools, and when they don't function as expected, it is frustrating for all involved.

Why it Happened

Some may wonder why this happened when registration periods in years past have occurred without any system difficulties. After working with AOSA last year, we identified a need to open registration at a predetermined date and time for all candidates. We listened to AOSA leadership's request to open registration at 9:00pm EST with advanced notification. Previous years' registration openings had not experienced the issues encountered on February 15. The high number of simultaneous user logons and registration attempts overloaded the registration service, causing the web server to stop responding.

What's Next

As soon as a registration solution is affirmed, we will announce the new registration opening date and time with a minimum of two weeks' advance notice so that all candidates may plan, prepare and have the same opportunity to register. We will provide our next communication on this issue sometime after the Part I ABS examination has been administered.

Once again, we offer our apologies. We appreciate your understanding and support as we work to prepare for a new registration opening date for Part III (CSE), ISE and LSPE.

Sincerely,

NBEO