



National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards **Candidate Handbook**

November 2025

State licensing information

Candidates may contact the National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB) with questions about exam applications.

Questions regarding how to become licensed should be directed to the appropriate state jurisdiction.

National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB)
1120 20th Street NW
Suite 750
Washington, DC 20036

Phone
(202) 712-9040

Email
nab@nabweb.org

Website
www.nabweb.org

Examination information

Candidates may contact Pearson VUE with questions about this handbook or about an upcoming examination.

Phone
(800) 834-1426

Website
<https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/nab.html>

Quick reference

Reservations

Before making an exam reservation

Candidates should thoroughly review this handbook. It contains important examination information regarding eligibility for the examination and the licensing application process.

Making an exam reservation

Candidates may make a reservation online through their NABVerify account or by calling (800) 834-1426.

Candidates are encouraged to make their exam reservation at least 48 hours in advance.

Walk-in examinations are not available.

Schedules & fees

Test centers

Candidates should visit <https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/nab.html> for a complete list of testing center locations.

Exam fees

The examination fee must be paid at the time of application by credit card or debit card.

Fees will not be accepted at the test center. Examination fees are non-refundable and non-transferable, except as detailed in the Change/Cancel Policy.

Exam day

What to bring to the exam

Candidates should bring to the examination proper identification as outlined in the **What to Bring** section.

Exam procedures

Candidates should report to the test center at least 30 minutes before the examination begins to complete the admission process. Each candidate will leave the test center with a preliminary score report in hand.

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Overview

This handbook provides information about the examination and licensing process for National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB) testing candidates.

Individuals who wish to test with NAB must:

1. **Read the handbook to learn about the examination and licensing requirements.**
2. **Apply for licensure through your state licensing board.**

Contact your state licensing board to see if you qualify for licensure/certification, and apply for licensure directly with your state licensing board. Once the state board has approved your application, you may apply to take a NAB exam.

A list of state board and agency contacts is available on the NAB website at www.nabweb.org/state-licensure-requirements. Candidates for the HSE™ qualification should visit www.nabweb.org/health-services-executive to review requirements.

Note: State licensure requirements are maintained by the respective state boards; contact them with specific questions.

3. **Apply to take a NAB exam and pay the examination fee(s).**

To apply for a NAB examination, submit an online application at the NABVerify website: <https://ams.nabweb.org/nabssa/>. If you are a first-time user of the NAB website, create a new profile and enter your personal information.

Note: An administrator would be considered a new user for a score transfer if they have not used the system previously.

After signing in to your account, select a jurisdiction to apply for any NAB examination(s). A jurisdiction is the state board, state agency, or certification body that is authorized to approve specific applications. Agree to the exam security standards, and follow the screens to complete your background information and submit your payment. For assistance with the exam application process, you may email nab@nabweb.org or call (202) 712-9040.

4. **Receive an exam authorization email from NAB.**

Once your application is submitted, it is reviewed and verified within 120 days by the designed state board/agency or certification body (or NAB for HSE™ applications). If your application is approved, you will receive an Authorization to Test email with instructions for scheduling your exam.

Note: If you are nearing the end of the 120-day review window and the licensing jurisdiction has not made a decision regarding your exam application, you have the following options:

- **Contact your state jurisdiction.**

You can contact the state jurisdiction to which you applied to inquire about the status of your NAB exam application.

A list of state board and agency contacts is available on the NAB website at www.nabweb.org/state-licensure-requirements.

- **Withdraw your NAB application.**

If you prefer not to wait for the jurisdiction's decision, you can withdraw your NAB exam application before the 120-day deadline and submit a new application once you have settled your license application with the appropriate jurisdiction.

- **Leave your application pending.**

You can leave your application pending with the jurisdiction and wait to see if they approve it before the 120-day deadline.

Once you have received the Authorization to Test email, examinations must be scheduled and completed within 90 days. It is advised to schedule your exam as soon as possible after receiving approval to ensure that it can be completed within the eligibility window.

Your eligibility is valid for one examination attempt. If you fail an examination or if you are absent from your testing appointment, you will need to reapply and receive a new Authorization to Test email to retake the exam. **No refunds will be given if you are absent from your testing appointment or fail to test within the 90-day window.**

5. Make a reservation to take the exam.

Make a reservation (by phone or online) with Pearson VUE for the examination. Online reservations can be made through your NABVerify account using the **Manage Exam Appointment** button within the exam application.

6. Go to the test center.

Go to the test center on the day of the examination, bringing along all required identification items. See **What to bring** for details.

You will receive your pass/fail results immediately after the exam. If successful, you will receive instructions for completing the licensure process with your state licensing board. If unsuccessful, you will need to reapply for an exam through NAB. See **Retake requirements** for more information.

Introduction

About the National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB)

The mission of NAB is to work in partnership with their member state regulatory boards/agencies to ensure public protection of the residents and clients of America's skilled nursing facilities, assisted living communities, and home and community-based services. As such, NAB strives to support member boards/agencies in carrying out their mission through the development and provision of entry-level competency examinations, standards, shared resources, and tools to assist them in their role of licensing nursing home, assisted living, and home and community-based services administrators. NAB examinations are also used as a component in meeting the eligibility criteria for voluntary certification programs.

Contact information

Candidates may contact Pearson VUE with questions about this handbook or about an upcoming examination.

Pearson VUE NAB

Phone: (800) 834-1426

Website: <https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/nab.html>

Live chat is available to address candidate support inquiries and is the quickest way to reach a customer service agent. It is available from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. CST Monday through Saturday. Availability is subject to change during locally-designated holidays.

Please visit <https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/nab.html#contact> for more information.

For questions about obtaining or maintaining a license, candidates should contact their state licensing jurisdiction. Questions regarding the exam application may be directed to NAB.

National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards

1120 20th Street NW

Suite 750

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: (202) 712-9040

Website: www.nabweb.org

Email: nab@nabweb.org

Licensure process

Licensure is the process by which an agency or state government or other jurisdiction grants permission to individuals to engage in the practice of a particular profession, vocation, or occupation and prohibits all others from legally practicing that profession. By ensuring a minimum level of competence, the licensure process protects the general public. The state regulatory agency is responsible for establishing the acceptable level of safe practice and for determining whether an individual meets that standard.

NAB has commissioned the services of Pearson VUE to develop and administer its licensing examination program. Pearson VUE is a leading provider of assessment services to regulatory agencies and national associations.

NAB relationship with state boards and certification bodies

NAB works in collaboration with its member state boards and voluntary certification bodies to design exams to measure the competencies needed to begin a career in health services and supports administration. It is important to remember that state regulatory boards/agencies are the entities that issue all long-term care licenses once requirements have been met successfully.

In addition to required licenses, some professionals may opt to complete a voluntary certification program in the areas of resident care/assisted living and/or home and community-based services if their states do not license these lines of service. For those professionals desiring to hold a certification in one of these areas, NAB has established standards that certification bodies may follow if they use NAB exam(s) as a component for certification eligibility.

Refer to the NAB website at www.nabweb.org for additional information on state boards/agencies and certification bodies requiring examinations. Each state board or agency retains the sole authority to determine passing scores.

State requirements for licensure

Candidates should contact the state board/agency that regulates licensure in the jurisdiction in which they wish to be licensed to confirm requirements regarding education, experience, and examinations before applying for any NAB exams.

Information regarding licensure requirements can be found at www.nabweb.org/state-licensure-requirements. This includes state-specific requirements, state contact information, and links to state-specific websites for more information regarding long-term care licensure. Candidates should contact their state jurisdictions for the most current licensure requirements.

Available examinations

NAB examinations are competency-based assessments developed to protect the public by ensuring that entry-level administrators have mastered the specific body of knowledge necessary for competent practice within the profession. NAB develops and administers examinations across the continuum of long-term care, and the NAB team of exam item authors work diligently to craft questions that cover all domains of practice within long-term care administration. Exams are offered in the following areas:

NAB National Core Knowledge Exam for Long-Term Care Administrators (CORE)

The CORE exam is used to demonstrate mastery of the foundational skills and knowledge for all lines of service across the senior living and health services continuum. It has 125 questions, which includes 25 non-scored, pretest questions, and candidates are given two hours and 30 minutes to complete the exam, which includes time to read the welcome message and non-disclosure agreement and answer post-exam questions. Candidates will have two hours and 10 minutes to answer questions. The time to answer questions remains the same regardless of whether candidates read or do not read the other sections.

First-time candidates are encouraged to schedule their CORE and Line of Service (LOS) exams concurrently to obtain discounted pricing when purchased together. If a candidate registers for the exams separately, refunds (minus the non-refundable 40% processing fee per application) will not be given unless both applications are withdrawn. Some states may mandate concurrent scheduling, so candidates should check their state board requirements before scheduling.

NAB National Nursing Home Administrators Line of Service Exam (NHA)

The NHA line of service exam measures the entry-level knowledge specific to nursing home administrators. It is a required component of licensure in all states and the District of Columbia. The NHA exam has 75 questions, which includes 15 non-scored, pretest questions, and candidates are given one hour and 30 minutes to complete the exam, which includes time to read the welcome message and non-disclosure agreement and answer post-exam questions. Candidates will have one hour and 10 minutes to answer questions. The time to answer questions remains the same regardless of whether candidates read or do not read the other sections.

NAB National Residential Care/Assisted Living Administrators Line of Service Exam (RC/AL)

The RC/AL line of service exam measures the entry-level knowledge specific to residential care and assisted living administrators. It is a required component of licensure in several states. The RC/AL exam has 75 questions, which includes 15 non-scored, pretest questions, and candidates are given one hour and 30 minutes to complete the exam, which includes time to read the welcome message and non-disclosure agreement and answer post-exam questions. Candidates will have one hour and 10 minutes to answer questions. The time to answer questions remains the same regardless of whether candidates read or do not read the other sections.

Candidates whose states/jurisdictions do not license RC/AL administrators may take advantage of NAB-approved third-party certification programs. For more information regarding these programs, visit www.nabweb.org/third-party-certification-programs.

In addition, qualified professionals may be approved by NAB to take the HCBS exam through the Health Services Executive (HSE™) qualification program. For more information regarding this qualification, visit www.nabweb.org/health-services-executive.

NAB National Home and Community Based Services Line of Service Exam (HCBS)

The HCBS line of service exam encompasses independent living, adult day, home health, community-based services, palliative, and hospice care. Currently, very few states offer licensure in HCBS. The HCBS exam has 75 questions, which includes 15 non-scored, pretest questions, and candidates are given one hour and 30 minutes to complete the exam, which includes time to read the welcome message and non-disclosure agreement and answer post-exam questions. Candidates will have one hour and 10 minutes to answer questions. The time to answer questions remains the same regardless of whether candidates read or do not read the other sections.

Candidates whose states/jurisdictions do not license HCBS administrators may take advantage of NAB-approved third-party certification programs. For more information regarding these programs, visit www.nabweb.org/third-party-certification-programs.

In addition, qualified professionals may be approved by NAB to take the HCBS exam through the Health Services Executive (HSE™) qualification program. For more information regarding this qualification, visit www.nabweb.org/health-services-executive.

Health Services Executive (HSE™) qualification

In 2017, NAB introduced the Health Services Executive (HSE™) qualification. The HSE™ is designed to facilitate cross-jurisdictional licensure mobility and multiple lines of service licensure qualification.

The HSE™ qualification is awarded to health services and supports professionals who demonstrate, through a combination of education, experience, and examination, mastery of the entry-level competencies required to meet licensure requirements in all three lines of service (NHA, RC/AL, and HCBS). Detailed information regarding the application process and qualification requirements can be found on the NAB website at www.nabweb.org/health-services-executive.

States that adopt the NAB HSE™ qualification recognize NAB HSE™-qualified candidates as meeting their state licensure requirements in state-specific required categories (NHA, RC/AL, and/or HCBS) of licensure with minimal additional requirements (e.g., criminal background checks and state law exams as required by the state).

Candidates for the HSE™ qualification must first register and apply for the HSE™ through NABVerify at <https://nabweb.org/seeking-licensure/hse> and must meet the NAB HSE™ qualifications prior to applying to additional state boards for licensure. HSE™ applicants are required to complete all three LOS exams successfully to achieve the HSE™ qualification. All HSE™ applicants must apply to take their exams through the “HSE-NAB” jurisdiction or the exam application will be denied. Upon qualification, candidates may apply directly to their state board for licensure, and NAB will transfer the HSE file to the state board or agency.

State examination administration program

NAB also offers administration of state-based examinations for select jurisdictions. States prepare their respective exams and provide any study materials or guidance for their exams. Candidates should check with the jurisdiction in which they are seeking licensure to determine if they participate in the NAB state examination program. Additionally, this information can be found on the state board page of the NAB website: www.nabweb.org/state-licensure-requirements.

If a state exam is offered, candidates may elect to schedule to take both the national examinations and the state exam concurrently or in two separate testing sessions. Prior to registering for a state or national exams, candidates should contact their states to determine the order in which to take the exams.

The Diagnostic Report is only available for the national exams as the state exams do not have a consistent passing scaled score.

Exam structure

Licensure and certification candidates must pass both examinations.

The first exam consists of the CORE examination with 125 items (100 scored and 25 non-scored, pretest items). Individuals who have completed either the NHA exam and/or RC/AL exam prior to July 1, 2017 do not need to take the CORE exam.

The second exam consists of the appropriate line of service (LOS) exam with 75 items (60 scored and 15 non-scored, pretest items). NAB offers three line of services exams: NHA, RC/AL, and HCBS.

Candidates may take both exams (CORE + LOS) together by scheduling consecutive exam reservations. Candidates should check with their state board regarding scheduling requirements.

If exams are applied for and scheduled consecutively, they are taken one right after the other with a break in between. After completing their first exam, candidates will leave the exam room and be readmitted for the second exam. Candidates who are successful on one exam and unsuccessful on the other are required to retake only the failed exam, unless the licensing jurisdiction states otherwise. Separate scores for each exam are reported to state licensing boards and agencies.

Note: Candidates should check with their state board for any exceptions to the single-exam retake policy. Some states may require candidates to retake both exams in one test sitting.

All of the items on the NHA, RC/AL, and HCBS examinations are objective, multiple-choice questions having four answer choices, of which one is the correct response. The examination content covers four content areas/domains:

- Care, services, and supports
- Operations
- Environment and quality
- Leadership and strategy

Each content area includes several tasks along with knowledge and skills needs to perform the tasks. The NAB Domains of Practice, available on the NAB website at www.nabweb.org/state-representative/domains-of-practice, includes the four major content areas and detailed tasks and knowledge statements in each major subject area.

Exam content and item development

The procedures used by NAB to prepare all examinations are consistent with the technical guidelines recommended by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (AERA, APA, & NCME, 2014). In addition, all NAB exams are designed to adhere to relevant sections of the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection adopted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Civil Service Commission, Department of Labor, and Department of Justice (EEOC, CSC, DOL, & DOJ, 1978). All NAB examinations are constructed to meet the specifications set forth in the job analysis study.

The job analysis study is completed every five years to define the job-related activities, knowledge, and skills underlying the work of health services and supports entry-level administrators. A panel of subject-matter experts (SMEs) chosen by NAB generate the work-related activities and content areas of the job analysis under the guidance of professional testing staff. The components delineated in the study are reviewed by a random sample of health services and supports administrators and executive directors to validate that the domains, tasks, and knowledge statements are applicable to individuals from a variety of work settings and geographic locations.

NAB examinations are competency-based assessments developed to protect the public by ensuring that entry-level administrators have mastered the specific body of knowledge necessary for competent practice within the profession. NAB and Pearson VUE institute a number of review procedures to ensure that the examinations contain items that are relevant to practice as well as critical to assessing entry-level competence.

Testing items are written by select SMEs based on the content areas of the validated test specifications. These SMEs serve as a member of one of the NAB examinations committees. To be accepted for inclusion in the item bank, each question must also meet minimum standards concerning its importance and criticality to entry-level practice. The item must assess an aspect of work in the field that is frequently performed at entry-level as well. All new items that fail to meet these standards are rejected from the item bank. Every test item undergoes a statistical analysis and is reviewed by the NAB examination committees.

Exam reservations

Schedule an exam appointment online at <https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/nab.html> or by calling Pearson VUE at (800) 834-1426.

Test center locations

Pearson VUE has been selected to provide accessibility to candidates in all states and metropolitan areas. Visit <https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/nab.html> to find a local testing center.

Exam eligibility

Because state requirements for education, experience, and education vary, candidates should contact the state board or agency which regulates the licensure of NHA, RC/AL, and HCBS administrators in the state they wish to be licensed **prior** to applying for a NAB exam.

Candidates can find a list of state board and agency contacts on the NAB website at www.nabweb.org/state-licensure-requirements. Candidates for the HSE™ qualification should check the NAB website for requirements and submit an application to NAB through the NABVerify system at <https://nabweb.org/seeking-licensure/hse> prior to submitting any exam applications. All HSE™ applicants must apply through the “HSE-NAB” jurisdiction in order to have their exam applications approved for testing.

It is the responsibility of state boards and other approval jurisdictions to approve all examination applications. Because exam approval procedures vary among jurisdictions, all questions regarding application approval time frames should be directed to the jurisdiction in which the candidate applied. It is important to note that approval letters sent directly from the approval jurisdiction are not the approval for taking a NAB examination; this approval will be emailed to the candidate through the NABVerify system.

Once the state licensing board has electronically approved a candidate’s exam application, they will receive an Authorization to Test email with instructions for scheduling the exam(s).

Making an exam reservation

Online reservations are the most efficient way for candidates to schedule their examinations. Candidates must log in to their NABVerify account and make a reservation for an examination at least 48 hours before the desired examination date. **Walk-in examinations are not available.**

Candidates who wish to make a phone reservation at (800) 834-1426 must do so at least 48 hours before the desired examination date.

Before making a reservation, candidates should have the following:

- Legal name, address, email address, daytime telephone number, and date of birth
- Name of the examination(s)
- Preferred examination date and test center location

Exam fees

Candidates may schedule and take each exam component separately or consecutively. First-time candidates are encouraged to take the CORE and LOS components together through consecutive exam appointments. If the exams are applied for and scheduled consecutively, there is break between exams.

If a candidate wishes to change from an individual exam application to consecutive exams, the individual application must be withdrawn and a new application for consecutive testing must be submitted. All applications that are withdrawn according to the **Change/cancel policy** will be refunded (minus the non-refundable 40% processing fee). Some states may mandate concurrent scheduling, so candidates should check their state board requirements before scheduling.

Exam fees must be paid at the time of the application by credit card or debit card. **Fees will not be accepted at the test center.** Examination fees are non-refundable and non-transferable, except as detailed in the **Change/cancel policy**.

National exam fees

National NAB exam time limits vary by exam.

Component	Exam Fee*	Exam Fee* (Effective 2/1/2026)
CORE and NHA	\$455	\$480
CORE and RC/AL	\$455	\$480
CORE only	\$320	\$320
NHA only	\$190	\$190
RC/AL only	\$190	\$190
HCBS only	\$190	\$190

*All exam fees include a non-refundable processing fee equal to 40% of the exam application fee.

State exam fees

All state exams have a two-hour time limit.

Exam	Exam Fee*
Florida NHA-FL	\$260
Maryland NHA-MD	\$210
Missouri NHA-MO	\$210
Missouri RC/AL-MO	\$210
New Hampshire NHA-NH	\$210
Ohio NHA-OH	\$210

Exam	Exam Fee*
Oklahoma NHA-OK	\$210
Oklahoma Certified Assistant Administrator CAA-OK	\$210
Oklahoma RCAL-OK	\$210
Oklahoma Residential Care Administrator RC-OK	\$210
Oklahoma Adult Day Care Administrator ADC-OK	\$210
Pennsylvania NHA-PA	\$330
South Carolina NHA-SC	\$210
South Carolina RCAL-SC	\$210
Texas NHA-TX	\$210
Wisconsin NHA-WI	\$210

*All exam fees include a non-refundable processing fee equal to 40% of the exam application fee.

Refunds

If an exam has been denied by a jurisdiction or withdrawn by the candidate, a request for a refund must be made in writing to nab@nabweb.org within 60 days of the denial or withdrawal request. Approved refunds will be processed minus the non-refundable processing fee.

Refunds will not be issued for missed or failed exams. Should a candidate dispute an exam application charge on their credit card after a failed or missed exam, they will not be allowed to submit any new examination applications or access any test scores until the issue is resolved. Any misuse of the NABVerify system, such as the intentional creation of multiple accounts, may be reported to the candidate's jurisdiction.

Change/cancel policy

Candidates wishing to cancel or reschedule their examination without penalty must do so at least 48 hours before the examination. Rescheduled exams must occur within the 90-day window from the date of receiving the Authorization to Test email. If additional time is needed that extends beyond the 90-day window, candidates should withdraw their exam applications. See **Withdrawals** for more details.

Visit <https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/nab.html> to cancel online or call (800) 834-1426 to cancel by phone. Candidates who wish to change or cancel a reservation and have provided proper notice may transfer the fees to a new exam appointment or request a refund. Refunds for credit or debit card payments are processed within one week. Candidates who change or cancel their reservations without proper notice are responsible for the examination fee.

Candidates are individually liable for the full amount of the examination fee once a reservation has been made, whether paid individually or by a third party.

Withdrawals

Candidates should email NAB at nab@nabweb.org to withdraw their application if they need additional time beyond the approved 90-day window to schedule and complete the exam(s). No extensions of the 90-day window are allowed.

Withdrawal requests must be made in writing to nab@nabweb.org before the end of the 90-day eligibility window and at least 48 hours prior to any scheduled testing appointment. Verbal withdrawals made by telephone will not be accepted.

Once an application withdrawal is submitted, the candidate must also cancel any existing exam appointments, either online at <https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/nab.html> or by calling (800) 834-1426. If an exam appointment is not canceled, the candidate will be considered absent and all application fees will be forfeited. Candidates who withdraw their application must reapply and pay all required fees in order to obtain a new 90-day eligibility window in which to take the examination(s).

After the application withdrawal is received and all exam appointments have been canceled, candidates will receive a refund in approximately 30 days.

Note: Each application has a 40% non-refundable processing fee that is subtracted from any refunds. Combo exams (CORE + LOS) have a single 40% processing fee, while separate exams (including national and state exams) have a 40% processing fee for each application (e.g., NHA + a state exam would have 40% of the NHA exam application fee and 40% of the state exam application fee deducted from any refunds).

Absence/lateness policy

Candidates who are absent from or late to an exam may call Pearson VUE within 14 days of the exam date to request an excused absence for the following reasons:

- Illness of the candidate or of the candidate's immediate family member
- Death in the candidate's immediate family
- Disabling traffic accident
- Court appearance or jury duty
- Military duty
- Weather emergency

A case number will be assigned and instructions will be provided for the candidate to email supporting documentation. **Candidates absent from or late to an exam who have not changed or canceled the reservation according to the Change/Cancel Policy will not be admitted to the exam and will forfeit the exam fee.**

Weather delays and cancellations

If severe weather or a natural disaster makes the Pearson VUE test center inaccessible or unsafe, the examination may be delayed or canceled. Pearson VUE will notify and reschedule candidates in the case of severe weather.

Pearson VUE holiday schedule

Testing may be unavailable on U.S. federal holidays and, in some cases, holiday weekends.

Accommodations

Pearson VUE complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. The purpose of accommodations is to provide candidates with full access to an exam. Accommodations are not a guarantee of improved performance or exam completion.

Pearson VUE provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to individuals who demonstrate a need for accommodations.

Test accommodations may include things such as:

- Separate testing room
- Extra testing time
- Reader or recorder (for individuals with mobility or vision impairments who cannot read or write on their own)

Test accommodations are individualized and considered on a case-by-case basis. All candidates who are requesting accommodations because of a disability must provide appropriate documentation of their condition and how it is expected to affect their ability to test under standard conditions. This may include:

- Supporting documentation from the professional who diagnosed the condition, including the credentials that qualify the professional to make this diagnosis
- Description of past accommodations that the candidate has received

The steps to follow when requesting test accommodations vary, depending on the test program sponsor. To begin, visit pearsonvue.com/accommodations and select the test program sponsor from the alphabetized list.

All reservations with accommodations must be rescheduled and/or canceled through the Pearson VUE call center at (800) 466-0450, option 3.

Preparing for the exam

Examination areas are designed to assess mastery of the knowledge and tasks necessary for entry-level practice as a long-term care administrator, and candidates should be proficient in each area of the NAB Domains of Practice.

For test security reasons, NAB does not distribute past examination forms.

NAB-recommended references

NAB provides a recommended reference list for all national exams on their website at <https://nabweb.org/seeking-licensure/exam-study-material/study-resources>.

The references on these lists are the materials used to develop the respective NAB exams, and NAB recommends that candidates are familiar with the material in all of these resources. References are reviewed yearly by the NAB examination committees for applicability, currency, and continued relevance to the profession, therefore this list may change and should be checked frequently.

A digital NAB Study Guide is also available for purchase on the website. The NAB Study Guide will guide candidates in studying for NAB exams, but it should not be the sole resource used to prepare for examination.

Practice examinations are available for each of exam component. Taking a practice exam provides candidates an opportunity to experience the exam structure, question style, and timed testing format that are present when taking the actual exam. At the end of a practice exam, candidates receive scores broken out by domain of practice to help indicate any areas where more preparation may be needed before taking the exam. **Answers to practice exam questions are not provided** as the goal of the practice exam is to simulate the examination process and experience.

NAB Domains of Practice

The most current NAB Domains of Practice can be found on the NAB website at <https://nabweb.org/state-representative/domains-of-practice>.

NAB examination specifications for core and lines of service: NHA, RC/AL, HCBS

	CORE	NHA	RC/AL	HCBS
Domain 1: Care, services, and supports	39%	45%	75%	47%
Domain 2: Operations	37%	28%	12%	28%
Domain 3: Environment and quality	13%	27%	13%	25%
Domain 4: Leadership and strategy	11%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of scored items	100	60	60	60
Number of unscored, pilot items	25	15	15	15

Note: Some tasks and knowledge statements may apply only to some lines of service.

Timed examination

The exam time starts as soon as the administrator signs the candidate into the testing computer, and a digital clock on the screen indicates the time remaining on the exam. When the maximum allowed time is reached, the exam will terminate automatically.

Note: For combo exams that have been scheduled consecutively, the screen clock indicates the time remaining for the each exam individually (i.e. the screen clock during the first exam shows the time remaining for the first exam only).

One examination question is presented at a time, and answer choices to the question are identified as A, B, C, or D. Candidates type a letter on the keyboard or use the computer mouse to select the chosen response. Candidates can navigate forward and backward through the exam, question by question, and may change answers as many times as desired during the exam time limit.

A question may be left unanswered and returned to later within the session if needed. If not all questions have been answered, it is recommended that candidates use any time remaining to answer those questions. There is no penalty for guessing, so candidates should be sure to answer all questions before ending the exam.

Exam question types

All of the questions on the entry-level competency exam are objective, multiple-choice items with each question having four response options, only one of which is correct.

Three types of multiple-choice questions are used in NAB exams:

- **Knowledge**
Knowledge questions involve remembering and understanding previously learned material. They may also require candidates to demonstrate the inter-relationship among given facts.
- **Interpretation**
Interpretation questions require that the candidates understand and make use of information presented, as opposed to recalling a fact or definition.
- **Problem-solving and evaluation**
Problem-solving and evaluation questions require candidates to organize facts, interpret data, assess the situation, and choose the best alternative or course of action.

Answering exam questions

A candidate's exam score is based on the number of questions answered correctly, and there is no penalty for guessing. Since it is to the candidate's advantage to respond to each question, NAB recommends answering questions that are known first and then, if time permits, returning to any more difficult questions that may have been left unanswered initially.

Note: For combo exams that have been scheduled consecutively, candidates are unable to review questions for the first exam after it has been completed. Candidates will leave the exam room after the first exam and be readmitted for the second exam with no access to the previous exam's content.

In addition to the scored questions, NAB exams also include non-scored, pretest questions. Candidates are asked to answer these questions, but they are not included in the scored examination result. Pretest questions are dispersed throughout the exam and are not identified separately from scored questions. This ensures that candidates answer pretest questions in the same manner as scored questions and allows the pretest questions to be validated as accurate and appropriate before they are included in future exams.

Exam day

Candidates who do not present the required items will be denied admission to the examination, will be considered absent, and will forfeit the examination fee.

What to bring

All candidates are required to bring identification that is deemed acceptable to the test center on the day of the examination.

Acceptable forms of identification

Candidates must present **two forms of current signature identification**. The primary identification must be government-issued and photo-bearing with a signature, and the secondary identification must contain a valid signature. Identification must be in English and exactly match the name used to register for the exam.

If the name on the exam registration does not exactly match the name on the IDs presented, the candidate will not be allowed to test and the exam fees will be forfeited.

Primary ID (including photograph and signature, not expired)

- Government-issued driver's license
- U.S. Department of State driver's license
- U.S. learner's permit (plastic card only, with photo and signature)
- National/state/country identification card
- Passport
- Passport card
- Military ID
- Military ID for spouses and dependents
- Alien Registration Card (Green Card, Permanent Resident Visa)

Secondary ID (signature, not expired)

- U.S. Social Security card
- Debit (ATM) card or credit card
- Any form of ID on the primary list

If the ID presented has an embedded signature that is difficult or impossible to read or is not visible (microchip), the candidate must present another form of identification from the primary ID list that contains a visible signature.

Pearson VUE does not recognize grace periods. For example, if a candidate's driver's license expired yesterday and the state allows a 30-day grace period for renewing the ID, the ID is considered to be expired and will not be accepted for testing.

Exam procedures

Candidates should report to the test center 30 minutes before the examination and check in with the test center administrator. The candidate's identification and other documentation will be reviewed, and they will be photographed for the score report. Candidates are required to review the Candidate Rules Agreement form and provide a digital signature. If the Candidate Rules Agreement is not followed and/or cheating or tampering with the examination is suspected, it will be reported as such, and the appropriate action will be taken. The examination fee will not be refunded, the exam may be determined invalid, and/or the state or NAB may take further action, such as prohibiting candidates from retaking the examination and/or denying a license.

The test administrators will answer questions, but candidates should be aware that administrators are not familiar with the content of the examinations or with the state's licensing requirements. Test administrators have been instructed not to advise candidates on the requirements for licensure.

The exam time starts as soon as the administrator signs the candidate into the testing computer, and a digital clock on the screen indicates the time remaining on the exam. The examination will end automatically after the examination time has expired, and candidates will leave the test center with their preliminary scores in hand. For combo exams scheduled consecutively, candidates will receive individual score reports for each exam (one after each exam appointment).

Pearson VUE testing policies

Test center location

The following policies are observed at each test center. **Candidates who violate any of these policies will not be permitted to finish the examination and will be dismissed from the test center, forfeiting the examination fee.**

- **No personal items are allowed in the testing room.** Personal items include but are not limited to: cellular phones, hand-held computers or other electronic devices, pagers, watches, wallets, purses, firearms or other weapons, hats, bags, coats, books and/or notes, pens, and pencils.
- Candidates must store all personal items in a secure area as indicated by the administrator or return items to their vehicle. All electronic devices must be turned off before storing them in a locker. **The test center is not responsible for lost, stolen, or misplaced personal items.**
- Studying is **not** allowed in the test center. Visitors, children, family, or friends are **not** allowed in the test center.
- Dictionaries, books, papers (including scratch paper), and reference materials are not permitted in the examination room (unless permitted by the exam sponsor), and candidates are strongly urged not to bring such materials to the test center. Upon entering and being seated in the testing room, the test administrator will provide the candidate with an erasable noteboard booklet to make notes or calculations and any other items specified by the exam sponsor. **The candidate may not write on these items before the exam begins or remove these items from the testing room.**

- Eating, drinking, chewing gum, smoking, and/or making noise that creates a disturbance for other candidates is prohibited during the exam.
- Break policies are established by the exam sponsor. Most sponsors allow unscheduled breaks. To request an unscheduled break, the candidate must raise their hand to get the administrator's attention. **The exam clock will not stop while the candidate is taking a break.**
- Candidates must leave the testing room for all breaks. However, **candidates are not permitted to leave the floor or building for any reason during this time, unless specified by the administrator and the exam sponsor.** If a candidate is discovered to have left the floor or building, they will not be permitted to proceed with the examination and may forfeit the exam fees.
- While taking a break, candidates are permitted to access personal items that are being stored during the exam only if necessary — for example, personal medication that must be taken at a specific time. However, **a candidate must receive permission from the administrator prior to accessing personal items that have been stored.** Candidates are not allowed to access other items, including but not limited to cellular phones, exam notes, and study guides, unless the exam sponsor specifically permits this.
- Any candidate discovered causing a disturbance of any kind or engaging in any kind of misconduct — giving or receiving help; using notes, books, or other aids; taking part in an act of impersonation; or removing examination materials or notes from the examination room — will be summarily dismissed from the examination and will be reported to the state licensing agency. Decisions regarding disciplinary measures are the responsibility of the state licensing agency and NAB.

Exam security

Pearson VUE maintains examination administration and examination security standards designed to ensure that all candidates are given the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and to prevent some candidates from gaining an unfair advantage because of testing irregularities or misconduct. Pearson VUE routinely reviews irregularities and examination scores believed to have been earned under unusual or non-standard circumstances.

Pearson VUE maintains the right to question any examination score whose validity is in doubt because the score may have been obtained unfairly. Pearson VUE first undertakes a confidential review of the circumstances contributing to the questions about score validity, and if there is sufficient cause to question the score, Pearson VUE will refer the matter to the state licensing agency and NAB, which make the final decision on whether or not to cancel the score.

The performance of all candidates is monitored and may be analyzed statistically for the purpose of detecting and verifying fraud. If it is determined that a score has questionable validity, NAB will be notified and will determine whether the candidate's scores will be released.

NAB is responsible for the integrity of the scores it reports. On occasion, occurrences such as a computer malfunction or misconduct by a candidate may cause a score to be questioned. NAB is committed to rectifying such discrepancies as expeditiously as possible. NAB may void examination results if, upon investigation, violation of its regulations is discovered.

Copyrighted examination questions

All examination questions, each form of the examination, and any other examination materials are copyrighted and are the property of Pearson VUE and/or NAB. Consequently, any distribution of the examination content or materials through any form of reproduction or oral or written communication is strictly prohibited and punishable by law.

Score reporting

To ensure fairness of the examination scoring process, a statistical method called equating is used to account for differences in test difficulty and to calculate a score. With equating, scores are reported on a scale common to all forms of the examination (scaled score). The raw score (the number of questions answered correctly) is converted to a scaled score using a scale ranging from 50 to 150. On this converted scale, NAB designates a scaled score of 113 as a passing score for the state boards for all CORE and LOS exams.

When candidates complete the examination, they will receive a score report marked “pass” or “fail.” When testing at a Pearson VUE testing center, the score report will be provided at the test center.

Note: For combo exams that have been scheduled consecutively, candidates will receive a score report after each exam is completed. Score reports from a candidate’s first exam will need to be stored with their other personal belongings (e.g. in a locker) before they are admitted for the second exam.

After the examination, candidates will receive a pass/fail score report. Candidates who fail an examination or component(s) will receive a score report that includes a numeric score and diagnostic information for each component as well information about re-examination. Reservations for re-examination cannot be made at the test center.

Diagnostic score summary

Candidates can view and print a diagnostic summary that provides the number of correct questions and percentage scores for each of the four content areas (domains) for the CORE and LOS exams. This information may be used by candidates for further study and preparation. Content scores are not included in the score transfers provided to licensing boards and agencies.

Candidates will receive notification via email that their scores have been released by their licensing jurisdiction. Once the jurisdiction has released a score, candidates can obtain the diagnostic score summary from their NAB*Verify* account under **Exam Applications**, then **Application/Registry**. Any scores that have been released can be reviewed on the NAB website.

Note: Diagnostic scores are not available for state-based examinations.

Score transfer request

Candidates' scores can be reported to jurisdictions other than the one for which they took an exam. This service is available to aid candidates who wish to apply for licensure in multiple states. Scores are reported to the initial jurisdiction without charge, but there is a \$70 charge for reporting scores to each additional jurisdiction.

Scores from 2012 to the present can be viewed in the candidate's NAB*Verify* account under **Exam Applications**, then **Application/Registry**. To transfer a score, select the **Exam Applications** tab and click **Begin the Exam Score Transfer Application**. When finished, submit the application and pay the transfer fee.

If a score is not present in the candidate's account, more information will be needed to complete a score transfer request, such as the approximate date of the exam, the exam type, and any other available details. Standard transfer applications require ten business days for processing, but incomplete applications will delay processing.

In most cases, NAB will have a candidate's exam scores for 30 years. Prior to 1988, NAB did not administer the national licensing exam for long-term care administrators and therefore cannot guarantee a complete record of a candidate's score. If a score transfer request application is submitted for an incomplete record, the candidate will be notified that the transfer request cannot be fulfilled, and a refund will be issued.

Duplicate score reports

Candidates may log in to their NAB*Verify* account to obtain a duplicate score report.

Retake requirements

Candidates who fail one or both components of the examination are required to submit a new exam application (including any exam application fees) to the jurisdiction, NAB, or certification body of the original application to receive eligibility for a retake. If the new exam application is approved, candidates receive a new 90-day window to schedule and take the exam(s).

The number of attempts for the CORE, NHA, and RC/AL exams may be limited by the jurisdiction under which the exam application was submitted. For information on exam retake attempts and policies, candidates should contact their licensing jurisdiction.

Candidates may not take the CORE, NHA, or RC/AL exam more than four times in an exam cycle (July 1 – June 30). Candidates may not take the HCBS exam more than three times in an exam cycle (July 1 – June 30). These limits apply to all candidates testing on or after January 1, 2026.

Fewer exam retakes may be allowed if the jurisdiction's policy is fewer than NAB's policy.

Continuing education

After long-term care administrators are licensed, most states have annual or biannual continuing education (CE) requirements for all licensed or certified health services and supports administrators. The National Continuing Education Review Service (NCERS) is a nationwide database of CE programs for administrators seeking credits to maintain their license/certification. All courses listed in NCERS have been reviewed and approved by experienced CE reviewers and are approved by many state boards to use toward renewal of licensure/certification. To locate CE courses that are NAB-approved, visit <https://nab.learningbuilder.com/public/activitysearch>.

Additionally, NAB has a CE Registry system within NABVerify. This complementary service is available to all individuals licensed by a NAB member board and can be used as a mechanism for tracking all CE courses that are both NAB- and state-approved.

Note: Fees may apply for individuals not licensed by a NAB member board.

For more information regarding the CE Registry or to sign up for a NAB ID number, visit <https://nabweb.org/licensed-professional/ce-registry-licensure>.

Confidentiality

Testing candidates' information and examination scores are considered confidential. Studies and reports concerning candidates contain no identifiable information, unless authorized by the candidate.

Questions or comments about the exam

For security reasons, examination materials are not available to candidates for review. Candidates who have questions, comments, or concerns related to the exams, score, or score reports, or those who wish to verify any data held in Pearson VUE files, should direct written inquiries to Pearson VUE at the address provided at the beginning of this handbook. Candidates may also email their questions directly to Pearson VUE Customer Service at pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com.

In all correspondence, candidates should provide their name and address information. If questions or comments concern an examination already taken, candidates should also include:

- the name of the examination
- the date the examination was taken
- the location of the test center