



NATIONAL BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTOMETRY®

ADVANCING THE ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCE®

Policy Changes in Response to COVID-19

The safety of our candidates and staff is our top priority and the NCCTO has enacted policies to provide a safe testing environment. Candidates who do not comply with these policies or who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms will be required to leave the NCCTO immediately. Please note that all policies are subject to change with minimal notice due to the fluid nature of this epidemic.

Wellness Screening: Candidates will be required to sign a form upon arrival attesting that they are in good health. If a Candidate answers “yes” to any of the following questions, they will not be admitted into the facility:

- Do you have any of the following symptoms?
 - Fever or feeling feverish (chills, shaking, sweating)?
 - Shortness of breath or trouble breathing?
 - Cough?
 - Fatigue?
 - Muscle or body aches?
 - Headache?
 - Sore throat?
 - New loss of taste or smell?
 - Congestion or runny nose?
 - Nausea or vomiting?
 - Diarrhea?
- Do you have reason to suspect you might have COVID-19 or are a carrier for COVID-19?

Temperature Check: All persons wishing to enter the NCCTO will have their temperature taken before admittance to the test center is granted. This screening will be conducted by a trained staff member using a non-contact thermometer and anyone who has a fever will not be allowed to enter the facility. An oral thermometer is available for those who exhibit a fever to ensure for complete accuracy.

Release Forms: Upon arrival at NCCTO, Candidates will be required to sign the Candidate Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk and the Face Covering Statement, Release and Waiver of Claims. Both release forms will be provided to Candidates for review approximately 2 weeks prior to arrival to the NCCTO. Candidates may bring signed copies with them, or they can sign upon arrival at NCCTO.

Detailed cleaning: The NCCTO has enacted elevated cleaning protocols which include, but are not limited to:

- All common surfaces such as door handles, light switches, keyboards, desks, etc. disinfected multiple times a day
- All exam rooms disinfected both before and after each candidate tests
- Nightly deep-cleaning
- Fogging the facility with an FDA approved virucide via electrostatic sprayer
- Increased cleaning in property common areas such as elevators and walkways
- Fresh air has been maximized to the facility

PPE: Candidates, standardized patients, and staff will be **required** to wear face masks for the entire time that they are in the NCCTO facility. NBEO will offer both KN95/N95 and surgical masks to all Candidates for their use during the exam. Candidates may bring their own masks, but the masks are subject to examination by staff. All masks must be worn over both the mouth and nose. Masks will only be removed, briefly, for the Candidate's picture to be taken or identity verified. Masks may cause fogging for some people and lens cloths are provided. Additionally, surgical tape is available as an option to tape masks to reduce fogging.

Gloves are available but are not required. Frequent hand washing is recommended, and hand sanitizer is available. We have also added fans and increased the size of the breath guards on the slit lamps to better protect patients and Candidates.

Handwashing: Candidates are required to follow CDC guidelines, which recommends 20 second handwashing for infection control.

Decreased Physical Interaction: Candidates, standardized patients, and staff will maintain at least a 6-foot distance from others whenever possible. Candidates will not shake hands when greeting the standardized patients and will maintain at least a 6-foot distance at the conclusion of the exam. During the exam itself, the Candidate may touch a patient's face, as needed, but proper hygiene will be strictly enforced.

In summary, Candidates will not be allowed to test if:

- Temperature is ≥ 100.4 °F
- Candidate exhibits symptoms of COVID-19
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- Candidate does not answer the Wellness Questionnaire or indicates that they are a potential risk for COVID-19
- Candidate does not follow the safety policies
- Candidate does not sign both release forms

Thank you for your understanding as we work diligently to administer the exam in the safest manner possible. We would also like to encourage all Candidates to follow CDC guidelines when travelling to and from the NCCTO: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>

Please note: If a Candidate is not able to test due to illness or suspected illness, or prefers to reschedule their test due to the requirements of NCCTO's safety protocols or release forms, they will be eligible for a free reschedule to a later open exam slot, but they will not be reimbursed travel or lodging expenses.