



AMERICAN BOARD OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY-HEAD AND NECK SURGERY

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American Board of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery Written Qualifying Candidates 2020 Exam Date Addition

In the June 25, 2020 communication from the American Board of Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery (ABOHNS), we shared the difficulties candidates were experiencing in reserving an exam seat for the 2020 Written Qualifying Exam (WQE) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of this situation, the ABOHNS would like to announce an additional date for the 2020 WQE. Candidates will now have the option of taking the WQE on either the original date of **September 1, 2020** or one week before on **August 24, 2020**. Both dates will require securing an exam seat at a Pearson Vue testing center. A different exam, still consisting of 300 items, will be administered on this additional date.

We recommend that **candidates without a reserved exam seat contact Pearson Vue immediately to look for availability on either date**. Those candidates that already have a reservation may choose to switch to the alternate exam date of August 24, 2020. Additionally, if your reserved exam seat is not in the preferred geographical area, please continue to reach out to Pearson Vue on a regular basis and inquire about availability on both dates, as exam capacity in states, cities, and testing centers is changing daily based on the trajectory of COVID-19.

Deferment Considerations:

Primary Certification

Due to the unique circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we understand that some candidates may prefer to defer taking the 2020 WQE. The ABOHNS is extending the Board Eligibility period by one year for anyone wishing to defer their examination to the 2021 WQE. Additionally, candidates that choose to defer may request a refund of the already paid 2020 exam fee or apply that fee to the following year. Please note, re-applications will be subject to the current pricing for the year submitted if a refund is requested. Candidates can submit a deferment request now, or later if one cannot secure an exam seat at a preferred location closer to the exam date.

Deferments can be requested up to 5 days prior to the registered exam administration date by sending an email request to Rosa La Neve at RML@ABOHNS.ORG.

Subcertification

In order to be eligible for subcertification, candidates must first attain primary board certification in Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. For those entering Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited fellowships in Pediatric Otolaryngology or Sleep Medicine in July 2020, deferral of the primary certification process to the 2021-2022 cycle will have an impact on eligibility for the administration of the first subcertification exam following fellowship completion. If any candidates for subcertification are in this situation, the ABOHNS will extend the period of subcertification eligibility by one additional year. Updated information on Complex Pediatric Otolaryngology subcertification can be found on the ABOHNS website (https://www.aboto.org/Complex_Pediatric_Otolaryngology.html). For those entering ACGME-accredited Neurotology fellowships in July 2020, requesting a deferral to the 2021-2022 exams should not affect eligibility for the first subcertification exam following fellowship completion, which will be in 2024, assuming one successfully attains primary board certification in 2022 or 2023.

The ABOHNS continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic very closely. We want to reiterate that these plans are based on current status but remain subject to change based on the uncertainty of the virus' ongoing evolution. After careful consideration of several options that included many discussions within the organization and with Pearson Vue, we hope that this additional exam date, along with anticipated increases in testing center capacity, will help address the challenges our candidates have experienced securing exam seats, particularly at convenient locations. The ABOHNS will communicate any additional exam administration decisions should further changes be necessary as a result of the COVID-19 trajectory.

On behalf of all of us at ABOHNS, we thank you for your patience and understanding during this unprecedented time. We hope that you, your families, and your colleagues remain safe and healthy. We are also steadfast in our commitment to assist you as you navigate in these challenging times, and encourage those needing assistance to contact Rosa La Neve (Certification Coordinator) at RML@ABOHNS.ORG.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Nussenbaum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" being more prominent than the last name "Nussenbaum".

Brian Nussenbaum, MD, MHCM
Executive Director