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October 22, 2020

Dear Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Program Directors and Coordinators,

Registration for the 2021 Otolaryngology Training Exam (OTE) will open on November 2, 2020, and **all registration forms must be submitted by Friday, December 11, 2020**. While the exam will be administered in an online, electronic format it will remain an in-person, secure, and proctored exam.

Following are some important updates for your 2021 administration:

1. New Exam Dates

The new OTE exam dates are **Saturday, March 6, 2021 and Sunday, March 7, 2021**. Programs will be able to choose their preferred exam date during the registration process.

2. Test Site Registration

Due to the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and restrictions on access at campus', ABOHNS will waive the test site fee of \$450.00 for the 2021 exam administration, however, programs will need to provide two proctors, at the program's expense.

Due to current COVID-19 restrictions programs that have normally tested at another location will need to confirm with that location, prior to registration, if they can accommodate their residents this year. If not, then you will need to register as a test site and administer the exam at your location.

3. Test Site Options

We are offering two options for test site locations:

- Computer lab
- Conference room/lecture hall

For those choosing the conference room/lecture hall options your residents will all need to use their personal computers and have stable, reliable Wi-Fi access for the day of exam. Accessing the exam using a laptop or desktop

computer is strongly encouraged, although the exam will also be accessible via iPad. It is also advised that your program have a few extra computers available on test day in the event of a resident experiencing technical emergencies.

If you encounter a problem finding a space to accommodate all your residents for administration in a single day that adheres to all local and Center for Disease Prevention and Control COVID-19 safety guidelines, please reach out to Shannon Lamkin at sll@abohns.org.

4. **Check Readiness: System Check, Download Secure Browser, and Run a Simulation Test**

Programs, proctors, and residents will be responsible for verifying the readiness of the local network and all computers. The American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (ABOHNS) is working with a technology partner to provide tools to check the readiness of the computers selected for use during the exam. The information to perform these checks will be sent to you prior to the exam date.

5. **Proctors**

Your program will be responsible for providing two proctors for the exam. ABOHNS will not be responsible for providing and/or paying for proctors this year. Potential proctors may include any of the following: Program Coordinator, Program Director, faculty member, person from another department, or outside person of your choosing if the University permits their presence under the current restrictions. **One proctor will be required to have his/her own laptop on test day to login to start and oversee exam.** Proctors should also be able to assist residents with their computer readiness checks and login to the secure browser. Please **submit your proctor information on the test site registration page.** The program director, coordinator, and proctors (if different) will be **emailed separate login credentials (Welcome Email) for the testing website prior to the exam.** All proctors will be required to sign and adhere to the ABOHNS cheating policy.

6. **Examinee Registration**

Your program will again complete an online examinee registration that will list each resident taking the exam. **The registration form includes examinee name, PGY-level (used for scoring), and test site location.** Program Directors, faculty, and other non-resident examinees may be added to your exam registration forms by contacting Shannon Lamkin at sll@abohns.org. Your program will be responsible for payment and receipt of results for these examinees. The fee per resident remains unchanged from prior years.

NOTE: Each residents' anticipated graduation year is pre-filled on the registration form. This is the year provided by the program during the 2020 Resident Registry. A residents' graduation year is used for scoring. Please check this information carefully.

If changes need to be made contact Shannon Lamkin at sll@abohns.org. **This will be the only opportunity to correct the graduation year used for scoring.**

In February, the program directors and coordinators will receive a master list for all residents taking the exam at your program, including any visiting residents from other programs (if allowed based on local COVID-19 policies) plus, an instruction manual. Please review the list of examinees taking the exam at your program. **The deadline to submit corrections, additions/deletions will be noted.** Once the review period to make changes has passed, the examinee list will be considered final.

Those with residents needing to test at a different location, must get prior approval from Shannon Lamkin before registering those residents for the exam.

7. Seating Charts

All programs must use pre-assigned seating along with a formal seating chart when administering the OTE exam. These charts must be submitted to the ABOHNS at the close of the exam. We will provide general suggestions, guidelines, and examples of assigned seating and recommendations on developing a seating chart prior to the exam date.

8. Exam Format

The exam format will follow the same time frame as previous exams: a three and half hour (3 ½) morning session, one-hour lunch break and a three and a half hour (3 ½) afternoon session. Programs will have the flexibility to take a shorter lunch break if preferred; however, all examinees must follow the same time schedule at each test site.

Following are the key, 2021 OTE Examination deadlines:

Mon. Nov. 2, 2020	Registration Begins
Fri. Dec. 11, 2020	Registration Ends and Payments due
February 2021	Master List of Examinees, Instruction Manual and Seating Chart Instructions sent via email
February 2021	Review period to make changes/additions
Week of Feb. 22, 2021	Final Examinee List sent via email
Sat. Mar. 6, 2021	Examination Day
Sun. Mar. 7, 2021	Examination Day
Week of May 10, 2021	Test scores released

*The above dates/descriptions are subject to change

ABOHNS will provide an update to Program Directors during the Otolaryngology Program Director Organization (OPDO) Webinar scheduled for 7:00 PM on Thursday, October 29, 2020. Here is the link to register: <https://suo-aado.org/mpage/WebinarSeries2020>. Additionally, Shannon Lamkin will provide an update to Program Coordinators during the Otolaryngology Program Coordinator Organization (OPCO) zoom meeting scheduled for 1:00 PM on Thursday, November 5, 2020. Please make certain to share all this pre-exam preparation information with your residents. The ABOHNS will also be reaching out to the AAO-HNS (The Section for Residents and Fellows-in-Training) to establish a communication channel for providing information as well as answering questions regarding the exam process and preparation requirements.

The ABOHNS team appreciates the importance of this exam for you and your residents and we are working hard to improve the OTE and provide a successful administration during this unsettled time. We appreciate your feedback, patience and understanding as we navigate the administration of the exam during this pandemic. We hope that each of you stays safe and well, and encourage you to share any immediate needs or concerns directly with Shannon Lamkin at sll@abohns.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Nussenbaum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" and last name "Nussenbaum" clearly legible.

Brian Nussenbaum, MD, MHCM
Executive Director