



Candidate Handbook



Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing
1900 Spring Road, Suite 501
Oak Brook, IL 60523
+1-877-302-BCEN(2236)
bcen@BCEN.org

Candidate Handbook

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All general questions and requests for information regarding BCEN exams should be directed to:

Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing
1900 Spring Road, Suite 501 Oak Brook, IL 60523
Phone: 877-302-BCEN (2236) | Fax: 630-596-8250
E-mail: bcen@bcen.org | Website: www.BCEN.org

This Candidate Handbook will describe the examination process as well as give you other important information regarding the Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing (BCEN®) certification exams. Please familiarize yourself with the information in this booklet.

Nondiscrimination Policy

BCEN and its test development and test delivery vendors endorse the principles of equal opportunity and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as Amended. Eligibility criteria for BCEN examinations are applied equally to all applicants regardless of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, age, marital status, or gender identity. All testing sites comply with all federal, state, and local laws regarding use of public buildings, ensure accessibility required under the ADA, and accommodate applicants with disabilities on an individual basis without additional cost. For the complete text of BCEN's nondiscrimination policy, consult the BCEN website at www.BCEN.org.

How BCEN Exams are Developed

BCEN recognizes the importance of producing psychometrically sound examinations, emphasizing three principal processes:

Test Construction

BCEN conducts Role Delineation Studies (RDS) every 4-5 years to ensure the content on its exams reflects the most current and relevant practice.

As part of the RDS, survey instruments are distributed to nurses in the content area of each exam (emergency, flight, transport, trauma, pediatric emergency, and burn) throughout the United States. This survey data guides the RDS committee in creating the content outline that molds the exams.

The integrated concepts, cognitive level distribution, and number of questions specified within each content area for each BCEN exam program are developed via unanimous agreement from the exam committee.

Item Development

Content experts who write items for BCEN exams represent various aspects of emergency, flight, transport, trauma, pediatric emergency, and burn nursing. BCEN strives to screen applicants to ensure geographic, demographic, and practice diversity. Qualifications of individuals involved in item development are documented, consistent with the stated level and purpose of BCEN examination(s), and representative of the clinical practice skills and amount of experience representative of the certificant population. Item writers are trained in the fundamentals of sound item writing and are advised about the purpose and identified structure of BCEN examinations, including their intended audience.

Analysis

Item analysis is a continuous quality process in which performance statistics are collected on each item. Summary statistics are calculated regarding the reliability of each exam, difficulty indexes, performance indexes and discrimination levels.

All examination questions and test forms are the copyrighted property of BCEN. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject you to disciplinary action by BCEN and/or severe civil and criminal penalties. For more information about BCEN's policies regarding test development, consult the BCEN website at www.BCEN.org.

Eligibility Requirements

Required:

To qualify for a BCEN certification exam, you must hold a current, unrestricted Registered Nurse license in the United States, a U.S. Territory, Canada or Australia. A nursing certificate that is equivalent to a Registered Nurse in the United States is also acceptable.

Candidates who received their RN license or equivalent OR are certified in any other country, nation or territory outside of the U.S., a US Territory, Canada or Australia must complete BCEN's Internal Credential Evaluation provided by the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS). [Learn more.](#)

Recommended:



Two years' experience in the ED



Two years' experience as a flight nurse



Two years of full-time experience in pediatric emergency nursing care. Pediatric emergency nursing care as defined by BCEN includes providing direct care, health care facilitation, education, and advocacy for pediatric emergency patients and their families.



Two years' experience as a ground transport nurse



Two years of trauma nursing experience at an average of 1,000 practice hours per year across the trauma care continuum (trauma nursing practice defined as providing direct care, supervision, education, and advocacy for trauma patients and their families).

Additionally, twenty (20) to thirty (30) hours of trauma specific coursework across the trauma continuum.



Two years' experience as a burn nurse. Burn nursing care as defined by BCEN includes providing direct patient care, health care facilitation, education, advocacy and outreach for those impacted by burn injury.

How to Apply for a BCEN Exam



Create or Log In to your [BCEN Account](#)



Locate the “My Certifications” section on the left-hand side of the screen. Here you will see all of our certification logos. Click Create New Application next to the appropriate logo to open it.



Choose your payment method. Credit card, EChecks/ACH and voucher payments will be processed immediately. Check payments may take up to 4 weeks to process.



Once payment has been processed, you will receive an exam eligibility email from BCEN. This contains important information on your 90-day testing window, how to schedule your exam with BCEN’s test delivery provider, PSI Exams, and other helpful information.

How to Schedule



To Schedule online:

- Click on **Schedule/Manage Exam** found in the left-hand sidebar next to the appropriate logo on your BCEN account dashboard.
- You will be redirected to PSI’s website.
- Click on **Schedule** under the applicable exam link to select your testing center, exam date and time or live remote proctored exam date and time.

To Schedule by phone:

- Contact PSI customer service at +1 833-518-7459.
- After you schedule your exam, PSI will send a confirmation email listing your exam date, time, and address if you are testing at a PSI testing center.

Rescheduling

If you are within your 90-day testing window AND still have 48 hours before the exam (based on the time zone of the testing center where you have an exam scheduled or the location of live remote proctoring), you will be able to reschedule with PSI with no reschedule/cancellation fees.

When rescheduling, you must pick a new exam time that also falls within your 90-day window.



To reschedule, log into your BCEN Account and click on **Schedule/Manage Exam** next to the applicable logo and follow the same steps you took when initially scheduling.

You can contact PSI +1 833-518-7459 for assistance.

If you fail to reschedule within these guidelines or do not show for your exam appointment, you will forfeit the full exam fee without a refund. Fees are applicable for new testing windows.

We strongly recommend scheduling your new test day promptly, as test center seat availability is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Failing to Report for a Scheduled Exam

If you do not report for a scheduled exam appointment, you will forfeit all paid fees. A new application and payment will be required for a new exam appointment.

Exam Refunds

You may submit a written request for a refund of an exam fee to BCEN prior to scheduling an appointment with PSI and prior to the close of your 90-day testing window date as outlined in your eligibility notification from BCEN. Once your exam appointment has been scheduled, refund requests will not be accepted.

Exam Accommodations

If you require accommodations in order to sit for your exam, please complete and upload the Exam Accommodations form located with your exam application. If you require accommodations other than extra time, you will need to complete [this additional form](#) from our exam delivery provider, PSI. Upon completion, PSI will reach out via phone call or email to assist in scheduling your exam. Contact PSI at 800-367-1565 x6750 or examaccommodations@psionline.com for assistance. For more information before completing the application contact BCEN at bcen@bcen.org or at +1-877-302-BCEN (2236).

Methods of BCEN Exam Delivery

Testing Facilities

Testing centers have been selected to provide accessibility to the largest number of candidates in all states and major metropolitan areas. Exams are delivered by computer at PSI testing centers. If you cannot find a PSI testing center in your area, contact the BCEN office.

In rare cases, weather or an emergency forces a test center closure. If this happens you will be contacted by the PSI rescheduling department within 24-48 hours to reschedule your appointment.

If power to a testing center is temporarily interrupted during exam administration, testing center staff will attempt to restart the exam so that you may continue.

Live Remote Proctoring (LRP)

Live remote proctoring is a method of exam delivery where, instead of physically visiting a testing center location, you can launch the exam online via computer at a secure location of your choice. The exam is recorded and proctored remotely in real time. Exams delivered by LRP are the same as those delivered in a test center and have the same level of exam security.

Identification Requirements

To gain admission to the testing center or live remote proctored exam, you must present a valid, unexpired and acceptable ID. It must be a government-issued ID with your name, photo and signature. The first and last name you use to register for the exam must match exactly with the first and last name on the ID you present at the testing center or to the remote proctor. Failure to supply proper ID at the time of the exam is considered a missed appointment. There will be no refund of your exam fee.

All IDs must be issued by the country in which you are testing. If you do not have the qualifying ID issued from the country in which you are testing, a passport from your country of citizenship is required.

Acceptable Forms of ID

- International Travel Passport
- Driver's license
- Visa
- State/province ID card (w/photo)

Admission Procedures

Testing Facilities

It is recommended to arrive at the test center within 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment time. This will give you adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures.

Note: If you do not arrive at the test center by the time of your scheduled appointment, you may be denied admission and you may forfeit your examination fee. If you are not admitted because you are late and the testing center cannot accommodate your appointment, contact BCEN during regular business hours 8:00 am to 4:30 pm CT.

Upon arrival and before you can sit for your exam, you will be asked to do the following:



- Review and accept the Examination Rules and Regulations agreement.
- Submit a valid, correct form of ID.
- Have your photograph taken.*
- Store your belongings.

*You must agree to have your photograph taken as part of the admission procedure; if you do not agree, you will not be admitted for the exam.

You will be provided with two sheets of scratch paper during the exam. You must destroy this scratch paper at the completion of the exam.

Live Remote Proctoring

The check-in process must be completed within 30 minutes of your scheduled appointment time. This will give you adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures (e.g. downloading the secure browser). Once the check-in process is complete, you will have access to launch your exam at the scheduled appointment time.

Note: If you do not log in by the time of your scheduled appointment, you may be denied access to launch your exam and may forfeit your examination fee. If you are not admitted because you are late and the live remote proctor cannot accommodate your appointment, contact BCEN during regular business hours 8:00 am to 4:30 pm CT.

Before the proctor can launch your exam, you will be asked to do the following:

- Download the Secure Browser (if not already done).
- Complete a system check of your computer microphone and web-camera.
- Scan your testing environment and your work area.
- Submit a valid, correct form of ID.
- Have your photograph taken.

**You must agree to have your photograph taken as part of the admission procedure; if you do not agree, you will not be admitted for the exam.

You may use two sheets of blank scratch paper during the exam. You will be asked to destroy this scratch paper within view of the proctor at the completion of the exam.

What to Expect

Before you begin taking your BCEN exam either via test center or LRP, you will be asked to confirm the name of the exam you are taking and then asked to agree to the PSI and BCEN Examination Rules and Regulations agreement regarding exam confidentiality. Total seat time for the exam is 180 minutes (3 hours). You will have 5 practice exam questions that are meant to familiarize you with the functionality of the exam. The timer begins counting when your exam begins.

Check out [this YouTube video](#) from PSI for a walkthrough of the LRP testing process.

Security Procedures During Admission

BCEN and its test delivery partner maintain strict exam administration and security standards designed to ensure candidate safety and that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.

Testing Facilities

The testing center is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for test security purposes.

Testing center staff will monitor you on admission to ensure no unauthorized materials are taken into the testing room. The integrity of the exam and BCEN's copyright require that you be precluded from duplicating or recording any part of the examination by any means, including copying or photographing.

Randomly assigning seating, separating you from other test-takers, and using table dividers decreases the chance of any irregular behavior. If you fail to comply with the following regulations, you will be dismissed from the testing center and forfeiture of all fees.

Live Remote Proctoring

LRP exams are recorded and stored for 30 days. The integrity of the exam and BCEN's copyright require that candidates be precluded from duplicating or recording any part of the examination by any means, including copying or photographing.

Security Regulations During the Exam



Testing Facilities

Testing areas are monitored by testing center staff during the exam. If you do not follow these regulations during the exam, you will be dismissed from the testing area and asked to leave the testing center. Your score will not be reported and you will forfeit all exam fees without a refund.

- No conversing or any other form of communication among test-takers is permitted once you enter the examination area.
- You are prohibited from reproducing, communicating or transmitting any test content in any form for any purpose. Copying or communicating content is a violation of PSI security policy. Either one may result in the disqualification of examination results, may lead to legal action and will be reported to BCEN.
- Electronic devices and recording devices of any kind (including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, cameras) are NOT permitted in PSI testing centers.
- No personal items should be brought to the testing centers. PSI will not be responsible for any personal items, and suggests that you leave such items in another safe place of your choosing. Only non-programmable calculators that are silent, battery operated, do not have paper tape printing capabilities, and do not have an alphabet keyboard will be allowed in the examination site.
- PSI requires all test takers to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards a proctor or other candidates will be reported to BCEN and may result in criminal prosecution.
- Persons not scheduled to take a test are not permitted to wait in the testing center or surrounding common areas.
- You may not exit the building or use your cell phone or other electronic devices during the examination.

Live Remote Proctoring

Your testing session is monitored and recorded. Software monitors your position in the web camera throughout the session. Additionally, the lock-down browser user prevents the proctor from accessing your computer or accessing personal data or confidential information. BCEN has developed a set of rules and standards that assist proctors in identifying and addressing behaviors that may be potential violations. If a violation is noted, the proctor will communicate with you via chat or they may pause or end your exam based upon the violation. If your exam ends due to a major violation, your scores will not be reported and all exam fees will be forfeited without a refund. A list of violations can be found [here](#).

- Requirements for LRP include a web camera, speakers, microphone, and stable broadband internet connection. Please go through the compatibility check on PSI's [scheduling website](#).
- If you need assistance during your exam, you should initiate a chat with the proctor using the in-exam chat tool.
- No conversing or any other form of communication is permitted once your exam has been released.
- You are prohibited from reproducing, communicating or transmitting any test content in any form for any purpose. Copying or communicating content is a violation of PSI security policy. Either one may result in the disqualification of examination results, may lead to legal action and will be reported to BCEN.
- With the exception of your testing machine, electronic devices and recording devices of any kind (including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, and cameras) are NOT permitted during your testing session.
- You will be asked to scan the room from which you are testing prior to launching your exam. If there are notes, drinks, a box of tissues or any such items on your desk, you will be asked to remove them prior to releasing the exam.
- You must present a valid, unexpired and acceptable ID in order to take your exam. Military IDs are not accepted.
- PSI requires you to conduct yourself in a professional and courteous manner at all times. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards a proctor via chat will be reported to BCEN and may result in criminal prosecution.
- You may connect with the proctor for up to 30 minutes prior to your scheduled start time provided your exam is ready to launch. Your launch button will be enabled when your exam is fully prepared for delivery.
- You may not exit the camera view or use your cell phone or other electronic devices during the examination.
- Your hands must be visible to the camera at all times. Talking or mouthing words while testing is prohibited.



Taking Breaks During the Exam

You may take up to two breaks whenever you wish, but you will not be given additional time to make up for time lost during breaks. During any break, you are not permitted to access personal items other than medication required at a specific time (unless you receive prior permission). You must receive permission from the testing center staff prior to accessing personal items that have been stored. Breaks must not exceed 10 minutes each. If a break exceeds 10 minutes, you will be removed from the exam.

You will need to show ID when leaving and entering the testing room. Testing center staff will escort you to your assigned workstation when you return to the testing room.

Those who are testing with a Live Remote Proctor will be asked to do another room sweep upon re-entry.

Comments

During the exam, you may make comments about specific questions by clicking on the Comment button on the screen.

Comments will be reviewed by the BCEN Exam Construction Review Committee, but individual responses will not be provided.



Exam Results and Personal Information

Confidentiality

Maintaining candidate and certificant confidentiality is of primary importance to BCEN. Individual scores and personal information are not released to anyone other than the candidate/certificant. For the complete text of BCEN's confidentiality policy, consult the BCEN website at www.BCEN.org.

BCEN publishes aggregate information about the performance of candidate groups on the BCEN website on an annual basis to comply with Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC) accreditation requirements, which may include but not be limited to pass/fail data and exam performance data. Any data published are based on a sufficient number of candidates to ensure that the data are meaningful to report but do not compromise individual candidate confidentiality, as determined by the BCEN Board of Directors in collaboration with its test development vendor. Studies and reports that include test scores and other exam data do not contain information identifiable with any candidate or certificant, unless authorized by the candidate or certificant.

Maintenance of Records

Candidate and certificant information is maintained within your secure BCEN Account. Within your account you can edit your profile to update your address, phone number, email address, opt in or out of BCEN communications, publish your credential, change your account password and login name. Candidates and certificants can also view their detailed account history which includes information about certification status, exam application status and recertification activities.

Cancellation of Candidate Scores

Candidate misconduct occasionally may cause a score to be suspect, at which time PSI would report the incident to BCEN. BCEN reserves the right to void or withhold exam results if any violation of testing regulations is discovered upon investigation.

Any of the following actions can void an exam score or result in the denial, suspension, or revocation of BCEN certification:

- Falsification of information on the certification application.
- Falsification of any material information requested by BCEN.
- Any restrictions such as revocation, suspension, probation or other sanctions of professional RN license by a nursing license authority that limits a nurse's ability to function in an emergency care setting and perform those tasks normally associated within emergency nursing specialty practice.
- Misrepresentation of certification status.
- Cheating or collusion with others to cheat, including distributing exam content orally, digitally, or in writing on the certification exam.

Note: BCEN investigates all instances of alleged misconduct, misrepresentation, and/or noncompliance to ensure due process and to protect candidates' rights. BCEN policies on misconduct, the disciplinary process, and candidate appeals process appear in full on the BCEN website at www.BCEN.org.

How Exam Results are Reported

The score report will indicate your test results as pass or fail, which is determined by your raw score. A raw score is the number of questions you answered correctly. There is a specific breakdown of the major content areas of the exam and how you scored within each area.

Once you have completed the exam, you will be instructed to report to test center staff to receive your score report. Scores are reported in written form in person at the testing center, and also immediately sent to you via email.

Those testing with a Live Remote Proctor will see a PASS or FAIL result on screen upon completion of the exam. You will also receive your results immediately via email.

Pass/Fail Result Determination

BCEN uses the Angoff technique as the procedure for estimating pass/fail decisions for its exams. Passing scores may vary slightly for each form of the exam. To ensure fairness to all candidates, a process called statistical equating is used. The equating process then considers the difficulty level of each question selected for each form of the exam, attempting to match the difficulty level of each form as closely as possible. To ensure fairness, slight variations in difficulty level are addressed by adjusting the passing score up or down, depending on the overall difficulty level statistics for the group of scored questions that appear on a particular version of the exam.



In the event of an error on the part of BCEN or its agents which results in an incorrect pass or fail score, BCEN reserves the right to correct any score.

If you Pass...

If you pass the exam, you are certified for four (4) years and can use the designated credential after your licensing title with no punctuations. A certificate and wallet card will be delivered within 15 business days after passing the exam.

Contact BCEN if your certificate or wallet card is not received within this timeframe.

If you Don't Pass...

If you do not pass the exam, you will be given your raw scores (i.e., number correct) in each area of the content outline. You must reapply and submit all applicable fees and documentation to retake the exam.

BCEN offers a discounted fee for retest applications up to one year after your initial exam. If you chose the BCEN Test Assurance option, you may submit a no-fee retest application for your second attempt. There is a 90-day waiting period between exam attempts.

How to Prepare

Visit our [How to Study Page](#) for the following resources:

Preparation Checklist

Content Outlines

Sample Questions

Reference Lists

Practice Exams

Review Course Search

Exam Tutorial