



COVID-19 AND THE IMPACT ON THE PHYSICAL THERAPY COMMUNITY

PUBLIC WEBINAR

MAY 18, 2020



Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy

AGENDA

- Introduction – Nancy Kirsch, FSBPT President
- Brief background
- Status as of today
- Challenges with changing NPTE program
- Prometric situation
- Communication efforts
- Questions from you



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INTRODUCTION – NANCY KIRSCH

- Our mission is important to us and our members, state licensing boards
- We value the partnerships and relationship we have with all of our stakeholders
- The stresses on individuals and systems are unprecedented
- Things haven't been done as well as we would like
- We are committed to doing things well and value your input



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BACKGROUND



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UNPRECEDENTED DISRUPTIONS TO TESTING

- All April exams were cancelled
 - PT – 4,081
 - PTA – 1,706
 - Law – 1,135
 - TOTAL FSBPT – 5,922

*Total April Displacements
2012 – 2019*

43



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STATUS UPDATE



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STATUS OF APRIL TEST TAKERS AS OF MAY 18, 2020

	PTA	% of expected	PT	% of expected
Test complete	224	22%	1,273	35%
Scheduled to test	644	64%	2,167	59%
Not yet scheduled	144	14%	203	6%
TOTAL APRIL EXPECTED	1,012	100%	3,643	100%



STATUS OF JULY EXAMS

➤ Fixed dates still apply

- July 8 (PTA) and July 28 & 29 (PT)
- Blocked seats on the fixed dates
 - ~4,800 seats for PTA
 - ~6,600 seats for PT

➤ Multi-week exam window following the fixed dates

- Three-week window for PTA (July 9 through July 26)
- Four-week window for PT (July 30 through August 31)

Capacity challenges at test centers will continue into July

Window seats are intended to be used only if an individual cannot find an appointment on the assigned fixed date.



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STATUS OF JULY TEST TAKERS AS OF MAY 18, 2020

	PTA	PT
Scheduled to test	1,760	2,937
Eligible - Not yet scheduled	438	417

2019 July Volume
PTA – 4,049
PT – 6,345





CHALLENGES WITH CHANGING THE NPTE PROGRAM



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CHALLENGES WITH CHANGING THE NPTE PROGRAM QUICKLY

- Stakeholder input
- Evidence base/data collection/piloting
- Fairness/access issues
- Security considerations
- Time to implement changes
- Practical considerations



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PROMETRIC SITUATION



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STATEMENT FROM PROMETRIC

“We recognize that our communications to your test takers and other stakeholders has at times been inadequate and may have caused unnecessary confusion and frustration. In response, we have applied new processes to improve our communication and response times, and continue to work to identify areas for improved service.”



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WHY DOES IT SEEM LIKE PROMETRIC IS DOING SUCH A BAD JOB?

DO WE HAVE TO USE THEM?

➤ Challenges

- Massive testing disruption – 450,000 test takers
- Systems are designed to deliver many tests, not cancel and reschedule them
- Changes in state/local rules
- Getting PPE shipped to centers
- Generic communications instead of FSBPT specific communications

➤ Long term relationship with Prometric

- Extremely high candidate satisfaction prior to COVID-19

➤ Testing Issues

- Contact exam services – examregistration@fsbpt.org



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COMMUNICATION EFFORTS



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WWW.FSBPT.ORG/CORONAVIRUS



Exam Candidates Licensees Members Educators Volunteers The Public

News & Events

News

- COVID-19 Updates**
- FAQs for Jurisdictions
- FAQs for Candidates
- FAQs for Schools
- FAQs for Licensees

Events

Publications

COVID-19 Updates

Read [FSBPT's COVID-19 Response](#). FSBPT also joined other US health care licensing and regulatory organizations to release a [joint statement](#).

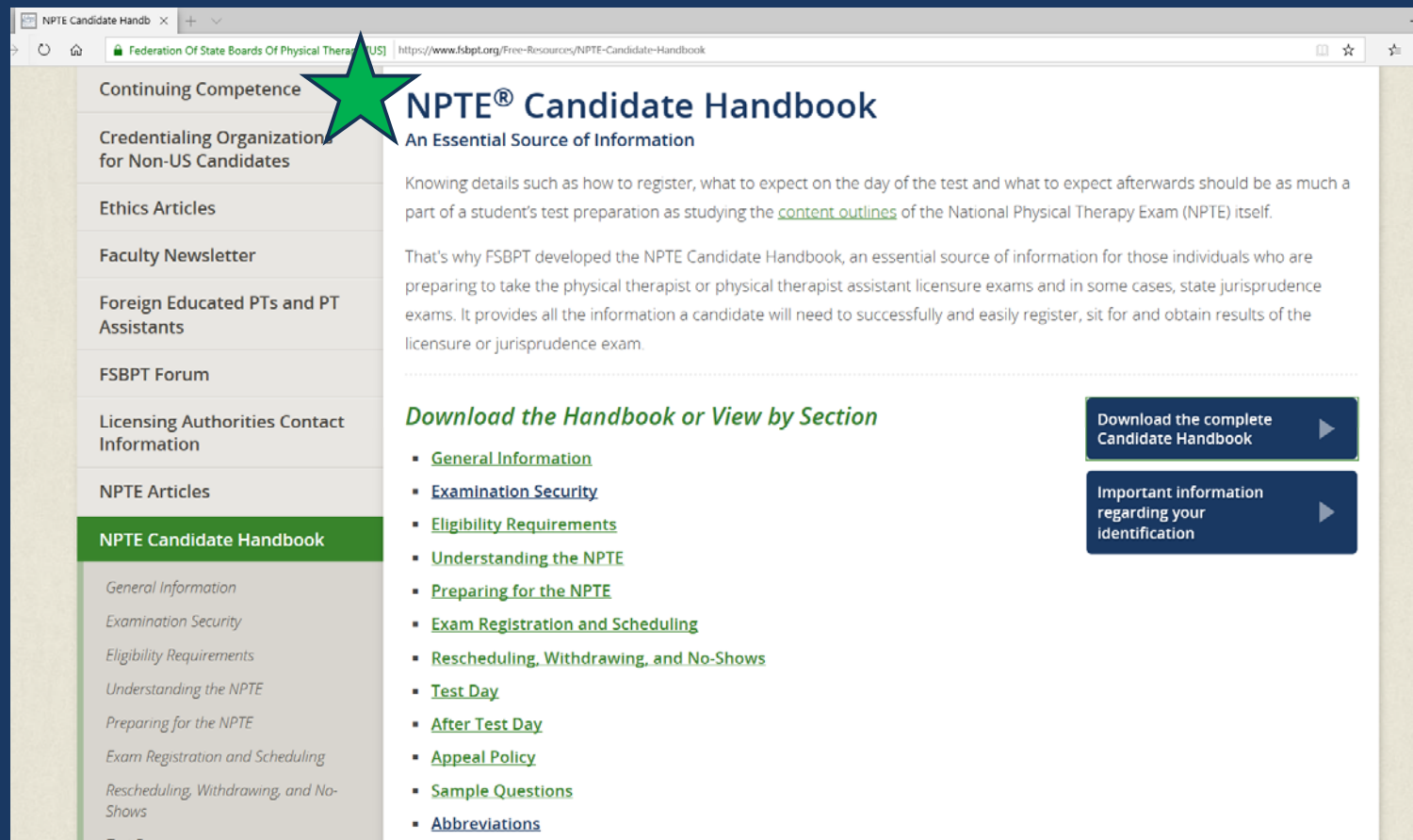
FSBPT will continue to monitor the evolving situation and provide updates.

- **[Resources for Member Boards](#)**
Communications plans, posts, and other resources for jurisdictional boards.
- **[Information for Schools](#)**
Information on FSBPT processes and the NPTE.
- **[Information for Candidates](#)**
Information on the NPTE and other important notices for students.
- **[Information for Licensees](#)**
Information for practicing PTs and PTAs
- **[Telehealth and Physical Therapy Providers](#)**
Information on telehealth laws and practices
- **[Additional Physical Therapy Resources](#)**
Additional information and resources from other physical therapy organizations
- **[Information from the CDC](#)**
Relevant advice and notices from the US Centers for Disease Control



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FSBPT.ORG/HANDBOOK



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.fsbpt.org/Free-Resources/NPTE-Candidate-Handbook>. The page title is "NPTE® Candidate Handbook" with the subtitle "An Essential Source of Information". A green star is placed over the "NPTE®" part of the title. The left sidebar contains a menu with the following items: Continuing Competence, Credentialing Organization for Non-US Candidates, Ethics Articles, Faculty Newsletter, Foreign Educated PTs and PT Assistants, FSBPT Forum, Licensing Authorities Contact Information, NPTE Articles, and NPTE Candidate Handbook (highlighted in green). Under "NPTE Candidate Handbook", there is a sub-menu with links to: General Information, Examination Security, Eligibility Requirements, Understanding the NPTE, Preparing for the NPTE, Exam Registration and Scheduling, Rescheduling, Withdrawing, and No-Shows, and Test Day. The main content area contains introductory text and a section titled "Download the Handbook or View by Section" with a list of links: General Information, Examination Security, Eligibility Requirements, Understanding the NPTE, Preparing for the NPTE, Exam Registration and Scheduling, Rescheduling, Withdrawing, and No-Shows, Test Day, After Test Day, Appeal Policy, Sample Questions, and Abbreviations. On the right side, there are two dark blue buttons: "Download the complete Candidate Handbook" and "Important information regarding your identification".



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COMMUNICATIONS

➤ Candidates with open NPTE registrations

- Emails
- Twitter/Facebook
- Phone calls

➤ Member boards

- Emails
- April 9 WebEx
- May 15 WebEx

➤ Schools

- Emails
- Responded to individual emails and phone calls
- May 15 WebEx

➤ Technical Advisory Panel



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COMMUNICATIONS

➤ Partners

- APTA, CAPTE, ACAPT, PTA SIG, ELP

➤ Prometric

- Meetings 2-4 times per week

➤ Other healthcare testing organizations

- Security roundtable
- CEO group for HCR
- Peer-to-peer conversations



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QUESTIONS FROM YOU



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RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS

- We don't have all the answers
- We'll do our best
- We respect you and your opinions



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WHY AREN'T ALL PROMETRIC CENTERS OPEN?

- Number of factors determine whether a specific center is able to open:
 - Are there state/local government mandates preventing the center from opening?
 - Does the center have the requisite number of staff to maintain secure testing protocols?
 - Does the center have enough personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies for staff members?
 - Is the facility owner where the center is located allowing businesses to open?
- These issues can be site specific, which is why some centers in a given market are open, while others remain closed
- If any of the factors above change, it can cause a closed center to open, or result in an open center needing to close



WILL FSBPT CONTINUE TO WAIVE WITHDRAWAL/CANCELLATION FEES?

- Yes
- There will be no cancellation fees for the NPTE for the foreseeable future, including for the July exam



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WHAT IS PROMETRIC DOING TO ENSURE TEST TAKERS AREN'T UNNECESSARILY EXPOSED TO COVID-19?

- Prometric published its social distancing testing procedures
 - Available on Prometric's COVID-19 page – social distancing policies
 - Available through FAQ on FSBPT's website
- Modified arrival and check-in procedures
 - Require candidates to wear a mask
 - Test center staff will have access to masks, gloves, and sanitizing materials
- Proctor & testing room procedures
- End of test procedures
 - All surfaces cleaned between each test taker and at start/end of each day





YOUR QUESTIONS

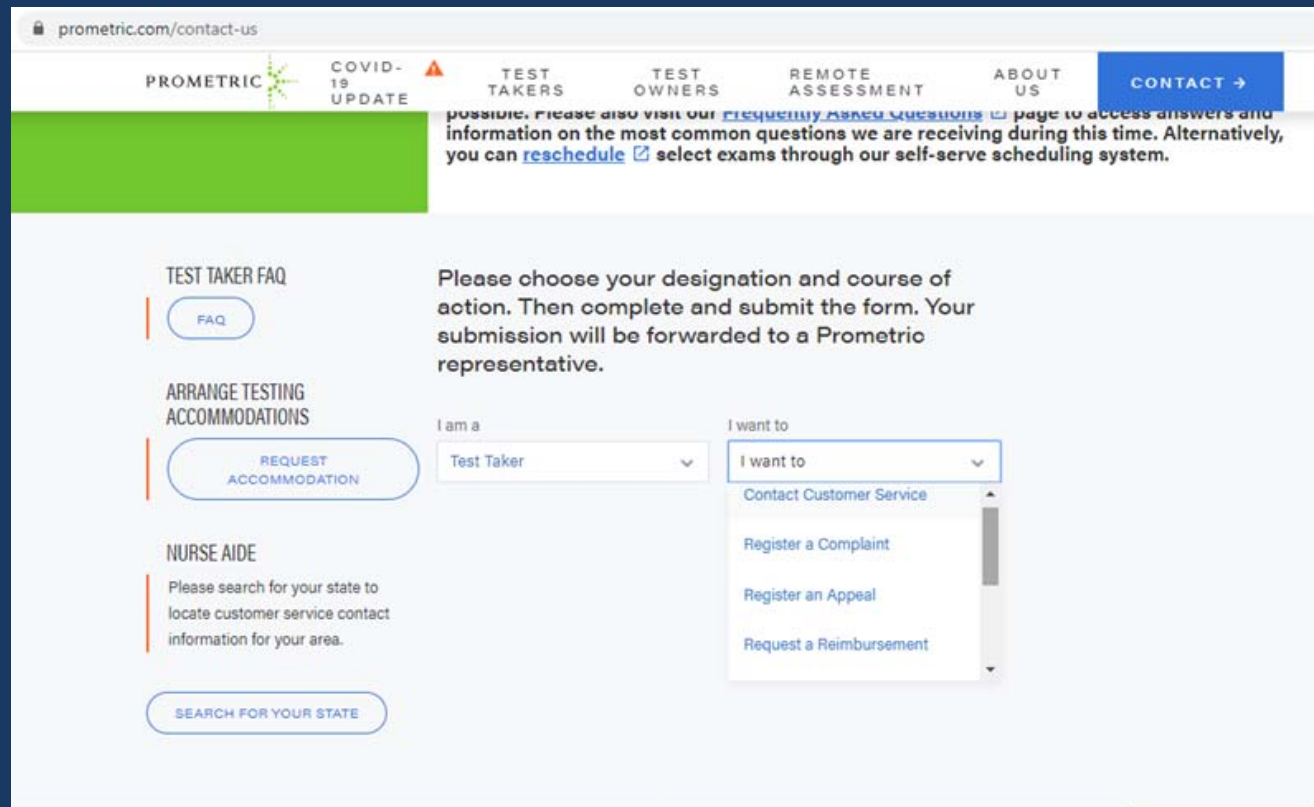
PLEASE SEND QUESTIONS VIA CHAT TO THE PRESENTER



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HOW DOES PROMETRIC HANDLE LAST MINUTE CANCELLATIONS? REIMBURSEMENT POLICY?

- Prometric's [contact us](#) page has been updated
- Reimbursements have been made to FSBPT candidates
- New FAQ on FSBPT website



The screenshot shows the Prometric website's contact-us page. The browser address bar displays "prometric.com/contact-us". The navigation menu includes "PROMETRIC", "COVID-19 UPDATE", "TEST TAKERS", "TEST OWNERS", "REMOTE ASSESSMENT", "ABOUT US", and a "CONTACT" button with a right-pointing arrow. A green banner at the top contains text: "possible. Please also visit our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page to access answers and information on the most common questions we are receiving during this time. Alternatively, you can [reschedule](#) select exams through our self-serve scheduling system."

The main content area is divided into three sections:

- TEST TAKER FAQ**: Includes a "FAQ" button.
- ARRANGE TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS**: Includes a "REQUEST ACCOMMODATION" button. To the right, there is a form with two dropdown menus: "I am a" (set to "Test Taker") and "I want to" (with a dropdown menu open showing options: "Contact Customer Service", "Register a Complaint", "Register an Appeal", and "Request a Reimbursement").
- NURSE AIDE**: Includes the text "Please search for your state to locate customer service contact information for your area." and a "SEARCH FOR YOUR STATE" button.



PLANS FOR OCTOBER

- Registration is open for October exams
 - Fixed dates - PTA 10/6/2020 | PT 10/27/2020
- We will have large blocks of seats on the fixed dates
 - ~3,500 seats for PT
 - ~2,500 seats for PTA
- Need more info before making any other decisions relative to October
 - Prometric capacity
 - Candidate behavior
 - Status of coronavirus pandemic



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HAS FSBPT CONSIDERED SUBSTANTIALLY MODIFYING THE TESTING PROGRAM (I.E.: REMOTE PROCTORING, CONTINUOUS TESTING, UNIVERSITY PROCTORING)?

- Alternate NPTE delivery options are unlikely to be a realistic solution in the near term
 - Gather stakeholder input
 - Contract with a delivery provider
 - Address technical details to ensure fairness for all candidates
- The NPTE's purpose is to help state PT boards ensure that only individuals with the requisite knowledge of physical therapy are licensed
- FSBPT is committed to working with Prometric to help our candidates take the NPTE safely and securely during this pandemic
- FSBPT is focusing all efforts on working with Prometric to get as many candidates scheduled in the existing test centers as possible



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HOW CAN I FIND THE LIST OF OPEN CENTERS AT PROMETRIC?

The screenshot shows the Prometric website's navigation bar with links for Careers, Events Calendar, Become a Test Center, and a language selector for English (US). A dropdown menu is open under the COVID-19 UPDATE button, listing options like Site Openings, Social Distancing Policies, Essential Client Programs, Reschedule Your Exam, FAQ, and For ETS Candidates. Below the menu, a news article titled "Prometric regarding COVID-19 (coronavirus)" is visible, discussing the impact of the virus on testing activities and providing updates for North America.

Prometric regarding COVID-19 (coronavirus)

Prometric is continuing to be impacted with the spread of the COVID-19 virus in countries around the world. We review daily the status of ordinances, regulations, and government orders, as well as revised guidance from health policy organizations such as the US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). We are also in regular communication with those organizations that entrust us with the delivery of their licensure & certification programs. Our goal remains to provide these organizations and the people they represent with the most appropriate options for testing that provide for individual health, safety and well-being.

The following information represents the most recent updates regarding regional resumption of testing activities based on this review.

North America (U.S. and Canada)

In accordance with the changing local and federal governance and advice from the CDC and WHO, **we have determined it is necessary to further extend the closure of test centers in the U.S. and Canada through May 31st. This applies to all testing programs, with the exception of essential services programs, which resumed in a limited capacity on May 1st.** Prometric has actively worked with test sponsors to determine whose programs meet the criteria for "essential workforce" as defined by the US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency ([CISA](#) [🔗](#)). For the most up-to-date list of these programs, please click [here](#) [🔗](#). Test centers in North America will be operating under strict social distancing guidelines at this time. For a full list of these procedures, please click [here](#) [🔗](#).



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PROMETRIC RESOURCES

- Improved contact us form - www.Prometric.com/contact-us
- COVID 19 Updates Page – www.Prometric.com/corona-virus-update
- Open center list – www.Prometric.com/site-openings
- Social distancing policy
- New feature in development to make rescheduling easier



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WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT THE TEST CENTER? (FAQ)

- All candidates will be required to bring and wear a face mask/covering while at the test center.
- Note that local government social distancing guidelines apply to each step in the process, which means only a couple of people will be allowed into the Prometric lobby at the same time for check-in.
- Please [read this detailed description of the processes Prometric is adopting](#) beginning May 1.



HOW DO I DECIDE WHETHER I SHOULD TEST ON THE FIXED DATES IN JULY OR DURING THE EXTRA DAYS PROVIDED IN THE WINDOW?

START WITH THE FIXED DATES

➤ OKAY REASONS to switch

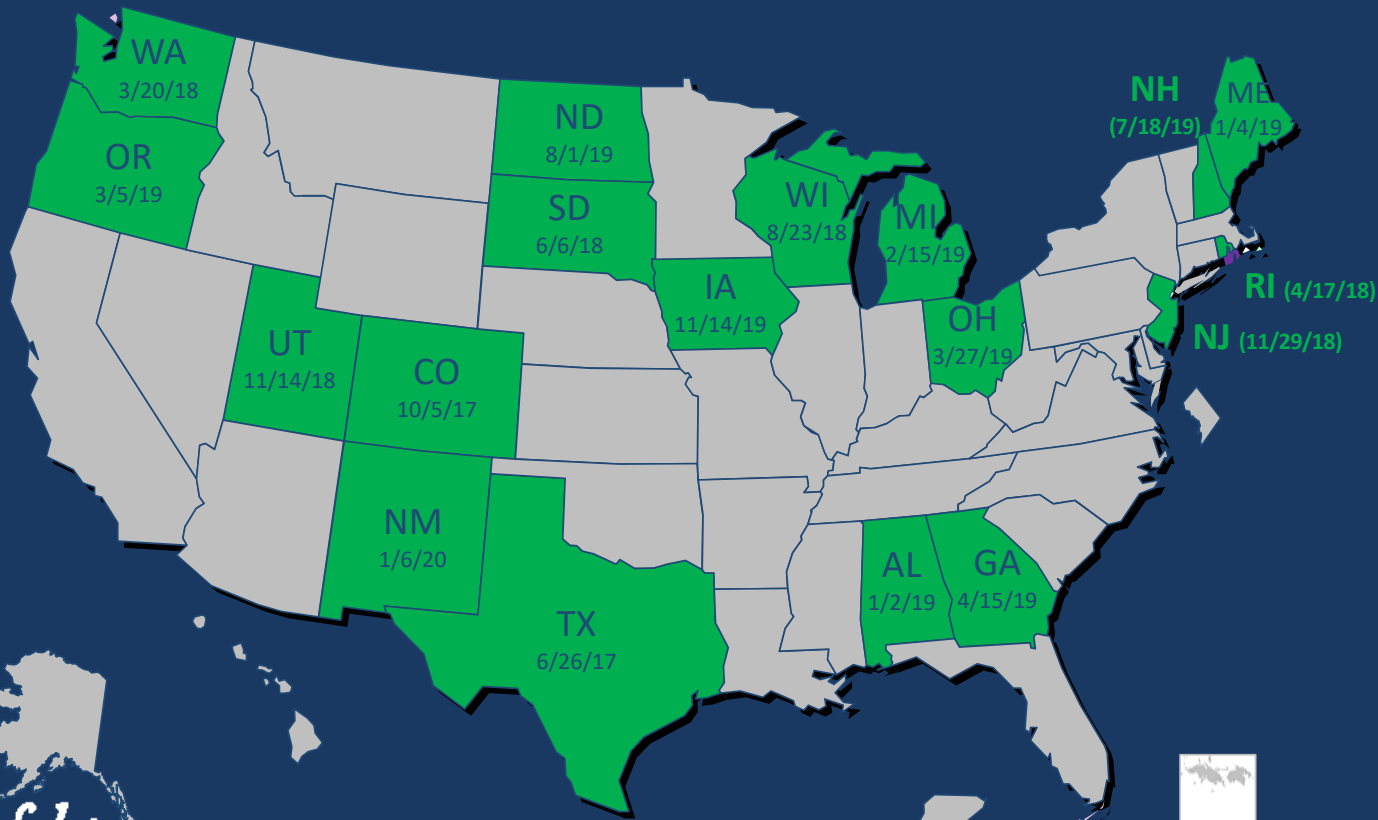
- No appointment w/in reasonable distance

➤ NOT OKAY REASONS to switch

- You don't like the time slot
- You want more time to study
- There's only one test center that is within a couple miles of you
- You want to test at the same time/location as a friend



STATUS OF ALTERNATE APPROVAL PATHWAY ADOPTION MAY 2020



GREEN – Executed AAP Agreement/Opted In (18)



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CLOSING REMARKS

NANCY KIRSCH



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!



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