

## Intent

The intent of this policy is to establish that National Registry examination results are considered valid for 24 months.

## Scope

This policy applies to all certification levels and examinations.

Note: The Transition Policy for ALS Certifications contains an exclusion to the 24 month time period valid for Advanced Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic cognitive and psychomotor examinations taken prior to July 1, 2024.

## Definitions

Eligibility requirements: Requirements that must be satisfied for national certification to be issued as specified for each certification level.

## Policy

Passing scores on National Registry examinations can be applied to applications for certification or recertification for up to 24 months from the date of the successful examination result. All other requirements for eligibility must also be met, including successful completion of all requirements for each respective level of certification within the established time period from course completion.

The end of the same month the examination was scored as passed will be used as the deadline for use of examination results. For instance, a passed examination on June 1, 2024, would be valid until June 30, 2026.

Examination results are not valid after 24 months and results cannot be transferred to another application.

## Rationale

A 24 month time period for valid examination results is consistent with other time periods used by the National Registry, including course completion and duration of certification. This simplifies processes for certificants, staff and stakeholders. The prior combination of a one year (12 month) standard for examination results and a two year (24 month) standard for course eligibility caused significant confusion among candidates and stakeholders.

Research has consistently shown degradation of required knowledge over time. A 2011 study of medical students and physicians showed relatively little degradation in knowledge of basic sciences for the first

two years and later degradation was slowed by rehearsal of information. The authors noted, “When rehearsal during the retention interval is controlled for, it appears that little knowledge is lost for 1.5–2 years after it was last used.” (Custers & Ten Cate, 2011). A 2007 study of the elapsed time of paramedic training completion until taking the examination showed a statistically significant decline in the score on a linear examination of 0.009% per day. The authors noted, “Based on this model, it would take 17 months before a paramedic’s predicted score would fall below the passing standard.” (Fernandez & Studnek, 2007). Both of these published studies support a time frame of 24 months or less to pass the National Registry examination.

States use an EMS licensure period of two to five years. The 24-month time period for which the examinations are considered valid is a balance of operational needs for a consistent time period with the suggestion of knowledge decay shown by research.

## Related Policies and Procedures

Eligibility for Certification

Transfer of Examination Results

Transition Policy for ALS Examinations

Certification Schemes – EMR, EMT, AEMT, NRP

## References

Custers E. J. & Ten Cate, O. T. (2011). Very long-term retention of basic science knowledge in doctors after graduation. *Medical Education*; 45, 422–430.

Fernandez, A. R. & Studnek, J. R. (2007). The Association between a candidates score on the national certification examination and the elapsed time from course completion to completion of the cognitive examination. Oral presentation at the annual symposium of the National Association of EMS Educators. (<https://www.nremt.org/rwd/public/document/research>) *Prehospital Emergency Care*,11,489-493.

## Document History

2018-06-15	Board motion authorizing 24-month time period for valid exam results.
2018-07-23	Advisory input from NASEMSO Personnel Licensure Council.
2018-07-27	Advisory input from National Registry State EMS Official Advisory Group.
2018-11-05	Policy developed and approved (v1)
2023- 12-28	Revised for ALS Redesign to remove psychomotor examination (v2). Transition Policy for ALS contains exclusions on the 24-month examination valid time period.
2024-06-11	Approved by the Board of Directors (v2)