



ALS Redesign Expert Panel meeting

January 24, 2021 2 p.m. ET

This months Topic: National Registry Retest Policy

How it works:

The topic for the meeting was the examination retest policy. We learned from Dr. Mihaiela Gugiu, that a retest policy is best practice in the certification industry. A retest policy protects the integrity of the examination process by reducing the chance of passing an unqualified candidate. The current retest policy is not consistent with certification industry practice and is difficult to explain and administer.

Stakeholder Partnership Director, Alan Arguello, shared collective feedback from State EMS offices and our military partners.

Current state and research

Before the floor was opened for discussion, the desired criteria for the National Registry's future retest policy were shared:

- Acceptable to the EMS community
- Applies to all test takers
- Easy to understand and enforce (ideally consistent across all program levels)
- Minimizes the chance that a candidate will see the same questions in a six-month period
- Feasible within budget constraints

For reference, our current policy is

- 15 day waiting period after failed examination
- 3 failures require a refresher course (EMRs must complete a new course)
- 6 failures require a new course
- Two-year eligibility resets with new course

Posed question

Is the proposed Retest Policy acceptable? If not, what changes need to be made?

The key points made

During the discussion a number of different perspectives were presented. Panelist were concerned about the workforce shortage and how the retest policy would affect it, they had a

lively discussion about a requirement for remediation and whether it was the Registry's place to enforce such a requirement. They also discussed concerns about a long waiting period having a negative effect on a candidate's chances of passing the examination and felt that a change at this time might not be a good idea given all the other issues confronting the EMS community. The panel also discussed the importance of examination validity, and how best practices require sufficient space between examination attempts.

During the conversation, it was brought to attention that the current 15 day waiting period between attempts was causing some confusion in the community. A few panelists shared that their candidates were not able to schedule a Person VUE test until after the waiting period was over which resulted in a longer waiting period if appointments were not immediately available. Registry staff have been assigned to look into this issue.

The consensus

From a quick poll in the meeting, a seven-day waiting period was highlighted to be the most popular preference. The National Registry will report these opinions back to the Standards and Examinations Committee of the Board of Directors and use them when putting forth further options that balance candidate experience, candidate cost, and examination security and validity.

It was suggested and discussed that the National Registry should consider working with other EMS organizations to develop a position paper on the retest policy and best practices in remediation. The National Registry Science Team is exploring that possibility.

As always, please share this information with your colleagues and gather their thoughts on the issue. Thank you for attending and sharing your feedback. Your work is benefitting EMS, the public, and resulting in a more valid and reliable certification process.