

**TITLE 16 OCCUPATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING**  
**CHAPTER 20 PHYSICAL THERAPISTS**  
**PART 2 EXAMINATIONS**

**16.20.2.1 ISSUING AGENCY:** New Mexico Physical Therapy Board.  
[5/15/1996; 10/15/1997; 16.20.2.1 NMAC - Rn & A, 16 NMAC 20.2.1, 8/31/2000]

**16.20.2.2 SCOPE:** All individuals who wish to practice physical therapy in the State of New Mexico.  
[5/15/1996; 10/15/1997; 16.20.2.2 NMAC - Rn & A, 16 NMAC 20.2.2, 8/31/2000]

**16.20.2.3 STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** Section 61-12-10 NMSA 1978.  
[3/29/1983...10/15/1997; 16.20.2.3 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.2.3, 8/31/2000]

**16.20.2.4 DURATION:** Permanent.  
[5/15/1996; 10/15/1997; 16.20.2.4 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.2.4, 8/31/2000]

**16.20.2.5 EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 15, 1997, unless a later date is cited at the end of a section  
[3/29/1983...10/15/1997; 16.20.2.5 NMAC - Rn & A, 16 NMAC 20.2.5, 8/31/2000]

**16.20.2.6 OBJECTIVE:** The objective of Part 2 of Chapter 20 is to establish examination requirements for applicants applying for a license to practice as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.  
[5/15/1996; 10/15/1997; 16.20.2.6 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.2.6, 8/31/2000]

**16.20.2.7 DEFINITIONS: [RESERVED]**  
[10/15/1997; 16.20.2.7 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.2.7, 8/31/2000]

**16.20.2.8 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NATIONAL PHYSICAL THERAPY EXAMINATION:**

**A.** All applicants for licensure must take the national physical therapy examination (NPTE), or show proof of having taken the NPTE in another state. The examination must be taken in English, without the use of an interpreter, and without the aid of an English/foreign language dictionary.

**B.** Alternate Approval Pathway: the alternate approval pathway is an alternate method of licensure application for the physical therapist or the physical therapist assistant applying for an initial license in the state of New Mexico. The applicant will follow these steps, prior to completing the application process for New Mexico licensure:

(1) Apply directly to the federation of state boards of physical therapy (FSBPT) for permission to sit for the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant national licensing exam.

(2) Once the national licensing exam has been completed, the FSBPT will send the score to the state of New Mexico, as identified by the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant applicant.

(3) The state of New Mexico will receive the score from the FSBPT and then determine if the licensing eligibility requirements have been met. The applicant MUST provide a complete licensure application with all required fees to the board for verification of eligibility for licensure in New Mexico, prior to the state of New Mexico issuing a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant license, pursuant to Section 16.20.3.8 NMAC.

**C.** The federation of state boards of physical therapy (FSBPT) will notify applicants, in writing, of the procedure to follow in order to register for the exam with an approved computer based testing (CBT) company.

(1) Applicants MUST take the exam within 60 days from the date of notification to register by [FSBPT].

(2) Applicants will register in New Mexico, but may take the exam in any state.

(3) Applicants will be scheduled to sit for the exam within 30 days from the time they call the computer based testing (CBT) company.

(4) Applicants may change their appointment up to two days prior to the test date.

**D.** Effective August 28, 1995, an applicant for licensure as a physical therapist shall obtain a score on the NPTE for physical therapists that equals or exceeds the criterion-referenced passing point of 600, based on a scale ranging from 200 to 800. Per changes in the eligibility requirements through the FSBPT, effective January 2016, applicants scoring 400 or less on two exams will be unable to test again for licensure. In addition, applicants will be able to take the exam a maximum of six times (three attempts annually) with no additional attempts allowed.

Applicants may not complete more than three attempts on the NPTE, in a 12 month period.

**(1)** For applicants who took the NPTE during the period from June 10, 1971 to August 28, 1995, the passing score for the national examination shall be 1.5 standard deviation below the national mean on the date the exam was taken by the applicant.

**(2)** Exams taken prior to June 10, 1971 may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis or the applicant may qualify under 16.20.3.10 NMAC (Licensure by Endorsement).

**E.** Effective August 28, 1995, an applicant for licensure as a physical therapist assistant shall obtain a score on the NPTE for physical therapist assistants that equals or exceeds the criterion-referenced passing point of 600, based on a scale ranging from 200 to 800. Per changes in the eligibility requirements through the FSBPT, effective January 2016, applicants scoring 400 or less on two exams will be unable to test again for licensure. In addition, applicants will be able to take the exam a maximum of six times (three attempts annually) with no additional attempts allowed. Applicants may not complete more than three attempts on the NPTE, in a 12 month period.

**(1)** For applicants who took the NPTE during the period from June 10, 1971 to August 28, 1995, the passing score for the national examination shall be 1.5 standard deviation below the national mean on the date the exam was taken by the applicant.

**(2)** Exams taken prior to June 10, 1971 may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis or the applicant may qualify under 16.20.3.10 NMAC (Licensure by Endorsement).

**F.** Any applicant who fails the NPTE may retake the exam at the next available opportunity.

**G.** Any applicant who has failed the NPTE will not be issued a temporary license, or if a temporary license has been issued, it will automatically be revoked. The revocation is effective upon recording of the test results by the registrar. The registrar will promptly notify the applicant of results by certified mail.

**H.** An applicant who fails the NPTE two or more times must complete and submit proof of completion of remedial work as recommended by the board before being permitted to take subsequent NPTE's. Refer to the remedial criteria for specific requirements for each subsequent exam failed, up to six lifetime attempts.

CRITERIA FOR REMEDIAL WORK, DESCRIBED BY THE PHYSICAL THERAPY BOARD			
Number of failures	Number of points from passing	Mentorship and tutorial	Other
2	Score is within 6 points of passing	20 hours of mentorship or tutorial or any combination of both	Proof of a national licensing exam review course
2	Score is greater than 6 points of passing	40 hours of either mentorship or tutorial or any combination of both	Proof of a national licensing exam review course
3	Score is within 6 points of passing	20 hours of mentorship and 40 hours of tutorial	NONE
3	Score is greater than 6 points of passing	60 hours of mentorship and 60 hours of tutorial	NONE

After the fourth failure of the NPTE for PT/PTA applicant, the applicant must complete the following remedial work, to sit for the exam

**(1)** Letter confirming completion of remedial clinical mentorship with a licensed PT/PTA Supervisor for:

- (a)** 160 hours in an outpatient clinic/facility
- (b)** 160 hours in an inpatient/rehabilitation clinic/ facility
- (c)** 160 hours in a clinic/ facility of their choice

**(2)** Letter confirming (with both scores listed) completion of a National License Review course and the FSBPT PEAT exam.

**(a)** Applicant must retake a national licensing review course (providing proof of completion)

**(b)** Applicant must retake the FSBPT PEAT exam (providing both scores). Per FSBPT guidelines, beginning January 2016, all applicants will be restricted to six lifetime attempts at passing the

national licensing exam. In addition, two scores at 400/800 will preclude the applicant from any additional attempts at examination.

[3/29/1983; 2/19/1988; 8/1/1989; 5/8/1991; 6/3/1994; 7/28/1995; 5/15/1996; 16.20.2.8 NMAC - Rn & A, 16 NMAC 20.2.8, 8/31/2000; A, 7/28/2001; A, 8/16/2010; A, 9/30/2014; A, 7/28/2019]

**16.20.2.9 PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT EXAM REQUIREMENTS:** The minimum knowledge and skill required of applicants to take the physical therapist assistant examination requires graduation from a physical therapist assistant program accredited by the commission on accreditation in physical therapy education (CAPTE).

[10/15/1997; 16.20.2.9 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.2.9, 8/31/2000; A, 7/28/2001; A, 3/2/2006]

**16.20.2.10 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE JURISPRUDENCE EXAMINATION:**

**A.** All applicants for licensure except those applicants applying for expedited licensure pursuant to 16.20.12.9 and 16.20.12.13 NMAC, must take the New Mexico jurisprudence examination and have a passing score of eighty percent, based on a total available score of one hundred percent. Any applicant who fails to pass the jurisprudence examination may retake the examination upon receipt of the required fees.

**B.** A licensee who received an expedited license by 16.20.12.9 or 16.20.12.13 NMAC must take the New Mexico jurisprudence examination when renewing their license for the first time and have a passing score of eighty percent, based on a total available score of one hundred percent. Any licensee who fails to pass the jurisprudence examination may retake the examination upon receipt of the required fees.

[6/3/1994; 10/15/1997; 16.20.2.10 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.2.10, 8/31/2000; 6/27/2023]

**HISTORY of 16.20.2 NMAC:**

**Pre-NMAC History:** The material in this part was derived from that previously filed with State Records and Archives:

Rule 71-1, Re: License, filed 6/10/1971

Rule 80-3, General Rules and Regulations, filed 4/14/1980

Rule 83-2, Examinations, filed 3/29/1983

Rule 88-2, Examinations, filed 2/19/1988

Rule 89-2, Examinations, filed 8/1/1989

Rule 91-2, Examinations, filed 5/8/1991

Rule 94-2, Examinations, filed 6/3/1994

Rule 95-2, Examinations, filed 7/28/1995

Rule 95-2, Examinations, filed 9/18/1995

Rule 92-11, P.T.A. Examination Requirements, filed 1/28/1993

[Rp, 16 NMAC 20.2.3A, 8/31/2000]

**History of the Repealed Material: [Reserved]**