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MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL LICENSURE

TO: Mississippi Secretary of State

From: Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure

Date: May 17, 2007

Subject: Notice of Proposed Rule Adoption - Final Rule

Mississippi Code §73-43-11 gives the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure the power to promulgate and publish reasonable rules and regulations necessary to enable it to discharge its functions and to enforce the provisions of law regulating the practice of medicine.

This rule as adopted does not differ from the proposed rule.

The changes to Regulation IV, Licensure Examinations, reflect the Board's attempt to simplify current language.

IV. LICENSURE EXAMINATIONS

For the purpose of licensing by examination and reciprocity, the Board recognizes three (3) separate and distinct examinations, to-wit: The examinations administered by the NBME, FLEX and USMLE. The Board adopted the FLEX as a method of licensure by examination on March 8, 1973. Prior to this date, the Board administered a written examination and endorsed, for the purposes of reciprocity, licenses to practice medicine or osteopathic medicine obtained in most states by written examination. A separate discussion of each examination and this Board's requirements for the purpose of licensure is as follows:

A. FLEX

1. The Board adopted the Federation Licensing Examination (FLEX) as the method of licensure by examination on March 8, 1973. The last regular administration of the FLEX was December, 1993. The Board will recognize FLEX as a valid medical licensing examination subject to all requirements heretofore and hereinafter set forth.
2. Prior to January 24, 1985, the FLEX examination was divided into three components:

Day I - Basic Science

Day II - Clinical Science

Day III - Clinical Competence

In order to pass this examination, each applicant must have obtained a FLEX weighted average of 75 with Day I given a value of 1/6 of the entire examination, Day II given a value of 2/6, and Day III given a value of 3/6. The Board may make an exemption to the weighted average of 75 if the applicant has completed an approved residency program and is currently ~~board~~ certified by a specialty board recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties or the American Osteopathic Association.

After January 24, 1985, the Board has approved administration of a new FLEX examination with a different design from that administered since 1973. This examination is a three-day examination, and is comprised of two components. Component I consists of one and one-half (1½) days and judges the readiness of a physician to practice medicine in a supervised setting. Component II consists of one and one-half (1½) days and judges the readiness of a physician to practice independently. A score of 75 is considered a passing grade for each component. If taken separately, Component I must be passed before taking Component II.

1. An applicant has seven (7) years in which to pass both components of the FLEX. An applicant is required to repeat only that component failed. A candidate who is unsuccessful in passing the FLEX after three (3) attempts will be required to take one additional year of post-graduate training approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) before being eligible to take the FLEX again. Following completion of the year of post-graduate training, applicant may be allowed three (3) additional attempts to pass the FLEX.

B. USMLE

1. The Board adopted the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) as an additional method of licensure by examination on September 16, 1993. The USMLE replaces FLEX and the NBME certification examinations during a phase-in period from 1992 to 1994. Unlike the three-day (two component) FLEX, USMLE is a three-step examination that consists of three two-day examinations, Step 1, Step 2 and Step 3. Each step is complementary to the other; no step can stand alone in the assessment of readiness for medical licensure. Unlike the FLEX, which must be taken upon or after graduation from medical school, most applicants will take Step 1 and 2 of the USMLE during their medical school years. Step 3 will be taken after graduation.
2. To be eligible for Step 1 or Step 2 of the USMLE, an applicant must be an officially enrolled medical student or a graduate of a United States, Puerto Rican or Canadian medical school accredited by the LCME or the AOA, or an officially enrolled medical student or a graduate of a foreign medical school and eligible for examination by the ECFMG for a certificate.

3. To be eligible to take Step 3 of USMLE, an applicant must, (a) complete an application for a Mississippi medical license and, (b) meet all other requirements for licensure, as provided in Section II above.
4. A score of 75 is necessary to successfully pass each step of the USMLE.
5. USMLE Steps 1, 2 and 3 must be passed within a seven-year time period beginning when the examinee passes his first Step. The Board, at its discretion, may waive this requirement based on extraordinary circumstances. The Board encourages all applicants to take Step 3 of the USMLE as soon as possible following receipt of the M.D. or D.O. degree. An applicant has seven (7) years in which to pass all steps of the USMLE. A candidate who is unsuccessful in passing Step 3 after 3 (three) attempts will be required to take one (1) additional year of ACGME-approved postgraduate training before being eligible to take Step 3 again. Following completion of the year of postgraduate training, the applicant may be allowed three (3) additional attempts to pass Step 3 of the USMLE.

C. NBME or NBOME

The Board recognizes for the purpose of reciprocity and waiving examination, diplomats of the NBME and on or after February 13, 1973, diplomats of the NBOME. Both examinations are administered in three (3) parts, Parts I, II and III. Applicants must have the NBME or NBOME submit a certificate evidencing successful completion of the exam directly to the Board.

D. EXAM COMBINATIONS

Now that the FLEX and examinations administered by the NBME have been phased out, the Board will accept passing scores for the following combinations of the FLEX, NBME and USMLE examinations:

EXAMINATION SEQUENCE	ACCEPTABLE COMBINATIONS
NBME Part I <i>plus</i> NBME Part II <i>plus</i> NBME Part III	NBME Part I or USMLE Step 1 <i>plus</i> NBME Part II or USMLE Step 2 <i>plus</i> NBME Part III or USMLE Step 3
FLEX Component I <i>plus</i> FLEX Component II	FLEX Component I <i>plus</i> USMLE Step 3 <i>or</i> NBME Part I or USMLE Step 1 <i>plus</i> NBME Part II or USMLE Step 2 <i>plus</i> FLEX Component II
USMLE Step 1 <i>plus</i> USMLE Step 2 <i>plus</i> USMLE Step 3	

Amended September 13, 1997. Amended January 18, 2001. Amended February 18, 2003. Amended May 17, 2007.