VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Virginia OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Last Class Paperwork

Published: June 2024

Background

First & Last Class Paperwork has been a staple of initial certification programs in Virginia for several *decades. This guidance document and the accompanying official Office of EMS forms serve two distinct* purposes:

1. For educators, it provides you a means of ensuring that all your students have been adequately introduced to EMS education practices, polices and requirements in Virginia;
2. For students, this packet ensures that they are educated on state policies and procedures as **well** as your individual requirements for the course.

Based on feedback and recurring questions from students over the years, we have designed the first and last class paperwork. You will now find that we have two distinct paperwork packets:

1. First Class Paperwork – This packet contains many of the forms and documents to which you have become accustom.
2. Last Class Paperwork – This packet is designed to be handed out and discussed with students on the last day of class and it specifically covers the testing processes required by the National Registry and Pearson VUE.

Each packet is designed to provide you with guidance as to what state documents and forms to incorporate in your course syllabus along with suggestions as what items—unique to your individual program should also be included. This packet is not designed to simply be printed off and handed out to your students.

This guidance document is designed to provide you with the skeletal structure to design a course syllabus and your own First Class Paperwork packet which is unique to your program and its requirements. The state forms and paperwork included in the appendices are MANDATORY and must be included, reviewed verbatim and maintained on file for each student in your program.

First and Last class paperwork has been carefully designed to assist you as an educator to ensure that you are meeting all of your regulatory requirements for initial certifications programs in the

Introduction

Explain to your students that you will be covering give (5) important areas of the certification testing process.

1. The Virginia and NREMT Accommodation Request Policies
2. The program's required Terminal Competency Psychomotor Exam testing process conducted at a local CTS.
3. The National Registry Cognitive Exam Process
4. The process of registering on Pearson VUE for the NREMT Cognitive Exam
5. Maintaining My Certification – How to Recertify in Virginia

Americans with Disabilities Act

All ADA Requests are handled by the National Registry. The National Registry complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in regard to requests for examination accommodations consistent with its mission and public protection.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY OVERVIEW

The National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians administers its certification examinations in a manner that does not discriminate against an otherwise qualified applicant. The National Registry offers reasonable and appropriate accommodations for the written and practical components of the registration examination for those persons with documented disabilities, as required by the ADA.

The National Registry urges candidates requesting any accommodation to submit such requests as early as possible to provide adequate time to resolve any documentation issues that may arise. At a minimum, all requests for accommodations must be received by the National Registry no less than thirty (30) days before scheduling the examination.

- https://www.nremt.org/Policies/Examination-Policies/ADA-Accommodations

Pearson VUE Testing Procedures

National Registry Certification examinations are intended to evaluate the competence of EMS practitioners at a variety of levels: Emergency Medical Responder (EMR), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT), and Paramedic.

The examinations address content areas defined and validated by subject matter experts, educators, and individuals working in EMS fields. As examinations provide only one source of information regarding examinee competence, they are used in conjunction with other indicators of training and experience in the granting of certification.

Registration

Before scheduling an examination appointment, you must have already:

- Registered with The National Registry and received an Authorization to Test (ATT) letter.
- Been notified of your eligibility to sit for the examination; and
- Paid an examination authorization fee to The National Registry.

When you receive your Authorization to Test letter, carefully review the information to ensure it is accurate. If any of the information is incorrect, or if the information has changed, please contact the National Registry at (614) 888-4484.

Scheduling

First time test takers who wish to schedule online must create a Pearson VUE Web account. When creating your account and scheduling your test, you will need your National Registry Candidate ID from the Authorization to Test letter National Registry sent you. Appointments may be made up to one business day in advance.

Maintaining My Certification

Maintaining your certification in Virginia requires that EMS providers complete the state requirements for recertification prior to their certification expiration date. These requirements include:

EMS Provider's MUST:

1. Complete the required continuing education (CE) credits for their appropriate level of certification.
    a. CE Requirements can be located on the OEMS web site at: http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/recertifying-your-virginia-ems-credential/
    b. All CE documentation must be received in the Office of EMS prior to the provider expiration date to prevent lapsing into reentry.
    c. BLS Reentry - Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) & Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Providers in reentry must:
        i. Complete any remaining required continuing education criteria AND
        ii. pass the National Registry Cognitive (written) exam and
        iii. pass Virginia Psychomotor Skills Verification prior to the end of their reentry period to regain their lapsed certification. Click this link for specific instructions regarding the testing requirements. https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-

medical-services/education-certification/provider-resources/recertifying-your-virginia-ems-credential/reentry-certification-process/

2. EMS Providers can access a copy of their Virginia CE Report online 24/7/365 via the Virginia EMS Portal.
3. Once all requirements are met you will be eligible to recertify. This process is automated and you will recertify on the first day of the month of your expiration.
    a. Providers plan to maintain their National Registry certification as well as their Virginia certification should use the “Recertify Me” option in the Virginia EMS Portal (My Tests & Eligibility>Eligibility Letters) once their National Registry certification has been issued.
    b. This will cause your Virginia certification to immediately renew.
    c. This will assist you with keeping your continuing education records in sync with both Virginia and the National Registry.
4. If you allow your certification to lapse you will go into reentry and to regain certification will be required to take the following examinations:
    a. If a BLS provider, the Virginia Psychomotor Examination and the National Registry Cognitive Examination.
    b. If an ALS provider, the National Registry Cognitive Assessment Examination for your certification level.
5. Virginia EMS Providers cannot practice without a current Virginia certification card.

Appendix A

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Virginia OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Form: TR-09-A

Enclosed are documents containing information about the EMS program you are about to attend. You will be asked to verify that you have reviewed the information with the Course Coordinator, have had your questions answered and understand the information contained herein by signing this cover form **and individual documents enclosed.**

My signature below indicates that the specific section listed below for the Emergency Medical Responder/First Responder or Emergency Medical Technician program has been read to me. Further, my signature indicates that I read the contents of the specific section for the Emergency Medical Responder or Emergency Medical Technician program and understand the information contained in that section.

Student Name

(printed) _____

Part I Introduction

Part II Americans with Disability Act

_____ _____ _____

Signature Date Signed Date of Birth – Minimum 16 years old

Signature for this item indicates that I was also provided a duplicate copy of this form.

Part III BLS Certification Testing Process

_____ _____

Signature Date Signed

BLS Student Signatures

Form: TR-15-B

NATIONAL REGISTRY OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS

https://www.nremt.org/Policies/Examination-Policies/ADA-Accommodations

Rocco V. Morando Building
6610 Busch Blvd.
P.O. Box 29233
Columbus, Ohio 43229
Phone: (614) 888-4484
Fax: (614) 888-8920

NREMT Accommodations Policy

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Virginia OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Form: TR-11-C

BLS Programs Certification Testing Policy

Directions

1. Distribute two (2) copies of this form to each student.
2. This form must be covered with your entire class on the last day of regularly scheduled classes.
3. Instructors are required read this entire policy to all students verbatim.
4. Students are required to sign one (1) copy of this form and return it to the instructor keeping the second copy for themselves.

Eligibility for Certification Examination

1. You must satisfy all items contained in state form TR-16—Course Expectations for Successful Completion.
2. Successful completion of #1 above as evidenced by your Course Coordinator marking you as “Pass” on the Course Student Disposition Report (CSDR) and with the National Registry of EMT’s.
3. Testing for initial certification must be started within 180 days of the course's end date.

Terminal Competency Psychomotor Exam

All students in BLS programs must have successfully completed a terminal competency psychomotor examination which allows the Program Director and Medical Director to validate entry-level psychomotor competency. This exam is to be conducted through competency based critical thinking scenarios as approved by the program’s EMS Physician.

Cognitive Examinations

1. Cognitive examinations are administered by the National Registry of EMT’s. In order to sit for the cognitive exam, a student must have been marked for successful completion of their initial course by their Program Director PRIOR to being issued a National Registry of EMT’s (NREMT) Authorization to Test Letter (ATT).
2. The National Registry of EMT’s has implemented computer based testing (CBT) for its cognitive tests. CBT strengthens the NREMT's commitment to serving the EMS community and providing a valid and reliable exam process. It also provides numerous benefits to candidates, educators, and others in the EMS community as well as the public, including:
    a. More accurate, precise and fair evaluation of candidates' competency
    b. Increased EMS professionalism
    c. In most cases, next business day exam results
    d. Increased scheduling flexibility

e. Fortified examination security

3. Candidates will apply to take the NREMT cognitive exam through the NREMT website.
    a. Once the candidate has made application, the Program Director is responsible for verifying course completion which will allow the Authorization To Test letter (ATT) letter to generate.
    b. Once the candidate is authorized to test and has an ATT letter, they will contact Pearson VUE by internet (if by telephone a fee will be charged for customer service support)
        i. Candidates, when applying for their cognitive exam have the opportunity to select whether they would like to take their exam face-to-face exams at a Pearson VUE Testing Center or a remotely proctored exam on Pearson OnVUE.
            - Face-to-face Cognitive Exam (Pearson VUE Test Center)
                a. Students can search for open Pearson VUE Test Centers near them by clicking this link: https://wsr.pearsonvue.com/testtaker/registration/SelectExamPage/NREMT?conversationId=1218760
            - Remotely Proctored Exam on Pearson OnVUE
                a. To learn more about Pearson OnVUE Remote Proctored Exams by visiting: https://home.pearsonvue.com/nremt/onvue
4. For BLS certification, NREMT has chosen to make use of a computer adaptive test (CAT). An "adaptive test" presents the candidate with items that will be most informative for measuring ability. Each testing experience is unique to the individual being tested and the exam is tailored to the ability of the candidate. In CAT, the computer determines with at least 95% certainty that:
    a. the candidate's ability is either **above** or **below** the passing standard, OR
    b. the candidate receives a maximum number of items, OR
    c. the candidate runs out of time.

    Every time the candidate answers a question, the computer estimates the candidate's ability. With every additional answer, the ability estimate gets more precise. Based upon the most recent, revised ability estimate, the computer selects the next item to be presented, such that the candidate will find it challenging. There is no minimum percentage of items correct to pass. Every candidate will be challenged to the limit of his/her ability. Candidates will not receive exam results at the test center. In most cases, exam results will be available the next business day on the NREMT website.
5. **Emergency Medical Responder Candidates**
    a. EMR candidates are allowed three (3) opportunities to pass the cognitive examination provided all other requirements for national registration are met. Should a candidate fail the third and final attempt of the cognitive examination,

the candidate must complete another complete First Responder/Emergency Medical Responder course.

b. Oral testing will not be permitted on cognitive examinations. The use of any electronic or mechanical device which translates the cognitive exam material into an audible or tactile format of any type is not permitted, but the use of normal corrective lenses is allowed.

6. **Emergency Medical Technician Candidates**
    a. EMT candidates are allowed three (3) opportunities to pass the cognitive examination provided all other requirements for national registration are met. Candidates applying for the fourth attempt of the cognitive examination must submit official documentation verifying he/she has successfully completed twenty (20) hours of educational review with a recognized instructor that overviews the content of the Virginia EMS Education Standards (VEMSES) as outlined on the OEMS web site.
        i. This educational review must be completed after the third unsuccessful attempt of the cognitive examination.
        ii. Should a candidate fail the sixth and final attempt of the cognitive examination, the candidate must complete another complete EMT course. When results are not received or an application is not returned within three (3) weeks, candidates or coordinators are urged to contact the NREMT.
    b. Oral testing will not be permitted on cognitive examinations. The use of any electronic or mechanical device which translates the cognitive exam material into an audible or tactile format of any type is not permitted, but the use of normal corrective lenses is allowed.
7. Testing period allowed
    a. Once your psychomotor examination competency has been verified with the National Registry, those results will remain valid for a maximum of two (2) years from the end date of your course as announced to OEMS. If your verification of completion is delayed, the two-year clock still begins on the last day of your course.
8. Testing Accommodations
    Any testing accommodation requested based upon the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) must be submitted to the National Registry of EMT's at least 3 weeks prior to the test site. The NREMT accommodation policy can be found at: www.nremt.org/nremt/about/policy_accommodations.asp
9. Reciprocity for State Certification
    a. For students enrolled in a Virginia EMS program, reciprocity will be automatically processed in Virginia and a Virginia certification card will be issued and mailed to the student.

10. Follow These Steps to Take The NREMT Exam
    http://nremt.org/nremt/downloads/NREMT%20EMSStudent%209.23.pdf
    - **Step 1: Create Your Account**
        - Go to nremt.org and click on 'Create New Account'.
    - **Step 2: Login**
        - After you have completed Step 1, you can return to the home page and log in with the username and password you created.
    - **Step 3: Manage Your Account Information**
        - Complete all the information in the Personal Account Information fields as prompted. The first and last name you include in this area should be the same as what appears on your driver's license (or the ID you will present at the testing center), and is what will appear on your application, National Registry certificate, and card upon successful completion of the examination.
    - **Step 4: Create a New Application**
        - Click on 'Create Certification Application' to apply to take your exam.
        - Review the Personal Information Summary – if any items are incorrect, you can make corrections by clicking on 'Manage Account Information'.
        - Select the application level you wish to complete.
    - **Step 5: Pay Application Fee**
        - First exam attempt:
            - The cost for first attempt at the NREMT exam will be paid for by the Virginia Office of EMS.
                - ***Schedule your exam carefully! Rescheduling fees apply!***
                - ***Refunds cannot be issued for no-shows.***
                - ***If you arrive late for your exam, you may lose your appointment!***
                - ***If you are a no-show for your NREMT examination, the Office of EMS will be billed for the no show attempt. The Office will not pay for any subsequent attempts at the NREMT exam.***
        - Second and subsequent attempts:
            - The candidate will assume the cost for all subsequent attempts at the NREMT exam.
    - **Step 6: Check to See if You Are Approved to Take Your Exam**
        - *You will only see 'Print ATT Letter' when you have been verified to test! This link will not appear if the verification process is not yet*

complete!

- Monitor the progress of your application and watch for your Authorization to Test (ATT) Letter by going to the NREMT home page and logging in using your username and password.
- Click on 'View All Certification Applications'.
- If you see 'Submitted' next to 'Course Completion Verification', this means the NREMT has submitted your information to the program you indicated and is waiting for authorization from the education program director indicating that you have completed the course.
- If you see 'Not Submitted' next to the 'Application Payment', and you have had a previous attempt at the examination, you must pay the fee prior to receiving an ATT Letter.
- When successful course completion has been verified by your education program director and payment has been made, you will see the following link: 'Print ATT Letter'.

- **Step 7: Print the ATT Letter to Schedule Your Exam through Pearson VUE**
  - Scroll down to see if the 'Print ATT Letter' appears.
  - *Click on this link to print your ATT Letter. Print and follow the instructions in your ATT Letter.*
  - Your ATT Letter will contain instructions on how to schedule your examination through the Pearson VUE website.
  - Your ATT Letter will also include other important information you should read carefully!
- **Please note!**
  - ***Schedule your exam carefully! Rescheduling fees apply!***
  - ***Refunds cannot be issued for no-shows.***
  - ***If you arrive late for your exam, you may lose your appointment!***

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the contents of the Certification Testing Policy for Basic Life Support Programs Form TR-11C.

Student Name (printed) _____

_____ _____

Signature Date Signed

Appendix B

EMS Students!

Follow These Steps to Take The NREMT Exam

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians®
THE NATION'S EMS CERTIFICATION™

Follow these easy steps 3 to 4 weeks in advance of when you plan to test. If you need additional assistance, please contact the NREMT at 614-888-4484. We're ready to help!

Step 1: Create Your Account

- Go to nremt.org and click on 'Login' (found in the blue bar at the top of the NREMT home page).
- Click on 'Set Up New Account' and follow the instructions.

Step 2: Login

- After you have completed Step 1, you can follow the link and login with the username and password you created.

Step 3: Manage Your Account Information

- Complete all the information in the Personal Account Information fields as prompted. The name you include in this area should be the same as what appears on your drivers license (or the ID you will present at the testing center), and is what will appear on your application, National Registry certificate and card upon successful completion of the examination.

Read this to avoid delay! *Make sure the name you use to set up your Account matches the name on your drivers license EXACTLY (or the ID you will present at the testing center) or you will be denied access to the testing center on the day of your exam!*

Step 4: Create a New Application

- Click on 'Create a New Application' to apply to take your exam.
- Review the Personal Information Summary – if any items are incorrect, you can make corrections by clicking on 'Manage Account Information'.
- Select the application level you wish to complete.

Step 5: Pay Application Fee

- It is recommended that you pay your application fee at the time you complete your online application. However, if you choose, you may pay at a later date.

Read this to avoid delay! *An Authorization to Test (ATT) Letter allowing you to schedule your exam will not be issued until payment has been received and all other verifications are complete.*

- You can pay by credit/debit online or print a money order tracking slip for mailing your money order to the NREMT.

Step 6: Check to See if You Are Approved to Take Your Exam

- When all areas of the application process are completed and have been verified, you will see the following link: 'Print ATT Letter'.

Read this to avoid delay! *You will only see 'Print ATT Letter' when you have been verified to test! This link will not appear if the verification process is not yet complete!*

- Monitor the progress of your application and watch for your Authorization to Test (ATT) Letter by going to the NREMT home page and logging in using your username and password.
- Click on 'Candidate Services'.
- Click on 'Application Status'.
- If you see 'Submitted' next to 'Course Completion Verification', this means the NREMT has submitted your information to the program you indicated, and is waiting for authorization from the program indicating that you have completed the course.
- If you see the link 'Print ATT Letter', click on the link.

Step 7: Print the ATT Letter to Schedule Your Exam

- Scroll down to see if the 'Print ATT Letter' appears.

Read this to avoid delay! *Click on this link to print your ATT Letter. Print and follow the instructions in your ATT Letter.*

Step 8: Call Pearson VUE to Schedule Your Exam

- Your ATT Letter will contain the Pearson VUE phone number to call to schedule your examination.
- Your ATT Letter will also include other important information you should read carefully!

- **Read this to avoid delay!**
  - You can reschedule your exam up to 24 hours in advance by calling Pearson VUE at 1-866-673-6896 or visiting the Pearson VUE website. If you fail to appear for your exam, you will have to complete a new application and pay another application fee!
  - Refunds cannot be issued for no-shows.
  - If you arrive late for your exam, you may lose your appointment!

Additional informational can be found on the NREMT instructional DVD.
Ask your instructor for more information or visit the NREMT website at www.NREMT.org.

Revisions and updates may be necessary to make the CBT transition as smooth as possible. Please refer to the NREMT website for the most currrent policies and procedures.
Release date 11/06 Revised 6/07

The NREMT is dedicated to its mission of providing a valid, uniform process to assess the knowledge and skills for competent practice required by EMS professionals.

To accomplish this mission the NREMT focuses on public protection by providing a meaningful certification through a secure and valid examination process. Policies of the NREMT are approved by the NREMT Board of Directors in conjunction with legal counsel and are based upon research and widespread national review.

The NREMT complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in regards to requests for examination accommodations consistent with its mission and public protection.

This brochure is designed to:

- help candidates and educators understand how the ADA affects national EMS certification
- describe how NREMT has responded to meet ADA requirements and what role the NREMT has regarding accommodations
- explain how to apply for an accommodation on an NREMT examination
- provide some advice for educators who have students requesting accommodations

ABOUT THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is designed to eliminate unnecessary barriers to people with disabilities in the areas of employment, transportation, public accommodations, public services, and telecommunications. This comprehensive federal act has many sections that affect builders, state and local governments and employers. Title III of the ADA specifically assures that certification test sponsors must provide appropriate accommodations to otherwise qualified candidates so as to permit candidates to be tested on their true abilities.

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians®
THE NATION'S EMS CERTIFICATION™

NREMT
P.O. Box 29233
Columbus, OH 43229
614-888-4484
www.nremt.org

revised 7/09



The NREMTs Americans with Disabilities Accommodations Policy

Guidelines for Educators and Students

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians®
THE NATION'S EMS CERTIFICATION™

Accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies

NREMT's Response and Role Regarding Disabilities

The NREMT took a lead role in responding to the ADA in 1991 to assess its impact upon testing, licensing and certification of Emergency Medical Technicians. The NREMT has worked with psycho-educational consultants, occupational rehabilitation specialists, reading specialists and legal counsel to develop its current accommodation policies. These disability and educational specialists reviewed job descriptions, functional job analysis, tasks within the NREMT Practice Analysis, and observed EMS providers in the field. The NREMT also worked in conjunction with state EMS licensing agencies to develop the current policies.

The NREMT is committed to the provision of reasonable accommodations which do not compromise the ability of its certification tests to evaluate a candidate's ability to safely and effectively perform the critical tasks in the provision of EMS care. NREMT certification attests to a standard of care in the interest of public protection. Accordingly, this standard guides the accommodations that can be made for candidates taking the National Registry examination. The NREMT also recognizes that each disability is unique to the individual and all NREMT decisions regarding reasonable accommodation are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The NREMT is the national EMS certification agency and does not issue a state license or permit to work. Not all aspects of an EMT's job are covered in the NREMT cognitive or psychomotor examinations. Accordingly, the state licensing agencies will continue to have the responsibility and authority to determine an applicant's ability to safely and effectively provide EMS services with respect to those physical and mental skills not tested on NREMT certification examinations.

Requesting an Accommodation

The NREMT National EMS Certification has two components: a computer based cognitive examination and a practical examination, where candidates must perform competently some psychomotor aspects of the job of an EMT.

Specific steps to follow to request an accommodation can be found on the NREMT website (www.nremt.org), under General Policies, ADA policy. Candidates requesting accommodations should print out and follow the "How to request an accommodation." Following these steps, including the timely submission of appropriate documentation, will facilitate the NREMT's review regarding appropriate accommodations.

Although each accommodation request is analyzed separately, some general principles guide NREMT decisions. Documentation must be current and provided by a qualified professional. Documents will be reviewed by NREMT psychoeducational consultants and approval of accommodations must be obtained by the NREMT.

The practical examination evaluates necessary skills and simulations of skills required of an EMT. Use of assistive devices on the practical examination to assist disabled persons to demonstrate psychomotor competency may be permitted provided these same assistive devices can be used safely and effectively on the job. Prior approval of use of any of these devices on an NREMT practical examination must be obtained. Decisions can not be made at the examination site. Documentation of a physical disability must be submitted in accordance with information found on the NREMT website.

EMS Education and the ADA

The NREMT does not set policy for educational institutions regarding appropriate accommodations in the classroom. However, in the interests of public protection and appropriate counseling of prospective EMS students, coordination of NREMT and educational accommodation policies is critical. EMS educators should seek guidance from the Disabilities support services connected with their educational institution. Independent education courses that are not sponsored by institutions with disability support should contact their State EMS Office for advice. Furthermore, educators and state offices should familiarize themselves with these guidelines for standard use:

- No discussion or screening for disabilities, or other addressing of potential disabilities should be performed prior to a student's admission to a training program. No inquiry may be made of a prospective student about any disability. Aptitude or diagnostic testing may only be required prior to admission if it is required of *all* students.
- The EMT job description, which is included in EMT curricula, should be provided for each student at the beginning of their training.
- *At the beginning of a course* (but *never before* the course begins), instructors should inquire if there are students who may request accommodations for disabilities. If students request accommodations, the instructor should refer or advise the individual to contact the state EMS office directly to assure a consistent approach to the application of appropriate accommodations in the classroom.

  Educators should request documentation of the disability before providing accommodations in the classroom. This documentation should be reviewed by the school's disability coordinator. Understanding psychological reports requires expertise that almost every EMS educators does not possess. Accommodations in the classroom setting should be approved by an expert assigned to the school.

  Students who have stated they have a disability and are seeking an accommodation on the NREMT examination should be directed to the NREMT website and follow the instructions provided. The NREMT recommends that all applicants complete an online profile and apply to take an NREMT National EMS Certification examination 4-6 weeks prior to the desired date of examination.