

MPJE Overview

- The Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination® (MPJE®) is designed to assess the candidates' application of laws and regulations for specific states/jurisdictions and is taken by recent graduates of ACPE-accredited pharmacy schools shortly after obtaining their pharmacy degree, licensed pharmacists seeking to practice in other jurisdictions, and pharmacists who have achieved FPGEC Certification.
- The MPJE is an examination owned and developed by NABP for use by the boards of pharmacy to consider candidate exam results for the purposes of licensure eligibility, including licensure transfer.

Talking Points

- The MPJE is designed as a ***high-stakes summative assessment*** (licensure exam) for entry-level minimally competent licensure candidates.
- The MPJE was developed to standardize the assessment of regulatory knowledge of state-specific rules and regulations to meet the state's public health and safety needs.
- NABP's member boards access the examination results to ensure that licensure applicants meet the minimum competency standards as determined by the states.
- The exam's psychometric standardization process is used by participating jurisdictions as the basis for competence decisions to determine a candidate's eligibility for licensure.
- The exam is considered a high-stakes summative assessment because the results have a ***meaningful consequence*** as they are used to assist boards in making a determination of a candidate's eligibility for licensure. The standardized exam is delivered in a secure proctored testing environment, whereas a low-stakes exam such as a practice exam is taken by candidates outside of a testing center.
- Instead of viewing the exam as a barrier to entry into the practice it should be viewed as a safety measure to ensure a licensure candidate has demonstrated the ability to apply the ***minimally required*** knowledge and skills to engage in unsupervised (independent) practice.
- Pharmacist licensure demonstrates the knowledge and skills to serve as the medication experts and "gatekeepers" of potential medication dispensing errors to protect patients, the licensure exam that credentials pharmacists is the "gatekeeper" to entry into the practice to protect overall public health.
- Although boards of pharmacy face pressure from certain stakeholders to ease the way for individuals to become pharmacists and reverse the trending pharmacist shortage that threatens to restrict patient access to care, it is important not to forget the responsibility of a licensed pharmacist to hold themselves to the highest principles of the profession's moral, ethical and legal conduct. (<https://www.aacp.org/resource/oath-pharmacist>)

- There are some states that may feel that continuing education (CE) is insufficient to hold licensees accountable for compliance with the laws and regulations.
- Regulators feel strongly that a proactive test of licensure candidates' regulatory competency is a necessary public health and safety protection measure.
- Licensed pharmacists should be knowledgeable of the laws to which they – not necessarily the corporation that employs them – are held accountable.
- NABP is available to provide assistance with developing and maintaining the item pool for a board experiencing resource and/or staffing constraints.
- An additional behind-the-scenes overview of the MPJE exam development process can be found by clicking [here](#).

Item Development

- MPJE items are written to map to the [Competency Areas](#) (exam blueprint). The competencies and blueprint are updated once every 3 to 5 years or more frequently as necessary to ensure that current regulatory and legislative changes in pharmacy practice are reflected in the content areas assessed on the MPJE and to ensure that the weight for each area is appropriate.
- Weights that are assigned to each area relate to the importance of the application of knowledge and skills captured from the MPJE practice analysis conducted according to psychometric industry standards by surveying state boards to determine the relative risk to the pharmacist, the patient, and the public.
- NABP recruits volunteer subject matter experts (SMEs), that are board members and/or board staff from all practice settings, to participate in item writing ([MPJE Item Development Workshops](#)). Item writers are nominated by the participating jurisdictions' Board.
- Item writers are typically Board staff or board members who serve as SMEs on the state's rules and regulations.
- In some cases, Boards may nominate an item reviewer that is not a board member or staff, such as a law firm attorney or a representative from a local state association if there is no conflict of interest.
- A dedicated NABP team is available to provide year-round support for both the development and review of MPJE questions from a jurisdiction's item pool.
- Detailed item development training is provided both virtually and in-person during the Item Development Process and is designed to streamline items by following strict NABP item writing guidelines and editorial standards.
- An additional behind-the-scenes overview of the MPJE item development process can be found by clicking [here](#).

Item Review

- Item analysis is conducted by NABP Psychometricians as an ongoing monitoring process of items' statistical performance based on psychometric thresholds for item difficulty and discrimination. When necessary, the Competency Assessment Department will outreach to boards on any items that need further review to ensure rules or regulation changes are properly reflected on the exam.
- A yearly [MPJE State-Specific Review](#) (SSR) meeting is hosted for participating jurisdictions during which content review of a jurisdiction's item pool is prioritized based on Competency Areas impacted by various rule or regulation change(s) and/or item analysis results.
- All edited and newly written items must go through a rigorous review process by the [MPJE Review Committee](#) (MRC) which validates exam content to ensure that they meet specific standards before it enters the editorial and final testing phases.
- NABP's criteria by which it selects its MPJE Review Committee members is strictly followed in order to promote consistency among the review committees and to maintain the quality of its exams. Review committee members must be a pharmacist, pharmacy board attorney, or pharmacy board staff member familiar with state and federal laws and regulations, who serve as SMEs on the regulatory aspects of the profession. All MPJE items are reviewed by the MRC members before they are used in published exams.

Exam Content

- Exam content includes federal and state-specific items, which are not differentiated as such.
- Jurisdiction-specific content is tailored to reflect terminology and characteristics unique to each participating state's rules and regulations, however the development of the exam is **standardized** across all participating jurisdictions.
- The MPJE is a fixed-length computer adaptive test (CAT) delivered to match a candidate's ability level.
- State-specific exams are built utilizing Psychometric standards following the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA et al., 2014), which consider item type and difficulty to support the MPJE Competency Areas, also known as the Blueprint.
- Candidates are administered 100 operational (scored) items and 20 pretest (unscored) items. Pre-test items are not factored in as these are only used to analyze an item's performance.
- Both the operational and the pretest item pools are composed of multiple-choice, multiple-response (select all that apply), and multiple responses (K type), with the majority being multiple-choice items. K-type questions are being phased out from the MPJE exam.

Pass Rates

- Following a blueprint update, a group of SMEs are recruited to participate in the standard setting project. The standard setting panel recommends the passing standard, and this

recommendation is considered by the appropriate NABP committees, and then approved based on NABP policies and procedures set to finalize a passing standard.

- An examinee's raw score (the total number of questions answered correctly) on the MPJE is transformed into a scaled score because different MPJE questions (due to the computer adaptive format of the MPJE) are administered to examinees. Examinees are held to the same passing standard regardless of which form they take and scaled scores take into account any variation in the difficulty of the questions that are administered on a given exam.
- It is important to understand that scaled scores are neither percentiles nor percentages of correctly answered items.
- MPJE exam results are neither intended nor validated to serve as criterion for assessing or measuring the quality or effectiveness of pharmacy curricula.
- Starting in October 2023, a Candidate Performance Report is provided to candidates that fail the exam and provides a data table breakdown of performance level by Competency Area of the MPJE Blueprint to inform future study efforts.
- A downward trend in pass rates has raised concerns about exam validity and integrity from various stakeholders (colleges of pharmacy, boards of pharmacy, and other pharmacy associations). This is not the result of changes in the MPJE exam development or statistical properties of the test administration methodology. Lowering the standard or removing the requirement for the MPJE would not address the fact that the composition of the pharmacy school student population has changed.

Exam Updates (Action Steps for Boards)

- NABP partners with the MRGA team to continuously monitor regulatory and legislative changes that may impact the content of the MPJE. NABP will reach out to the boards to review identified exam content to discuss the potential impact to the MPJE and mask any items that need to be immediately removed from the exam.
- Exam content updates are a continual process to ensure representation of contemporary pharmacy practice and account for changes in state rules and regulations.
- Given the ever-changing landscape of pharmacy, once alerted by a state Board, NABP staff can remove content from a state's exam immediately ensuring the most up-to-date evaluation process.
- Boards should notify NABP at the end of the rule promulgation process as soon as a new rule or regulation has been passed/approved and adopted.
- Boards should notify [NABP](#) at any time throughout the year if there is a rule change that may impact their exam. NABP staff are available to support ad hoc reviews or updates that can be made outside of the yearly state-specific review process.