



NATIONAL BOARD FOR  
**CERTIFIED COUNSELORS**®



CENTER FOR  
**CREDENTIALING  
& EDUCATION**™

# **TeleMental Health Examination (TMHE™) Handbook**

**Board Certified TeleMental Health  
Provider (BC-TMH™) Program**

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# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
About CCE .....	4
About Pearson VUE.....	4
Nondiscrimination Policy.....	4
Examination Administration Overview.....	4
<b>EXAMINATION PURPOSE, CONTENT, AND FORM</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Examination Purpose and Content .....	5
Examination Development.....	5
Minimally Qualified Candidate .....	5
Examination Form .....	5
<b>ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
BC-TMH Provider Eligibility Requirements.....	6
Eligibility to Register for the TMHE .....	6
<b>REGISTERING FOR AN EXAMINATION</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Examination Administration .....	7
Holidays .....	7
Registration Expiration .....	8
Failure to Report for an Examination.....	8
Examination Reregistration.....	8
Fees and Refund Policy .....	8
<b>SCHEDULING AN EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Scheduling an Examination .....	9
Accommodations for Candidates With Disabilities .....	9
Examination Appointment Changes .....	10
Circumstances Resulting in Forfeiture of Examination Registration Fees .....	10
Personal Emergency, Inclement Weather, or Power Failure.....	10
<b>TAKING THE IN-PERSON EXAMINATION (PEARSON VUE TEST CENTER)</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Identification Requirements .....	11
Test Center Locations .....	11
Security Requirements.....	11
Additional Examination Administration Restrictions .....	12
Examination Process.....	12

<b>TAKING THE ONLINE EXAMINATION (ONVUE)</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Identification Requirements.....	13
OnVUE Examination Administration Requirements.....	13
Security Requirements.....	13
Testing Space Requirements.....	14
Additional Examination Administration Restrictions.....	14
Examination Process.....	15
<b>EXAMINATION RULES AND REQUIREMENTS</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Misconduct.....	15
Examination Materials Ownership.....	16
<b>FOLLOWING THE EXAMINATION</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Pass/Fail Score Determination.....	17
Scores Canceled by CCE or Pearson VUE.....	17
Appealing Examination Results.....	17
Confidentiality.....	17
<b>Appendix A: TMHE Content Outline</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Appendix B: TMHE Sample Examination Questions</b> .....	<b>23</b>

## For More Information

All questions and requests for information about the CCE credentialing program should be directed to:

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Email: [cce@cce-global.org](mailto:cce@cce-global.org)  
Website: [cce-global.org](http://cce-global.org)

All questions and requests for information about examination scheduling should be directed to:

**Pearson VUE**

5601 Green Valley Dr.  
Bloomington, MN 55437  
Phone: 866-904-4432  
Website: [pearsonvue.com](http://pearsonvue.com)

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# Introduction

Telemental health is a rapidly growing field spanning multiple mental health disciplines. The **Board Certified–TeleMental Health Provider (BC-TMH) credential** is designed to meet the need for best practices; credibility; and the safe, effective services that clients and employers demand. The BC-TMH launched in 2018 and was developed by the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) and thought leaders in telemental health.

Proficiency on the **TeleMental Health Examination (TMHE)** is an essential component of the BC-TMH credential. The TMHE measures a professional’s ability to apply and evaluate knowledge in core telemental health (TMH) best practices. The TMHE is designed for National Certified Counselors (NCCs) or licensed mental and behavioral health professionals, including professionals under supervised practice. Based on input from several subject matter experts in TMH services, the TMHE transitioned to a longer examination, a new content outline, and an updated eligibility policy effective July 1, 2021. These changes are further detailed in the relevant sections of this handbook.

Currently, registration for the TMHE is done after a candidate’s BC-TMH application is reviewed and the candidate is deemed eligible to sit for the examination by CCE.

## ABOUT CCE

The Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) is a not-for-profit organization that advances professional excellence through credentialing, assessment, and business services. Created in 1995 as an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), CCE credentials nearly 25,000 practitioners globally—across six continents and 16 countries—in a variety of fields.

## ABOUT PEARSON VUE

Pearson VUE is our computer-based testing partner for the administration and scoring of the TMHE. As an independent testing agency, Pearson VUE has test centers across the globe and is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with regional offices in Australia, China, Dubai, India, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Pearson VUE provides two test delivery options for the TMHE:

- In-person administration, at a Pearson VUE test center.
- Internet-based (online) administration through Pearson VUE’s OnVUE platform. The examination may be taken on a computer at home or in a private setting with a strong internet connection and webcam. Strict security protocols are in place to ensure the integrity and security of the testing process and examination content. For more information about the OnVUE process and system requirements, visit [nbcc.org/exams/administration](https://nbcc.org/exams/administration).

## NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

CCE does not discriminate against any candidate based on gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law.

## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW

When taking the TMHE as part of the BC-TMH credentialing process, the examination is administered following successful application for the BC-TMH, including completion of all required training and verification of state licensure or NCC certification. As noted, candidates have the choice to take the TMHE in-person at a Pearson VUE test center or online through Pearson VUE’s OnVUE platform.

# Examination Purpose, Content, and Form

## EXAMINATION PURPOSE AND CONTENT

The TeleMental Health Examination (TMHE) measures a professional's ability to apply and evaluate knowledge in core telemental health (TMH) best practices. The TMHE is designed for National Certified Counselors (NCCs) or licensed mental and behavioral health professionals, including professionals under supervised practice. The qualifying criteria to take the TMHE are stated in the minimally qualified candidate profile.

The TMHE provides a standardized measure of the CCE core competencies associated with providing TMH services. The examination's development is based on input from subject matter experts (SMEs) in TMH who determined the core domains of TMH services and developed the examination content of the TMHE.

## EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT

The TMHE was developed through a national job analysis survey, which was completed by 848 TMH practitioners. The survey was designed to assess the skills and knowledge areas that are required for safe and effective TMH services. The job analysis survey results were evaluated by a committee of subject matter experts (SMEs) who were actively practicing TMH practitioners. Working collaboratively, they identified the aspects of mental health and behavioral health services that were most impacted when practitioners are geographically separate from clients or when services to clients are provided asynchronously. The resultant content outline was created and approved by the TMHE Subject Matter Expert (SME) Committee in April 2023. The committee's responsibilities included, but were not limited to, defining the TMHE; defining the minimally qualified candidate for the TMHE; determining the examination format, length, and blueprint; and finalizing the content outline. The six content domains are:

- Orientation to Telemental Health
- Practitioner Protocols and Informed Consent
- Implementation of Telemental Health
- Professional, Legal, and Compliance Standards
- Professional Ethics
- Crisis Management

For more detailed information concerning the examination domains, please review Appendix A (TMHE Content Outline) of this handbook.

## MINIMALLY QUALIFIED CANDIDATE

The minimally qualified candidate for the TMHE has a master's degree or higher in a mental health or behavioral health field. The minimally qualified candidate should hold a qualifying mental health or behavioral health professional license issued by a state regulatory board, and/or hold the National Certified Counselor (NCC) credential. A qualifying professional may be currently working as an associate/intern or under supervised practice if the professional complies with practice limitations. The minimally qualified candidate should be familiar, through graduate-level coursework or continuing education, with the six content domains listed in the previous section.

## EXAMINATION FORM

The TMHE is composed of 12 case studies comprised of 10 multiple-choice questions each. The case studies present hypothetical clients that are receiving TMH services and other scenarios involving the implementation of TMH. Each case study assesses a candidate's ability to provide care in a safe and effective way. Of the 120 examination items on the TMHE, 20 are unscored items and 100 items are scored. Both scored and

unscored items are of the same structure, and they appear in a randomized order throughout the examination. Examinees will have 3 hours to complete the TMHE.

The questions contained in each TMHE test form, which are drawn from the examination item pool, have undergone extensive review and field-testing. Although each form of the TMHE contains different questions, the content areas and the respective numbers of questions representing those areas are consistent. Within the set of 120 questions on each form of the TMHE, 100 questions are counted for the purpose of determining whether a minimally qualified candidate achieves the minimum criterion (passing) score for that form. Each of these 100 questions comprise one score point; thus, the maximum possible score a candidate can achieve is 100. The remaining 20 items are unscored field-test items. Field-test items are included on the examination to gather item statistics to evaluate their performance for use on future examinations. Sample TMHE test questions can be found in Appendix B of this handbook. For more information about scoring, see the handbook section concerning Pass/Fail Score Determination on p. 17.

## Eligibility Requirements

### BC-TMH PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates seeking the BC-TMH Provider credential must satisfy the following credential eligibility requirements:

- **Qualifying Academic Degree:** A minimally qualified candidate must have a master's degree or higher in a mental health or behavioral health field.
- **Qualifying License or Certification:** A minimally qualified candidate must hold a current, active qualifying license to practice in a behavioral health field in the state in which the candidate resides or works\*, and/or be a National Certified Counselor credentialed by the National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. (NBCC).
- **Qualifying Training:** A minimally qualified candidate must successfully complete an approved telemental health training course. Please review the training requirements explained on the CCE website at [cce-global.org/credentialing/bctmh/training](http://cce-global.org/credentialing/bctmh/training).

**\*NOTE:** If the candidate is currently working as an associate/intern, or under supervised practice, they may qualify as long as they are complying with all applicable state practice limitations.

### ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER FOR THE TMHE

Candidates who satisfy the BC-TMH Provider credential requirements, and otherwise meet the requirements identified in the BC-TMH Application, will be eligible to register for the TMHE. Please visit the CCE website at [cce-global.org/credentialing/bctmh/requirements](http://cce-global.org/credentialing/bctmh/requirements) for more information.

To maintain the integrity of NBCC and CCE examinations, ensure test security, and minimize the likelihood that former Pearson VUE personnel taking an NBCC or CCE examination are exposed to test content, all Pearson VUE employees and contractors, including test administrators and examination proctors, are disqualified from taking any NBCC or CCE examination for any purpose during their employment or affiliation with Pearson VUE and for 2 years following separation from employment or affiliation with Pearson VUE. This disqualification period applies to Pearson VUE personnel who are involved with the development or maintenance of NBCC/CCE examinations and/or the delivery of in-person or online NBCC/CCE test administrations. Similarly, any individual who plans to take any NBCC or CCE examination within the next 2 years cannot serve as a proctor or test administrator for NBCC/CCE examinations.

# Registering for the Examination

Examination registration includes the following steps:

- Create an account on the Credentialing Gateway ([my.cce-global.org](http://my.cce-global.org)) and select the “BC-TMH” application.
- Transmit required eligibility materials by uploading documentation of required training and licensure or certification, and submitting the BC-TMH application, including the \$100 examination fee.
- Certification and Credentialing Services staff will review and verify application information and then notify the candidate whether their application is approved or rejected, or if additional information is required.
- If their application is approved, the candidate will receive an Authorization to Test email from Pearson VUE with their Candidate ID number. They may either schedule an appointment for the examination online or by telephone. See the Scheduling an Examination Appointment section of this handbook (p. 8) for more information on this process.

If a candidate is unsure of any part of the registration process, they should contact CCE via email at [credentialinfo@cce-global.org](mailto:credentialinfo@cce-global.org).

## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

For candidates choosing the in-person examination administration, the TMHE is delivered by computer at more than 900 Pearson VUE testing centers located throughout the United States. The in-person examination is administered by appointment only on dates authorized by CCE, Monday through Saturday beginning at 8 am with the last appointment at 5:30 pm. Please contact Pearson VUE for a test center location and details. Internet-based (online) administration through Pearson VUE’s OnVUE platform is also an option. Generally, there are no application deadlines for either administration, and a candidate may submit a registration form and fee at any time. Dates will be indicated when scheduling each candidate’s examination and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

## HOLIDAYS

Examinations are not offered on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth National Independence Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
- Christmas Eve (Limited hours)
- Christmas Day



## REGISTRATION EXPIRATION

The candidate must take the examination within the 90-day test authorization period. If not, the candidate is considered a “no-show,” must reregister for the TMHE through the Credentialing Gateway and pay a \$100 reregistration fee.

In certain limited circumstances, candidates may submit a written request to CCE seeking a waiver of the reregistration fee. Waiver requests may be granted by CCE for good cause, specifically circumstances that made it impossible or very difficult for the requesting candidate to have scheduled and completed the TMHE within the 90-day test authorization period. Candidates requesting a waiver of the reregistration fee are required to submit specific information and related documentation supporting the request. Supporting documentation may include a letter from a health care provider, employer, government agency, and/or other organization or an individual with first-hand knowledge of the reason(s) and circumstance(s) serving as the basis for the waiver request. Such requests must be emailed to [credentialinfo@cce-global.org](mailto:credentialinfo@cce-global.org) with the subject line “TMHE.” Candidates must receive CCE waiver approval prior to reregistering for the TMHE.

## FAILURE TO REPORT FOR AN EXAMINATION

A candidate who fails to report for an examination appointment forfeits the registration fees and all fees paid to take the examination. A newly completed registration form and new examination fee are required to reregister for an examination.

## EXAMINATION REREGISTRATION

If the candidate does not sit for the examination at the scheduled time, or is unsuccessful in their examination attempt, the candidate may retake the TMHE. Candidates may take the examination once every 90 days, not to exceed three test administrations within a period of 2 years. Reregistration must be completed through the Credentialing Gateway. Candidates can email [credentialinfo@cce-global.org](mailto:credentialinfo@cce-global.org) for assistance with reregistration and retesting. Candidates will be notified of the scheduling process via email once their examination reregistration is approved.

## FEES AND REFUND POLICY

Candidates must submit the appropriate fee to register.

- BC-TMH application plus examination fee (first attempt): \$150
- Reregistration to retake the examination (each subsequent attempt): \$100
- Reregistration due to a “no-show”: \$100

Registration fee payments are made by credit card (VISA, MasterCard, or American Express) or personal check payable to CCE. Payments are also accepted from third parties (e.g., a candidate’s employer). Examination fees are not refundable or transferable and are forfeited if the registration process is not completed within 1 year.



# Scheduling an Examination Appointment

## SCHEDULING AN EXAMINATION

After candidates have registered with CCE and are approved to schedule their TMHE, they will receive an Authorization to Test email from Pearson VUE with their Candidate ID number. They may then either schedule an appointment for the examination online or by telephone. Candidates testing with approved special accommodations must schedule their examination via phone and inform Pearson VUE of the need for special accommodations. See the **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES** section below for more information.

To Schedule Online (this is the preferred scheduling method):

- Retrieve the Candidate ID number from Pearson VUE Authorization to Test email.
- Navigate to [pearsonvue.com/cce](https://pearsonvue.com/cce) and select “Create Account.”
- Follow step-by-step instructions to select the BC-TMH program and register for the TMHE.

To Schedule by Telephone (candidates may experience extended hold times):

- Call Pearson VUE at 866-904-4432 to schedule an examination appointment.
- This toll-free number is answered from 7 am to 7 pm Central Time, Monday through Friday, for scheduling purposes.

When scheduling an appointment, candidates should be prepared to confirm a location (for in-person testing), communicate a preferred date and time for testing, and provide their Candidate ID number. Pearson VUE uses the Candidate ID number only for identification purposes for maintaining candidate records. When a candidate contacts Pearson VUE to schedule an examination appointment, they will be notified of the time to report for the in-person administration at the test center, or the online administration via OnVUE.

## ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

CCE approves appropriate special examination accommodations for individuals with disabilities and with respect to other qualifying circumstances. Candidates with a recognized disability may request accommodations in accordance with the requirements set forth in the [NBCC-CCE Special Examination Accommodations Policy](#).

Candidates requesting accommodations must carefully review the NBCC-CCE Special Examination Accommodations Policy, which contains detailed information related to accommodation requests. To make a request for accommodations, a candidate may use the [Accommodations Request](#) form, or submit substantially similar documentation in accordance with the requirements set forth in the [NBCC Special Examination Accommodations Policy](#). Accommodations must be pre-approved by CCE before scheduling the examination.

Since the TMHE is provided via online administrations, only specific, limited accommodations may be available for the TMHE.

For any questions related to accommodations, please feel free to contact [accommodations@cce-global.org](mailto:accommodations@cce-global.org).

## EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT CHANGES

Candidates may reschedule their test up to 24 hours before the currently scheduled examination appointment by calling Pearson VUE at 866-904-4432. Candidates with approved accommodations must call (800) 466-0450, and select Option 3, to reschedule their examination. Candidates who cancel less than 24 hours prior to their examination appointment, or after the scheduled appointment, must pay a \$100 reregistration fee, or request a reregistration fee waiver, as explained in the “Registration Expiration” section above.

## CIRCUMSTANCES RESULTING IN FORFEITURE OF EXAMINATION REGISTRATION FEES

Examination registration fees and all fees paid to take the examination are forfeited if a candidate:

- misses an appointment and fails to reschedule at least 24 hours before the examination appointment.
- arrives more than 15 minutes late for the examination.
- violates any NBCC/CCE or Pearson VUE policy, rule, procedure, or instruction from a proctor or examination administrator.
- engages in any prohibited conduct during the Examination administration, such as conduct related to cheating or a test security breach.

Candidates must pay a separate examination registration fee when reregistering for the TMHE, unless a waiver is approved by CCE.

## PERSONAL EMERGENCY, INCLEMENT WEATHER, OR POWER FAILURE

In the event of a personal emergency or other circumstance that prevents the candidate from taking the TMHE at the scheduled appointment time, the candidate is required to: promptly contact CCE at [credentialinfo@cce-global.org](mailto:credentialinfo@cce-global.org) or 336-482-2856; explain the circumstances resulting in the inability to test; submit specific information and related documentation, if applicable, supporting the reason(s) and circumstance(s) identified to CCE; and identify when the candidate is available to reschedule the examination. CCE, in its sole discretion, will determine whether the candidate is permitted to cancel the current examination appointment and reschedule the TMHE, or is required to reregister to take the TMHE.

In the event of inclement weather, Pearson VUE will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation and rescheduling of a test center examination appointment. An examination will usually be rescheduled if the test center personnel are unable to open the facility. Every attempt is made to administer an examination as scheduled; however, should an examination be canceled at a test center, all scheduled candidates will receive notification by email or telephone regarding rescheduling or reregistration procedures.

During an OnVUE online TMHE administration, if the candidate experiences a power outage that temporarily interrupts the administration of the examination, the TMHE will restart at the last question completed. The candidate will need to log back in to restart the examination. Details about this process and the steps a candidate must follow, including conducting a system test for software compatibility prior to testing, are provided at [home.pearsonvue.com/nbcc](http://home.pearsonvue.com/nbcc). Important FAQs and instructions are provided under the “Learn More” tab of the Pearson VUE/CCE webpage.

# Taking the In-Person Examination Administration (Pearson VUE Test Center)

The examination will be delivered in-person, via computer-based testing, at a physical Pearson VUE test center. Advanced computer experience or typing skills are not required to take the examination. Candidates will be required to select answer choices and, in some instances, scroll to the end of the current page using a mouse.

On the day of the TMHE appointment, the candidate can check in up to 30 minutes before the examination and up to 15 minutes after the scheduled appointment time. **If the candidate checks in more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time, the candidate will not be allowed to test and will forfeit their registration fee.**

Prior to testing at the Pearson VUE test center, candidates are required to review and sign the Pearson VUE Candidate Rules Agreement. The document explains what candidates should do if they need help during the examination and identifies other test administration policies.

## IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The candidate must provide two forms of proper identification as part of the check-in process at the test center, and at least one form of identification must be one of the following:

- driver's license
- state ID
- military ID
- passport

Non-acceptable forms of ID include employment ID cards, student ID cards, and any type of temporary identification. The name on the registration and on the photo ID must be identical. Both forms of identification must be current and include the candidate's current name and signature. Failure to provide appropriate identification at the time of the examination is considered a missed test appointment, and the candidate will forfeit their examination fee. Candidates will be required to sign a roster for verification of identity.

## TEST CENTER LOCATIONS

Pearson VUE test centers have been selected to provide accessibility to candidates in all states and U.S. territories. A current listing of Pearson VUE testing centers, including addresses and driving directions, is available at [pearsonvue.com/cce](https://pearsonvue.com/cce) under "Find a Test Center." Specific test center address information will also be provided once an examination appointment is made.

## SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

CCE and Pearson VUE maintain the highest degree of administration and security standards. All test centers are continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes.

The following security procedures apply during the in-person test administration:

- No cameras, notes, tape recorders, personal digital assistants (PDAs), pagers, cell phones, or smart watches are allowed in the testing room.
- No calculators are permitted.

- No guests, visitors, or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.
- No personal items, valuables, or weapons should be brought to the test center.
- A locker is provided for storing keys, wallets, and cell phones. Pearson VUE is not responsible for items left in the reception areas. Cell phones must remain off during the entirety of the examination and must not be accessed during breaks.

CCE or Pearson VUE may modify these security requirements as needed.

## **ADDITIONAL EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION RESTRICTIONS**

- Writing materials will be provided during check-in.
- All writing materials must be returned to the proctor at the completion of testing, or a score report will not be given. No documents or notes of any kind may be removed from the examination room.
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Breaks may be taken when needed but no additional time will be given to test.
- Eating, drinking, or smoking is not permitted in the test center.

## **EXAMINATION PROCESS**

Upon arrival at the test center, and following the check-in process, each candidate will be directed to a testing carrel after their identification has been confirmed. All candidate testing sessions will be monitored via video throughout the entirety of the examination administration.

Candidates will have a total of 3 hours to complete the TMHE. The computer tracks the time a candidate spends on the examination. A nondisclosure agreement (NDA) will appear on the screen and the terms of the agreement must be agreed to in order to proceed with the examination. Candidates have 5 minutes to agree to the NDA, or the examination will terminate.

After agreeing to the terms of the NDA, each candidate will be provided with a 10-minute examination tutorial that reviews how to navigate and respond to the examination items. Upon completion of the tutorial, candidates will begin the timed examination.

The examination begins when “Start” is selected. The examination terminates if the time allowed is exceeded. A digital clock appearing on the computer screen indicates the time remaining to complete the examination.

Only one examination question is presented at a time. The question number appears in the upper right portion of the screen. Answer choices are identified as A, B, C, or D. Candidates indicate their choice by clicking the option for the best response using the mouse. To change an answer, the candidate simply clicks on the alternate option using the mouse. Candidates may change their answer as many times as they wish before the examination time limit. Going back to review questions is permitted if needed. Candidates are encouraged to provide an answer for every examination question before ending the examination, as there is no penalty for guessing.

# Taking the Online Examination (OnVUE)

The examination will be delivered via internet-based, online-proctored testing administered by Pearson VUE, at an appropriate location selected by the candidate. Advanced computer experience or typing skills are not required to take the examination. Candidates will be required to select answer choices and, in some instances, scroll to the end of the current page using a mouse.

On the day of the TMHE appointment, the candidate can check in up to 30 minutes before the examination and up to 15 minutes after the scheduled appointment time. **If the candidate checks in more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time, the candidate will not be allowed to test and will forfeit their registration fee.**

Prior to testing, candidates are required to review and sign the [Pearson VUE Candidate Rules Agreement](#). The document explains what candidates should do if they need help during the examination and identifies other test administration policies.

## IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- On examination day, candidates will be prompted to take a photo of their government-issued ID and a real-time photo of themselves. Candidates will be required to show that same photo ID to the proctor via the webcam.
- The following options satisfy this identification requirement:
  - driver's license
  - state ID
  - military ID
  - passport

The first and last name used by the candidate to register for the examination must exactly match the first and last name on the government-issued ID that is presented on the day of the examination.

**Note:** The candidate must have proper identification to test via internet-based, online-proctored testing. Failure to provide appropriate identification at the time of the examination is considered a missed appointment, and the candidate will forfeit their examination fee.

Candidates with questions or concerns about the ID requirements should contact Pearson VUE customer service at [home.pearsonvue.com/Contact-Us.aspx](http://home.pearsonvue.com/Contact-Us.aspx).

## ONVUE EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The candidate will be required to adhere to the following NBCC/Pearson VUE test administration policies and rules with respect to internet-based testing:

## SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

- Immediately prior to the start of their testing session, each candidate must run a computer system check to ensure that the computer being used to complete the examination meets all Pearson VUE computer system and technical requirements. Information concerning the systems check is available at [home.pearsonvue.com/cce/onvue](http://home.pearsonvue.com/cce/onvue). Failure to perform the system check may result in technical deficiencies that could adversely affect a candidate's test administration or ability to complete the examination.

- Prior to accessing the examination, candidates will be required to show their testing space to the online proctor via the computer webcam and capture four photos of their testing environment.
- Constant online proctoring/monitoring will be conducted by both artificial intelligence and a Pearson VUE–certified proctor by webcam and microphone throughout the test administration.
- Computers used to take online examinations are not always protected from security threats by third parties. In order to protect both the security and integrity of NBCC/CCE examinations, and the candidate taking the test, Pearson VUE is constantly monitoring for unknown software, threatening computer programs, unauthorized access to a candidate’s computer, and/or other potential security risks. In the event any threat or risk is identified, a candidate will be prohibited from accessing the examination and/or the examination will be revoked immediately, among other remedial actions. If a candidate is denied access to an examination or their examination is revoked, the candidate should contact NBCC/CCE at [credentialinfo@cce-global.org](mailto:credentialinfo@cce-global.org) for further information and instructions.

## TESTING SPACE REQUIREMENTS

During the test administration, the candidate MUST:

- **Be alone in the room.** Other individuals (including children) and pets (except service animals) are not allowed in the testing environment. It is recommended that candidates use a room with a locking door to reduce the likelihood that an interruption will occur.
- **Have a clear desk and testing area.** The candidate is not permitted to have textbooks, cell phones, smart watches, or other materials that may have test content or exam-related information in their testing location, including bulletin boards, white boards, or other items.
- **Be connected to a power source and the internet.**
- **Keep their webcam, speakers, and microphone on for the duration of the test.** The proctor must be able to see and hear the candidate throughout the test.

The candidate CANNOT:

- use a phone or headphones.
- use dual computer monitors.
- leave their seat or get up for any reason, unless specifically instructed by the proctor. A 15-minute break will be offered to all candidates at the halfway point of the examination.
- talk or read the test questions aloud.

The proctor may provide other directives regarding the examination environment. Failure to follow any instructions or directives from the proctor will result in termination of the examination and forfeiture of the examination appointment and any associated fees.

## ADDITIONAL EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION RESTRICTIONS

- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Candidates may not eat or drink during the test administration, unless specifically approved by NBCC/CCE. Candidates may have water in a clear container during the examination.

- Chewing gum or smoking is not permitted during the examination.
- Candidates are not permitted to get up or leave their testing space for any reason.

Any interruption, including contact with any person other than the examination proctor, or any violation of these test administration rules, will result in termination of the online administration of the TMHE.

## EXAMINATION PROCESS

Candidates are encouraged to review the OnVUE test administration rules and procedures, which are explained on the Pearson VUE website, located at [home.pearsonvue.com/cce/onvue](http://home.pearsonvue.com/cce/onvue).

Upon accessing the secure examination, the candidate will be instructed to show the proctor a full view of the testing area after the candidate's identification has been confirmed. Candidates will be monitored by video and audio throughout the examination session.

Candidates will have a total of 3 hours to complete the TMHE. The computer tracks the time a candidate spends on the examination. A nondisclosure agreement (NDA) will appear on the screen and the terms of the agreement must be agreed to in order to proceed with the examination. Candidates have 5 minutes to agree to the NDA, or the examination will terminate.

After agreeing to the terms of the NDA, each candidate will be provided with a 10-minute examination tutorial that reviews how to navigate and respond to the examination items. Upon completion of the tutorial, candidates will begin the timed examination.

The examination begins when "Start" is selected. The examination terminates if the time allowed is exceeded. A digital clock appearing on the computer screen indicates the time remaining to complete the examination.

Only one examination question is presented at a time. The question number appears in the upper right portion of the screen. Answer choices are identified as A, B, C, or D. Candidates indicate their choice by clicking the option for the best response using the mouse. To change an answer, the candidate simply clicks on the alternate option using the mouse. Candidates may change their answer as many times as they wish before the examination time limit. Going back to review questions is permitted if needed. Candidates are encouraged to provide an answer for every examination question before ending the examination, as there is no penalty for guessing.

After clicking "Finish Test," the system will alert you to any flagged or unanswered questions. You will be prompted to confirm that you would like to submit your examination. After submitting the examination, you will see a confirmation message with instructions to close your browser window.

## Examination Rules and Requirements

Prior to accessing the examination, candidates will be required to acknowledge and comply with all CCE test administration policies, rules, instructions, and security requirements.

### MISCONDUCT

Candidates must not engage in any prohibited conduct during the Examination, including, but not limited to:

- Cheating
- Using any unauthorized materials or communication devices, such as cell phones, PDAs, smart watches, or pagers



- Accessing other computer programs, applications, or content during the examination
- Communicating with other candidates or other persons during the test administration
- Being abusive to, or otherwise uncooperative with, the proctor and/or test administrator
- Interruptions where others enter or walk through the testing room
- Copying, or attempting to make copies of, any examination materials, including, without limitation, any questions, answers, or screen images. This includes taking photos or videos of computer screens, even if attempting to document a technical problem or other issue.
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else
- Being observed with notes, books, or other aids
- Participating in any data dump activities (e.g., sharing specific test questions and content with others)
- Reading aloud or mouthing the questions and answer choices
- Looking around the room
- Taking an unauthorized break in test centers
- Taking an unscheduled break in the OnVUE examination
- Eating, chewing gum, smoking, or having a drink, other than water in a clear container
- Asking the proctor or examination administrator questions about the examination content
- Any other behavior deemed as misconduct or suspicious activity as reported by examination administrators or proctors

If CCE or Pearson VUE determines that a candidate has acted contrary to any applicable CCE or Pearson VUE examination administration policy, rule, procedure, or instruction, or the terms of the Test Administration and Confidentiality Agreement, the candidate's examination may be terminated and/or their scores may be invalidated. Additionally, a candidate may be subject to appropriate corrective actions and/or sanctions, including, but not limited to, ineligibility for any future NBCC/CCE examinations. If it is determined that a candidate's behavior is unethical, the case will be sent to the NBCC Ethics Department for review of candidate eligibility.

## **EXAMINATION MATERIALS OWNERSHIP**

The TMHE, including all examination questions and answers, is confidential and cannot be provided to any other person(s). CCE owns all rights, titles, and interests related to the TMHE and all examination-related materials, including trademark and copyright interests and rights.

Candidates are prohibited from: copying, or attempting to make copies of any examination materials, including, without limitation, any questions, answers, or screen images; disclosing, reproducing, using, or transmitting any examination material, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means, verbal or written, electronic or mechanical, for any purpose; and, reconstructing, or attempting to reconstruct, any TMHE questions or answers from memory in any form, or discussing any of the content of the TMHE with any other person(s). Candidates are strictly prohibited from taking photos or videos of any examination materials, including but not limited to the content of the examination, even if attempting to provide documentation of a technical problem or other issue.

# Following the Examination

Following completion of the examination, the candidate will obtain an unofficial score report, including the test score. Within 10 weeks after the examination, the candidate will receive an email from CCE with the official score report, including the final test score, the examination cut score, and next steps based on the score (notification of BC-TMH certification or examination reregistration instructions).

Passing the examination does not guarantee CCE credentialing. CCE reserves the right to withdraw or void official scores if CCE determines that a candidate engaged in any prohibited conduct during the examination, wrongfully sat for the examination, or violated the terms and conditions of the BC-TMH credential application, including failure to satisfy the credential eligibility requirements.

## PASS/FAIL SCORE DETERMINATION

The examination score is determined only by the candidate's performance on the TMHE. It is important to note a candidate's ability to pass the TMHE depends on the knowledge and skill of the candidate, and not on the performance of other candidates.

Within the 120 questions on each form of the TMHE, 100 of the questions are scored for the purpose of determining whether a candidate meets the minimum criterion (passing) score for that form. Each of these 100 multiple-choice questions count for one score point; thus, the maximum possible score a candidate can achieve is 100. The passing score for the TMHE is calculated through standard setting, which requires TMHE subject matter experts to review and evaluate each question on the examination to determine the passing score that would be expected from a minimally qualified candidate. The passing score obtained through standard setting on one test form will be applied to other TMHE test forms through statistical equating. Statistical equating adjusts the passing score up or down by accounting for the overall difficulty of each test form. Therefore, statistical equating ensures fairness to all candidates by associating the passing score on a test form with the overall difficulty level of the items on it. With this standard procedure for determining the successful candidates on the TMHE, the passing scores may vary slightly for each TMHE test form.

## SCORES CANCELED BY CCE OR PEARSON VUE

CCE and Pearson VUE are responsible for the validity and integrity of the scores they report. CCE and Pearson VUE reserve the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, violation of regulations is discovered.

## APPEALING EXAMINATION RESULTS

In the event that a candidate wishes to appeal a failing test result, the candidate must satisfy the requirements in the [NBCC-CCE Examination Appeal Policy](#) located on the NBCC website, and complete all appeal submission requirements. Failure to follow the appeal instructions identified in this Policy will result in rejection of the appeal.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Information about candidates for testing and their examination results are confidential. Studies and reports concerning candidates will not contain personally identifiable information unless authorized by the candidate.

# Appendix A

## Content Outline

### The TeleMental Health Examination (TMHE) Content Outline

#### Examination Purpose and Measurement Focus/Core Domains

The TeleMental Health Examination (TMHE) measures a professional's ability to apply and evaluate knowledge in core telemental health (TMH) best practices. The TMHE is designed for National Certified Counselors (NCCs) or licensed mental and behavioral health professionals, including professionals under supervised practice. The qualifying criteria to take the TMHE are stated in the minimally qualified candidate profile.

The TMHE provides a standardized measure of the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) core competencies associated with providing TMH services. The examination was developed after a comprehensive job analysis survey conducted in the spring of 2023 and led to the identification of six core domains of TMH services, including:

The core domains associated with TMH services were determined to be:

1. Orientation to Telemental Health
2. Practitioner Protocols and Informed Consent
3. Implementation of Telemental Health
4. Professional, Legal, and Compliance Standards
5. Professional Ethics
6. Crisis Management

#### Target Population and the Minimally Qualified Candidate

The minimally qualified candidate (MQC) for the TMHE has a master's degree or higher in a mental health or behavioral health field. The MQC should hold a qualifying mental health or behavioral health professional license issued by a state regulatory board, and/or hold the NCC. A qualifying professional may be currently working as an associate/intern or under supervised practice if the professional complies with practice limitations.

## Examination Form

The TMHE is composed of 12 case studies comprised of 10 multiple-choice questions each. The case studies present hypothetical clients that are receiving TMH services and other scenarios involving the implementation of TMH. Each case study assesses a candidate's ability to provide care in a safe and effective way. Of the 120 examination items on the TMHE, 20 are unscored items and 100 items are scored. Both scored and unscored items are of the same structure, and they appear in a randomized order throughout the examination. Examinees will have 3 hours to complete the TMHE.

## Development of the Content Outline

The TMHE was developed through a national job analysis survey, which was completed by 848 TMH practitioners. The survey was designed to assess the skills and knowledge areas that are required for safe and effective TMH services. The job analysis survey results were evaluated by a committee of subject matter experts (SMEs) who were actively practicing TMH practitioners. Working collaboratively, they identified the aspects of mental health and behavioral health services that were most impacted when practitioners are geographically separate from clients or when services to clients are provided asynchronously. The resultant content outline was created and approved by the TMHE Subject Matter Expert (SME) Committee in April 2023. The committee's responsibilities included, but were not limited to, defining the TMHE; defining the MQC for the TMHE; determining the examination format, length, and blueprint; and finalizing the content outline.

Table 1 presents the six domains and the percent of scored items on the TMHE for each domain.

**Table 1.** *The Number of Items for Each Domain*

	Domain	Percentage of Items
1	Orientation to Telemental Health	10
2	Practitioner Protocols and Informed Consent	20
3	Implementation of Telemental Health	25
4	Professional, Legal, and Compliance Standards	20
5	Professional Ethics	13
6	Crisis Management	12

The following core domains and associated skills and knowledge areas were identified by SMEs with experience in providing TMH services. These domains are supported by the TMH literature and existing education in TMH services.

**Table 2.** *Skills and knowledge areas related to the domains*

**Domain 1. Orientation to Telemental Health**

- A. Differentiate between TMH and non-TMH practice
- B. Distinguish between various technological modalities
- C. Evaluate and select technologies for TMH
- D. Explain the benefits and risks of different TMH modalities
- E. Explain the public health need for TMH
- F. Identify the different settings for TMH practice
- G. Know security aspects of different technologies
- H. Know terminology relevant to TMH
- I. Know the terms related to technology
- J. Know the TMH requirements toward ongoing training, knowledge, and supervision
- K. Know hardware, software, and internet connection needs
- L. Understand contraindications for TMH
- M. Understand the history of TMH
- N. Understand the need for various options for local area supports

**Domain 2. Practitioner Protocols and Informed Consent**

- A. Clarify expectations for TMH sessions
- B. Facilitate the TMH disclosure and informed consent process in an ethical manner
- C. Establish a policy for social media
- D. Establish protocol to clarify bounds and requirements of the practitioner when client is in crisis
- E. Explain benefits and risks of different TMH modalities
- F. Explain challenges and risks of TMH (e.g., technology failure, confidentiality, private connection)
- G. Prepare a protocol for management of technical difficulties
- H. Establish and adhere to verification protocols for safety and privacy
- I. Establish and adhere to verification protocols for identity and location
- J. Prepare a protocol for establishing local resources and an emergency contact

**Domain 3. Implementation of Telemental Health**

- A. Address concerns of clients related to TMH
- B. Apply required technology security protocols
- C. Apply setting-specific security needs
- D. Conduct ongoing assessment of the client's personal resources and abilities
- E. Consider risk factors (e.g., domestic violence, suicidality, homicidality, systemic challenges)
- F. Demonstrate to the client how to access technology of choice

- G. Determine client resources and abilities in relation to TMH
- H. Develop rapport with clients across TMH modalities
- I. Establish client identity in a virtual environment
- J. Establish client safety prior to session
- K. Evaluate ongoing effectiveness of TMH
- L. Familiarize self with client local, state, and national community resources
- M. Implement screening for suitability to engage in TMH
- N. Model practitioner TMH etiquette within different modalities
- O. Obtain and maintain adequate documentation
- P. Perform ongoing client risk assessments
- Q. Troubleshoot technical difficulties and poor quality of communication
- R. Monitor ongoing informed consent

**Domain 4. Professional, Legal, and Compliance Standards**

- A. Adhere to the Client's Bill of Rights
- B. Conduct technology risk assessment
- C. Demonstrate appropriate response to data loss
- D. Demonstrate appropriate response to security breaches
- E. Understand and maintain HITECH compliance
- F. Explain Protected Health Information (PHI)
- G. Follow rules and regulations related to storing and destroying session recordings and documentation
- H. Follow rules and regulations related to recording sessions
- I. Follow state and federal laws directing TMH practice
- J. Know order of authority between state-level and federal regulations
- K. Know risks of security breaches
- L. Know the consequences of noncompliance
- M. Know the importance of business associate agreements
- N. Know the types of safeguards (technological, administrative, and physical) for risks and threats
- O. Know what constitutes a breach
- P. Know who can and cannot access PHI and when
- Q. Understand and maintain HIPAA (covered entities, privacy rule, security rule, privacy officer)

## **Domain 5. Professional Ethics**

- A. Consider the risks to diverse populations of using various emergency management systems
- B. Understand and apply best practices in TMH
- C. Utilize resources available to troubleshoot TMH issues
- D. Document ethically
- E. Follow ethical guidelines related to screening and intake
- F. Follow ethical guidelines with social media
- G. Maintain confidentiality with respect to TMH modality
- H. Follow ethical guidelines pertaining to practitioner values and biases
- I. Operate within your scope of practice
- J. Sustain ethical clinician relationships/boundaries
- K. Use technology ethically

## **Domain 6. Crisis Management**

- A. Apply best practices in culturally appropriate crisis intervention
- B. Assess if client is in crisis
- C. Create an emergency management plan
- D. Employ de-escalation strategies in crisis
- E. Identify the signs of a crisis
- F. Initiate involuntary commitment process
- G. Maintain elements of a safety plan
- H. Manage a list of active client-local emergency resources
- I. Follow a protocol for establishing local resources and an emergency contact
- J. Determine additional risk factors involved related to diverse populations when utilizing various emergency management systems



# Appendix B

## TMHE Sample Examination Questions

Following are six sample questions in the same style and with similar content as will be on the TMHE. Candidates can use the sample questions to verify their understanding of the topics on the examination. Answers are provided for the sample questions.

### Sample Items

The following sample items are provided as a representation of the sorts of questions that can be asked from the different competency areas.

#### **Domain 1: Professional Orientation to Telemental Health**

Which of the following illustrates a motivation in the need for telemental health (TMH) services?

- A. rising demand for TMH services in shortage areas with limited access to mental health providers
- B. growing preference for the use of TMH by counselors for ease and convenience
- C. development of universal guidelines for TMH use for mental health professionals
- D. wider availability of Wi-Fi and higher speed internet connections to make use easier

#### **Domain 2: Client–Practitioner Protocol**

Which of the following illustrates why it is important to document the client’s residence?

- A. to ensure that their license is valid to provide TMH services in their state
- B. to ensure that there isn’t a better counseling option for the client
- C. to ensure that the client is always at their residence on record
- D. to ensure their marketing analytics are congruent with campaigns

#### **Domain 3: Disclosure and Informed Consent**

Which of the following is the most likely location where a client will find the counselor’s statement on expectations for telemental health counseling services?

- A. client assessment form
- B. informed consent form
- C. privacy policy document
- D. release of information form

**Domain 4: Technology**

A telemental health provider is upgrading their computer and plans to sell their old one. Although they did store medical records on the old computer, they copied that data over to the new computer. Which of the following is the appropriate ethical action they should take before selling the older computer?

- A. change the password on the computers
- B. completely wipe the hard drives, including all partitions
- C. delete all the electronic medical records data
- D. remove the electronic medical records software

**Domain 5: Professional, Legal, and Ethical Considerations & Compliance Standards**

Which example could lead to a security breach?

- A. A videoconferencing platform is controlled by a third-party server that collects data from its users.
- B. A counselor scans the room remotely to ensure there is no one else in the teleconferencing room with the client.
- C. A counselor uses secure electronic messaging to communicate with a client between sessions.
- D. Electronic health records are accessible at the clinician site but not at the client site.

**Domain 6: Crisis Management**

Prior to the first counseling appointment, the counselor established the client's location and verified identity. Which of the following illustrates the next step in crisis management in telemental health (TMH)?

- A. ensure that insurance will pay for TMH services
- B. compile a list of the client's local emergency services
- C. contact the emergency contact person
- D. start the first counseling appointment with the client

Question Number	Key
1	A
2	A
3	B
4	B
5	A
6	B