

Pulmonary Function Technologist Examination FAQs

What changes are being made to the CPFT and RPFT Examination programs in 2015?

The CPFT and RPFT credentialing programs will transition to a one-examination, two-cut scores examination in June 2015. The new examination for pulmonary function technologists will contain 115 multiple-choice (100 scored, 15 pretest), four-option items, which candidates will take within a two-hour time limit.

What is the rationale for changes to CPFT and RPFT Examinations?

A recent assessment of overlapping content between examinations for the CPFT and RPFT programs revealed a very similar result as had been observed when the same kind of assessment was made for CRT and RRT programs three years ago. Among tasks that the 2006 CPFT and RPFT job analyses had found were critical to assess in examinations, more than 95% of tasks were critical for both the CPFT and RPFT programs. In other words, the vast majority of content that was critical to the assessment of RPFT competencies also were critical to assessments of CPFT competencies. NBRC trustees interpreted this result as evidence of sufficient convergence between what had been more strongly distinct roles for persons holding the CPFT and RPFT credentials in the past.

When will the new examinations be available?

June 15, 2015

What are the examination fees?

The PFT Examination will cost \$200 for new applicants and \$170 for repeat applicants.

Are Self-Assessment Examinations available?

The Self-Assessment Examination will be available for the PFT Examination on January 1, 2015.

Are practice tests available?

Free practice examinations are available to candidates at no charge to familiarize themselves with the content and types of questions that will be included on the regular exams. The free PFT practice examination will be available on our website on October 1, 2014.

How many questions are on the PFT Examination?

115 multiple-choice questions will be presented on the examination, 100 scored items and 15 pretest questions. All NBRC multiple-choice examinations contain questions that are being pretested for use in future versions of the examinations.

How long are the new examinations?

The testing time for the PFT Examination is 2 hours.

What do the cut scores mean?

There will be two established cut scores for the PFT Examination. If a candidate achieves the lower cut score, they will earn the CPFT credential. If a candidate achieves the higher cut score, they will earn the RPFT credential.

When is the last opportunity to apply to take the current CPFT and RPFT Examinations?

The last date applications will be accepted for the current examination is April 30, 2015. These applicants must schedule testing appointments by May 31, 2015. Applications received on or after May 1, 2015 will be processed for the new examination an eligibility start date of June 15, 2015.

What are the admission requirements for the PFT Examination?

1. Applicants shall be 18 years of age or older.
2. Applicants shall satisfy ONE of the following:
 - a. Have a minimum of an associate degree from a respiratory therapy educational program 1) supported or accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC), or 2) accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) and graduated on or before November 11, 2009.

OR

- b. Be a Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT) or Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credentialed by the NBRC.

OR

- c. Complete 62 semester hours of college credit from a college or university accredited by its regional association or its equivalent, including college credit level courses in biology, chemistry and mathematics. A minimum of six months of clinical experience in the field of pulmonary function technology is also required prior to applying for the examination.

OR

- d. Be a Certified Pulmonary Function Technologist (CPFT) credentialed by the NBRC.

I have already earned the CPFT credential but not the RPFT credential. What do I do now?

Any candidate who wishes to earn the RPFT credential will need to take the PFT Examination and pass at the higher cut score.

How will the examination changes affect the Continuing Competency Program?

All credentials earned on or after July 1, 2002 are subject to recertification. The NBRC strongly supports continued competency for the practitioners it certifies by requiring recertification every five years. Practitioners that earn the CPFT and/or RPFT credentials after 2015 will still be required to demonstrate their continued competence through the NBRC's Continuing Competency Program (CCP). Practitioners can also retake and pass the respective examination for the highest credential held that is subject to the CCP. If that credential is the RPFT credential, individuals will need to retake and pass the PFT Examination at the higher cut score to recertify their RPFT credential.

What is the application process for the new examinations?

Starting June 15, 2015, you may apply online using the 'Submit Application' link located on each examination page or complete and submit a paper application and appropriate fee when the admission requirements are satisfied. If mailing your application, the NBRC recommends using certified mail or a certificate of mailing and keeping your receipt as proof that your application was sent to the NBRC. Ineligible applications submitted to the NBRC will be returned, less a \$50.00 processing fee.

If I currently hold the CPFT credential and score below the lower cut on the PFT Examination, will I lose my CPFT credential?

No. You can retake the PFT Examination as many times as necessary to earn the RPFT credential without impacting the status of your current CPFT credential.