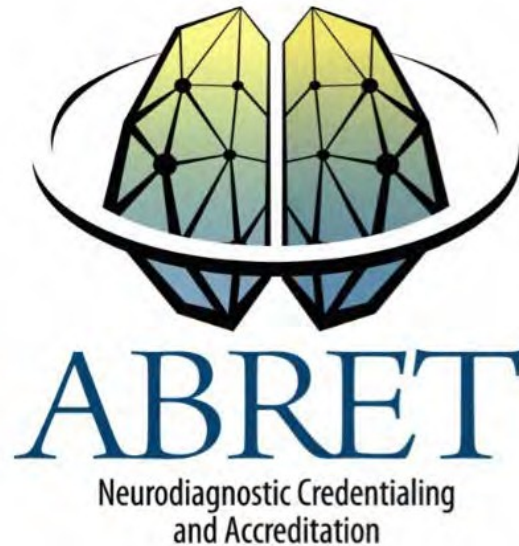


2027



# **Handbook for Candidates Microcredential for**

# **CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine CNIM - CS**

ABRET Executive Office  
111 E. University Drive., #105-355,  
Denton, TX 76209

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The **CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine Examination** (CNIM-CS) is designed and written for the advanced level Neurodiagnostic professionals, or formally trained intraoperative monitoring (IOM) professionals who are currently practicing in an intraoperative environment specializing in complex spine cases.

This handbook contains necessary information about the CNIM-CS examination.

Please retain it for future reference.

Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully.

This handbook is subject to change – Please refer to the [ABRET website](#) for the most up-to-date information.

# Quick Reference Guide

This section pulls together the information candidates ask about most: how to apply, what happens right after you apply, and what happens after you take the exam. This guide is a summary — full details, including required policies, are in the sections that follow.

## How to Apply

- Read this handbook, especially the Content Outline, which is the blueprint for the exam.
- Go to [abret.org](http://abret.org), click EXAMS, and select CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine under Microcredentials. Confirm you meet every requirement on the [Eligibility Chart](#) (current CNIM, two years as a CNIM technologist, 50 complex spine cases documented on the [CNIM Documentation Form](#), and current CPR/BLS certification).
- Select “Online Application” and log into your existing [ABRET Certemy account](#) — do not create a new one (forgot your login? call ABRET at 217-726-7980). Complete the application, upload your eligibility documents, and pay the \$400 fee. **Ensure checks clearly identify your name as an exam candidate.**
- **Petition of Eligibility** — If you don’t meet a requirement exactly as written, visit [abret.org](http://abret.org) to find the [petition form and instructions](#).

## What Happens After You Apply

- **Eligibility review** — ABRET reviews your eligibility and application materials.
- **Scheduling Authorization** — Once your eligibility is verified, ABRET emails your Scheduling Authorization in approximately 2–5 business days. Double-check that your email address on file is correct.
- **Schedule right away** — Scheduling is handled through [Webassessor](http://webassessor.com/abret) ([webassessor.com/abret](http://webassessor.com/abret)). Onsite test-center appointments are first-come, first-served, so schedule as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization.
- **Two ways to test** — an onsite proctored exam, or live remote proctoring from a quiet, distraction-free location. Remote proctoring allows no breaks during the 2-hour exam — if you may need a break, choose an onsite appointment.
- **Your 3-month testing window** — You have three (3) months (90 days) to sit for the exam after your eligibility is verified. There are no refunds, extensions, or transfers.
- **Rescheduling** — Free through [webassessor.com/abret](http://webassessor.com/abret) up to 72 hours before an onsite exam (24 hours for an online exam). Inside that window, a \$45 fee is paid directly to Kryterion.
- **Accommodations** — The [Testing Accommodation Request Form](#) must be emailed to [tami@abret.org](mailto:tami@abret.org) *before the final submission* of the candidate’s application.
- **If you are denied eligibility** — You may appeal in writing to ABRET within 30 days.

## What to Expect After You Take the Exam

- **Right after testing** — You will see your score immediately after you submit the exam. The exam is a one-time event — you cannot re-enter it once submitted.
- **Official results** — If you pass, your CNIM-CS certificate becomes available in the Digital Wallet of your Certemy account approximately 4 weeks after your exam date, and you will be listed on the ABRET website.
- **If you pass** — The CNIM-CS microcredential is awarded for five years.
- **If you do not pass** — You are provided one (1) exam attempt per application and must wait 6 months before retesting. After that, contact ABRET at 217-726-7980 or by Contact Us email to reassign your application — you will repeat all online application steps. *Do not contact ABRET about your results until you receive your OFFICIAL results.*
- **Questions about the exam itself** — You may comment on any question right after the exam, or submit a written complaint to the ABRET Executive Director within 14 calendar days of testing.

# Introduction

ABRET is a nonprofit credentialing board. ABRET supports the concept of voluntary certification by examination for health care professionals in intraoperative monitoring (IOM). Certification focuses specifically on the individual and is an indication of current knowledge in IOM specializing in complex spine cases. ABRET does not guarantee the job performance of any individual.

## KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- ABRET sets and measures the knowledge required for IOM Complex Spine certification through an objective, computer-based exam.
- Certification recognizes individual knowledge — it does not guarantee job performance.
- Continued professional growth is required through continuing education and recertification.

# Objectives of ABRET

TO ESTABLISH COMPETENCY IN IOM COMPLEX SPINE BY:

1. Providing a standard of knowledge in IOM Complex Spine required for certification.
2. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification in IOM Complex Spine by means of an objective, computer-based written examination.
3. Formally recognizing those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of ABRET and pass the CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine Examination.
4. Encouraging continued professional growth in IOM Complex Spine through mandatory continuing education and recertification.

# Non Discrimination Statement

ABRET – Neurodiagnostic Credentialing & Accreditation does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, marital status, or handicapped condition.

# Administration

The Registration Program is developed and maintained by ABRET and administered through Kryterion's Webassessor, CNIM-CS exam management and delivery portal (onsite and remote proctoring available).

Questions concerning the exam should be addressed to the ABRET Executive Office: 111 E. University Dr.#105-355, Denton, TX 76209 – (217) 726-7980 – [www.abret.org](http://www.abret.org) or by email: [Tami@abret.org](mailto:Tami@abret.org)

# Fees

**Application Fee** for the CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine .....\$400

**Rescheduling Fee** within 72 hours of onsite, test center exam and within 24 hours for online exams (but still within the 3-month/90-day testing period).

Paid directly to Kryterion .....\$45.00

Exam fees must be paid upon submission of the CNIM-CS exam application.

THERE ARE NO REFUNDS, EXTENSIONS, nor TRANSFER OF FEES

# 2027 CNIM-CS Eligibility Chart

## CNIM - CS Eligibility Requirements:

1. Current CNIM
2. Two years as a CNIM Technologist
3. Documentation of 50 Complex Spine Cases
4. Current CPR/BLS certification

**The CNIM-CS credential is achieved upon successfully passing the CNIM-CS Exam**

## Completion of the CNIM Documentation Form

1. The Candidate must be the **primary** technologist in the set-up, troubleshooting and monitoring of each case listed.
2. Observation of a Complex Spine case may not be included in the required cases, but supervised cases are acceptable, as long as the requirements listed above are met.
3. ABRET will accept documentation of up to two cases per day. Do not submit more than the requested number of cases.
4. Complex Spine NIOMs must be conducted within the last 5 years with a minimum of 10% completed within 24 months of application.
5. Monitoring performed in the operating room during a surgical procedure should be included. Pre-op testing and procedures do not satisfy this requirement.
6. Documentation forms will be randomly audited which can delay or negate eligibility.

The Certificate is achieved upon successfully passing the IOM Complex Spine Exam.

**A list defining complex spine cases is provided on the [Complex Spine IOM Documentation Form](#).**

The Complex Spine microcredential is awarded for five years.

The CNIM-CS credential is awarded for five years. See information in the [Recertification tab of the ABRET website](#). After 3 unsuccessful attempts to pass the examination within a 2-year timeframe, candidates must wait 6 months and submit an additional 15 hours of Continuing Education before being eligible to test.

**Petition of Eligibility** – Visit [ABRET.org to find](#) the petition form and instructions.

## Quick Tips Before Proceeding with the Application Process

- \*Your name must match exactly with the name shown on current government-issued photo ID, such as a driver's license or passport. Do not use nicknames or abbreviations.
- \*CNIM-CS Documentation forms are available on the ABRET website – [www.abret.org](#)
- \*Have all required eligibility documents ready to be uploaded into your ABRET Certemy Account.
- \*PDFs are best.
- \*Retain copies of all uploaded documents for your records.
- \*Keep this HANDBOOK for reference.

# Application Procedure

Applications for the ABRET examinations should be completed online through the ABRET website.

[www.abret.org](http://www.abret.org)

- 1) Read the Handbook for Candidates and follow instructions.
- 2) Visit ABRET.org – click on **EXAMS** and select **CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine** under **Microcredentials**. See the [CNIM-CS credential page](#).
- 3) Select "Online Application" to begin the application process.
- 4) [Log into your ABRET Certemy account](#). You already have an account as a CNIM credential holder. If you do not remember your login information, contact ABRET at 217-726-7980. Do not create a new account.
- 5) Complete the application by inputting your information and uploading your eligibility requirements including payment of the \$400 examination fee.
  - Most major credit cards are accepted.
  - Ensure Checks identify your name as an exam candidate and the ABRET exam you are applying for. Mail checks to: ABRET Executive Office – 111 E. University Dr., #105-355, Denton, TX 76209
- 6) Upon verification of your eligibility requirements and application, you will receive a Scheduling Authorization from ABRET. See the "Scheduling Examination" section of this handbook for information on scheduling your exam.

A denial of eligibility for certification may be appealed in writing and sent to ABRET within 30 days. See **APP-9** & **APP-10** of ABRET Examination Policies posted on the [ABRET website under Principles](#).

**Candidates have three (3) months from the status of "Eligible to Test" date to sit for the examination. After the 3-month period, candidates will need to reapply for the examination and pay a new application fee.**

**THERE ARE NO REFUNDS, EXTENSIONS, nor TRANSFER OF FEES**

After exam results are uploaded into your ABRET Certemy account, proceed as directed:

**Pass Results:** The CNIM credential is awarded for five years. Go to [ABRET's Recertification webpage](#) for more information.

**Fail Results:** Candidates are provided one (1) exam attempt per application submission within the established three (3)-month time frame. **Candidates who do not pass the CNIM-CS Exam will not be allowed to retest for a period of 6 months.** Please contact ABRET following six (6) months to reassign your application at 217-726-7980 or by submitting a [Contact Us email](#). You will essentially need to repeat **ALL** steps of the online application process to reassign.

\* Please do not contact the ABRET office about your results until you receive your OFFICIAL test results. You will not be able to reapply until the OFFICIAL test results are in.

## Quick Tips Following the Application Process

\*Candidates should retain copies of all uploaded documents submitted for eligibility requirements.

\*Application status will be PENDING until all steps of the application, including payment, are completed:

- If you paid by CHECK, your "Application Form" will not be completed until payment is received.
- You may have been randomly selected for audit. You or your supervisor will be contacted by our auditor with any questions or instructions on next steps.

# Scheduling Your Examination

**Candidates cannot schedule an examination appointment until they have received a Scheduling Authorization from ABRET via email.**

Upon verification of your eligibility requirements and application, a Scheduling Authorization will be emailed to candidates in approximately 2–5 business days. Please ensure you enter your correct email address on the application. If you do not receive a Scheduling Authorization within two weeks of achieving “Eligible to Test” status, contact ABRET at (217) 726-7980 or email [tami@abret.org](mailto:tami@abret.org) for a duplicate.

It is the candidate’s responsibility to schedule the examination appointment through Webassessor at [webassessor.com/abret](http://webassessor.com/abret). Select the “Schedule Now” button in your Webassessor account to proceed to scheduling.

The CNIM-CS examination is administered in two ways:

- 1) as an onsite proctored exam or
- 2) via live remote proctoring in your home or another quiet, distraction free location. **NOTE: No breaks are provided or allowed for remote proctoring.** *If you believe you may need a break during the 2-hour exam, you must schedule an onsite proctored exam.*

For the live remote proctoring option, you must provide a computer with a camera, microphone, and an internet connection that allows real-time communication with a remote proctor. More information about Remote Proctoring can be found in your Webassessor account.

Appointment times for onsite test centers are first come, first serve, so schedule your examination appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization in order to maximize the availability for your preferred location and preferred date.

After you make your test appointment, Webassessor will send you a confirmation email with the date, time, and location of your exam. Your **Exam Authorization Code** will also be contained in this email and **is required to launch your exam** for both onsite and online testing. Please check the confirmation carefully for the correct date, time, and location. [Use the Live Chat Bot feature in your Webassessor account for assistance](#) if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

**Two (2) forms of identification must be presented** in order to gain admission to sit for the exam. One must be a current government-issued photo ID (driver’s license or passport). Secondary ID must include your printed name, such as a credit card, bank debit card, or employee ID card. **Temporary, paper driver's licenses are not accepted, nor are US Social Security cards.** It is recommended to have a printed copy of the email containing the **Exam Authorization Code** as well as Webassessor appointment confirmation.

Arrival at the testing site at the appointed time is the responsibility of the candidate. Plan for weather, traffic, parking, and any security requirements specific to the testing location. Late arrival may prevent you from testing.

\*It is highly recommended the candidate becomes familiar with the testing site’s location prior to appointment.

# Changing Your Examination Appointment

Candidates may cancel or reschedule an exam through [webassessor.com/abret](http://webassessor.com/abret) with no additional fee up to 72 hours prior to your scheduled exam time. No Shows, Cancellations and Reschedules within 72 hours of your scheduled exam time will incur an additional fee of \$45.00 paid directly to Kryterion. Exam fees will not be refunded for sessions canceled without proper notice. Any penalty for not keeping an appointment will be the responsibility of the candidate.

**Candidates have three (3) months from the status of “Eligible to Test” date to sit for the examination.**

**After the 3-month period, candidates will need to reapply for the examination and pay a new application fee.**

**THERE ARE NO REFUNDS, EXTENSIONS, nor TRANSFER OF FEES**

## Special Accommodation Requests

ABRET complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations in accordance with the ADA for individuals with documented disabilities who request and demonstrate the need for accommodation. ADA regulations define a person with a disability as someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. ABRET requires documentation to validate the type and severity of a disability to enable accommodations to be specifically matched with the identified functional limitation in order to provide equal access to examination functions for all examinees. The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and test accommodation is confidential and is not included in scoring or reporting.

All approved testing accommodations must maintain the psychometric nature and security of the examination. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature or security of the exam will not be granted. Note that accommodation for an examination (test accommodation) may not be the same as accommodations provided by your employer for your job. You can find more information about testing accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act ([www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)).

The [Test Accommodation Request Form](#) must be emailed to [tami@abret.org](mailto:tami@abret.org) *before the final submission* of the candidate’s application. Missing information or incomplete Forms will result in a delay in processing.

To request test accommodations, complete the following steps:

1. Download the [Test Accommodation Request Form](#).
2. Complete Test Accommodations Form with your doctor/healthcare professional.
3. Email the Form and supporting documents to [tami@abret.org](mailto:tami@abret.org) *before the final submission* of the candidate’s application. Missing information or incomplete Forms will result in a delay in processing.

**If your Form is incomplete and/or not received at least 8 weeks before the start of the testing period, we cannot guarantee that we can make these test accommodations in time for you to test. Therefore, your application may need to be reprocessed for another testing period, and you would need to pay the reprocessing fee.**

***\*Accommodations cannot be added to an existing exam appointment\****

### KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- By applying, you agree to follow all ABRET policies, including the Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Policy.
- You must keep ABRET informed of any change in your name, address, phone number, or email.
- Exam materials are confidential — you may not copy, share, or retain any exam content.
- ABRET may deny, suspend, or revoke certification for rule violations; a passing score is always required for credentialing.

## Application Agreement

- 1. Application.** I certify that all the information contained in my application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I hereby authorize ABRET and its officers, directors, employees, and agents (collectively, “ABRET”) to review my application and to determine my eligibility for certification.
- 2. Compliance with ABRET Rules.**
  - A.** I have read and agree to abide by ABRET’s policies and procedures, including but not limited to those listed below. I will read and keep up to date with these rules.
    - i. Handbook for Candidates (including the Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Policy);
    - ii. Use of Credential and Trademark Policy; and
    - iii. ABRET Examination Policies.
  - B.** I agree that ABRET may take action regarding my application, examination, or certification in accordance with its Disciplinary Policy, and that the penalties for violation of an ABRET rule include (but are not limited to) denial, revocation, or limitation of my certification.
  - C.** As specified within the Disciplinary Policy, I agree to notify ABRET of any change in name, address, telephone number, or email address, and of any development bearing on certification such as (but not limited to) suspension, revocation, or expiration of a state license to practice, being sued by a patient, or being investigated or reprimanded by a state regulatory board.
- 3. Cooperation.** I agree to cooperate promptly and fully in any review of my application, examination(s), or certification, and I agree to submit any additional information requested.
- 4. Examination Confidentiality.** I am seeking admission to take the examination(s) for the purpose of pursuing certification, and for no other purpose. Because of the confidential nature of the examination(s), I agree to not make or keep copies, excerpts, or notes of examination materials, and to not use or divulge information learned from the examination(s). The examination(s) is/are the exclusive property of ABRET, and I will not use examination information in any way without the express prior written consent of ABRET.
- 5. Examination Administration.**
  - A.** I agree to abide by ABRET’s reasonable rules regarding examination administration. ABRET may refuse my admission to an examination if I do not have the proper identification (valid photo ID and eligibility notice), or if administration has begun. The proctors may take steps as they believe necessary to maintain a secure and proper examination administration, including (but not limited to) relocating me before or during the examination.
  - B.** If I am refused admission or fail to appear at the examination site, or if my examination performance is voided based upon my behavior, I agree that I will not receive a refund of the application or examination fees and there will be no credit for any future examination.
  - C.** I understand that review of the adequacy of examination materials will be limited to computing accurate scoring; I hereby waive all further claims of examination review.

# Application Agreement (continued)

D. I acknowledge that ABRET is concerned with reporting only valid scores. I agree that ABRET may cancel an examination score if there is adequate reason to question its validity because of misconduct or other circumstances.

E. A passing score is required for credentialing in all instances.

**6. Continuing Compliance.** I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to maintain and demonstrate continuous compliance with all ABRET policies and procedures.

**7. Certification Marks.**

A. The CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine credential and the stylized “CNIM-CS” logo are the sole and exclusive property of ABRET and are subject to all applicable trademark and other rights of ABRET as owner under United States intellectual property law and international conventions. I agree to abide by ABRET’s instructions regarding use of its intellectual property, and to not use this intellectual property in any way without the express prior written consent of ABRET.

B. I agree to correct at my own expense any inaccurate or unauthorized use by me of ABRET’s credential and logo. I agree that if I refuse to make corrections, then ABRET is entitled to obtain all relief permitted by law, including but not limited to injunctive relief to enforce its rights with respect to the protection of its name, credential, logo, and other intellectual property.

**8. Information Release.** I agree that ABRET may release information regarding my application and certification record to state and federal authorities, licensing boards, employers, and others. This information includes (but is not limited to) ABRET’s findings regarding review of my application, fraudulent statements made by me, information indicating noncompliance with laws or regulations or with policies of other organizations, and the pendency or outcome of disciplinary proceedings.

**9. Duration of Credential.** This Application Agreement will become effective as of the date of acknowledgment upon submitting my application and will remain in effect for the duration of my application review. If I am granted certification, the terms of this Application Agreement will automatically continue in effect for the duration of my credential. I acknowledge and agree that initial credential is awarded only for a five (5) year period, and that completion of recertification requirements, recertification applications, and reviews will be required to maintain my credential.

**10. Waiver of Claims & Indemnification.**

A. I hereby waive all claims against ABRET arising out of my application and my participation in the certification program, including (but not limited to) claims arising out of (i) any release of information to state and federal authorities, licensing boards, employers, and others, and (ii) any investigation and review of my application and certification by ABRET. If ABRET is required by law to disclose confidential information, the individual(s) whose information is released will be notified to the extent permitted by law.

B. I agree to indemnify ABRET for any third-party claims arising out of any action taken pursuant to the policies and procedures of ABRET with regard to my application, the examination, or my certification. In addition, I agree to indemnify ABRET for any third-party claims arising out of my professional practice and related activities.

C. The provisions of this Waiver of Claims & Indemnification section do not extend to claims based on the gross negligence or willful misconduct of ABRET.

D. My obligations and rights and those of ABRET under this Waiver of Claims & Indemnification section will survive beyond the termination or expiration of my certification and remain in full force and effect.

# Application Agreement (continued)

**11. Governing Law & Venue.** This Agreement is governed exclusively by the laws of the State of Texas, without reference to its choice of law doctrine. The parties agree that the sole jurisdiction and venue for any litigation arising from this Agreement is the appropriate federal court for the Eastern District of Texas or state court located in Denton County, Texas. If a dispute arises, the parties shall make a good faith attempt to resolve the dispute through dialogue and negotiation prior to pursuing court action.

Upon submitting the application for “CNIM-CS” you will be asked to acknowledge that you have read and understand this Application Agreement and agree to its terms in consideration for the opportunity to seek certification from ABRET.

**Information Release:** If granted certification, you will be authorizing ABRET to release your name and the fact that you have been granted certification to newspapers and other publications, and to release your name, employment information, address, and email address in ABRET’s online directory and mailing list. You may opt out of this process by notifying the ABRET office in writing.

## Examination Administration

The CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine Examination is administered on a daily basis, Monday through Saturday, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by Kryterion and through online proctoring. Candidates are expected to abide by the rules and regulations of the facility and its proctors.

In the event of inclement weather, contact Kryterion’s support team via the Live Chat Bot feature in your [Candidate Community Portal](#). For faster support, you will be asked to provide your Webassessor Login ID and exam details to the support staff.

Kryterion’s website provides information on what you can expect on your test day, including a walkthrough of check-in and security procedures: <https://www.kryterion.com/test-candidate/>.

**Calculators:** Candidates launch their exam from "My Assessments" in Webassessor. Once the exam begins, the calculator appears as a calculator icon in the exam toolbar (typically near the top of the exam window). Clicking the icon opens the calculator in a pop-up/floating window that can be moved around while answering questions.

**NOTE:** *No breaks are provided or allowed for remote proctoring. If you believe you may need a break during the 2-hour exam, you must schedule an onsite proctored exam.*

### KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- Bring a current, valid government-issued photo ID — temporary or paper IDs are not accepted.
- No electronic devices, papers, books, calculators, or reference materials of any kind are allowed in the testing room.
- You cannot leave the testing room during your exam, except to use the restroom.
- Breaking a rule can mean forfeited fees, dismissal from testing, and canceled scores.

## Rules for Examination

**Please read the information below carefully.** You are responsible for adhering to the examination rules while at the testing center.

## Rules for Examination (continued)

1. You must present your current driver's license, passport, or US Military ID at the testing center. Candidates without valid ID will NOT be permitted to test. Temporary or paper copies of your ID will not be accepted.
2. No Electronic devices that can be used to record, transmit, receive, or play back audio, photographic, text, or video content, including but not limited to, cell phones, laptop computers, tablets, Bluetooth devices; wearable technology (such as smart watches), MP3 players (such as iPods), pagers, cameras, and voice recorders are permitted to be used and cannot be taken in the examination room. The testing center provides lockers for your personal items.
3. No papers, books, calculators, rulers, or reference materials may be taken into or removed from the testing room. \*See note under the Examination Administration section regarding calculator availability.
4. No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the examination session. The candidate should read carefully the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.
5. Candidates are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, with the sole exception of going to the restroom.
6. Bulky clothing, such as sweatshirts (hoodies), jackets, coats, and hats (except hats worn for religious reasons), and most types of jewelry may not be worn while taking the examination. Proctors will ask you to remove such items and place them in your locker.
7. All watches and "Fitbit" type devices cannot be worn during the examination.
8. No food/beverages are permitted inside the testing room. Leave these items in your assigned locker.

**Accessing cell phones and electronic devices at any time while you are taking the exam is prohibited.** You can only remove snacks, drinks, medicine, or personal health care items from your locker. No backpacks, bags, purses, or clothing can be removed while your exam is in session.

**VIOLATION OF ANY OF THE RULES LISTED ABOVE MAY LEAD TO FORFEITURE OF FEES, DISMISSAL FROM THE TESTING ROOM, AND CANCELLATION OF YOUR TEST SCORES.**

## Quick Tips Before Examination Day

- \*Hours and days of availability vary at different centers. You will not be able to schedule your exam appointment until you have received a Scheduling Authorization from ABRET
- \*It is highly recommended the candidate becomes familiar with the testing site's location prior to your appointment.
- \*This Handbook provides the Content Outline for the Examination. Use it to help guide your study in preparing for the examination.

### KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- Computer-based, multiple-choice exam with a total testing time of 2 hours — remote proctoring allows no breaks.
- Weighting: Preparation and Application of Fundamental Concepts 25%, Intraoperative Phase 65%, Post-Operative Phase 5%, Ethics 5%.

## Content of the Examination

1. The Examination for CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine is a computer based examination composed of multiple-choice, objective questions with a total testing time of two (2) hours.
2. The content of the examination is described in the Content Outline below.

# Content of the Examination (continued)

3. The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in neurophysiologic intraoperative monitoring and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by ABRET and Kryterion.
4. ABRET, with the advice and assistance of Kryterion, prepares and reviews the examination.
5. The Examination for CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine will be weighted in approximately the following manner:
  - I. Preparation and Application of Fundamental Concepts.....25%
  - II. Intraoperative Phase.....65%
  - III. Post-Operative Phase.....5%
  - IV. Ethics.....5%

## KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- This is the blueprint for what you'll be tested on — use it as your study guide.
- Four domains: Preparation and Application of Fundamental Concepts, Intraoperative Phase, Post-Operative Phase, and Ethics.

# Content Outline

- I. Preparation and Application of Fundamental Concepts.....25%**
  - A. Neurological Disorder & Neuro examination – Preop Neuro Exam
  - B. Elements of History Related to IOM - Elements of a patient history
  - C. Special Consideration/Contraindication
  - D. Complex Spine Procedural Pre-Operative Risk Assessment/Modality Selection/Muscle & Nerve Selection
  - E. Medical Complex Spine Procedural terminology and stages
  - F. Complex Spine Specific neuroanatomy/neurophysiology/pathophysiology/pathology
  - G. Specialty Equipment Considerations and Setup/Configuration
  - H. Anesthetic protocols for complex spine procedures
  - I. Safety protocols relevant to all modalities and communication
- II. Intraoperative Phase.....65%**
  - A. IOM Correlates of Clinical/Surgical Entities, Surgical Events and Risk
  - B. Obligate waveform Analysis Localization and Identification
  - C. Advanced troubleshooting techniques specific complex spinal cases
  - D. Alarm Criteria and Reporting Changes
  - E. ACNS Guidelines
  - F. Complex Spine Specific Electrical safety techniques - Safety protocols relevant to all modalities
  - G. Risks associated with specific disorders/surgical procedures/patient positioning
  - H. Surgery specific monitoring protocols
  - I. Atypical electrode placement
  - J. Evoked potentials, motor evoked potentials, D-Waves, spinal cord mapping, NAPs, DNEP, and EMG correlates of clinical entities
  - K. Effects of drugs/anesthetic agents on recordings - Anesthetic Effects and Physiological Effects
  - L. Modality specific waveforms
  - M. Stimulation parameters for each modality
- III. Post-Operative Phase.....5%**
  - A. IOM Post-operative Outcomes
  - B. Postoperative Concerns/Care Complex Spine-Specific
- IV. Ethics.....5%**
  - A. HIPAA
  - B. ABRET Code of Ethics
  - C. Regulatory Requirements

# Sample Questions

1. Compared to the myogenic motor evoked responses, the D- wave responses:
  - A. Are more sensitive to detect cord ischemia
  - B. Are better suited to detect unilateral motor pathway compromise
  - C. Can be produced by single pulse transcranial stimulation
  - D. Need temporal summation of corticospinal volleys for generation
2. A surgeon attempts direct stimulation of spinal cord motor tracts for monitoring motor responses from muscles during surgery. At the same time as muscle responses, neurogenic responses were unexpectedly recorded in sural nerve. Which of the following explains this finding?
  - A. Sural nerve is a mixed sensory and motor nerve
  - B. Sural nerve is a pure motor nerve
  - C. Antidromic sensory potentials from spinal cord stimulation
  - D. Volume conduction from motor to sensory tracts in spinal cord
3. Which of the following is true about astrocytomas in comparison with ependymomas, in spinal cord:
  - A. Astrocytomas are the most common intramedullary spinal cord tumor in adults
  - B. Astrocytomas are centrally located
  - C. Astrocytomas are more infiltrative
  - D. Astrocytomas are more common in lumbar region
4. During the removal of intramedullary spinal cord tumor, after dorsal myelotomy, while the surgeon is retracting the dorsal columns, the focus of neuromonitoring is on:
  - A. Somatosensory evoked potentials monitoring
  - B. D-wave monitoring
  - C. Spontaneous EMG monitoring
  - D. Triggered EMG responses

ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS: 1. C, 2. C, 3. C, 4. A

## References

The following references, or recent editions of the following, may be of use in preparing for the examination. The list does not attempt to include all acceptable material, nor is it suggested that the CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine Examination (CNIM-CS) questions are necessarily based on these references.

## Highly Recommended References

1. Aatif M. Husain MD, 2015, A Practical Approach to Neurophysiologic Intraoperative Monitoring 2nd Edition. Demos Medical Publishing, LLC.
2. J. Pace (2020). Monitoring and mapping of the spinal cord. Principles of Neurophysiological Assessment, Mapping and Monitoring. Springer Nature Switzerland.
3. Marc R Nuwer (2009). Intraoperative Monitoring of Neural Function. Elsevier.
4. Mirela V. Simon (2019). Intraoperative Neurophysiology: A Comprehensive Guide to Monitoring and Mapping, Second Edition. Demos Medical Publication.
5. S. F. Davis & A. D. Kaye: Principles of Neurophysiological Assessment, Mapping and Monitoring; Second edition. Springer.
6. Stephen G. Waxman (2020) in Clinical Neuroanatomy 29th Edition McGraw Hill Education
7. Vedran Deletis, et al. (2020). Neurophysiology in Neurosurgery: A Modern Approach. Elsevier, Academic Press.

# Additional Supplementary References

- ABRET Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
- American Academy of Neurology, American Clinical Neurophysiology Society (joint guidelines). Evidence- Based Guideline Update: Intraoperative Spinal Monitoring with Somatosensory and Transcranial Motor Evoked Potentials (2012). ([www.acns.org](http://www.acns.org))
- American Clinical Neurophysiology Society Guidelines in Evoked Potentials (2006), and in Intraoperative Monitoring (2016). ([www.acns.org](http://www.acns.org))
- Joint Commission on Accreditation for Healthcare Organizations. “National Patient Safety Goals”(updated annually) [www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org)
- Paul D. Mongan and Vikas V. Patel (2017) ‘Posterior Cervical Spine Surgery’ in Antoun Koht et. al. Monitoring the Nervous System for Anesthesiologists and Other Health Care Professionals 2nd Edition. Springer Inc.
- Ronald Leppanen (2017) ‘The Use of Reflex Responses for IOM’ in Antoun Kout et al. Monitoring the nervous system for anesthesiologists and other healthcare professionals. Springer international publishing

Additional reference materials may be obtained by contacting ASET - The Neurodiagnostic Society  
[www.aset.org](http://www.aset.org)

## Scoring

The Board set the passing standard as the number of test questions it determines to be necessary for candidates to answer correctly in order to be considered at least minimally competent. This method focuses on the particular test that is being administered. Different forms of an examination are matched for difficulty and content coverage. This comprehensive approach makes use of information about the performance of similar groups in the past.

ABRET is concerned with reporting only valid scores. On rare occasions, misconduct or circumstances beyond the individual’s control may render a score invalid. If doubts are raised about a score because of these or other circumstances, ABRET reserves the right to cancel any examination score if, in the sole opinion of ABRET, there is adequate reason to question its validity.

## Report of Results

The candidate will see their score immediately after submission of the exam and will not be able to re-enter the exam. The exam is set for a one-time event.

Approximately 4 weeks following examination date, passing candidates will have access to their CNIM-CS certificate in the Digital Wallet of their Credential Manager (i.e., Certemy account) and will be listed on the ABRET website.

#### KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- You can comment on any question right after the exam, or submit a written complaint within 14 calendar days.
- Exam materials themselves are not available for candidate review.

## Examination Challenges

Candidates may comment in the appropriate section at the end of the examination about any test question or questions, test procedure, and/or the test itself. Alternatively, a candidate may submit a complaint in writing to the ABRET Executive Director no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after taking the examination. All challenges and complaints will receive ABRET's full attention. Comments regarding examination validity will be reviewed by the ABRET examination committee. Examination materials shall not be available for review by candidates.

## Confidentiality

1. ABRET will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate.
2. From time to time, it may be necessary for the ABRET Executive Office and Board of Directors to disclose candidate information and/or scores. No material or information disclosed will be released to any unauthorized person.
3. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to ABRET or Kryterion.
4. ABRET provides ASET – The Neurodiagnostic Society with the names, addresses, and emails of passing candidates. Candidates may opt out by contacting ABRET.

## Attainment of Credential

Eligible candidates who pass the CNIM Specialist in IOM Complex Spine Examination will be certified for a period of five years and will be authorized to use the CNIM-CS designation, subject to compliance with ABRET's Code of Ethics, rules, policies, and procedures, and standards of practice of ABRET. They will receive a Digital Certificate and be eligible for recertification after five years. If not recertified, they will no longer be permitted to use the CNIM-CS designation.

#### KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- The Code of Ethics and Grounds for Disciplinary Action define the conduct required to earn and keep an ABRET credential.
- Falling short of these standards can lead to suspension or revocation of your certification.

## Purpose of Standards

ABRET has developed the *Code of Ethics* and the Grounds for Disciplinary Action to articulate standards of conduct required for eligibility of ABRET credentials, microcredentials, and continued credentialing of EEG, EP, CNIM, CLTM, CAP, CMEG, and NA-CLTM technologists. Maintenance of board certification will require adherence to these and other ABRET rules. Individuals who fail to meet these requirements may have their certification suspended or revoked.

ABRET does not guarantee the job performance of any individual.

### KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- Put patients first: dignity, confidentiality, safety, and freedom from discrimination.
- Stay current in your field and practice competently and objectively.
- Don't take primary responsibility for interpreting EEG/EP/IOM studies unless you're licensed to do so.
- Be honest and cooperative with ABRET, and follow all ABRET rules.

## Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice

ABRET is a nonprofit credentialing board for Electroencephalographic (EEG) Technologists, Evoked Potential (EP) Technologists, Neurophysiologic Intraoperative Monitoring (CNIM) Technologists, Long Term Monitoring (CLTM) Technologists, Autonomic Professionals (CAP) and Magnetoencephalography (CMEG), NeuroAnalyst Long Term Monitoring (NA-CLTM) Technologist, and related microcredentials, and seeks to encourage, establish, and maintain the highest standards, traditions and principles of these technologies. ABRET Registered and Certified Technologists should recognize their responsibilities, not only to their patients, but also to society, to other healthcare professionals, and to themselves.

The following principles have been adopted by the Board of Directors in order to encourage personnel to aspire to the highest possible professional practice. An ABRET Registered technologist or Certified individual shall:

1. Do everything in his or her power to ensure that the current Guidelines of the American Clinical Neurophysiology Society are complied with in the department in which he or she works.
2. Preserve human dignity, respect patient's rights, and support the wellbeing of the patient under his or her care. The Registered or Certified technologist on shall avoid discrimination against individuals on the basis of race, creed, religion, sex, age, and national origin.
3. Appreciate the importance of thoroughness in the performance of duty, compassion with patients, and the significance of the task she or she performs.
4. Preserve the confidentiality of medical and personal information of a patient.
5. Strive to remain abreast of current technology and to study and apply scientific advances in his or her specialty. Carry out his or her professional work in a competent and objective manner.
6. Abide by laws related to the profession and to general public health and safety and avoid dishonest, unethical, or illegal practices.
7. Refuse primary responsibility for interpretation of testing or monitoring of Electroencephalograms, Evoked Potentials, or Neurophysiologic Intraoperative Monitoring for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment. Individuals who are licensed or otherwise authorized by practice standards to provide interpretation are excluded.
8. Be truthful, forthcoming, and cooperative in his or her dealings with ABRET.
9. Be in continuous compliance with ABRET's rules (as amended from time to time by ABRET).
10. Respect ABRET's intellectual property rights.
11. Upon suspension or withdrawal of certification, the certificant shall discontinue the use of all claims to certification that contain any reference to ABRET.

## Quick Tips After Achieving Your Credential

\* It is important for ABRET to maintain your correct name and contact information. Please promptly notify the ABRET Executive Office of an address and/or name change by completing [ABRET's name and address change form](#). Although it is your responsibility to know when your credential expires, we will remind you via email through your ABRET [Certemy account](#) when your credential needs to be renewed.

**Please make sure your ABRET Certemy account is up to date.**

### KEY POINTS — what this section means for you

- Certain criminal convictions (e.g., violent or sexual offenses) can make you ineligible for certification.
- Grounds for discipline include fraud, cheating, misuse of ABRET credentials, or failing to report changes/adverse actions.
- Sanctions range from reprimand and probation to denial, suspension, or revocation of certification.
- You may appeal a disciplinary decision in writing within 30 days.

## Violations Reporting Requirements

If conduct has occurred that may be grounds for disciplinary action under the Violations to Standards of Practice and Disciplinary Process policy, then ABRET may place an application on hold while reviewing the matter. These will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

A criminal conviction may be grounds to deny or otherwise limit eligibility. Convictions of this nature include (but are not limited to) felonies involving rape, sexual abuse of a patient or child, and actual or threatened use of a weapon or violence. If a conviction resulted in a sentence that includes incarceration, then the individual is ineligible while in confinement (RUL-26).

- 1. Grounds for Disciplinary Action.** ABRET may deny, suspend, revoke, or take other action regarding an application or certification if an individual is not in compliance with this Disciplinary Policy. Grounds for disciplinary action include (but are not limited to):
  - A. Ineligibility for certification, regardless of when the ineligibility is discovered;
  - B. An irregular event in connection with an ABRET examination including (but not limited to) copying answers, copying examination materials, and causing a disruption in the testing area;
  - C. Providing fraudulent or misleading information;
  - D. Unauthorized possession or misuse of ABRET credentials, examinations, and other intellectual property;
  - E. Misrepresentation of certification status;
  - F. Failure to provide requested information in a timely manner;
  - G. Failure to inform ABRET of changes or adverse actions;
  - H. Gross negligence or willful misconduct in professional work;
  - I. Accepting primary responsibility for interpretation of testing or monitoring for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment (Individuals who are licensed or otherwise authorized by practice standards to provide interpretation are excluded.);
  - J. Failure to maintain a current professional credential as required by the jurisdiction in which the individual practices (this may include a license, certificate, or registration);
  - K. The conviction of, plea of guilty to, or plea of no contest (“nolo contendere”) to a felony or misdemeanor related to public health and safety or the profession;
  - L. Disciplinary action by a licensing board or professional organization other than ABRET; and
  - M. Other failures to maintain continuous compliance with ABRET standards, policies, and procedures.

# Violations Reporting Requirements (continued)

## 2. Sanctions.

A. ABRET may impose one or more of the following sanctions for a violation of this Disciplinary Policy:

- Denial or suspension of eligibility;
- Denial of certification;
- Revocation of certification;
- Non-renewal of certification;
- Suspension of certification;
- Reprimand;
- Probation;
- Notification of other legitimately interested parties;
- Or other corrective action (RUL-8).

Candidates or certificants may appeal the decision of the Ethics and Disciplinary Committee by submitting a written appeals statement within 30 days, according to ABRET's policies.

Each candidate must affirm that the information provided in the Application is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. Each candidate further agrees to hold ABRET and its sponsoring organizations blameless from any claim for damages as a result of any action it may take in connection with this Application, the credentialing examination, or the results thereof.