

PROCTOR GUIDE

for MECH Certification Testing

Version 7.2 – Jan 2020

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Introduction

Procedures for administering the MECH Certification Test are intended to be simple, but require **strict attention to detail** at each step. By following directions **precisely**, you ensure the validity of the test results and the certification earned.

Errors, omissions, inconsistent information and even poor handwriting can delay scoring or cause a test to be declared invalid. No refunds are made for tests forfeited due to proctor error, and the proctor and/or their facility may be responsible for fines if test security is affected.

MECH Proctors must be “disinterested third parties” to both the test candidates and the test content. Proctors may be healthcare facility employees, working in any department except Maintenance. Proctors should not have a personal relationship with the candidate(s), report to the same supervisors, or direct the candidate(s) work in any way.

Before you can become an authorized proctor, you must read and fully understand this guide. **Direct any questions or concerns to the MECH National Coordinator.**

Proctors are authorized for one year from the notarization date. Original signed and notarized affidavits must be mailed to the MECH National Coordinator to be accepted. Affidavit forms may be scanned and emailed if the notary stamp is clear and readable.

As an authorized MECH proctor, you may also administer the STEP Test. See page 9 for STEP Test information.

Proctor Responsibilities

You are an extension of MECH; acting as an authority for MECH and are required to act in compliance with standards held for all nationally standardized tests. You are responsible for making sure that all MECH procedures and policies are followed.

Follow all directions precisely; contact the National Coordinator if you have questions or concerns.

You must maintain your authorization as a proctor during the entire test process. Do not pass your responsibilities off to any person who is not an authorized MECH proctor. Make sure you have the most up to date copy of all materials, and are aware of any changes in policy.

Intervene, document and report honestly anything that compromises the integrity of the test, including any actions by test candidates or others who may be interested in affecting the test administration or results.

If a situation seems out of your control or unsafe for you, do not intervene but document and report to the National Coordinator immediately. Your report can be kept confidential if required.

You are expected to ensure the security of the test candidates' information and the test materials while they are in your possession.

If you are not sure of any procedural requirement, get an official determination from MECH before making a decision on your own.

Proctor Affidavit

To become an authorized proctor, you are required to submit the MECH Proctor Affidavit. **The Affidavit form requires the following:**

- Your complete contact information. Please use the mailing address at which you will receive test material.
- Indication of agreement to nine basic proctor responsibilities, and your signature.
- The signature of your immediate supervisor, indicating agreement that you will be serving as a MECH proctor during your workday.
- The signature of another person in administrative authority, indicating agreement to MECH policy and applicable laws.
- Notarization of all three signatures. Notaries may choose their best method for witnessing each signature (multiple sheets or notary initials next to each signature are allowed).

Your affidavit is valid for one year from the notarization date. Proctors may maintain authorization each year, or submit an affidavit only when there are candidates interested in testing. To submit a new affidavit, **download the current form** from www.mech-certification.org.

If you are a returning proctor and the same supervisor and administrative person will be signing your affidavit again, you may contact the MECH National Coordinator for approval to skip the notarization. You must have approval first, or your affidavit will be rejected.

Application Process

Make sure your proctor affidavit is current before handling any applications or scheduling a test date.

You may be required to help test candidates apply for the MECH test in your facility.

Go to www.mech-certification.org to find more information about the certification test or other products. The application for certification can be found on the “Getting Certification” page.

The candidate should fill out his/her own application, assuring that all information is complete and true. The candidate and his/her supervisor will both need to sign the application. Follow instructions on the application for submission and payment.

Applications may be emailed to the MECH National Coordinator. Payment may be made by check, or by credit card via our website. Candidates may request an invoice by checking the box on the application.

You will handle communication concerning MECH testing at your facility. Work closely with your candidates, their supervisor(s), the facility manager, administrative assistant(s) or your accounting department as needed.

Proctors may also set up pre-arranged test dates, and advertise that test opportunity to their organization. Announcements should include a suitable application deadline (5 weeks in advance of the test is advised). Applications for a pre-arranged test date should include the test information in order for the test candidate to be added to the roster.

Contact the MECH National Coordinator for more information about setting up pre-arranged test dates.

Setting a Test Date

Work with your test candidates and their supervisor(s) to choose a test date. **Your chosen date must be no less than 40 business days (8 weeks) from the day you request the date.** Requests for test dates occurring in less than forty business days will not be approved.

Obtain approval for your chosen date from the MECH National Coordinator. Email is preferable, but you may also call the National Coordinator. Once your date is approved, you will receive a test roster listing your test candidates. **Candidates can be added to an approved test date up to 4 weeks in advance.**

Each candidate will receive the Test Preparation Workbook to help them get ready for testing. Candidates may require more than 8 weeks to prepare; **you may schedule test dates up to a year in advance.**

If you have several candidates, you may choose to split them into groups. Groups tested on the same day will appear on the same roster. If the groups will test on separate days, each test date will be handled as a separate event; **do not hold test material between dates or switch test candidates.**

If you find at any time that you must reschedule or postpone a test, alert the MECH National Coordinator immediately to receive guidance before rescheduling. Tests cancelled with less than 20 business days notice (4 weeks) will be assessed a cancellation fee.

Proctors may also set up pre-arranged test dates, and advertise that test opportunity to their organization. Announcements should include a suitable application deadline (5 weeks in advance of the test is advised).

Contact the MECH National Coordinator for more information about setting up pre-arranged test dates.

Preparing to Test

You are responsible for maintaining the security of the MECH test before, during, and after administration. **No one else at your facility is allowed to open or access any test materials.** Make sure you are the only person who will open the package when materials are shipped to you.

You must have a locked cabinet, drawer or storage space that is accessible only to you. Keep all test materials locked while they are in your possession.

Choose a location to administer the test that is:

- Secure, having a door that can be closed
- Quiet and free from distractions
- Well-lit
- Comfortable in temperature
- Furnished with tables or desks and chairs
- Large enough to leave plenty of space between test candidates

An open library, cafeteria or meeting space is not a suitable test room. No other persons besides yourself and the test candidates are to be in the test room at any time during the test. A conference room with a single central table is not suitable for testing more than one candidate; candidates should not be facing each other during testing.

No test candidate is to be disturbed for any reason other than their personal safety during the test.

Proctors are required to remain in the test room for the full test time.

Familiarize yourself with the Test Incident Report form and its uses (refer to page 9).

Prior to your test date, gather:

1. At least two sharpened #2 pencils per candidate
2. A stopwatch or timer to monitor the test time
3. Additional blank scratch paper.

Receiving Test Materials

You will receive the test booklets approximately five days in advance of your test date, shipped to your office via USPS from our scoring service, EDEMPCO.

When the envelope arrives from EDEMPCO:

1. Ensure that the envelope is sealed.
2. Carefully cut open the Tyvek envelope at the top, and count to make sure you have one security seal and the required number of test booklets, answer sheets and scratch paper sheets.
3. Check that all test booklet seals are intact.

Contact the MECH National Coordinator

immediately if the package was opened before you received it, if any test booklet seals are broken, if the security seal, answer sheets or scratch paper sheets are missing, or if you did not receive the required number of test booklets, answer sheets or scratch paper sheets.

4. Save the envelope and bubble wrap insert, if included. (Discard packing slip from EDEMPCO)
5. Download and print the **Test In Progress Sign** and **Incident Report** from mech-certification.org
6. Print the **Test Roster** and **Shipping Label** emailed by the National Coordinator.
7. Place all test materials in your locked location.

Contact the MECH National Coordinator

immediately if the original mailing envelope or box was destroyed or lost, and you will not be able to reuse it for the return mailing.

Pre-Test Checklist:

BEFORE your test day, make sure you have:

- Two sharpened #2 pencils per test candidate
- Additional blank scratch paper
- Timer to monitor the time during the test (stop watch preferred)
- Printed copy of this Proctor Guide, so you can follow testing procedures and read the instructions to the test candidates
- Printed copy of the Test In Progress Sign and Incident Report, downloaded from the MECH Proctor Info web page
- Tape for hanging Test In Progress sign and sealing the return mailing package

The following are provided by the MECH National Coordinator via email — download and print:

- Test Roster
- Return shipping label

The following test materials are mailed to you:

- Test booklet(s)
- Answer sheet(s)
- Scratch paper sheet(s)
- Security seal
- Original mailing envelope and bubble wrap insert, if included

If you are missing any of the above items: STOP.

Do not administer the test until you have obtained all required items listed above. Contact the National Coordinator immediately if you are missing any of the documents or materials that should have been emailed or shipped to you.

Administering the Test

1. **Before test candidates arrive, prepare your testing location.** Use the checklist on page 5. Note the site code on your roster, and write it in the blank on step 6.

Set up your test room so that candidates are spaced apart, minimizing distractions. Place yourself where you can watch all candidates. Turn off your own cell phone; proctors must remain in the test room with candidates during testing, and no talking is allowed.

2. **As candidates arrive:**
 - A. Inspect photo ID. Check box on roster.
 - B. **Check for banned items.** A non-programmable calculator is permitted. No pens or pencils, paper, purses, bags, radios, pagers, cell phones or other equipment of any kind are allowed. **All cell phones or other communication devices must be turned completely OFF and held by the proctor during the test.** If a candidate insists that they must possess a prohibited item, that candidate must be barred from testing.
 - C. Provide each candidate with two #2 pencils, test booklet, scratch paper and answer sheet. **Write test booklet ID number in the space provided on the test roster.**
Let candidates know not to open test booklets until you announce that they may do so.
 - D. Direct each candidate to a desk, leaving space between each candidate.
 - E. **If a test candidate does not arrive before the scheduled time,** they are barred from testing. Do not allow late arrivals to enter the test room. Submit an Incident Report detailing your knowledge of the missing candidate's situation.

3. Only test candidates and yourself are allowed to remain in the testing room at test time.
4. At the scheduled test time, place the Test In Progress sign on the outside of the door and close it. Do not allow others to enter a room in which testing is taking place.
5. Direct the candidates to the instructions printed on the back cover of their test booklets.

6. Read this statement aloud, word for word:

“Please fill out the top of your answer sheet legibly, using all capital letters. Make sure that you fill in all fields properly. Answer sheets that are illegible or improperly filled in may result in forfeiture of test results. The Site Code is _____.”

7. See that all candidates have filled in the top of their answer sheets.

8. Read this statement aloud, word for word:

“This test has 110 questions. Ten of these are pilot questions and are being asked for statistical reasons only. Only 100 questions will count toward your score. The pilot questions are not identified; answer all questions on the test.”

“Answer all questions by completely darkening in the appropriate bubble. To change an answer, erase completely. Do not fill in more than one bubble for a question, as this will be scored as a wrong answer. Questions left blank will be also be scored as a wrong answer. Do not make any marks in your test booklets. Are there any questions?”

Pause, answer any questions at this time. Prepare your stopwatch or timer to begin.

“The time limit is two hours. You may open your test booklets now and begin the test.”

9. **Start your timer** for two hours.

10. **Remain in the test room during the entire test.** No other person may preside over a test in progress or handle test materials. At no time are the candidates to be left alone during the test.
11. **Monitor the candidates during the test period.** Candidates are not allowed to talk during the test.

Only one candidate at a time is allowed to leave the test area during the test period for personal hygiene reasons. All materials are to remain in the room, and no materials are allowed in upon the candidate's return. Do not "stop the clock" during the absence.

If a candidate leaves for any other reason their test will be ended. Submit an Incident Report.

Candidates who complete their tests early may leave before the end of the test period.

Fill out an Incident Report detailing any suspicious behavior or problems encountered during the testing period. See page 9 for details.
12. **At one hour and 50 minutes, announce:** "There are ten minutes remaining."
13. **At the end of two hours, announce:** "The test period has ended. Please put your pencils down. Place your answer sheets and scratch paper inside your test booklet."
14. Collect all test material from candidates, making sure that the **answer sheet and scratch paper are enclosed in each candidate's test booklet.**
15. **Before leaving the test area,** place all test materials (used and unused), Test Roster and any Incident Reports into the original mailing envelope. **Follow the Post-Test Checklist** to assemble your return mailing package, and **place the security seal correctly.**
16. Once the package has been prepared, place it in any USPS receptacle or hand off to your mail room for immediate shipping.

Post-Test Checklist:

Assemble the return mailing package as follows:

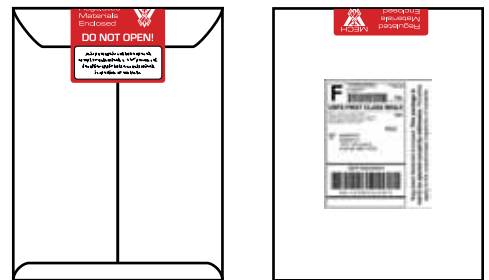
- Reuse the original Tyvek envelope (tape any damage). Include bubble wrap insert, if one was provided.
- Place the following test materials inside package. Do not include any additional documents:
 - Test Roster, filled out and signed
 - Incident Report if necessary (see page 9 for more information)
 - Each candidate's answer sheet and scratch paper(s), placed inside their test booklet
- Place security seal properly (see below)
- Tape return shipping label over original label
- Tape return mailing package closed securely

Mail the return package immediately. See next page for details.

Security Seal Placement:

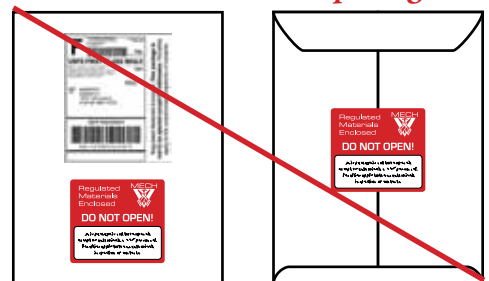
Place the seal over opening as shown. **You may fold seal over open end.** Tape over seal if necessary to hold closed.

CORRECT: on flap, over open end



DO NOT put the seal in any position that is not over an opening.

WRONG: not over opening



Returning Tests for Scoring

You are allowed to hold test materials for a maximum of 10 days, starting from the date you received them.

Do not wait to mail the test materials; prepare your return mailing package before leaving the test room and ship immediately after administering the test.

You must use the return shipping label emailed to you by the National Coordinator. If your mail room or US Postal Office personnel tells you there is something wrong with the shipping label, or requires additional postage, stop. Do not mail the package; alert the National Coordinator immediately. A new label can be emailed to you if required.

The use of an unapproved shipping method will result in delay or forfeiture of test results, revocation of proctor authorization, or additional fines.

If anything occurs which compromises the security of the test materials during the time you are in possession, you are required to submit an Incident Report. If it is not possible to include the report in the return mailing package, you may email your report to the National Coordinator.

Receiving Score Results

Candidates will receive their individual score report via email, no later than 30 business days after the test materials have been received by EDEMPCO.

Candidates who achieve MECH or Senior MECH will receive their certificate package via USPS to their home address.

Proctors or the candidate's supervisor(s) can request an Exam Report, showing which candidates passed at MECH or Senior MECH levels. Proctors who receive Exam Reports must uphold the privacy rights of their candidates; you may share a candidate's individual pass or fail with that candidate and with his/her immediate supervisor only.

It is possible that a candidate who had four or more years of healthcare experience at the time of testing, and was eligible for Senior MECH, achieved only MECH instead. This means that the candidate scored high enough for the first level, but not high enough for the second level of certification.

Candidates who fail to achieve the desired level of certification may retest at any time. MECH encourages candidates to ask their supervisor for more varied assignments prior to retesting; greater work experience will help the candidate to be successful.

Contact the National Coordinator if your facility is interested in additional tools to train or evaluate healthcare mechanics.

The Incident Report

The Incident Report is the most important tool you have as a proctor, since even the smallest unexplained irregularity in the returned test materials can result in the withholding of scores, forfeiture of test results, revocation of your authorization as proctor, and even fines to your facility for test security breaches.

Be prepared to fill out and submit an Incident Report with each test event you administer.

Document all occurrences, no matter how trivial.

In addition, you may need to contact MECH immediately if the incident compromises test security, indicates cheating, or requires action that is outside the policy set forth in this Guide.

All documentation turned in to MECH—applications, score sheets and reports—**must be typed or clearly written**. Illegibility can cause delay or forfeiture of score results.

Some examples of situations in which the Incident Report MUST be used:

- Any situation affecting the storage, handling or shipping of test materials.
- Any checklist item that was forgotten or skipped.
- Any time a step listed under “Administering the Test” is found to be skipped or modified.
- Candidates insisting that cell phones or other communication devices must remain on during the test, or leaving them on when handing them to you.
- Any time a cell phone or other device rings or buzzes during the test.
- Disagreements regarding MECH policy, the test itself, answer sheets or any other aspect of the test procedure.
- Distractions occurring in the test room or immediately outside of it during the test period, no matter how small.
- Any talking during the test.
- Any type of cheating or attempts to cheat: looking on another’s answer sheet, talking, signaling, signs or written communication between test candidates or coming in from the outside.
- Any problems with the test materials, no matter how trivial.
- Any situation which prevents a candidate from completing the test during the scheduled period.
- Weather or facility emergencies which require test administration to be postponed or stopped.
- Any situation that requires you to leave the testing room for any amount of time.
- Any mistake or omission discovered after test materials have been shipped, such as a missed Test Roster.
- Temporary or complete loss of any test materials, including answer sheets and scratch paper.

The STEP Test

The STEP Test (Screening Tool for the Evaluation of Personnel) is similar to the MECH Certification test, but does not award certification. Facility administrators and maintenance supervisors may use the STEP Test to screen potential new hires, determine training needs or evaluate mechanics after training. Facilities that require MECH Certification as a condition for hiring are encouraged to consider using the STEP Test to evaluate potential employees who are not currently eligible for certification.

The STEP Test is a two-hour written test administered in much the same way as the MECH Certification test. Since it is only for evaluation purposes and does not award certification, it can be administered by employees of the maintenance department. A STEP Test Proctor Affidavit is signed and submitted for every STEP Test order.

As an authorized MECH Proctor, you may administer the STEP Test without submitting an additional affidavit.

Maintenance supervisors and facility managers may order a quantity of STEP Tests; no candidate application is required. The STEP Test does not have to be held on a scheduled date, but must be **administered and returned for scoring within 10 business days of being received**. A ten-day target testing period is chosen when ordering STEP tests. MECH will mail test material via USPS so that it is most likely to be delivered on the first day of the target period.

After administration, test material is sent to MECH for scoring and results are delivered to the supervisor or facility manager who ordered the test(s) via email in approximately 10 business days.

Instructions for Administering the STEP Test:

1. Alert the MECH National Coordinator when you have received the STEP Test package. Test booklets and answer sheets are sealed together in an envelope. Make sure the number of envelopes received matches the order, and all envelopes are sealed. The security seal is not required for STEP Tests.
2. You will have a total of ten days to administer all ordered tests. Any unused tests must be returned after ten days, and will be subject to a restocking fee of \$50 per unused test.
3. Since there is no application process, you will not receive a test roster. It will be up to you to make sure that you administer the STEP Test to the correct examinee(s) within the ten-day period.
4. Administer the STEP Test in the same way that you would the MECH Certification Test, in the same type of room. You may use the Test In Progress sign, and the Incident Report form to note any suspicious behavior or distractions.
5. Provide examinees with #2 pencils and scratch paper. If needed, you may print extra answer sheets from the website.
6. Your test package will contain the STEP Test instruction statement to be read to the examinees before beginning the test. Each examinee will open their own envelope to begin the test.
7. The STEP Test is timed for two hours.
8. At the end of the test period, make sure each examinee places all test material, including scratch paper, back into the envelope. Each examinee will then pull out the flap of the envelope and seal it, then sign the statement on the envelope.
9. The STEP Test includes pre-paid return shipping. Use the same packaging in which you received the test materials and the shipping label that is sent to you to return the STEP test(s) for scoring. No security seal is required.