



STATE OF ALABAMA  
MANICURIST EXAMINATIONS

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN

This *Candidate Information Bulletin* ("CIB") is intended for your use in preparing for and understanding the processes and procedures for applying for licensure and scheduling to test. The Alabama Board of Cosmetology (the "Board") is responsible for licensing and regulating the profession of manicuring in the State of Alabama. The Board has contracted with Professional Credential Services ("PCS") to provide administrative examination services. The Board, through PCS, will exclusively use the National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology ("NIC") examinations. Any questions regarding your Board Application should be directed to the Board at:

**AL State Board of Cosmetology**  
RSA Union Building  
100 North Union Street, Ste 320  
Montgomery, AL 36130-1750

**Phone: (334) 242-1918**  
**Toll Free #: 1-800-815-7453**  
**Fax: (334) 242-1926**  
[cosmetology@aboc.state.al.us](mailto:cosmetology@aboc.state.al.us)

**Professional Credential Services**  
**Attn: Alabama Cos Coordinator**  
150 Fourth Ave North, Ste 800  
Nashville, TN 37219-2496

**Toll-Free: 888-822-3272**  
**Fax: 615-846-0153**  
**E-mail: [alcos@pcshq.com](mailto:alcos@pcshq.com)**  
**Web site: [www.pcshq.com](http://www.pcshq.com)**

A candidate who wishes to obtain a manicurist license must pass a theory and a practical examination within 2 years of completing school or apprenticeship hours. To take either of these examinations, a candidate must be approved by the Alabama State Board of Cosmetology. Once you have been approved to take the practical examination, the Board will then notify PCS. Approved candidates are required to call PCS at 1-888-822-3272 in order to schedule to take the practical examination.

**How To Schedule and Take the Practical Examination:** Approved candidates are required to call PCS at 1-888-822-3272 to schedule to take the practical examination. PCS will issue an **Admission Notice** for the practical examination approximately 7-10 business days prior to the test date. If you do not receive your admission notice on Monday prior to the approved examination date, please call PCS for further instructions. Visit [www.pcshq.com](http://www.pcshq.com) for a current list of practical examination dates and deadlines. Any questions regarding scheduling for the practical exam should be directed to PCS.

**Americans with Disabilities:** Candidates that require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must receive prior approval through the Alabama Board of Cosmetology. Prior approval must be submitted in writing to the Board.

**Fees:** All fees should be paid directly to the Board.

**Practical Examination Admission Requirements:**

1. You must present your **Admission Notice**, provided by PCS, and with a recent 2x2 passport type photo attached along with one form of government issued identification with a photograph and your signature (i.e. driver's lic. resident card or passport) at the practical examination site in order to be admitted into the examination room.
2. The identification must be current, clearly recognizable or you will not be admitted to test. If your photo does not have a signature, you must bring a second form of signature identification.
3. It is your responsibility to be at the test center on time. Candidates will not be permitted into the examination room after your scheduled testing time. It is strongly suggested that you visit the site before the day of the examination so you are familiar with the route and the travel time. Candidates are not permitted to bring anyone into the examination room. Candidates are not permitted to talk to one another once inside the examination room.

**General Policies and Procedures for Practical Examinations:**

**Security Policies:** Suspected security breaches during the practical exam administration, such as an act of impersonation, creating a disturbance, giving or receiving unauthorized information or aiding other candidates, attempting to remove test information by any means, possessing prohibited materials or sharing supplies may be sufficient cause to dismiss you from the examination site or to invalidate or cancel your scores. Suspected breaches may be identified by observation or suspicion by the test center staff, or may be evidenced by subsequent statistical analysis of examination materials. PCS reserves the right to investigate each incident of misconduct and will report such incidents directly to the Board. The Board will make all final decisions on examination score invalidations or cancellations. **No visitors, guests or children are allowed in the test center.**

**Prohibited Items:** No food, beverages, notebooks, magazines, backpacks, briefcases, hats, caps, reference books or **all electronic devices** such as cameras, walkmans, radios, all types of i-pods, portable fax machines, cellular telephones, calculator watches, reproduction equipment, beepers or pagers are permitted in the examination room. If any of the aforementioned items are found in a candidate's possession, the Test Center Administrator will collect the item until the end of the examination and provide a written report of the incident to the Board and PCS. Smoking or the use of tobacco is strictly prohibited in the examination room. PCS is not responsible for any personal items brought into the examination site.

**Environmental Distracters:** Although every attempt is made to provide a quiet and comfortable test environment, noise and room temperature may be an unforeseen and unavoidable distracter. It is suggested that you wear the type of clothing that would allow you to adapt to a cooler or warmer climate at the testing site.

**Emergency Policy:** In the event of inclement weather or similar emergency, a scheduled examination may be canceled or delayed. However, this decision is made only in rare instances and at the discretion of PCS. If you have reason to question whether or not a practical exam facility will be closed, please call PCS to make inquiries.

**Refunds and Rescheduling Policies:** Rescheduling is **not** permitted for the practical examination. Unless you are hospitalized or are involved in a traffic accident on the way to the test center that prevents you from arriving on time, refunds are **not** issued nor are fees transferable for the practical examination. Written documentation of the above-noted exceptions is required.

**Score Information:** For the practical examination, an overall score of 70 must be achieved. Test results are confidential and are not provided over the telephone.

**Passing Candidates:** When you have passed the practical examinations, the Board will automatically send a "Congratulations" letter to you. Complete and mail this Congratulations letter to the Board with required fees (Money Order or Cashier's Check ONLY) in order to receive your license. Please be sure to notify the Board of any mailing address changes.

**Failing Candidates:** Failing candidates will receive a score report from the Board, as well as information on how to retest.

## CONTENT OUTLINE FOR THE PRACTICAL EXAMINATION:

### IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

- Do not leave the examination area without permission. Permission must be obtained to leave the examination area for any reason, including restroom usage or at the completion of the examination.
- Candidates are required to bring their own kit with sufficient quantity of supplies in sanitary condition. This includes the required implements in proper working order and protective drapes. The kit must be kept closed except when removing or replacing materials for a particular service. The kit will be used during the examination as dry storage and is considered part of the work area.
- All examinations are administered in a testing environment. Candidates should bring a container of water if needed for any section of the examination. Candidates may bring a thermos of hot water if desired. All water and their containers must be taken with the candidates and may not be disposed of at the testing facility.
- Candidates are evaluated at all times. Continue demonstrating until you have completed the entire section.
- Candidates will be given 10 minutes for client protection and to set up the general supplies that they will use throughout the examination. Candidates will also set up the supplies for the basic manicure section of this examination.
- Candidates will also be given 2 minutes to set up the supplies for each section of the examination.
- The verbal instructions will be read twice for each section of the examination. Each examination section has a maximum time allowance. Once you have completed all tasks in the section please turn the hand toward the examiner to indicate that you are finished. In the event that all candidates complete the section before the time has elapsed the examiners will proceed to the next section of the examination.
- Candidates must follow all appropriate public protection and infection control procedures during all phases of the practical examination that will ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the public. In the event of a blood spill candidates will be expected to follow the NIC Health and Safety Standards. Failure to do so may result in your dismissal from the examination.
- Talking with other candidates or the examiners during the examination is strictly prohibited. Doing so will result in your dismissal from the examination and a report of your actions to the proper authorities. Your examiner has been instructed not to answer any questions concerning your examination. This ensures equal opportunity for all candidates and standardization in testing for the National Practical Examination. If you have an emergency situation please ask to speak with the examination coordinator.
- Manufacturer's labels are required on all disinfectants and sanitizers.

### MANNEQUIN HAND(S)

Candidates are required to bring a mannequin hand(s) for the practical examination. Mannequin hands with digital fingers (trainer hands) are **NOT** permitted during the examinations. Prior to reporting to the examination candidates **MUST** apply a set of nails to the mannequin hand. The artificial nails must cover the entire nail bed of each finger.

### NAIL TECHNICIAN (MANICURIST) PRACTICAL EXAMINATION CONTENT SECTIONS

The scope of the National Nail Technician (Manicurist) Practical Examination includes 6 core domain services. The core domain services are based on the national job analysis. The core domain services are as follows:

#### Core Domain Services

Set Up and Client Protection  
Manicure  
Nail Tip  
Nail Wrap  
Sculptured Nail  
Polish

### SET UP AND CLIENT PROTECTION (10 minutes)

**Verbal Instructions:** "You will now set up the general supplies that you will use throughout your examination." "You will also set up the supplies for the basic manicure section of this examination." "You will perform the client protection section of this examination." "You will be expected to follow all safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 10 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining" (1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

#### Preparation

- Disinfects work area or uses protective covering
- Sanitizes hands
- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Sets up implements that are visibly clean and sanitary
- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout setup

- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout setup

### MANICURE (20 minutes)

**Verbal Instructions:** "You will now perform the basic manicure section of this examination on one hand only." "You will be observed for cuticle pushing, filing, massage, and the final appearance of the nail." "Do not apply polish until instructed to do so." "You will be expected to follow all safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 20 minutes to complete this section."

"You will be informed when you have 10 minutes remaining."

(1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

#### Preparation

- Sanitizes hands
- Sanitizes hand to be manicured

#### Demonstration of Filing

- Holds skin away from sides of nails while filing
- Files nails from outside edge to center
- Avoids filing too deeply into corners
- Establishes uniform length
- Establishes uniform shape

#### Demonstration of Cuticle Care

- Immerses fingers in bowl of water
- Dries hand, nails, and cuticles
- Applies cuticle cream or remover
- Pushes back cuticle area safely
- Cleans under free edge safely
- Buffs nail
- Applies cuticle oil

#### Demonstration of Hand Massage

- Applies massage product
- Maintains continuous contact while massaging hand
- Massages palm, back of hand, and fingers
- Cleanses massage product from each nail including hyponychium

#### Safety and Infection Control

- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

### NAIL TIP (20 minutes)

**Verbal Instructions for Set Up:** "You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit for the nail tip section of this examination. Please do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up."

**Verbal Instructions:** "You will now perform the nail tip section of this examination." "You will be observed for preparation, infection control, application, filing and the final appearance of the nail." "You will apply a nail tip to one nail only." "You may select any nail on the hand." "You will be expected to follow all safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 20 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 10 minutes remaining."

(1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

#### Preparation

- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Removes shine from nail plate safely
- Cleanses nail plate and cuticle area of dust (e.g., using paper towel, cotton, towel, etc.)
- Selects a nail tip that matches width of natural nail
- Glues nail tip to natural nail
- At least ½ of natural nail plate remains uncovered
- Trims nail tip safely

#### Demonstration of Filing

- Holds skin away from sides of nail while filing
- Shapes free edge safely
- Files on top of nail plate

#### Final Appearance of Nail

- Cuticle area and skin surrounding nail are free from glue
- Tip is blended safely
- Hyponychium is free from glue
- Finished nail is smooth and even

#### Safety and Infection Control

- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

### NAIL WRAP (20 minutes)

**Verbal Instructions for Set Up:** "You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit for the nail wrap section of this examination. Please do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up."

**Verbal Instructions:**

"You will now perform the nail wrap section of this examination."

"You will wrap the nail to which you have just applied the tip." "You will be observed for preparation, infection control, application, filing, and the final appearance of the nail." "You will be expected to follow all safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 20 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 10 minutes remaining."  
**(1)** "The instructions will be repeated." **(2)** "You may begin."

**Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:**

**Preparation**

- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Removes shine from nail plate safely
- Cleanses nail plate and cuticle area of dust (e.g., using paper towel, cotton, towel, etc.)

**Application of Nail Wrap Product**

- Applies glue to nail plate
- Applies material over nail plate
- Trims material to fit nail plate safely
- Applies glue over nail wrap

**Demonstration of Filing**

- Holds skin away from sides of nail while filing
- Files nail safely
- Buffs nail

**Final Appearance of Nail**

- Finished nail is smooth and even
- Natural nail is covered by product
- Cuticle area remains free of product

**Safety and Infection Control**

- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

**POLISH (10 minutes)**

**Verbal Instructions for Set Up:**

"You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit for the polish section of this examination. Please do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up."

**Verbal Instructions:**

"You will now perform the polish section of this examination."  
 "You will apply red polish to **all** nails on the manicured hand."  
 "You will be expected to follow all safety and infection control procedures."  
 "You will have 10 minutes to complete this section."  
 "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining."  
**(1)** "The instructions will be repeated." **(2)** "You may begin."

**Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:**

**Preparation**

- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English

**Application of Polish**

- Applies base coat to nail plate
- Applies red polish
- Applies top coat

**Final Appearance of Nails**

- Polish covers entire nail plate
- Polish application is smooth
- Applies base coat, polish, and top coat so that product does not remain on skin

**Safety and Infection Control**

- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures (e.g., cotton that removes polish around nails)
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

**SCULPTURED NAIL (20 minutes)**

**Due to health and safety issues associated with Methyl Methacrylate Polymers (MMA), it is required that odorless or low odor sculptured nail products be used for the practical examination.**

**Verbal Instructions for Set Up:**

"You have 2 minutes to set up the supplies for the sculptured nail section of this examination." Please do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up"

**Read these instructions after the 2 minute set-up time:**

"All candidates are required to use odorless or low odor products for the sculptured nail section of this examination. Each candidate will be instructed to open their sculptured nail liquid to ensure that all candidates are complying with this requirement."

**Verbal Instructions:**

"You will now perform the sculptured nail section of this examination."  
 "You will apply one sculptured nail using an odorless or low odor product."  
 "You will be observed for preparation, infection control, application, filing, and the final appearance of the nail." "You will be expected to follow all safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 20 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 10 minutes remaining."  
**(1)** "The instructions will be repeated." **(2)** "You may begin."

**Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:**

**Preparation**

- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Removes shine from nail plate safely
- Cleanses nail plate and cuticle area of dust (e.g., using paper towel, cotton, towel, etc.)

**Application of Sculptured Nail Product**

- Applies nail form to fit snugly under free edge
- Wears gloves and safety glasses during application of primer
- Applies primer safely
- Applies product to extend free edge
- Applies product to cover nail plate

**Demonstration of Filing**

- Holds skin away from sides of nail while filing
- Files on top of nail plate to shape and balance nail safely
- Avoids filing too deeply into corners
- Buffs nail

**Final Appearance of Nail**

- Finished nail is smooth, even, and beveled
- Curve of nail is balanced
- Natural nail is covered by product
- Skin surrounding nail remains free of product

**Safety and Infection Control**

- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service

**CANDIDATE SUMMARY AND FINAL CLEANUP**

**Verbal Instructions:** "This concludes the National Practical Examination. Please make sure that all kit supplies and disposable materials are taken with you. Please do not dispose of waste materials, chemicals, or water in the trash receptacles or restrooms as they are unable to accommodate all waste materials from every candidate that takes the examination."

**RECOMMENDED GENERAL SUPPLIES**

**ALL SUPPLIES MUST BE LABELED IN ENGLISH**

Recommended kit size is no larger than 30"x30". For safety reasons all kits must be able to fit comfortably under the table area. **\*\*NO AEROSOL CANS WILL BE PERMITTED INTO THE EXAMINATION ROOM**

- dry storage kit/container
- hand sanitizer
- mannequin hand with artificial nails attached (trainer hands are **NOT** permitted)
- spray disinfectant
- disposal bag for waste materials
- cloth and paper towel(s)
- cotton
- first-aid supplies (blood spill kit)
- tape

**BASIC MANICURE SUPPLIES**

- bowl and container of water
- cuticle cream/remover
- filing and buffing implements
- cuticle pusher
- nail brush
- hand lotion or massage product
- cuticle oil

**NAIL TIP AND NAIL WRAP SUPPLIES**

- cuticle pusher
- nail tips and adhesive/glue
- nail wrap material (non pre-cut fabric)
- filing and buffing implements
- scissors

**SCULPTURED NAIL SUPPLIES**

- cuticle pusher
- sculptured nail products (powder, primer, "odorless or low odor" liquid)(The product must be in its original container with the manufacturer's label indicating that it is "odorless or low odor".)
- sculptured nail brush
- liquid & powder containers
- filing and buffing implements
- sculptured nail forms
- primer
- gloves
- safety glasses

**POLISH SUPPLIES**

- polish remover
- base coat/top coat
- red polish

NIC Health and Safety Standards  
 NIC, Inc., October 2002  
[www.nicesting.org](http://www.nicesting.org)

**NAIL TECHNOLOGY (MANICURING) REFERENCES**

*Milady's Standard Nail Technology, 2007*

Milady  
 5 Maxwell Drive  
 Clifton Park, NY 12065  
 (800) 347-7707  
[www.Milady.com](http://www.Milady.com)

*Salon Fundamentals, Nails 2007*

Pivot Point International, Inc.  
 Evanston, IL 60201  
 (800) 886-4247  
[www.pivot-point.com](http://www.pivot-point.com)

**OPTIONAL REFERENCES**

*Milady's Standard Textbook of Cosmetology, 2004*

Milady  
 5 Maxwell Drive  
 Clifton Park, NY 12065  
 (800) 347-7707  
[www.Milady.com](http://www.Milady.com)

*Salon Fundamentals of Cosmetology, 2004 & 2006*

Pivot Point International, Inc., 2000  
 Evanston, IL 60201  
 (800) 886-4247  
[www.pivot-point.com](http://www.pivot-point.com)

**NIC HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS BLOOD SPILL PROCEDURE**

If a blood spill should occur, the following steps **MUST** be followed:

- **SUPPLY INJURED PARTY WITH LIQUID STYPTIC/ANTISEPTIC AND THE APPROPRIATE DRESSING TO COVER THE INJURY.**
- **DOUBLE BAG ALL BLOOD-SOILED (CONTAMINATED) ARTICLES AND LABEL WITH RED OR ORANGE BIOHAZARD WARNING.**

*This is the responsibility of the candidate and should be executed as follows:*

**CANDIDATE INJURY – FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES**

1. **PROTECTION** – If a cut is sustained, stop the service and clean the injured area.
2. **APPLY** antiseptic and/or liquid or spray styptic as appropriate (**see NOTE**).
3. **DRESSING** - cover the injury with the appropriate dressing.
4. **COVER** injured area with finger guard or glove as appropriate.
5. **CLEAN** model/client and station as appropriate.
6. **DOUBLE BAG** and dispose of all contaminated objects. Clean hands with antimicrobial cleanser.
7. **RETURN** to service.

**MODEL INJURY – FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES**

1. **STOP** service.
2. **GLOVE** hands of candidate/student/licensee.
3. **CLEAN** injured area as appropriate.
4. **APPLY** antiseptic and/or liquid or spray styptic as appropriate (**see NOTE**).
5. **COVER** the injury with the appropriate dressing to prevent further blood exposure.
6. **DOUBLE BAG** and dispose of all contaminated objects. Clean hands with antimicrobial cleanser.
7. **RETURN** to service.

**EXAMINERS:**

- **EXAMINER IS TO USE UNUSED DISPOSABLE LATEX GLOVES OR NON-ALLERGENIC EQUIVALENT WHEN CHECKING THAT CANDIDATE'S SERVICE. DOUBLE BAG AND DISPOSE USED GLOVES.**
- **FOLLOW WITH ANTIMICROBIAL SCRUB ON HANDS.**
- **DOCUMENT INCIDENT IN BLOOD SPILL LOG.**

**NOTE: DO NOT ALLOW CONTAINERS, BRUSHES, NOZZLES OR LIQUID STYPTIC TO TOUCH THE SKIN OR CONTACT THE WOUND. USE AN APPLICATOR. EXAMINERS SHOULD ALSO COMPLETE AN INCIDENT REPORT.**

**WET DISINFECTION STANDARD**

**1**

All tools and implements, **EXCEPT THOSE THAT HAVE COME IN CONTACT WITH BLOOD OR BODY FLUIDS** must be disinfected, at minimum, by complete immersion in an EPA registered, *bactericidal, virucidal, fungicidal, and pseudomonacidal (Formulated for Hospitals)* disinfectant that is mixed and used according to the manufacturer's directions.

**2**

All tools and implements **WHICH HAVE COME IN CONTACT WITH BLOOD OR BODY FLUIDS** must be disinfected, at minimum, by complete immersion in an EPA registered disinfectant that is effective *against HIV-1 and human Hepatitis B Virus or Tuberculocidal* that is mixed and used according to the manufacturer's directions.

**DRY STORAGE STANDARD**

Disinfected implements must be stored in a disinfected, dry, covered container and be isolated from contaminants.

**HAND WASHING**

Anti-Bacterial Soap is recommended) Thoroughly wash hands and the exposed portions of arms with antibacterial soap and water before providing services to **each client** and after smoking, drinking, eating, and using the restroom.

**NAIL TECHNOLOGY**

Liquid Monomer containing Methyl Methacrylate (MMA) is prohibited for use during NIC practical examinations.

Odorless or low odor sculpture nail products are required for use during NIC practical examinations.

Adopted as amended October 2002

Visit our web site at [www.nicesting.org](http://www.nicesting.org)