

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST REGISTERED OTR<sup>®</sup>  
CERTIFIED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT COTA<sup>®</sup>

# TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS HANDBOOK

NBCOT<sup>®</sup> Certification  
Programs are accredited by:



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All general correspondence, including requests for information concerning NBCOT Testing Accommodations (TA), should be directed to:

National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT®), Inc.  
Attn.: Testing Accommodations  
One Bank Street, Suite 300  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

NBCOT does not discriminate against any individual because of race, ethnicity, gender, age, creed, disability, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, or national origin. NBCOT reserves the right to amend the procedures outlined in this handbook. All documentation submitted to NBCOT, for any reason, becomes the property of the organization. This includes but is not limited to: certification eligibility, initial certification, certification renewal, reinstatement, disciplinary action, international regulatory affairs or other NBCOT matters. For the most up-to-date information/announcements concerning NBCOT certification, please visit [www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org), or contact us via phone at: 301-990-7979.

Telephone: 301-990-7979  
E-mail: [accommodations@nbcot.org](mailto:accommodations@nbcot.org)  
Website: [www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org)

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## OVERVIEW

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), NBCOT® provides reasonable and appropriate Testing Accommodations (TA) for exam candidates with disabilities who are otherwise eligible to take the OTR® or COTA® certification examination. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g., caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, seeing, breathing, learning, and walking) when compared with the abilities of the general public.

In order to request TA for the OTR® or COTA® examination, exam candidates **MUST** have a documented disability as defined by the ADA. Testing accommodation requests are reviewed and approved based on the candidate’s request, the nature of the disability or medical condition, and supporting documentation. Having a diagnosed disability does not automatically necessitate testing accommodations.

Non-specific diagnoses such as individual learning styles, general learning differences, academic challenges, computer phobias, slow reading, and test difficulty or anxiety in and of themselves do not constitute a disability or impairment and are not covered under the ADA. Additionally, English as a second language is not covered under the ADA.

Accommodations may be approved for exam candidates with documented qualifying medical conditions that may be temporary or are not otherwise covered by the ADA, such as pregnancy with medical complications or a temporary impairment. Exam candidates with temporary and transitory conditions should contact NBCOT as soon as possible before the exam is scheduled to take place. The decision as to whether a medical condition that is not covered by the ADA is a “qualifying medical condition” for purposes of an NBCOT testing accommodation is at the sole discretion of NBCOT.

For conditions that require the use of medical devices or medication during the examination, please refer to the list of pre-approved personal items that do not require a request for testing accommodations on page 3 of this handbook.

Reasonable TA do not compromise the validity of the examination, jeopardize examination integrity and security, fundamentally alter the measurement of the skills and knowledge the examination is intended to test, or impose an undue burden on NBCOT. Accommodations cannot be made to the actual content of the examination.

All NBCOT certification examinations are computer-administered. Exam candidates respond to questions with a simple click of the mouse. During the examination, candidates will be able to highlight text in the question passage area that they feel is important to refer back to as they progress through the exam. A strike out feature is also available to help candidates visually eliminate possible options from consideration.

In the clinical simulation portion of the OTR exam, computer-based delivery is required for feedback to be revealed response by response as the candidate makes selections. For details on these features, as well as additional functionality of the exam in the computer-administered testing environment, view the [online exam tutorial\(s\)](#).



### **Important Notes:**

For questions relating to testing accommodations, please contact [accommodations@nbcot.org](mailto:accommodations@nbcot.org).

## STEPS FOR REQUESTING TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

- STEP 1:** Read the *Certification Exam Handbook*. The Exam Day: Questions & Answers section provides detailed information about the standard testing conditions.
- STEP 2:** Refer *here* for a list of pre-approved personal items that do not require a request for testing accommodations.
- STEP 3:** Gather required documentation from a qualified professional as outlined in the Required Documentation section of this handbook. Requirements are also outlined in the *Required Documentation to Submit with Testing Accommodations Request* form, located in the Appendix section of this handbook, and is available for download within the TA section of the online exam application. All documentation listed on the form must be submitted. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

The required documentation must be completed by a qualified professional (licensed professional or certified specialist) with training and experience in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of the relevant disability.

*It is recommended to gather all documentation prior to applying for the exam, as an exam application is only valid for three months from the date it is submitted. Please note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, exam applications will now be valid for six months.<sup>1</sup>*

- STEP 4:** Submit an *NBCOT Certification Examination Application* by visiting [www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org). If applying online for the first time, set up a new MyNBCOT account with a working email address and password. Be sure to activate your account. If you have an existing online account from a previous application, log on with your email and password and follow the steps to reapply.

- In the exam application, select “Yes” when asked if Testing Accommodations are required, and then answer all questions presented.
- You **MUST** complete the *Previous Testing Accommodations Log* within the application, providing a history of accommodations previously granted for educational and testing experiences. *(For considerations regarding previous TA, refer to item 3 under Required Documentation, page 4.)*
- Candidates requesting TA for the first time must upload all required documentation as outlined in Step 3 before the application may be completed. Candidates who are reapplying for the exam and who have been previously approved for TA will be presented with their pre-approved accommodation(s) and may choose some or all of them, provided the original approval has been within the past seven years. New TA may also be requested when reapplying for the exam. Candidates who are reapplying and who wish to request different or additional TA than those previously approved must submit the required documentation as outlined in Step 3.
- Read and confirm the declaration and authorization statements.



### **Important Notes:**

To change your existing TA request, or add a new request after applying, click on Application in your MyNBCOT portal, then click on the Edit button in the TA section of the application. To withdraw an existing TA request, click on the Withdraw button.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

As part of the criteria of requesting testing accommodations, a qualified professional with training and experience in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of the specific disability in patients/clients must complete ALL of the following on behalf of the exam candidate requesting TA:

1. A detailed, comprehensive, written report, dated within the past seven years and prepared by a qualified healthcare professional, describing your disability and its severity and justifying the need for the specifically requested TA.

Such documentation must include ALL of the following:

- Specific and professionally recognized diagnosis of the disability, including DSM and/or diagnostic code.
  - Description of the diagnostic criteria and diagnostic tests used, including date(s) of evaluation, specific test results, and interpretation of the test results.
  - Description of the current effect of the disability on one or more major life activities as compared to most people in the general public.
  - Specific explanation of how the disability impacts the candidate's ability to test under NBCOT's standard testing conditions. (Standard testing conditions are outlined in the *Certification Exam Handbook*, Exam Day: Questions and Answers.)
  - Specific recommendations for reasonable accommodations, including an explanation of why each recommended accommodation is necessary to minimize the impact of the disability when taking the NBCOT exam.
  - The professional credentials of the evaluator/professional that qualify him/her to assess, diagnose, and treat the relevant disability, including information about licensure or certification.
  - Contact information including address, telephone number, and/or email address of each evaluator/professional providing documentation.
2. If the report of the professional, described above, does not include the credentials that qualify him/her to make the particular diagnosis, the attached *Evaluator Information Form* must be completed by such professional (e.g., MD, PhD, PsyD). This qualified professional **MUST** be licensed/certified to diagnose your disability.
  3. *Previous Testing Accommodations Log*, which can be found in the online TA application, requires that you list the year(s) of accommodation, type(s) of accommodation, and the name(s) of the institution or organization which provided accommodation. If no prior accommodations have been provided in previous educational and testing experiences, please indicate on the Previous TA Log form. If this is the case, the report of the qualified professional should include an explanation as to why no accommodations were given in the past and why accommodations are needed now. Please note: while documentation of previously approved accommodation(s) in an educational or academic institution or other testing organization will be considered, an applicant's prior receipt of academic or testing accommodations does not in and of itself guarantee approval of the requested accommodation(s).

If the candidate has multiple disabilities that are the basis for the requested TA, separate documentation must be submitted for every disability for which an accommodation is being requested.

 **Important Notes:**

The confidentiality of TA requests and all supporting documentation is protected. Candidates must submit all required or requested documentation through their MyNBCOT portal in the TA section of their exam application.

## THE REVIEW PROCESS

**All required documentation must be received by NBCOT before the review of a Testing Accommodations (TA) application can begin.** Until such time, NBCOT will only respond to inquiries regarding the TA process and procedure. Inquiries regarding the content of an individual TA application will not be addressed until all required documentation is received. A TA candidate must always be an active participant in any communication regarding the content of their TA application. NBCOT cannot communicate with a third party (e.g., parent, spouse) unless the candidate is also present in writing or on the phone.

After all required documents are received, NBCOT reviews all requests for reasonable TA. NBCOT may request additional documentation at any time from the candidate or their qualified professional in support of the requested accommodations before a TA determination is made. Candidates can expect a decision within approximately 10 business days from when all required documentation is received, though reviews may take longer during busy times. Exam candidates will be notified in writing of the result of the TA request.

### Once the TA request is approved:

- An Approval Notice will be available to read and review on the candidate's MyNBCOT portal. If the candidate understands and agrees to the approved TA and instructions provided, they should click "I accept". If the candidate does not agree with the approved TA, they should contact NBCOT at [accommodations@nbcot.org](mailto:accommodations@nbcot.org).
- After NBCOT receives the candidate's acceptance and all other exam application documentation has been received and approved (e.g., exam application, fee, academic verification documentation), the candidate will be issued a **Testing Accommodations Authorization to Test (ATT)** letter by email. The ATT letter authorizes the candidate to schedule a test date with Prometric.

## SCHEDULING THE EXAMINATION THROUGH A TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS (TA) ADVOCATE

Examination candidates **MUST** have received a Testing Accommodations Authorization to Test (ATT) letter prior to scheduling a testing date. TA candidates are responsible for calling and scheduling their testing appointment directly with Prometric’s Testing Accommodations Team at 1-800-967-1139. Representatives are available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM (Eastern time) Monday-Friday.

Prometric will assign an advocate to assist the candidate through every step of the scheduling and administration process and coordinate proper delivery of approved accommodation(s). The advocate will be the candidate’s point of contact after the accommodation(s) is approved. Therefore, it is important for the candidate to obtain the name and contact information of their advocate in the event that any issues or questions arise. If the advocate is not available, alternate Testing Accommodations Team members are available to assist.

Depending on the approved TA, additional time may be required by the testing center to schedule the exam.

## REQUESTING AN ADDITIONAL REVIEW

NBCOT will notify exam candidates in writing whether their TA request has been approved. Candidates who do not accept the approved TA or whose TA request is not granted have the right to request an additional review of the application. This request must be submitted to NBCOT in writing and must be postmarked within seven (7) days from the date of the TA determination.


Once the request is received, NBCOT will review and make a decision. Once a determination in response to the request for additional review is made, the decision is considered final. The Testing Accommodations ATT letter will then be generated.

<sup>1</sup> These are temporary measures intended to assist students who are applying and scheduling to take their examination during the COVID-19 pandemic. NBCOT will continue to monitor the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on students/ability to sit for their certification exam and will determine how long the change in policies will remain in place and whether any adjustments to the changes are required going forward. (April 22, 2020)



# APPENDIX

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Required Documentation to Submit with Testing Accommodations Request .....	<a href="#">Appendix A</a>
Evaluator Information Form .....	<a href="#">Appendix B</a>



# REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION TO SUBMIT WITH TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS (TA) REQUEST

In addition to completing the section of the [NBCOT Certification Examination Application](#) regarding testing accommodations (TA), please submit **ALL** of the required documentation described below.\*

1. A detailed, comprehensive, written report, dated within the past seven years and prepared by a qualified professional, describing your disability and its severity and justifying the need for the requested TA.

Such documentation must include **ALL** of the following:

- Specific and professionally recognized diagnosis of the disability, including DSM and/or diagnostic code.
- Description of the diagnostic criteria and diagnostic tests used, including date(s) of evaluation, specific test results, and interpretation of the test results.
- Description of the current effect of the disability on one or more major life activities as compared to most people in the general public.
- Specific explanation of how the disability impacts the candidate’s ability to test under NBCOT’s standard testing conditions (Standard testing conditions are outlined in the [Certification Exam Handbook](#), Exam Day: Questions and Answers).
- Specific recommendations for reasonable accommodations, including an explanation of why each recommended accommodation is necessary to minimize the impact of the disability when taking the NBCOT exam.
- The professional credentials of the evaluator that qualify him/her to assess, diagnose and treat the relevant disability, including information about licensure or certification.

2. If the report of the professional, described above, does not include the credentials that qualify him/her to make the particular diagnosis, the attached **Evaluator Information Form** must be completed by such professional (e.g., MD, PhD, PsyD). This qualified professional **MUST** be licensed/certified to diagnose your disability.

3. **Previous Testing Accommodations Log**, which can be found in the online TA application, requires that you list the year(s) of accommodation, type(s) of accommodation, and the name(s) of the institution or organization which provided accommodation. If no prior accommodations have been provided in your educational and testing experiences, please indicate this on the Previous TA Log form. If this is the case, the report of the qualified professional should include an explanation as to why no accommodations were given in the past and why accommodations are needed now.

If you have multiple disabilities that are the bases for the requested TA, separate documentation must be submitted for each disability for which an accommodation is being requested.

**\*Important Note: All required documentation must be received by NBCOT before the review of a Testing Accommodations (TA) application can begin.**

*The exam applicant is ultimately responsible for submitting all required documentation to NBCOT with their exam application.*

## EVALUATOR INFORMATION FORM

**Dear Professional:** *The applicant identified below is requesting Testing Accommodations (TA) to take the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. (NBCOT<sup>®</sup>) Certification Examination and is submitting documentation prepared by you in connection with such request. NBCOT's policy requires that candidates requesting TA submit current documentation of their disability from an individual qualified to assess, diagnose, and treat the relevant disability.*

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY): \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

Professional's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*MUST be licensed/certified to assess, diagnose, and treat the relevant disability\***

Please identify the state/jurisdiction: \_\_\_\_\_

License/Certification Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

DSM/Diagnostic Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION:**

*I hereby certify that the above information is true and is given pursuant to the authorization to release information by the above-named applicant. I attest that I have specific training and experience in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of the disability identified above. I hereby certify that I personally completed this form, and that I may be asked to verify the above information at any time.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*This form is only required if the required documentation or comprehensive report provided by the qualified professional does not include the credentials that qualify him/her to assess, diagnose, and treat the relevant disability.*

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**Questions? Contact NBCOT: (phone) 301-990-7979 (e-mail) accommodations@nbcot.org (website) www.nbcot.org**



National Board for Certification in  
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