

Plumbing and Mechanical Systems Board

Testing and Exam Committee Notes

August 15, 2011 2:00 p.m. In Room 517

Present: Chuck Thomas, Jim Cooper, Mick Gage, Jane Hagedorn, Ron Masters, Matt Oetker, September Lau, Cindy Houlson and Mary Swinehart

Patrick Hayes from Prometrics joined via phone

Chuck Thomas posed the following questions to Patrick Hayes:

1. What options are there for ESL (English Speaking Language) accommodations?
Chuck suggested looking at other trade licensing agencies to see how they are handling this issue. Should there be a cost associated with accommodations, that expense will be paid by the individual, not by the majority of exam takers.
Patrick agreed to look into this to see how other agencies are handling ESL and report back to Cindy Houlson.
2. Gas questions need to be added to the Master and Journeyman refrigeration exams.
Chuck asked if it was as simple as taking the gas questions previously agreed upon and move into the refrigeration exam and reduce the number of questions to accommodate.
Patrick will pass on to the test developer and contract specialists and report back to Cindy Houlson.
3. Refrigeration questions need to be added to the HVAC exam.
Patrick will pass on to the test developer and contract specialists and report back to Cindy Houlson.
4. Books (resources) need to be reviewed and updated. Also issue with tabbed books.
Patrick commented that reviewing and updating resources are pretty normal.
Chuck commented on exam candidate being refused entrance to an exam due to book being tabbed.
Patrick commented that Promedic will accept what the Board would like to specify.
5. Testing sites, too few sites in Iowa and space available to use books inadequate. There was a discussion about the location of sites in Iowa. Individuals in the northern tier and the southeastern areas are not covered with test sites, requiring candidates to drive a great distance to take an exam
Patrick requested number in those areas to justify request for additional exam sites.

Provide any type of numbers in those areas.
Apprentices/who has taken tests
6. Committee would like to decrease the number of questions, possibly to 75 for the journey and 150 for the master. What do other states normally have?

We have exam takers not being able to complete the exam in the amount of time allowed. Maybe we need to reduce the number of questions.

What would be involved in reducing questions? We could keep duration the same and reduce the questions.

Work area may not be large enough to accommodate all resources needed to take exam.

Patrick will pass on to the test developer and contract specialists and report back to Cindy Houlson. There is no standard for state government. Don't know how large a task that would be.

7. How many versions of our test are in the rotation for candidates who retake the exam?

Patrick commented all questions are the same, but in different order. He will check to make sure there is a test bank to pull different questions each time.

When do we have to have changes made?

Patrick will check the timeline. Contract has point in time we can look at certain things. Patrick will review the contract.

Get answers to these questions. Contract was unique - \$0 to the state.

2:50 p.m. Patrick hung up.

This committee would like to see pass rate for second time taking exam.

3 p.m. meeting adjourned