

USMLE STEP 3 / COMLEX-USA LEVEL 3 EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Steps 1 and 2 CK/ Level 1 and 2-CE:

To ensure that all residents/fellows meet minimal standards, the Graduate Medical Education Office requires that **all** residents/fellows entering any graduate medical education program sponsored by the University of Tennessee College of Medicine must have passed USMLE Steps 1 and 2 CK or COMLEX-USA Level 1 and 2-CE.

Any Agreement of Appointment or offer letter will be contingent upon passing USMLE Steps 1 and 2 CK or COMLEX-USA Level 1 and 2-CE. Each resident/fellow is responsible for providing copies of passage of USMLE Steps 1 and 2 CK or COMLEX-USA Level 1 and 2-CE to the program director and GME Office and will not be allowed to start training until this documentation is submitted. A valid ECFMG certificate will be accepted as proof for international medical school graduates.

Accepted or matched residents and fellows who have not passed USMLE Steps 1 and 2 CK or COMLEX-USA Level 1 and 2-CE by July 1 will be released from their contract. Any program that releases a resident or fellow who matched through the NRMP will be required to obtain a release from NRMP before offering the position to another applicant.

Step 3/ Level 3:

All residents are required to pass USMLE Step 3 or COMLEX-USA Level 3 before they can advance to the PGY 3 level. All residents on the standard cycle must register for USMLE Step 3 or COMLEX-USA Level 3 no later than February 28th of the PGY 2 year. The exam should be taken on or prior to June 1, in order to have scores available to the program and GME office on June 30. Failure to register for the exam by the February 28th will result in the resident being placed on leave without pay until proof of registration is provided to the Program Director and GME Office. Residents must provide proof of passage by June 30th to be promoted to the PGY 3 level. Failure to provide proof of passage by June 30th will result in non-renewal of the resident's contract and the resident will be terminated from the program. It is the responsibility of the resident to provide the necessary proof to the Program Director and GME Office.

Residents that are off cycle must register for the exam no later than the end of the 8th month of training during the PGY 2 year or be placed on leave without pay until registered. Proof of passage must be provided no later than the last day of the PGY 2 year or the resident contract will not be renewed, and the resident will be terminated from the program.

Any Agreement of Appointment or offer letter to begin training at the PGY3 or higher level will be contingent upon passing USMLE Step 3 or COMLEX-USA Level 3. Accepted or matched residents and fellows who have not passed USMLE Step 3 or COMLEX-USA Level 3 prior to their scheduled start date do not meet eligibility requirements for entering programs at the PGY3 or higher level and will be released from their appointment. Any program that releases a resident or fellow who matched through the NRMP will be required to obtain a waiver from NRMP. The waiver must be granted before offering the position to another applicant.

Exceptions:

Any resident/fellow that passed USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 prior to June 1994 will not need to take USMLE Step 3. Any entering resident/fellow that holds an unrestricted Tennessee medical license meets this USMLE requirement.

Individual programs may have earlier examination deadlines or specific score requirements. The resident will be responsible for meeting individual program requirements when they exceed GME requirements.

Any exception to this policy may only be brought to the Graduate Medical Education Committee by the Program Director at his/her discretion. Only the Program Director may submit the written request and present at the GMEC meeting. If an exception is granted by the GMEC the resident will be placed on leave without pay on their original advancement date and take USMLE Step 3 or COMLEX-USA Level 3 at the next available test date. The resident will bring proof of passage to the Program Director and GME office to be removed from leave without pay and advanced to the next level of training. The resident may be required to extend their training to make up any time missed in accordance with the Residency Program and board eligibility requirements. Failure to pass will result in immediate termination of the resident. The decision of the GMEC is final.

Resident Responsibilities:

Each resident/fellow is responsible for contacting the appropriate licensing authority to register for the appropriate examination. All examination fees are the responsibility of the resident/fellow. Each resident/fellow should carefully review the exam dates and policies to ensure that the results will be available by the required deadlines.

Information on USMLE Step 3 is available in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#).

Information on COMLEX-USA Level 3 is available in the [COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information](#).

In addition, many states have restrictions regarding time intervals between the three steps, so residents/fellows should familiarize themselves with these requirements. In Tennessee, all three USMLE steps must be taken and passed within seven years. General information regarding state-specific requirements for licensure can be obtained from the [Federation of State Medical Boards](#).