



NATIONAL **BLOW DRY/STYLING**  
PRACTICAL EXAMINATION

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BULLETIN (CIB)

**EXAMINATION CONTENT AND IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Please visit your official examination provider website OR [www.nictesting.org](http://www.nictesting.org), for the most current bulletin prior to testing.

National Blow Dry/Styling Practical Examination is the licensure examination, which is developed by the National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (NIC).

This bulletin contains **IMPORTANT INFORMATION** regarding the **NIC National Blow Dry/Styling Practical Examination content and administration for Blow Dry/Styling core services and additional sections.**

For each NIC National Practical Examination, there are multiple parts to every Candidate Information Bulletin (CIB) stored as separate documents:

- **Important Instructions and Examination Core Domain Content**– This contains information and guidelines related to administration of the Practical examination and information about the scope of content covered in the core sections of the Practical examination.
- **Additional Services** – These provide information about additional sections offered by NIC for examination. Check with your State regulatory agency or examination administration vendor to determine which of these sections your State requires as part of their Practical examination.
- **References** – This is a list of references used to develop and support the content covered in NIC examinations.

The references will always be the same for both Theory and Practical examinations.

**BE CERTAIN TO DOWNLOAD AND/OR PRINT AND REVIEW ALL DOCUMENTS THAT MAKE UP THE NIC EXAMINATION CIB.**

**PLEASE REVIEW ALL INFORMATION CAREFULLY!**

**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. **Picture ID is required for re-entry into the examination.**
- Candidates are required to bring a supply kit for their own use.
  - It is the candidate's responsibility to make certain they have a sufficient quantity of supplies that have been properly cleaned and disinfected and that implements are in proper working order.
  - The kit will be used during the examination as dry storage and is considered part of the work area. The kit must be kept closed (e.g., completely zipped or lid tightly closed) except when removing materials for a particular service.
  - Candidates may remove items, supplies, etc., from the kit at any time, however nothing may be returned to the kit.
  - All examinations are administered in a testing environment.
  - Candidates are evaluated at all times. Continue working until you have completed the entire section or time has elapsed.
  - **EPA registered, disinfectant WIPES that demonstrate bactericidal, fungicidal, and virucidal properties must be used. DISINFECTANT SPRAYS ARE NO LONGER ALLOWED IN THE TESTING ENVIRONMENT.**

## NIC National Blow Dry/Styling Practical Examination

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- Due to standardization of the NIC National Examinations, proctors and examiners are required to adhere to the following standards:
  - The verbal instructions will be read twice for each section of the examination.
  - With the exception of verbal instructions, the proctors are not allowed to communicate with candidates.
  - Examiners are not allowed to speak with candidates.
  - Candidates requesting information during the examination will be told one of the following statements:
    - “Do the best you can with what you have available.”
    - “Do as you were taught.”
  - If a candidate experiences an emergency situation, please notify the proctor by raising your hand.
- Candidates will be given time to set up the universal (also known as general) supplies they will use throughout the examination.
  - Each section of the examination has a maximum time allowance, with the exception of those specified as untimed sections.
  - Once a candidate has completed all tasks in the section, please step back or turn the hand toward the examiner (in the case of nail sections) to indicate they have finished.
  - In the event that all candidates complete a section before the time has elapsed, the examiners will proceed to the next section of the examination.
  - When the timer goes off, all candidates must stop working and step back or turn the hand toward the examiner (in the case of nail services) **IMMEDIATELY**.
- During all phases of the examination, candidates must follow all appropriate public protection and infection control procedures and maintain a safe work area.
  - In the event of a blood exposure incident, candidates will be expected to follow the NIC Blood Exposure Procedure.  
**Failure to do so may result in your dismissal from the examination.**
    - *Be sure to contact your examination provider to obtain the most current version of, and any addendums to, the NIC Blood Exposure Procedure, OR go to [www.nictesting.org](http://www.nictesting.org) for a current downloadable copy.*
  - **If a candidate does not follow infection control procedures or allows the work area to become and remain unsafe, the result may be a failing score for the examination.**
- The following provides examples of materials and actions that are prohibited during the examination administration:
  - Possession of cellular phones, pagers, tablets, computers, projectors, cameras, or any other electronic or recording devices, printed materials, or handwritten notes.
  - Purses, bags, coats, hats, and any other personal items not directly needed to complete the examination, are not allowed.
  - Exhibiting disruptive behavior.
  - Communicating to other candidates or any examiner.
    - *The above referenced items or actions are not an exhaustive list. Failure to comply with any of these conditions or exhibiting ANY behavior that suggests an effort to cheat will result in the immediate dismissal from the examination and the candidate’s actions reported to the proper authorities.*
  - **All supplies must be labeled in English.** When an original manufacturer's label is required, there can be NO handwritten or any other type of labeling. Original manufacturers’ labels must have English and may also include other languages. All non-manufacturers created labels must be only in English.
    - Original manufacturer’s labels are *required* for all disinfectants and hand sanitizers.
    - **EPA-registered disinfectant WIPES that demonstrate bactericidal, fungicidal, and virucidal**

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## NIC National Blow Dry/Styling Practical Examination

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**properties must be used. DISINFECTANT SPRAYS ARE NO LONGER ALLOWED IN THE TESTING ENVIRONMENT.** Please refer to the “*Suggested Examination Supplies*” section to see any further state specific requirements for supplies and products.

- Simulated products are *not* allowed for disinfectants and hand sanitizers.
- **NO AEROSOLS** are allowed in the testing environment
- Candidates are to perform all tasks, utilizing products and supplies, and as they were taught. There is however, a section titled “*Suggested Examination Supplies*” provided following the “Content Domains” section of this bulletin for items that a candidate may *possibly* utilize in a section.

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### NIC MODEL OR MANNEQUIN REQUIREMENTS

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**Please refer to your state specific guidelines for model and mannequin requirements.**

**If your state requires that you use a mannequin head(s) or hand(s):**

- Candidates who are required to use a mannequin head(s): It is the candidate’s responsibility to come prepared for the examination.
- Mannequin heads that are premarked or presectioned are not allowed for any part of the practical examination.
- Candidates who are required to use a mannequin hand(s): It is the candidate’s responsibility to come prepared for the examination.
- Mannequin hands must be an entire hand and cannot have removable digits.
- Mannequin heads and hands must be approved by the examination state/vendor prior to admittance into examination.

### **SPECIAL ATTENTION**

The following information is vital and specific to the  
NIC National Blow Dry/Styling Practical Examination:

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- Candidates will be evaluated on proper designation of materials that are disposed. Candidates are ***required*** to bring and use the following supplies for the appropriate disposal of materials:
  - Container **labeled** “**To be disinfected**”
  - Container **labeled** “**Soiled linens**”
  - Container **labeled** “**Trash**”
- It is specified that there is **more than one client** represented for the purpose of this examination. A new client is introduced and must be prepared for during the course of the examination (see Blow Dry/Styling Practical Examination Content Domains Sections).
- Candidates are not allowed to label products as single-use items.
- Use of single-use products may result in a failing score for the examination.

**BLOW DRY/STYLING PRACTICAL EXAMINATION  
CONTENT DOMAIN SECTIONS**

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The scope of the National Blow Dry/Styling Practical Examination includes 6 (six) core domain sections.

The Core Domain Sections are based on the national job analysis.

1. **Work Area and Client Preparation, and Set Up of Supplies** (15 minutes)
2. **Blow Dry Styling** (20 minutes)
3. **Work Area and New Client Preparation, and Set Up of Supplies** (15 minutes)
4. **Flat Ironing** (10 minutes)
5. **Thermal Curling** (10 minutes)
6. **Blood Exposure Procedure** (10 minutes)
7. **Fingerwaving and Pin Curl Placement - Skip Wave** (10 minutes)+*ADDITIONAL SECTION+*

## **CONTENT DOMAINS**

### **1. WORK AREA AND CLIENT PREPARATION, AND SET UP OF SUPPLIES (15 minutes)**

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read to all candidates:

*“You will prepare your work area for your client.”*

*“You will set up the universal supplies you will use throughout the examination.”*

*“You will also set up the supplies for the Blow Dry section of the examination.”*

*“You will prepare your client for services.”*

*“You will be expected to follow all client protection, safety and infection control procedures.”*

*“You will have 15 minutes to complete this section.”*

*“You will be informed when you have 8 minutes remaining.”*

*“Do not demonstrate any procedures until the verbal instructions are given and you are instructed to begin.”*

*“Step back to indicate you have finished.”*

(1) *“The instructions will be repeated.”*

(2) *“You may begin.”*

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

- 1.1 Disinfects all work areas completely with product labeled in English as EPA-registered disinfectant that is virucidal, bactericidal, and fungicidal**
- 1.2 Universal supplies are labeled in English**
- 1.3 Sanitizes hands with product labeled in English**
- 1.4 Items to be disinfected, soiled linens, and trash are disposed of in a correct manner throughout section**

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if all candidates have stepped back to indicate they have completed the section before the timing has elapsed:

*“All candidates have indicated they have completed this section of the examination, we will now proceed.”*

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if the timer goes off before all candidates have stepped back:

*“Please stop working.”*

## 2. BLOW DRY STYLING (20 minutes)

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read to all candidates:

*“You will perform Blow Dry Styling.”*

*“You will blow dry the entire head using a round brush and a vented or paddle brush.”*

*“Your style must have a smooth finish with beveled ends.”*

*“You will be expected to saturate the hair prior to the service.”*

*“You will be expected to follow all client protection, safety and infection control procedures.”*

*“You will have 20 minutes to complete this section.”*

*“You will be informed when you have 10 minutes remaining.”*

*“Step back to indicate you have finished.”*

(1) *“The instructions will be repeated.”*

(2) *“You may begin.”*

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

- 2.1 **Blow dry supplies are labeled in English**
- 2.2 **Implements and supplies are visibly clean**
- 2.3 **Demonstrates safe use of blow dryer and/or attachments**
- 2.4 **Demonstrates control of hair with a round brush and a vented/paddle brush**
- 2.5 **Final result of blow dry styling**
- 2.6 **Maintains drape throughout section**
- 2.7 **Items to be disinfected, soiled linens, and trash are disposed of in a correct manner throughout section**

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if all candidates have stepped back to indicate they have completed the section before the timing has elapsed:

*“All candidates have indicated they have completed this section of the examination, we will now proceed.”*

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if the timer goes off before all candidates have stepped back:

*“Please stop working.”*

### 3. WORK AREA AND NEW CLIENT PREPARATION, AND SET UP OF SUPPLIES (15 minutes)

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read to all candidates:

*“You will breakdown your work area and dispose of supplies used in the previous sections of this examination.”*

*“You will prepare your work area for a NEW client.”*

*“You will set up the universal supplies you will use for the remainder of the examination.”*

*“You will also set up the supplies for the following sections of the examination:*

*Flat Ironing*

*Thermal Curling.”*

*“You will plug in and turn on your flat iron and curling iron at this time.”*

*“You will be expected to follow all client protection, safety and infection control procedures.”*

*“You will have 15 minutes to complete this section.”*

*“You will be informed when you have 8 minutes remaining.”*

*“Do not demonstrate any procedures until the verbal instructions are given and you are instructed to begin.”*

*“Step back to indicate you have finished.”*

*(1) “The instructions will be repeated.”*

*(2) “You may begin.”*

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

- 3.1 Disinfects all work areas completely with product labeled in English as EPA-registered disinfectant that is virucidal, bactericidal, and fungicidal**
- 3.2 Universal supplies are labeled in English**
- 3.3 Sanitizes hands with product labeled in English**
- 3.4 Items to be disinfected, soiled linens, and trash are disposed of in a correct manner throughout section**

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if all candidates have stepped back to indicate they have completed the section before the timing has elapsed:

*“All candidates have indicated they have completed this section of the examination, we will now proceed.”*

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if the timer goes off before all candidates have stepped back:

*“Please stop working.”*

## 4. FLAT IRONING (10 minutes)

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read to all candidates:

*“You will perform Flat Iron Styling.”*

*“You will straighten the hair on the entire back of the head, from nape to crown.”*

*“You will be expected to follow all client protection, safety and infection control procedures.”*

*“You will have 10 minutes to complete this section.”*

*“You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining.”*

*“Step back to indicate you have finished.”*

(1) *“The instructions will be repeated.”*

(2) *“You may begin.”*

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

- 4.1 Flat ironing supplies are labeled in English
- 4.2 Implements and supplies are visibly clean
- 4.3 Tests temperature of flat iron
- 4.4 Subsections hair for flat ironing
- 4.5 Demonstrates safe use of flat iron
- 4.6 Final appearance of flat iron styling
- 4.7 Maintains drape throughout section
- 4.8 Items to be disinfected, soiled linens, and trash are disposed of in a correct manner throughout section

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if all candidates have stepped back to indicate they have completed the section before the timing has elapsed:

*“All candidates have indicated they have completed this section of the examination, we will now proceed.”*

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if the timer goes off before all candidates have stepped back:

*“Please stop working.”*



## 5. THERMAL CURLING (10 minutes)

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read to all candidates:

*“You will perform Thermal Curling.”*

*“You will form three curls from the crown forward.”*

*“You will form one on-base curl, one half-off base curl, and one off-base curl.”*

*“A complete curl must be formed from base to end.”*

*“You will be expected to follow all client protection, safety and infection control procedures.”*

*“You will have 10 minutes to complete this section.”*

*“You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining.”*

*“Step back to indicate you have finished.”*

(1) *“The instructions will be repeated.”*

(2) *“You may begin.”*

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

- 5.1 Thermal curling supplies are labeled in English**
- 5.2 Implements and supplies are visibly clean**
- 5.3 Tests temperature of curling iron**
- 5.4 Subsections hair for thermal curling**
- 5.5 Demonstrates safe use of curling iron**
- 5.6 Final appearance of three curls**
- 5.7 Maintains drape throughout section**
- 5.8 Items to be disinfected, soiled linens, and trash are disposed of in a correct manner throughout section**

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if all candidates have stepped back to indicate they have completed the section before the timing has elapsed:

*“All candidates have indicated they have completed this section of the examination, we will now proceed.”*

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if the timer goes off before all candidates have stepped back:

*“Please stop working.”*

## 6. BLOOD EXPOSURE PROCEDURE (10 minutes)

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read to all candidates:

*“You will demonstrate the Blood Exposure Procedure.”*

*“You will imagine the following scenario: During a service, you have sustained a minor injury to your index finger. Blood is present. The injury is such that you can continue with the service. Your work area or client has not been contaminated. You are expected to demonstrate the proper procedure for a blood exposure.”*

*“You are expected to follow all client protection, safety and infection control procedures.”*

*“You will have 10 minutes to complete this section.”*

*“You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining.”*

*“Step back to indicate you have finished.”*

(1) *“The instructions will be repeated.”*

(2) *“You may begin.”*

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

- 6.1 Blood exposure supplies are labeled in English**
- 6.2 Removes materials from first aid kit**
- 6.3 Supplies and materials are visibly clean**
- 6.4 Cleans injured area with antiseptic**
- 6.5 Covers with dressing that is absorbent and secured**
- 6.6 Candidate wears glove or finger cot**
- 6.7 Disposes of all contaminated supplies**

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if all candidates have stepped back to indicate they have completed the section before the timing has elapsed:

*“All candidates have indicated they have completed this section of the examination, we will now proceed.”*

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read if the timer goes off before all candidates have stepped back:

*“Please stop working.”*

### CANDIDATE CLEANUP AND FINAL SUMMARY

**Proctor – Verbal Instructions:** Read to all candidates at the conclusion of the examination:

*“All examiners have indicated they have completed their assessment.”*

*“Make sure that all kit supplies and disposable materials are taken with you.”*

*“This concludes the National Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology, National Blow Dry/Styling Practical Examination.”*

*“Thank you for your participation.”*

***SUGGESTED EXAMINATION SUPPLIES***

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**Suggested supply list:**

- This is a list of suggested supplies for the practical examination.
- Candidates are responsible for bringing all needed materials, even if not included on this list.

**Information related to labeling of supplies:**

- ALL supplies must be labeled in English
- Original manufacturers' labels MUST have English and may be multi-language
- All created labels must be only English

**EXAMINATION UNIVERSAL/GENERAL SUPPLIES**

- blow dryer
- candidate supply kit to serve as dry storage area (must be closeable)
- capes (child size capes may be used)
- comb(s)
- container labeled "items to be disinfected"
- container labeled "soiled linens"
- container labeled "trash"
- curling iron with cord unbound and/or unaltered
- EPA-registered disinfectant wipes with manufacturer's label that demonstrate bactericidal, fungicidal, and virucidal properties must be used (must be actual disinfectant)
- first aid kit
- flat iron with cord unbound and/or unaltered
- gloves
- hair brush(es)
- hair clip(s) and/or clamp(s)
- hand sanitizer with manufacturer's label (must be real product)
- mannequin head(s) and a table clamp or tri-pod (pre-sectioning on mannequins is not permitted)
- material for testing temperature of iron(s)
- neck strip(s)
- paper towels
- spray bottle
- towels