



# **Application for Certification**

## **Basic Perioperative Transesophageal Echocardiography (Basic PTEeXAM)**

### **Certification Requirements and Online Certification Instructions**

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# Introduction

## National Board of Echocardiography, Inc.

The National Board of Echocardiography, Inc. (NBE) was formed in December 1998. The NBE is a not-for-profit corporation established to:

- develop and administer examinations in the field of Perioperative Transesophageal Echocardiography,
- recognize those physicians who successfully complete the Examination of Special Competence in Basic Perioperative Transesophageal Echocardiography (Basic PTEeXAM), and
- develop a board certification process that will publicly recognize as Diplomates of the National Board of Echocardiography, Inc. those physicians who have completed training programs or significant practice experience in the perioperative care of surgical patients with cardiovascular disease and in basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiography (TEE), as specified in this application, and have additionally passed either the Basic PTEeXAM or the Advanced PTEeXAM.

The examination and board certification in basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiography is not intended to restrict the practice of echocardiography. The process is undertaken, rather, in the belief that the public desires an indication from the profession regarding those who have made the effort to optimize their skill in the performance and interpretation of cardiac ultrasound.

In cooperation with the American Society of Anesthesiology, the National Board of Echocardiography is offering certification in basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiography. The primary purpose of this certification is to provide anesthesiologists who use TEE as a monitor during general anesthesia with an opportunity to demonstrate their competence with this technique. Certification in basic perioperative TEE is NOT intended to qualify an individual to use TEE as a diagnostic tool to direct or assess cardiac surgical interventions; the board certification in perioperative transesophageal echocardiography offered by the NBE since 2003 remains unchanged and still serves this purpose and from this point on will be referred to as Advanced PTE Certification. The requirements for certification in basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiography are based on the Guidelines for Training in Perioperative Echocardiography adopted by the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists and the American Society of Echocardiography in 2002.

## Eligibility

### Certification

Licensed physicians who have passed the Basic PTEeXAM or the Advanced PTEeXAM and are board certified in anesthesiology may apply for Basic PTE Certification. The Certification Committee will meet to review applications for Certification. Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision of the Committee. Applicants will receive notification of the decision of the Committee within the year.

Individuals who have passed the Advanced PTEeXAM and have been awarded Testamur status may apply for certification at any point at which they meet the clinical experience requirements, as long as their Testamur status remains valid. (For information concerning the Advanced PTE Certification, visit our website at [www.echoboards.org](http://www.echoboards.org))

### Testamur Status

For licensed physicians not meeting the criteria for certification, the NBE will continue to allow access to the examination. This is to encourage physicians to test and demonstrate their knowledge of basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiography based on an objective standard and to allow the medical community the opportunity to recognize individuals who elect to participate in and successfully complete a basic examination in perioperative transesophageal echocardiography. Those who successfully pass the examination will be granted Testamur status as having successfully completed the Examination of Special Competence in Basic Perioperative Transesophageal Echocardiography of the National Board of Echocardiography, Inc.

### Scope of Practice

The application of a basic perioperative TEE examination is limited to non-diagnostic use within the customary practice of anesthesiology. Because the goal of and training in basic PTE is focused on intraoperative monitoring rather than specific diagnosis, except in emergent situations, diagnoses requiring intraoperative cardiac surgical intervention or postoperative medical/surgical management must be confirmed by an individual with advanced skills in TEE or by an independent diagnostic technique.

# Apply for Certification

## Who May Apply?

Licensed physicians who have passed the Basic PTEeXAM or the Advanced PTEeXAM and are board certified in anesthesiology may apply for Basic PTE certification. The Certification Committee will meet to review applications for certification, and applicants will be notified in writing of the decision of the Committee.

## The Purposes of Basic PTE Certification

- establish the domain of the practice of basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiography for the purpose of certification,
- assess the level of knowledge demonstrated by a licensed physician practitioner of perioperative transesophageal echocardiography in a valid manner,
- enhance the quality of perioperative transesophageal echocardiography and individual professional growth in perioperative transesophageal echocardiography,
- formally recognize individuals who satisfy the requirements set by the NBE, and
- serve the public by encouraging quality patient care in the practice of perioperative transesophageal echocardiography.

## Certification Documentation and Instructions

The National Board of Echocardiography, Inc. reserves the right to audit stated clinical experience and continued provision of services in perioperative transesophageal echocardiography for the sake of eligibility for Basic PTE certification.

## Letters Documenting Training and/or Level of Service

Letters documenting training and/or level of service from Residency Program Director; the Fellowship Training Director; Director of Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology, Cardiothoracic Surgery, or Cardiology; Chairs of Anesthesiology, Medicine, or Surgery; or the Medical Director of the Echocardiography Laboratory MUST be typed on appropriate letterhead, MUST be the original notarized letter (no copies), and MUST contain EXACT numbers of studies performed and interpreted. **Committee decisions will be determined using the numbers provided in this letter.** Applicants with letters not meeting these criteria will not be reviewed. Sample letters in the required format and case log are available on pages 7-9 and on our web site: [www.echoboards.org](http://www.echoboards.org)

If the applicant is in private practice, the letter documenting level of service must be on appropriate letterhead and should be written by the CEO or President of the practice. If the applicant is the CEO or President of the practice, the letter should be written by the Business Manager. Letters signed by the applicant will not be reviewed by the Certification Committee.

**Note: The numbers provided must be in parallel, consecutive years but need not be calendar years. The end of the most recent year for which credit is requested must fall within the 12 months prior to the receipt of the complete application. If using fiscal year, exact dates are required. For example: MM/DD/YYYY - MM/DD/YYYY.**

## Review of Documentation for Basic PTE Certification

Due to the expected volume of applications and complexity of the process, review of the applications may take up to one year.

## Effective Date of Certification

Certification will be retroactive to the date that the Examination of Special Competence in Basic Perioperative Transesophageal Echocardiography (PTEeXAM) was passed and will be valid for ten (10) years from that date; e.g., if the exam was passed in 2025, board certification will be valid until December 31, 2035.

## Non-North American Trained Physicians

Non-North American trained physicians must have had the equivalent of each of the applicable requirements. Applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine the eligibility of the applicant for certification. All documentation must be supplied in English. If original documentation is not in English, a certified translation must be attached to each document.

### Current License to Practice Medicine:

If your medical license does not have an expiration date, you are required to supply ONE of the following:

- An original letter from the Medical Council stating your license is permanent
- An original certificate of good standing, dated no more than 12 months prior to date application is received

### Current Anesthesiology Certification:

Documentation of permission to practice anesthesiology is acceptable documentation.

### Specific Training in Basic Perioperative Transesophageal Echocardiography:

Documentation must include the inclusive dates of training.

## Definition of Perioperative TEE

Perioperative TEE is defined as a TEE performed 1) intraoperative, 2) post operative during the same hospitalization as surgery, or 3) preoperative in patients having surgery during the same hospitalization.

Note that diagnostic TEEs performed on patients not having a surgical operation, e.g. to rule out thrombus before a cardioversion or ablation or to rule out a cardiac source of embolus, are not considered to be perioperative and cannot be used for certification.

# Basic PTE Board Certification Requirements

## CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### Requirement 1. Successful completion of the Examination of Special Competence in Perioperative Transesophageal Echocardiography.

Applicants must have passed the Basic PTEeXAM or the Advanced PTEeXAM.

### Requirement 2. Current License to Practice Medicine.

Applicants who wish to apply for certification must hold a valid, unrestricted license to practice medicine at the time of application. (Geographical restrictions may be accepted and are subject to approval. Medical restrictions or restrictions to the scope of practice will not be accepted for purposes of eligibility for certification.)

### Requirement 3. Current Medical Board Certification.

Applicants must be board certified in Anesthesiology.

### Requirement 4. Specific Training in Basic Perioperative TEE.

#### Supervised Training Pathway:

Applicants must have had specific training or clinical experience in perioperative TEE, including study of 150 basic perioperative TEE examinations under appropriate supervision. Of the 150 examinations, at least 50 basic intraoperative TEE examinations must be personally performed and interpreted by the trainee. For these 50 examinations, the supervising physician must be present for all critical aspects of the procedure and must be immediately available throughout the procedure. Those examinations that are not personally performed by the applicant must be acquired and reviewed at an institution where the applicant has performed TEEs under supervision. Documentation of compliance with the requirements of this pathway must be obtained from the institution where the examinations are performed and must be in a form acceptable to the NBE. Supervised training in basic perioperative TEE must be obtained from an ACGME or other national accreditation agency-accredited anesthesiology residency program, and must be accomplished within a four-year period of time or less.

OR

#### Practice Experience Pathway:

Applicants must have performed and interpreted at least 150 basic intraoperative TEE examinations within four (4) consecutive years immediately preceding application with no fewer than 25 in any year in which any of the 150 echocardiograms were performed. Physicians seeking certification by this pathway must have at least 40 hours of AMA category 1 continuing medical education devoted to perioperative TEE obtained during the time the physician is acquiring the requisite clinical experience in TEE.

OR

#### Extended CME Pathway: (Must Complete Both Components)

**Practice component:** Applicants must have performed and interpreted at least 50 basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiograms within two (2) consecutive years immediately preceding application with no less than 25 in any year in which any of the 50 echocardiograms were performed.

AND

**Education component:** Physicians seeking certification by this pathway must successfully complete the review of 100 basic perioperative TEEs in the ASA/SCA Basic Perioperative TEE Education Program within two years of the application.

**Definition of Perioperative TEE:** Perioperative TEE is defined as a TEE performed 1) intraoperative, 2) post operative during the same hospitalization as surgery, or 3) preoperative in patients having surgery during the same hospitalization.

**NOTE: Diagnostic TEEs performed on patients not having a surgical operation, e.g., to rule out thrombus before a cardioversion or ablation or to rule out a cardiac source of embolus, are not considered to be perioperative and cannot be used for certification.**

**NOTE: The practice experience pathway will not be available to those completing their anesthesiology residency training after June 30, 2016.**

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

### Requirement 1.

Applicant must supply all required documentation for training and maintenance of skills.

Indicate year that the Basic PTEeXAM or the Advanced PTEeXAM was passed on application.

### Requirement 2.

A copy of current medical license renewal certificate that shows the expiration date (non-North American Physicians: see page 4).

### Requirement 3.

A copy of current board certification attained in Anesthesiology (non-North American Physicians: see page 4).

### Requirement 4.

#### Supervised Training Pathway:

A notarized letter typed on appropriate letterhead from the hospital or appropriate department Training Director, e.g., Residency Program Director; the Fellowship Training Director; Director of Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology, Cardiothoracic Surgery, or Cardiology; Chairs of Anesthesiology, Medicine, or Surgery; or the Medical Director of the Echocardiography Laboratory, verifying specific training and/or experience in perioperative transesophageal echocardiography and the number of basic perioperative TEE examinations personally performed and interpreted and the number of complete examinations reviewed with supervision by the trainee (see Letters Documenting Training and/or Level of Service: page 4 and Sample Letter: page 6).

For examinations studied but not performed by the applicant, a log itemizing each examination including the date reviewed, the diagnosis and surgery performed, and the supervising faculty/staff with whom the findings were discussed. The log must indicate that these exams were studied but not performed (see Sample Case Log: page 7).

OR

#### Practice Experience Pathway:

A notarized letter typed on appropriate letterhead from the hospital or appropriate department Training Director, e.g., Residency Program Director; the Fellowship Training Director; Director of Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology, Cardiothoracic Surgery, or Cardiology; Chairs of Anesthesiology, Medicine, or Surgery; or the Medical Director of the Echocardiography Laboratory, verifying the number of basic intraoperative transesophageal studies performed and interpreted on surgical patients for each of the four (4) years preceding this application (see Letter Documenting Training and/or Level of Service: page 4 and Sample Letter: see page 8). If using a fiscal year, exact dates are required. For example: MM/DD/YYYY-MM/DD/YYYY.

AND

A copy of certificate(s) or documentation from the institution providing CME credits documenting 40 hours of AMA category 1 CME devoted to perioperative TEE. For meetings not devoted only to perioperative TEE, applicants must indicate on the copy of the certificate how many hours were devoted to echocardiography.

OR

#### Extended CME Pathway:

A notarized letter typed on appropriate letterhead from the hospital or appropriate department Training Director, e.g., Residency Program Director; the Fellowship Training Director; Director of Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology, Cardiothoracic Surgery, or Cardiology; Chairs of Anesthesiology, Medicine, or Surgery; or the Medical Director of the Echocardiography Laboratory, verifying the number of basic intraoperative trans-esophageal echocardiograms performed and interpreted on surgical patients in two (2) of the three (3) years immediately preceding this application (see Letter Documenting Training and/or Level of Service: page 4 and Sample Letter: page 6 or 8). If using a fiscal year, exact dates are required. For example: MM/DD/YYYY-MM/DD/YYYY.

AND

A copy of the certificate or documentation from the ASA/SCA Basic Perioperative TEE education program documenting the successful review of 100 basic perioperative TEEs, the number of AMA category 1 CME hours awarded, and the date of completion of the program.

# Online Certification Instructions

## Instructions to Create a New Application:

Please log in to your account, using your **eight(8) digit NBE ID number** including leading zeroes. If you are unable to recall your account information, please **do not** create a new account and reach out to us via [info@echoboards.org](mailto:info@echoboards.org) for your account log in and password. If there have been any additional changes to your account, such as email address please also clarify these additional changes. Once you can log in to your account, you will need to:

1. Select “Certification application” from the top right of the screen within your dashboard.
2. A box will drop down that lists all certification application types.
3. Please select the appropriate certification where you will need to upload your documents.
4. Upon selecting your certification application type, you will click blue button to create a “Create a New Application”.
5. You will need to answer a few demographic questions and upload the required documents in PDF format.
6. Once you have uploaded all documents. You will attest that all uploaded documents are true and accurate, and then select the blue submit button on the “Application Summary” tab. Upon submission of your application to the NBE, you will receive an email stating that we have received your documents and that they will be reviewed in the order in which they have been received.
7. From the time in which we receive your documents to the time in which we will review them, this can take about **two weeks to a month.**
8. Upon the completion of reviewing your application you will receive one of two notifications:
  - a. A notification asking for more information/documentation and notes that outline what is needed. These notes will be found within your application on your account dashboard.
  - b. A notification that indicates your application has been moved into stage two review or into the upcoming review by the certification committee.
9. Once the certification committee has completed their review, then additional communication will be made via email indicating the status of your application and will also be reflected on your account dashboard, and NBE Physicians verification (Only for approved applicants. All other will not be reflected on the verification website).
10. If your application is approved, you will find a printable certificate available to you on your account dashboard. Since we have gone paperless, we will not be printing the certificate for you. If you wish to have a hardcopy of your certificate you can print it yourself or take the PDF version of the certificate to a location that can print it for you (FedEx, Staples, etc.)



# Sample Letter

## Specific Training in Basic Perioperative TEE (Requirement 4) (Supervised Training Pathway) Letters must be submitted in this format.

### ABC Hospital

123 Main Street • New York, NY 54321 • (212) 123-5432

Date

National Board of Echocardiography, Inc.  
3915 Beryl Rd. Suite 130  
Raleigh, NC 27607-5609

RE: *Applicant's Full Name*  
*Applicant's Date of Birth*

To Whom It May Concern:

#### REQUIREMENT 4

This letter confirms that Dr.  (Applicant's name)  successfully completed all aspects of training in basic perioperative TEE at our institution between  (beginning date - MM/DD/YYYY)  and  (ending date - MM/DD/YYYY) .

Our records indicate that  (he/she)  had specific training in Basic Perioperative Transesophageal Echocardiography and personally performed and interpreted  (#)  basic intraoperative TEE examinations under appropriate supervision. In addition,  (he/she)  studied under appropriate supervision, but did not perform  (#)  studies for a total of  (#)  complete basic perioperative TEE examinations. These studies include a wide spectrum of cardiac diagnoses.

I certify that the number of studies provided above are exact numbers and are not rounded and/or estimates.

Sincerely,

*(Original signature required)*

*Typed name*  
*Title (Residency Program Director, Fellowship Training Director, etc.)*

Sworn and subscribed to before me on *(date)*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Notary Public*

Notary Seal

**NOTE: The EXACT number of studies performed and interpreted MUST be provided. Committee decisions will be determined using the numbers provided in this letter. Applications containing approximated and/or rounded numbers will no longer be reviewed by the Certification Committee. Letters MUST be typed on appropriate letterhead and MUST be notarized.**





# Sample Letter

## Specific Training in Basic Perioperative TEE (Requirement 4) (Practice Experience Pathway) Letters must be submitted in this format.

### XYZ Hospital

123 Main Street • New York, NY 54321 • (212) 123-5432

Date

National Board of Echocardiography, Inc.  
3915 Beryl Rd. Suite 130  
Raleigh, NC 27607-5609

RE: *Applicant's Full Name*  
*Applicant's Date of Birth*

To Whom It May Concern:

#### REQUIREMENT 4

This letter is to confirm that Dr.      (*Applicant's name*)      n anesthesiologist practicing in our hospital. Our records indicate that      (*he/*  
*she*)      performed and interpreted the number of basic perioperative transesophageal echocardiograms per year as follows:

(2021)	(2022)	(2023)	(2024)
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
###	###	###	###

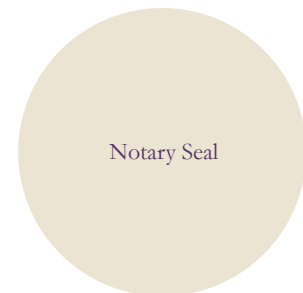
I certify that the numbers of studies provided above are exact numbers and are not rounded and/or estimates.

Sincerely, *Name*

(Original signature required)

*Typed name*

*Title (Director of Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology, Cardiothoracic Surgery,  
Medical Director of the Echocardiography Laboratory, President, CEO, etc.)*



Sworn and subscribed to before me on (date): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Notary Public*

**NOTE:** The EXACT number of studies performed and interpreted MUST be provided. Committee decisions will be determined using the numbers provided in this letter. Letters documenting training MUST be typed on appropriate letterhead and MUST be notarized.

**NOTE:** The numbers provided must be in parallel, consecutive years but need not be calendar years. The end of the most recent year for which credit is required must fall within the 12 months prior to the receipt of the complete application. If using a fiscal year, exact dates are required. For example: MM/DD/YYYY - MM/DD/YYYY.