

# Hearing Instrument Dispenser Examination

## OVERVIEW

### Instructions

The following information specifies the format, content and materials required for taking the Minnesota Hearing Instrument Dispenser Practical Examination. Please read carefully so that you understand the purpose of the various portions of the examination and bring everything you need for taking the examination.

### Examination Format

The certification examination includes two parts: the written examination and the practical examination. The written examination is administered by the International Hearing Society (IHS), and can be taken at testing locations throughout Minnesota. For more information, go to webpage: [HID Exam Instructions \(http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpsc/hop/hid/hidwrittenexaminstr.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpsc/hop/hid/hidwrittenexaminstr.html). You are encouraged to receive a passing score on the written examination before you schedule a time to take the practical examination.

Candidates are required to receive a passing score in each of three major content areas in order to pass the practical portion of the examination. The three major content areas are: Ear Mold Impressions, Audiometry and Hearing Aid Fitting and Servicing. Candidates who receive a passing score in one or two stations, but who do not receive a passing score in all three stations, must retake on a subsequent examination date(s). The retake will only include the failed content area. The passing scores for each of the three major content areas are:

- Ear mold Impressions (28)
- Audiometry (39)
- Hearing Aid Fitting and Servicing (17)

In addition, several deficiencies have been defined as a critical failure (CF). These activities are directly related to patient safety. If these activities are performed incorrectly or if they are not performed at all, the candidate will fail, regardless of the score achieved. Audiologist candidates who are in, or have completed an audiology master's or doctoral degree training program, are required to pass the practical portion of the Hearing Instrument Dispenser Examination which includes Minnesota Law questions.

## Practical Examination

### General Information

Prior to the start of the practical examination:

1. Upon admission to the waiting area, you will be asked to refer to a Certification Statement. The statement requires that you to agree not to discuss the questions or transmit any information about the examination in any form to any other person. You will sign the statement and return this statement and the contents of your folder to Grace Rauchwarter or her designee, after you have completed all portions of the exam and prior to leaving the exam site.
2. You will be given an Examinee Check Sheet. Each section of the practical examination must be checked off upon entering the exam and initialed by one of the examiners upon completion. Between sections of the practical examination, candidates must remain in the practical waiting area. Only upon completion of the entire practical will candidates be allowed to leave the waiting area. Time: Approximately two (2) hours of actual examination times, but wait times between exam stations will extend the time. The exam site has vending machines. It is recommended that you bring a bag lunch and/or snacks since you are not allowed to leave the exam site until after you have completed all portions of the exam.

### Required Candidate Competencies

Candidates are tested in three major content areas relating to hearing aid dispensing as described below:

- Ear Mold Impressions. Completely demonstrate preparation for and performance of the sequence of tasks for placing and removing an ear mold impression. Performance test. Tasks are designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to prepare ear mold impressions. The candidate should be able to:
  - Appropriately instruct the client for ear mold impression taking;
  - Perform cleansing procedures for hands and equipment;
  - Display proper technique in performing an otoscopic ear examination;
  - Visually evaluate photographs of eardrums and correctly determine the necessity for medical referral;
  - Produce a satisfactory ear mold impression; and
  - Properly box the ear mold impression for shipment.

Note: The candidate will NOT be allowed to complete the ear mold impression station, if he/she fails to inspect the subject's ear(s) prior to placing the otoblock, or fails to use an otoblock when making an ear mold impression.

- Pure Tone and Speech Audiometry: As instructed, perform specific audiometric tests given for the purpose of dispensing a hearing instrument. Performance Test. Tasks are designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to:
  - Conduct pure tone audiometric tests, including obtaining VALID pure tone air and bone conduction thresholds using the modified Hughson-Westlake technique and masking procedures as necessary;
  - Correctly prepare audiograms;
  - Set up an audiometer for speech testing; and
  - Conduct speech audiometric tests.

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- Written Test. Integration of Masking Concepts is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to interpret three completed audiograms and identify the need for masking in order to obtain a VALID hearing threshold in air and bone conduction measurement and additionally, explain the reason for doing so.

Also, the candidate is expected to interview clients appropriately and identify ear conditions requiring medical referrals.

Note: If at any time during this exam masking is necessary in order to obtain a VALID threshold, the candidate is expected to determine the need for masking and perform the masking procedures routinely.

- Hearing Aids: Fitting and Servicing: Performance test- The test is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to diagnose problems of malfunctioning hearing aids. Written Test – Hearing Aid Fitting from Audiometric Data is designed to evaluate the candidate's:
  - Ability to interpret a client's audiometric test results and select the most appropriate hearing aid; comprehend procedures for remedying problems with hearing aids commonly experienced by clients; and
  - Counsel clients on the comparative advantages or disadvantages of different styles of hearing aids.

## What to bring with you to the examination?

1. Ear Impression Materials
  - a. Otoscope (this is not an ear light)
    - i. Cold sterilization to clean the speculum, or disposable tips, prior to making the impression.
    - ii. A speculum size appropriate for your subject.
  - b. Ear impression material and tools required to make an ear impression.
    - i. Bring enough for two ear impressions. You will be required to make binaural impressions. You will have approximately 30 minutes to complete the ear impression portion of the exam.
  - c. Cleansing agent for cleaning hands and equipment.
  - d. Ear impression box for shipping impression to manufacturer.
  - e. Impression blocks of various sizes with nylon thread of dental floss attached (prepared in advance)
  - f. Impression syringe
  - g. Impression mixing container or impression gun and mixing tools
  - h. Blunt scissors
  - i. Glue for fixing impression (unless silicone impression material is used)
  - j. Ear mold of custom-molded hearing aid order form
  - k. Ear Light
  - l. Tissues
  - m. Oto Ease (this will be used for lubricant of otoblock for easy removal of ear mold from the ear of the simulator)

If you will be completing the ear mold portion on a live subject, you are responsible for ensuring the subject is at the exam site on the day of the exam. MDH cannot provide you with a live subject. Your subject will be required to sign a release from before the ear mold exam begins. If your subject is not available you will need to use the simulator provide by MDH.

All supplies must be clean and useable for the purpose of taking impressions without risk to the live subject and the simulator as if it were a human subject.

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2. Audiometer with the following capabilities:
  - a. Pure tone air and bone conduction testing
  - b. Speech audiometry
  - c. Masking
  - d. Red and blue pencils or pens for recording pure tone results

You will NOT be allowed to complete the audiometric portion of the examination if you fail to bring an audiometer with the above capabilities.

3. Hearing aid troubleshooting equipment:
  - a. Personal listening tube or ear mold
  - b. Appropriate size screwdriver for hearing aid trimmers
  - c. Vision assistance, if needed, to visually inspect the hearing aid for defects.Please notify us if you require other accommodations for troubleshooting hearing aids.

No batteries or battery testers are required. Batteries will have satisfactory voltage.

4. One form of identification that includes your signature and photograph. Acceptable forms of identification are a driver's license with photo, passport, or any other official form of identification that contains your photograph and your signature. Signatures will be required prior to and after completing the examination.

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*To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-3731.*