

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Changes to Rule 251

1. What are the areas affected by Rule 251?

The changes relate to the following areas, as detailed within the new rule:

- Combined tech/pharmacist and student pharmacist/pharmacist ratio to a ceiling of 6 to 1
- Establishes minimum standards, including national certification requirements for technicians
- Requirements for registration or licensure with the Board to access the secured area of a pharmacy on a regular basis

2. How does this affect clerks and cashiers?

Only registered or licensed support personnel will be allowed in the secured area of the pharmacy. This includes technicians, technicians-in-training, and student pharmacists. The positions of clerk and cashier will be eliminated and, therefore, not included in the ratio.

3. When did the ratio go into effect?

The ratio went into effect on May 8, 2009.

4. As a pharmacist, will I be required to work with a 6:1 ratio?

No. A 6:1 ratio is a ceiling, not a requirement. A PIC or any other pharmacist cannot allow operation of the pharmacy with a ratio which, under the circumstances of that particular practice setting, would result in, or be reasonably expected to result in unreasonable risk of harm to public health and safety.

5. Are pharmacy technicians subject to new minimum requirements for registration?

Yes. By increasing the ratio, the proposed changes require that pharmacy technicians meet the following requirements:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Have a high school diploma or its equivalent
- Be of good moral character and temperate habits
- Submit a completed application and fee to the Board.

After July 1, 2009, pharmacy technicians who register with the Board will need to be nationally certified, in addition to fulfilling the above requirements. A technician will be registered as a technician-in-training until he or she becomes nationally certified. (See #10)

6. What certifications does the BOP require?

Pharmacy technicians may become certified through either the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board ([PTCB](#)) or the Institute for Certification of Pharmacy Technicians ([ExCPT](#)).

7. What does it cost to take the certification exams?

The fee to take the PTCB exam is \$129. The fee to take the ICPT exam is \$105. Check the organizations' individual websites for changes in pricing.

8. What kind of exam is it?

Exams are taken at designated testing sites via computer. The PTCB exam consists of 90 multiple-choice questions. The ICPT exam consists of 110 multiple-choice questions.

9. How long does it take to become certified?

Exams are offered throughout the year, so time to certification depends, in part, on how soon a candidate schedules a time to take the exam. However, once the exam has been completed, pass/fail status is provided immediately, an official report of a passing score will print to designate the candidate as a certified technician.

10. Define tech in training, certified tech, and grandfathered tech.

Registered pharmacy technicians assist in the pharmacy under the direct supervision of a licensed pharmacist. All technicians must be registered with the Board before beginning work in a pharmacy.

A technician in training is a pharmacy tech who registers with the Board after June 30, 2009, and is required to become certified within one year. After one year, if certification has not been completed, registration may be renewed one time for a period of one year.

A certified technician has received national certification through either PTCB or ICPT. Certified technicians must participate in continuing education and renew their certification through ICPT or PTCB every two years.

A grandfathered technician is an individual who is working as a technician in a pharmacy and, as of June 30, 2009, has not been certified. In this situation, as long as the individual does not change employers, and maintains registration with the Board, the technician is not required to become certified.

11. What if I remain employed with my current employer, and begin working at another pharmacy as well?

You would need to register as a technician-in-training at both locations.

12. I am a high school student working in a pharmacy through a school-to-work program at my school. With the new technician qualifications, will I still be able to work in the pharmacy?

Yes. Pharmacy technician applicants who do not meet the requirements of 18 years of age and/or having received a high school diploma or GED will be able to apply for a waiver. The waiver must be approved by the Executive Director of the Board of Pharmacy and is intended to be utilized for high school students working in a school-to-work program.

13. If all pharmacy personnel have to be registered or licensed with the Board of Pharmacy, will IT workers or custodial staff be allowed within the secured area of the pharmacy?

Yes. The pharmacy or PIC may authorize other persons to be present temporarily in the secured area of the pharmacy for legitimate business purposes, provided that such persons are under the observation of the PIC or another pharmacist designated by the PIC during their temporary presence in the secured area of the pharmacy.