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MINISTRY OF HEALTH-ETHIOPIA

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HEALTHIER CITIZENS FOR PROSPEROUS NATION!

Directive Number 1124/2026

Health Profession Licensing Examination Implementation Directive

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

March, 2026

Whereas the competence of health professionals plays a crucial role in the quality of health, it is necessary to assess the competence of health professionals;

Whereas it is necessary to ensure that the professional licensing exam, which is administered to professionals entering the health profession, serves as a critical step in ensuring that they meet certain competency standards;

Whereas it is important to protect public health by ensuring that health professionals have the minimum knowledge, attitudes and skills required to provide safe and effective care;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Ministry of Health has issued this directive pursuant to the authority granted to it under Articles 34(5) and 58(2) of the Health Services Administration and Regulation Proclamation No. 1362/2024.

Part one

General Provisions

1. Short Title

This directive may be cited as "Health Profession Licensing Exam Implementation Directive Number 1124/2026"

2. Definition

In this directive,

- 1) **"Health Profession Licensing Exam"** : means an assessment process conducted to verify the knowledge, understanding, and skills acquired through training at higher health education institutions and to issue a professional license, using theoretical and, where necessary, practical examinations;
- 2) **"Higher Education"** : has the meaning given to it in Higher Education Proclamation No. 1152/2019;
- 3) **"Examination Center"** : means an institution selected as a site for conducting the examination among the higher education institutions in the country that meets the criteria to administer the examination;
- 4) **"Passing score"** : means the minimum cut-off score determined by experts based on the content and weight of the examination to measure the minimum level of knowledge, skill, or competence expected of a professional in a theoretical or practical examination;

- 5) **“Theoretical Examination”** : means a written examination that enables to measure the examinees level of understanding, remembering, analyzing, and making appropriate decisions based on the professional knowledge and attitudes acquired through education;
- 6) **“Practical Examination”** : means a practical examination that is given to assess the examinees level of ability to apply the professional knowledge and attitudes acquired through education into practice;
- 7) **“Task analysis study”** : means scientifically identifying and studying the tasks performed by health professionals while they are engaged in their work;
- 8) **“Exam blue print”** : means a document that describes the content of the exam, the type and number of questions, the knowledge, skill, and attitudes that the questions measure, and the weight or emphasis given to each content;
- 9) **“Exam Development”** : means the process that ranges from task analysis study to the preparation and review of exam questions;
- 10) **“Exam reviewers”** : means professionals who verify and review the questions prepared for the exam to ensure that they are accurate, clearly structured, and appropriate for the examination, in accordance with the prepared exam blueprint;
- 11) **“Examiner”**: means a professional selected by the Appropriate body to conduct a theoretical or practical examination of examinees in the exam room;
- 12) **“Examinee”**: means a person who has completed the required educational preparation, provided the necessary evidence, and registered for the examination;
- 13) **“Exam center supervisor”** : means a professional appointed by the appropriate body and is responsible for and supervises the entire examination process to ensure that the examination is provided at the examination centers;
- 14) **“Exam Center Coordinator”** : means a professional designated at the exam center to coordinate the examination activities within the center;
- 15) **“Information booklet”** : means a a book containing important information about the exam that enables examinees to prepare for the exam;
- 16) **“Appropriate body”** : means the Ministry or a body established by law to carry out the functions prescribed in this directive;
- 17) **“Proclamation”** : means Health Service Administration and Regulation Proclamation No. 1362/2024;

18) Other words and phrases defined in the Proclamation shall also apply to this directive;

19) Provisions defined in the masculine gender shall also include the feminine gender.

3. Scope of Application

This directive applies to examinees, and institutions and professionals involved in health professional's exam development and administration.

Part Two

Exam Development, Registration, and Administration of Health Professionals

Licensing Examination

4. Exam Development

- 1) Licensing exam of health professionals should be based on task analysis study.
- 2) The task analysis study prepared pursuant to this sub-article (1) may be revised at any time as necessary.
- 3) Based on the task analysis study, an exam blueprint will be developed for each health profession.
- 4) The exam blueprint developed as per sub-article (3) of this article may be revised at any time deemed necessary.
- 5) The exam may include a theoretical exam and, where appropriate, practical exam.
- 6) The theoretical examination questions will consist of four multiple-choices.
- 7) Questions included in the professional licensing exam may consist of newly developed items prepared by experts or generated with the assistance of artificial intelligence as may be deemed necessary, as well as revised versions of existing questions.
- 8) Any developed exam questions will be reviewed, revised, and approved by exam reviewers for content relevance, accuracy, and clarity.
- 9) The exam development process will only be carried out in a secure room prepared by the appropriate body.
- 10) Experts participating in the development of the exam will be experienced professionals from health education institutions, the health industry, and/or health professional associations.

5. Recruitment and Selection Criteria of Exam Developers

Experts' involved in exam development shall have at least:

- 1) Two years of work experience; and
- 2) Second degree.

6. Exam Registration Requirements

Any examinee shall;

- 1) Submit certificate of completion of studies at a licensed higher education institution and health education program;
- 2) provide evidence of payment of the service fee specified for registration;
- 3) when completing his education abroad in a health profession, provide evidence of equivalence from a relevant legal entity within the country and evidence of completion of practical training in the country;
- 4) Pass the written exam to take the practical examination for professions for which the practical examination has been introduced;

7. Exam Registration System

Any examinee shall,

- 1) Register within the time limit and according to the criteria set out in the website prepared by the appropriate body for this purpose;
- 2) After completing the necessary preparations and registration, must appear in person at the designated exam centers according to the exam schedule.

8. Exam Administration

- 1) The exam will be conducted at least three times a year in accordance with the schedule issued by the appropriate body.
- 2) The exam may be given by computer, paper, or a combination of methods.
- 3) The number of questions presented for the exam in one round should be between 180 and 200.
- 4) Examinees shall be informed of the exam schedule through various means of communication no less than 15 days before the exam is given.
- 5) The institutions that will serve as examination centers will be those that meet the requirements set out in this directive and are selected by the appropriate body.
- 6) Exam centers will prepare the materials and manpower needed for the examination as requested.
- 7) Examinees with disabilities, medical problems, or special needs will be provided with the necessary support during the administration of the exam if they declare their concerns during registration.

- 8) Exam result analysis will be conducted on each question, examinee, educational institutions, and the entire exam; low-quality questions may be eliminated from the results.
- 9) For the purposes of this article, low-quality questions means questions that have a fundamental flaw that could compromise the validity, integrity, or fairness of the exam, and includes questions of low or negative discrimination, extremely high or extremely low difficulty levels, incorrect answer keys, multiple correct answers, no correct answers, and questions that are incomplete or missing essential information.
- 10) Exam results will be released within 15 working days of the exam being completed.
- 11) The results of each examinee will be converted to a percentage (100%) and the exam results will be announced.

9. Recruitment and Selection Criteria for Examination Centers

Institutions selected as exam centers shall be those who are willing to administer the exam; have the necessary resources; and have the human resources required for the exam.

10. Passing Score Determination

- 1) Exam passing score determination shall be conducted following scientific method.
- 2) The passing score shall be determined by experienced professionals from health education, the health industry, and/or health professional associations, taking into account the content of the exam.
- 3) The passing score shall be determined by experts once a year, and modeling or equating techniques shall be used to determine the passing scores for the remaining rounds of exams.

11. Re-Examination

Any examinee who fails the exam may re-take the exam by fulfilling the requirements and obligations set forth in this directive.

Part Three

Functions and Obligations of Implementing Bodies

12. Appropriate Body

The appropriate body shall:

- 1) Lead, coordinate and supervise the development and administration of examination;
- 2) Work in coordination with stakeholders;
- 3) Ensure that guidelines, manuals, and protocols for the implementation of this directive are developed and implemented;

- 4) Ensure that best global practices are collected, compiled and the most appropriate ones are selected and implemented;
- 5) Conduct awareness-creation activities regarding the exam;
- 6) Select exam centers based on the criteria set for selecting the centers;
- 7) Allocate the necessary budget for the exam and monitor its implementation;
- 8) Ensure that the development, administration, correction, passing score determination, and result notification process of the exam are confidential;
- 9) Based on specified criterias select professionals who will participate in the development and administration of exam;
- 10) Monitor and ensure that any person involved in the development and administration of examination has signed an exam security agreement;
- 11) Prepare exam schedule, communicate it to relevant parties, and monitor its implementation;
- 12) Determine and announce exam centers, types of professions selected for the exam, and the eligible examinees;
- 13) Monitor and ensure that the resources required for the exam are provided at the exam centers;
- 14) Coordinate with relevant parties to ensure that the exam is carried out smoothly, and provide the necessary support and supervision;
- 15) Prepare and make available information booklet in collaboration with health education, the health industry, and/or health professional associations;
- 16) Collect, organize, analyze, and make available comprehensive information on exam as needed;
- 17) Receive and respond to complaints and grievances from examinees and stakeholders;
- 18) Select professions to be included in to the practical examination as needed;
- 19) Notify information booklet and exam schedule to examinees on time;
- 20) Provide the necessary training for exam developers before they enter to the development process;
- 21) Impliment exam quality assurance procedures.

13. Professionals Involved in Exam Development

Professionals involved in exam development shall:

- 1) Develop and review task analysis studies, exam blueprints, and exam questions in a manner that maintains confidentiality and the standards set by the appropriate body;

- 2) Determine the passing score for the exam in a scientific and confidential manner in accordance with this directive.

14. Exam Center Supervisor

Exam center supervisor shall:

- 1) Supervise and coordinate the examination work at the examination center;
- 2) Seek solutions to problems that arise during the examination process by reporting the matter to the appropriate body;
- 3) Be responsible for receiving, properly and confidentially storing, organizing, and delivering examination materials, various forms, necessary resources, and documents to the appropriate body;
- 4) Ensure that the exam rooms and environment are suitable for examination;
- 5) Allocate, orient, deploy, and supervise the necessary man power;
- 6) Provide orientation to the examinees regarding the examination process;
- 7) Take appropriate action in conjunction with examiners and the exam center coordinator for any individual or group misconduct during the exam process;
- 8) Submit examination performance report to the appropriate body.

15. Exam center coordinator

Exam center coordinator shall:

- 1) Ensures that exam rooms are suitable for examination;
- 2) Prepare necessary resources for the examination to proceed as planned, provides appropriate support, and report its performance to the exam center supervisor;
- 3) Resolve problems encountered during the examination process, notify the exam center supervisor if they are beyond his/her control;
- 4) In the event of an examiner's absence, and when necessary, serve on behalf of the examiner;
- 5) In the event of a violation of the examination rules by examinees or examiner, immediately notify the exam supervisor by filling out the incident forms.

16. Examiner

Any examiner shall:

- 1) Allow entry by checking and verifying the identity card and where appropriate admission card of the examinees;
- 2) Place the examinees in their respective exam seat and supervises the examination process;

- 3) Report any violation of any exam rules to the exam center Supervisor;
- 4) Ensure that no one except the examinees, exam center supervisor, and exam center coordinator enters the examination room.

17. Examinee

Any examinees shall:

- 1) Arrive in the exam room 30 minutes before the start of the exam;
- 2) Not leave the exam room earlier than (1) hour after it starts;
- 3) Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-article (2) of this article, during the practical examination, may withdraw at any time he finished the exam;
- 4) If forced to interrupt the exam due to personal reasons and re-enter the exam, no additional time will be allocated;
- 5) Carry his admission card and renewed legal ID;
- 6) Not be permitted to enter the examination room with any material other than that specified in this directive.

Part Four

Complaints Submission, Resolution System, and Administrative Measures

18. Complaint Submission

- 1) Any examinee who has a complaint during the exam process may submit the complaint to the exam center supervisor.
- 2) If the examinee who has filed a complaint with the exam center pursuant to sub-article (1) of this article is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, he may submit the complaint to the appropriate body within 10 working days of the completion of the exam.
- 3) Any examinee who has a complaint about the exam result may submit the complaint to the appropriate body within 10 working days of the results being announced.
- 4) Any complaint regarding the development and administration of the exam may be submitted to the appropriate body in writing, in person, by email, or by telephone.

19. Complaint Resolution

- 1) Complaint submitted at the exam center level will be resolved by exam center supervisor.
- 2) Subject to the provisions of sub-article (1) of this article, complaints that are beyond the control of the exam supervisor shall be resolved by the appropriate body.

- 3) Any complaint regarding the development and administration of the exam submitted in accordance with this directive must be responded to by the party to which the complaint was submitted within 15 working days of the complaint being submitted.
- 4) Any complaint regarding the development and administration of examination should be resolved based on relevant documentary evidence, or personal witness evidence, or other relevant evidence as may be necessary.

20. Administrative Measures

- 1) During the examination, an examinee who is caught cheating, causing a disturbance in the examination center, attempting to take another examinee's exam, or who commits any other act contrary to this directive, will be removed from the examination by the examination center supervisor, coordinator, and examiner, and the result of the examinee will be canceled.
- 2) In accordance with sub-article (1) of this article, the appropriate body may, upon investigation of a violation of the examination rules submitted to it by the examination center supervisor and supported by documentation, cancel the examination result of the examinee and prohibit him from taking up to three examination rounds.
- 3) If professionals involved in the development and administration of exams are found to have violated their obligations under this directive, the appropriate body may issue a warning and may prohibit them from participating in exam development and administration activities again.

Part Five

Miscellaneous Provisions

21. Duty to Cooperate

Any person whom the implementation of this directive concerns, is obliged to cooperate for the implementation of the directive.

22. Inapplicable Laws and Procedures

Any directive or customary practices that contradict with this directive shall not apply to matters covered by this directive.

23. Effective Date

This directive shall enter into force on the day of its registration with the Ministry Justice and its uploading on the official website of the Ministry of Health.

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Minister of Ministry of Health
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