



Entry to Practice Examinations/Examen d'entrée à la pratique Handbook

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General Information

OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of the Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators/Organisation Canadienne des Régulateurs Paramédicaux (COPR) is to facilitate collective and collaborative action in current and future interests of pan Canadian Paramedic regulation and to develop a common approach to provincial and federal obligations that may impact regulator function. For more information about COPR visit the web site: www.copr.ca.

CONTACT COPR

To contact a COPR representative go to the COPR website at www.copr.ca and click on the “Contact COPR” under the “Contact Us” tab. Complete the online form with your message., Email correspondence will be responded to within three (3) business days.

EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The objective of the examination development process is to ensure that the examination achieves its stated purpose; to protect the public by ensuring that those who are certified possess sufficient competencies (e.g. knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes and judgment) to perform important occupational activities safely and effectively. A rigorous test development process is implemented that meets or exceeds all professional standards as specified in the most recent edition of *American Psychological Association Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* including the requirements of periodic evaluation.

Competency Study

As the foundation for a criterion-referenced examination, the competencies (i.e., knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and judgments) required for the safe and effective practice of a entry-level primary and advance care paramedics were identified by COPR subject matter experts (SMEs). The paramedic competencies undergo an extensive review by focus groups of other SMEs from across Canada (i.e., educators, regulators, administrators, researchers) to establish their validity and to ensure that the competency profile for entry-level paramedic practice remains current.

Blueprint Development

An examination blueprint outlining the content to be tested in the examination was developed and is reviewed periodically by COPR. The blueprint includes the competencies - that is, the content domain that forms the basis for test development. It also specifies variables that provide structure for the examination, as well as guidelines and specifications for weighting the competencies to ensure that the examination accurately reflects the domain of entry-level paramedics. The examination blueprints can be found on the COPR website under the “Examinations” tab.

Item Development

Examination items (questions) are developed by SMEs who are trained in item writing. The examination items measure the specified competencies in accordance with the guidelines identified in the examination blueprint.

Item Review

Item Appraisers, from different regions across Canada review each new item to ensure that they measure content that is consistent with current Canadian entry-to-practice standards. They also ensure that stereotypes are not found in the items and that examinees are not disadvantaged by the examination content.

Professional Editing

All items are reviewed by the COPR testing agency to ensure clarity, consistency and appropriateness of the language used. The items are then entered into the official item bank for future retrieval.

Examination Monitoring & Approval

Each version of the examination is compiled by the COPR testing agency from items in the test bank in accordance with the blueprint specifications. Final approval of the examination is given after the examination SMEs have reviewed the entire examination to ensure that each item measures content that is consistent with current standards of practice for the entry-level paramedic practitioner.

Standard Setting

The standard for the examination is established by using the professionally accepted and widely used Modified Angoff method and/or Statistical Equating. The Examination Approval SMEs will set the specific passing (cut off) score for each version of the COPR exam using this method. For more information on the Modified Angoff see Appendix III. The passing score represents the performance minimally expected of entry-level practice paramedics. It should be noted that COPR does not normalize scores (no bell curve).

Translation

Examinations are translated into French by an official translator, and further reviewed and validated

Exams

Examinations are approximately 200 questions in length and are created with the oversight of psychometricians and subject matter experts to ensure that blueprint coverage of competency areas and other examination criteria are fulfilled. The exam is 4 hours in duration. There is no midway break during the exam. Candidates who arrive late for the examination will not have the full 4 hours to complete the examination. Candidates who arrive 30 minutes late will not be permitted into the examination test centre.

Exam Security and Confidentiality

The exam content is the property of COPR and must remain secure at all times. The exam is administered in proctored test centres under strict protocols in order to ensure that security and confidentiality are maintained. Proctors are required to sign a statement of understanding as are all candidates taking the exam. The *Candidate Statement of Understanding* (Appendix II)

outlines the expectations surrounding the exam in terms of ensuring security of exam content and confidentiality of exam results.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility to write the exam requires successful completion of a provincially-approved education program at the relevant level, or provincially-deemed-equivalent, and approval of candidacy by the Provincial Regulator.

Depending on the Provincial Regulator, a candidate is permitted to take up to a maximum of three attempts at the COPR Entry to Practice Examination. If not successful after the third attempt it will be necessary to submit evidence to the provincial regulator of completing provincially approved further training before being permitted further attempt(s).

Candidates who falsify documents will not be allowed to write the exam. If falsification is discovered after the exam has been taken, the exam results will be null and void.

Request for Special Accommodation

When appropriate, alternative accessible arrangements may be available to candidates who have special needs.

To request an accommodation for a physical, cognitive or other special need, please complete a written request for accommodation to your Provincial Regulator **when you register for exams**. Requests will be forwarded to the COPR Examination Committee for consideration. Special accommodation includes any medication you want to bring into the exam. We must receive documentation (such as educational assessment, doctor's letter, etc.) with your application. Requests for accommodation of special needs are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Note: Requests for accommodation received by COPR fewer than 35 business days before the examination will not be considered, except in unusual circumstances, such as a recent injury.

APPLYING FOR THE EXAM

(See Appendix V for Flow Chart of Candidate Registration Process)

Non-Resident of Canada

All applicants must be approved by a Provincial Regulator. There are no exceptions. Non-residents of Canada must provide their full contact details (full name, address, phone number, email address, photo) as part of their application. Applications to take the examination are available from Provincial Regulators.

Exam Site

Exam locations are available in provinces where the COPR Examination has been accepted as the provincial entry to practice examinations. Current adopting provinces are Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. COPR, and its testing partner Yardstick, strive to ensure that candidates taking the COPR exam are not required to drive long distances to test centres. Generally test centre

locations are colleges and universities where computer labs and experienced proctors are used to oversee the examination administration. The exam site can be booked online by a candidate soon after an application has been approved by the provincial regulator.

Language of Exam

The exam is available in both official languages, English and French. Applicants must choose their language preference as part of the application process.

Disclosure of Personal Information

COPR will not disclose a candidate's personal information to anyone other than the exam contract agency who will use it for the sole purpose of providing a secure exam to the candidate.

COPR will not give a candidate's result to any other individual or organization other than the regulatory body that authorized the candidate to write.

Candidate's Statement of Understanding

Candidates must agree to abide by all regulations, as well as oral and written instructions controlling the conduct of the examination. These regulations are intended to preserve the integrity of the examination process by providing standard test administration conditions that yield valid and reliable results.

Conduct occurring before, during or after testing that violates principles detailed in the *Candidate Statement of Understanding* may result in invalidation of examination results and/or other penalties and will be reported to the Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators/Organisation Canadienne des Régulateurs Paramédicaux (COPR) and provincial regulating authorities.

On the day of the examination, each candidate will receive an electronic copy of the *Candidate Statement of Understanding*. Candidates will not be able to begin the examination without reading and agreeing to the statement. A print version is attached to this document as Appendix II.

Submitting Your Application

Application forms are provided by Provincial Regulators. All applications must be submitted to the Provincial Regulator. There are no exceptions.

Submitting Your Exam Fee

Exam Fees are required to be paid in advance in order to reserve a seat to write the exams and are collected by COPR through the third party examination provider; Yardstick Testing Agency Inc. (Yardstick). . Yardstick will email candidates with details on payment.

Deadline Dates

The deadline for registering for the exam is determined by the Provincial Regulator. Typically it is approximately **6 – 8 weeks** in advance of the date of the exam.

Exam Fees

The fee for each attempt is **\$650.00 plus tax**.

Payment Methods

Payment can be made online using VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or PayPal.

AFTER APPLYING

Email Acknowledgement

Approximately one week after the final provincial registration deadline an email will be sent out to candidates with instructions on how to purchase and schedule their examination. Once the exam has been purchased and scheduled, a confirmation email listing the date, time, and location of the exam will be emailed. The email will also contain instructions on what to bring on exam day to the test centre. Candidates are encouraged to check their “junk” email folders to ensure they receive all email notifications.

Exam Site Change

In the event of an unexpected exam site change, all candidates affected will be contacted by email and/or phone in order to confirm the new location.

Exam Cancellation by Candidate

The purchase price of the exam will be fully refunded if cancellation is provided prior to 15 business days of the scheduled examination session. Cancellations within 15 business days of the examination session will have 50% of the purchase price refunded.

COPR Entry to Practice Examination Study Guide

The Entry to Practice Examination Study Guide can assist candidates in preparing for the examination process by providing tips and strategies for exam preparation as well as sample exam questions. Information provided includes:

- A summary of the examination development process;
- The examination format;
- Recommended exam taking strategies;
- Examples of type, format and content questions that you will see on the examination;
- An appendix of abbreviations and acronyms; and
- A list of reference textbooks utilized when by item (question) writers when developing the Entry to Practice examinations.

COPR Preparatory Tests

COPR has launched online Preparatory Tests. The Preparatory Tests have been created to familiarize candidates with the format and style of the questions on the entry to practice examinations.

The preparatory tests simulate the format of the actual examinations, but on a smaller scale. Each test contains 60 multiple-choice, single-answer questions that align to the blueprint used in the examinations. The preparatory tests use the same software and platform that candidates will find on the entry to practice examinations. Preparatory Test can be purchased for \$75.00 by going to <https://coprpreparatory.ysasecure.com> and setting up an account. COPR Preparatory Tests are intended for a single user; not for sharing, distribution, copying, or resale.

ON EXAM DAY

Admission to the Exam

Candidates are required to bring a copy of the exam scheduling confirmation email and government issued photo identification (e.g. passport, drivers` license) to the test centre for the proctor to validate the candidate's identity. Candidates without proper identification will not be allowed to take the exam. Candidates will be asked to review their personal information on the roster to ensure the accuracy of the information.

The proctor will provide information to all candidates regarding the test centre and exam protocol including the storage of cell phones and mobile devices, calculators, paper material, books, bags, wrist watch, etc. Please make every attempt not to bring anything to the test center other than the required paperwork, identification and permissible items. Permissible items include water/juice/coffee/drink in spill proof container with no label and **only if approved by the Test Centre Proctor**, a sweater without pockets and disposable ear plugs.

Before the Start of the Exam

Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the examination start time for registration and orientation. Candidates who arrive more than 30 minutes late will be denied access. Proctors will log each candidate into the exam at the designated time. Before the exam begins candidates will be required to read and agree to the *Candidate Statement of Understanding*. Candidates will have the opportunity to take a 'Tutorial Quiz' prior to the actual exam in order to become familiar with the examination interface. The time spent on the tutorial quiz does not count towards the actual examination time. An on-line calculator and memo pad are available as part of the exam interface. Scrap paper and pencil will be provided by the Exam Proctor at the beginning of the exam and must be turned in at the end of the exam.

Lavatory Break During the Exam

Candidates will be permitted to leave the secure examination computer lab once during the four hour examination for the purpose of utilizing lavatory facilities.

Candidates who wish to utilize lavatory facilities will be required to register their candidate identification on an "In/Out Report". The examination proctor will verify the candidate identification number, record the time the candidate left and re-entered the computer laboratory, and have the candidate sign the form.

Name Change and/or Address Change

In the event that changes have been made to a candidate's name or address from the original registration date to the examination writing date, such changes can be noted on the examination identification cards. These cards will be provided to candidates the day of the exam. The information collected on these cards will be forwarded to the provincial regulator to update the registrant database.

Failure to Take the Exam

No refund will be provided to a candidate who does not take the exam at the approved test centre and at the scheduled date/time unless the failure to take the exam is due to:

1. Death in the family (immediate), or
2. Sudden illness or injury (incapacitating), or

3. Other circumstances deemed by COPR to be commiserate to (1) or (2)

Candidates have 10 business days from the date of the exam to submit a refund request, with supporting documentation, to COPR outlining the circumstances that prevented them from taking the exam on the scheduled exam day. If the refund request is approved, 50% of the purchase price may be refunded.

At the End of the Exam

At the end of the exam, candidates will receive a confirmation that their exam responses have been captured. Candidates can leave the test centre when they have finished their examination.

AFTER THE EXAM

Exam Marking Review

Following exam administration, all question data will be reviewed to ensure that questions meet best practice standards for high stakes examinations. In the event that some questions do not meet such standards, they will be reviewed by a panel of paramedics who are subject matter experts to determine the most appropriate course of action to ensure exam fairness. This may include the exclusion of the items in question from the calculation of the candidates' final scores.

Results

Results will be provided immediately following the exam marking review, and the determination of the passing score. The pass score for each examination is determined through a modified Angoff standard setting process. See Appendix III for more information on this process. It is expected that the time between the end of the examination administration period and the release of scores will be approximately **3-4 weeks**. Please do not contact the testing agency – exam results are distributed by the Provincial Regulator.

COPR Certificate

A certificate will be mailed approximately one month after notification from the Provincial Regulator of a successful attempt at the COPR Entry to Practice Examination.

COPR Administrative Fees

The following administrative fees apply:

Certificate Replacement:	\$75.00
Receipt Replacement:	\$25.00

To request a replacement certificate or receipt, inquire through “contact us” on the COPR website.

Candidate Standard Score Report

COPR utilizes standard score reporting. Each COPR exam is assembled to cover the same proportion of exam content; however, each exam differs somewhat in its overall difficulty. To ensure fair and equitable examinations and not penalize candidates who receive more difficult examinations, scores are standardized to be comparable to previous exams' scores.

In addition to an individual's pass/fail status, candidates are also provided their performance in each NOCP competency area based on color coded bars.

- Red – Indicates areas of weakness. These likely represent focus areas for candidate growth.
- Yellow – Indicates candidate performance below acceptable performance.
- Light Green – Indicates acceptable performance.
- Darker Green – indicates area of strength.

Only the Total Standard Score determines the pass/fail result. A sample of the Standard Score Report can be found in Appendix IV.

Manual Verification of Results

Unsuccessful candidates can request a manual verification of their results whereby a manual rescoring is conducted to confirm the exam score. Exam responses are not analyzed or reviewed. The fee for this manual verification is \$200.00 and is non-refundable. Candidates can submit a request through the COPR website to have this service conducted.

Exam Appeal

A candidate, who has failed the COPR Entry to Practice Examination, may request a formal review of their exam to the Chair of COPR Examination Committee. A candidate's examination results may be reviewed only on the basis of suspected irregularities in the examination process, and not because of alleged errors in content of the examination. The content of an examination is not subject for review at the request of the candidate either singly or as a group. A request to review the examination results on the basis of process must present evidence that the alleged irregularity materially affected the candidate's performance. The existence of irregularities, in itself, is not sufficient to reverse the results of the examination. Please contact COPR directly if you want further information on this process.

Applying to Rewrite the Examination

If you fail the exam you will need to contact the Provincial Regulator in order to determine your eligibility to re-apply.

Incomplete Certification – Time Limits

Eligible time limits are set by the Provincial Regulator.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Sample Questions

Sample questions are available in the Examination Study Guide (www.copr.ca). In addition, candidates may purchase Preparatory Tests. See page 10 for information on how to purchase Preparatory Tests.

A “Tutorial Quiz” is available for all candidates to try prior to their actual examination, which is designed to familiarize candidates with the computer-based test-taking interface. Access to this system tutorial will be provided to successful applicants in advance of their examination date.

Appendix II: Candidate Statement of Understanding

Conduct occurring before, during or after testing that violates principles detailed in this *Statement of Understanding* may result in invalidation of examination results and/or other penalties and will be reported to the Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators/Organisation Canadienne des Régulateurs Paramédicaux (COPR) and provincial regulating authorities.

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the above statement.

1. The COPR Entry to Practice Examination is highly confidential. The examination questions **are the property of COPR**. Unauthorized disclosure of the examination questions is **prohibited under copyright laws**. By signing this statement of understanding, **you agree to maintain the confidentiality of the COPR examination questions**. You must therefore:
 - Keep the exam content confidential, **even after the exam**. This also includes not discussing the content with anyone who wrote the exam before you, with you or who has not written the exam yet.
 - Not use or be in possession of any electronic device (such as cell phones, cameras, pagers, iPods, etc.) **in the exam room**;
 - Realize that any recording or memorization of exam questions is strictly **forbidden** whether you intend to recreate parts of the exam for financial gain or not.
2. Candidates will be observed at all times while they are taking the COPR Examination. This observation will include direct observation by invigilators. Invigilators may not necessarily inform you of their observations, but they are required to report behaviour that may violate the terms and regulations of COPR or other forms of irregular behaviour.
3. Any cheating and/or breach of confidentiality/security or any attempt to subvert the examination process by any candidate violates the purpose and principles of the examination. Any candidate, who carries out, takes part in or who witnesses such behaviour must report it to the invigilator and/or COPR as soon as possible.

4. COPR strives to report results that accurately reflect the skill and performance of each candidate and represent a valid measure of their knowledge or competence as sampled by the examination. Accordingly, our standards and procedures for administering examinations have two related goals: giving candidates comparable opportunities to demonstrate their abilities, and preventing any of one person from gaining an unfair advantage over others. To promote these objectives, COPR reserves the right to cancel or withhold any examination results when, in the sole opinion of COPR, a testing irregularity occurs; cheating has occurred; there is an apparent discrepancy in, or falsification of, a candidate's identification; a candidate engages in misconduct or plagiarism; when aberrancies in performance are detected for which there is no reasonable and satisfactory explanation; or the results are believed to be invalid for any other reason.

A candidate agrees to abide by all regulations, as well as oral and written instructions controlling the conduct of the examination. These regulations are intended to preserve the integrity of the examination process by providing standard test administration conditions that yield valid and reliable results.

Appendix III: The Angoff Method and Determining a Pass Mark

Standard Setting is the business of setting passing scores, (or what is referred to as 'cut scores'), for examinations. The cut score(s) serves to **classify** candidates into categories; those who score above the cut score are judged to possess the minimum level of proficiency required for inclusion into the category, while those who score below the cut score are deemed not to possess the minimum level of proficiency required, and are classified accordingly.

Standard Setting is most often a judgmental process. It typically involves a panel of subject matter experts and stakeholders who must estimate the difficulty of each question for so-called **minimally-competent**, or borderline candidates. Those judgments are then aggregated in order to arrive at a passing score across sets of questions. Standard setting methods differ in the way that those judgments are made by panelists, and also in the way that question-level judgments are aggregated to create a passing score. One of the most common methods of standard setting is the *Modified Angoff* method. The central task of the Modified Angoff method is for panelists to estimate the **percentage** of minimally competent candidates who would answer each item correctly. The instructions to panelists would be to examine the question carefully, both in terms of the 'structure' of the question, and of the difficulty of the competency being tested. This information is used to make a judgment regarding the expected performance on that question of the minimally competent candidate. Two types of judgments are common, either the **probability** that any single candidate would answer the question correctly, or the number out of 100 minimally competent candidates that would answer the question correctly.

These judgments are summed for each panelist to create a recommendation for a passing score. This makes sense, because the item-level judgments are themselves pass-level judgments per question. For example, if a panelist provided judgments of 0.7, or 70% for each and every question, the passing standard would logically be 70% for the entire exam.

Item	Angoff Participant 1 round 1	Angoff Participant 1 round 2
1	0.87	0.79
2	0.64	0.60
3	0.43	0.47
4	0.55	0.51
5	0.61	0.63
6	0.43	0.44
7	0.76	0.79
8	0.61	0.66

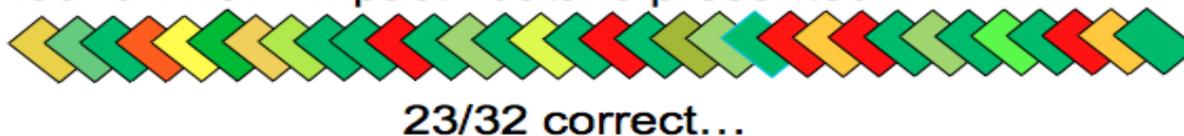
Typically these judgments are made over multiple rounds after which the judgments become increasingly refined. Between rounds, various types of information can be provided to panelists regarding the reasonableness of their judgments. A common type of information is *impact data*, or the number and percentages of candidates who would pass based upon the average or median passing score recommendation by panelists. Other types of feedback include the difficulty of each question for the candidates or the consistency of each panelist’s judgments.

As shown in the figure below, the changes in item-level ratings impact the overall recommended passing score. The passing score recommendation made in the final round is the one that is ultimately adopted.

Round One: Initial Ratings



Round Two: “Impact” data is presented.



For more detailed information on standard setting procedures and methods see the book, [Setting Performance Standards: Concepts, Methods, and Perspectives](#), edited by Gregory Cizek and Robert Sternberg.

Appendix IV: Standard Score Template

Candidate Standard Score Report



Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators / Organisation Canadienne des Régulateurs Paramédicaux

The following report shows your results on the November 2016 administration of the COPR Entry to Practice Examination for Primary Care Paramedic. This information is provided in 3 areas: Pass/Fail status (upper right), overall standard score versus passing mark (middle), and standard score performance versus passing mark for each National Occupational Competency (NOCP) (bottom). Details on standard scores are provided at the bottom of this report.

Exam Performance Report

Name:	Lionel Wyndham
Candidate ID:	91516061
Date of Examination:	19/11/16
Exam Result:	FAIL

We regret to inform you that you did not earn the minimum standard score required to pass on this examination. The score you achieved was 446.12, shown in Figure 1 by the length of the red bar, while the required score to pass was 475, represented by the black vertical line.

Your Total Standard Score

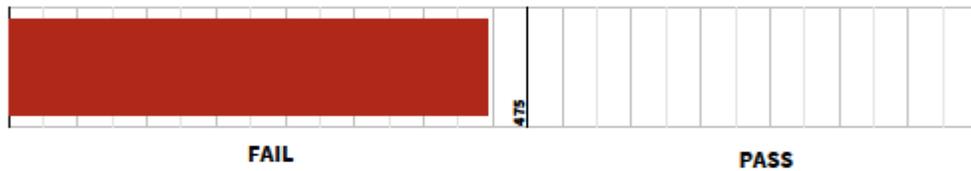


Figure 1. Your standardized total score, which determines your Exam Result (Pass/Fail)

Your performance in each NOCP Competency Area is shown in Figure 2. In this graph, the length of each bar represents the level of your performance and the vertical black line represents the approximate level of acceptable performance with each respective Area. The bars are also colour-coded as follows: red indicates likely areas of weakness; yellow indicates performance below acceptable performance; light green indicates acceptable performance; darker green indicates a likely area of strength. Note that only your Total Standard Score determines your Pass/Fail result; the second graph is for your information only.

Your Competency Standard Scores

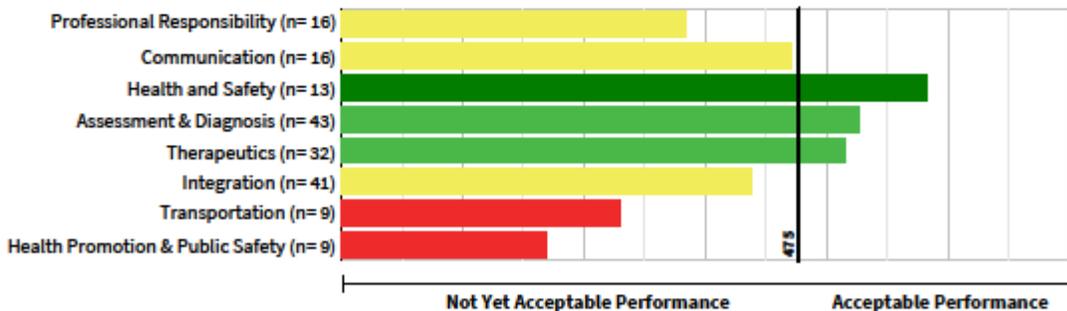


Figure 2. Your standardized competency scores for each NOCP Competency Area.

Note on Standard Scores: Every COPR Examination is assembled to cover the same proportion of exam content. However, each exam differs somewhat in its overall difficulty. To not penalize candidates who receive more difficult exams, scores from each exam are **standardized** to be comparable to previous exams' scores. For example, 70% on a more difficult exam will be standardized to a **higher** standard score than 70% from an easier exam. Using standard scores, passing scores are the same across all examinations (in this case, 475) and scores on different examinations can be directly compared.

Appendix V: Provincial Regulatory Bodies

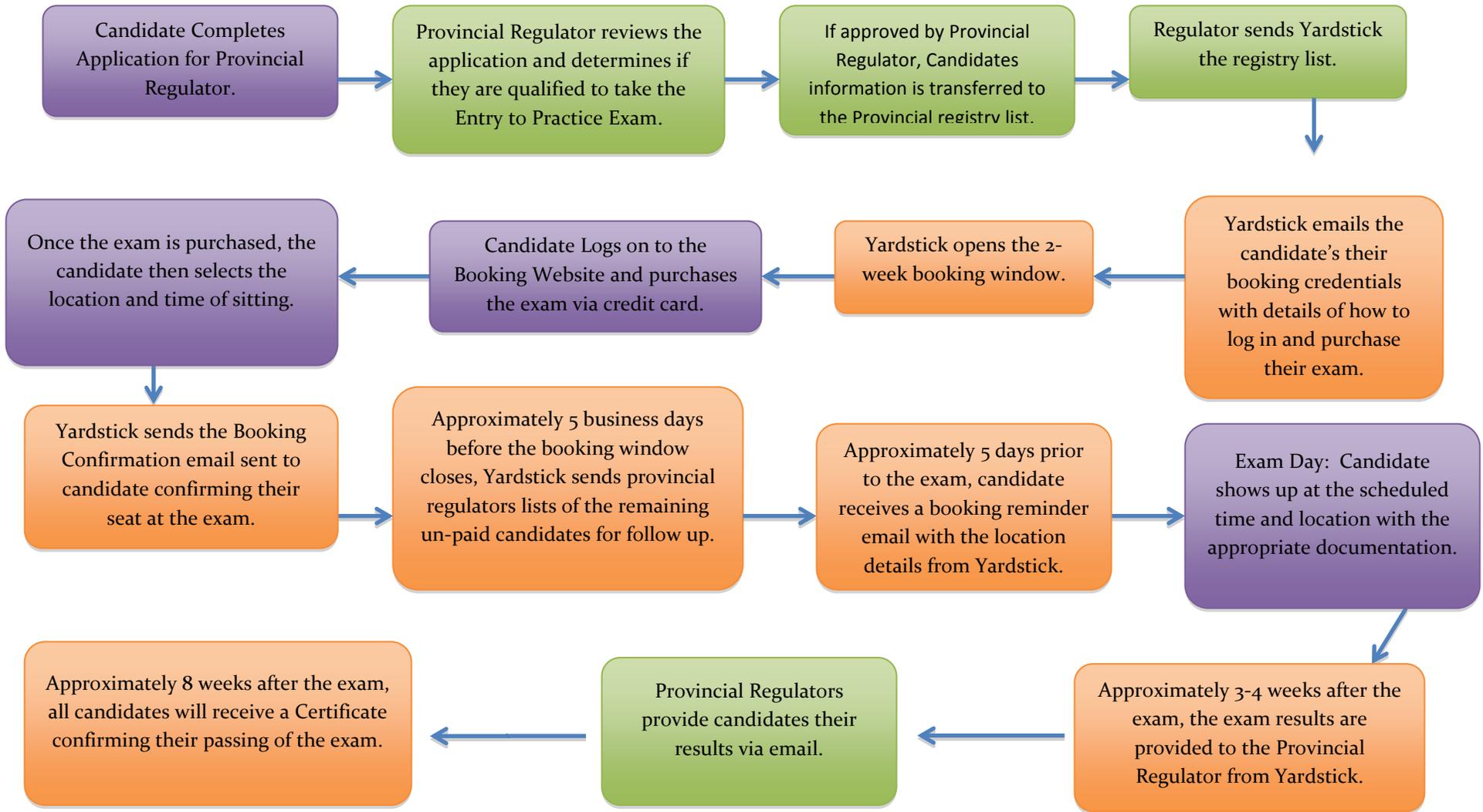
In provinces where COPR has an examination services agreement with a regulatory body, the Provincial Regulator will provide COPR with a list of candidates authorized to write the exam. COPR will send the Provincial Regulator the pass/fail result of each candidate on their list.

The following provinces utilize the COPR Entry to Practice Examinations:

- Manitoba
- Nova Scotia
- Prince Edward Island
- Saskatchewan
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- British Columbia

Candidates, who have passed the examination, and want to work in a regulated jurisdiction, are required to contact the regulatory body in that province for registration requirements. (Links to all paramedic regulators in Canada can be found under the *Contact Us* tab on at www.copr.ca).

Appendix VI: COPR – Candidate Examination Registration Process



YARDSTICK (YS)
Exam Test Agency

COPR / REGULATORS

CANDIDATE