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DSPS Communications
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DSPS Increases Options for Trades Examinations through New Partnership

Latest example of agency's innovative work to benefit state workforce, expedite licensing

Madison, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) is vastly expanding opportunities to take trades exams in Wisconsin, entering into an agreement with computer-based testing company Pearson VUE to offer more locations and more exam slots to those looking to earn a credential for work in the Badger State.

“This is a major boost to our state’s workforce, paving the way for qualified professionals to become credentialed more quickly,” said DSPS Secretary-designee Dan Hereth. “We have seen, and expect to keep seeing, increased demand for trades exams in Wisconsin. Looking into the future, our agency wants to position itself to meet that demand and help hard-working Wisconsinites get into a variety of great fields.”

Currently, DSPS offers trades exams about four days per month at one of five testing locations across the state. The partnership with Pearson VUE will add 54 additional testing sites in Wisconsin. There are six Pearson VUE-owned testing centers and 48 centers at third-party sites. Those signing up for exams will soon have the option to take exams through Pearson VUE at their locations. Those who wish to sit for an exam at a DSPS site can continue to register to do so. There will be no reduction in state-run exam slots.

In addition to more locations and more testing days, the partnership allows for more flexibility. People signing up for an exam will be able to choose the location, date and time that is most convenient for their schedule.

“The increased number of testing sites will greatly increase date and time options for those scheduling an exam,” Hereth said. “I’m proud to help lead this effort to make testing as convenient as possible and increase the number of trades exams taken each year.”

Hereth says the partnership with Pearson VUE will also allow applicants to avoid traveling significant distances to sit for an exam at a state testing site, adding that it will ultimately help more skilled professionals enter the Wisconsin workforce or progress in their careers more quickly.

“The importance of maintaining regulatory standards cannot be overstated, which is why we are so pleased to partner with the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services to deliver its licensing program examinations. We are confident that our extensive experience delivering large-scale, high-stakes examinations for Wisconsin DSPS for more than a decade will help the department continue to provide the highest quality licensure services,” said Eric D’Astolfo, Vice President of Business Development, Pearson VUE.

Pearson VUE already has an established process in Wisconsin, having provided testing in Wisconsin to a small number of DSPS-licensed professional groups, including real estate examiners, for more than 10 years. The benefits are now being extended to a much larger group of Wisconsin licensees.

“Since my appointment last year, the effort has been on putting the proper people, processes, and tools in place to be as efficient as possible, without lowering the regulatory guardrails and compromising our agency’s commitment to public safety. Working with established companies like Pearson VUE to significantly expand our services is just another way to improve our processes for the benefit of our state and its workers.”

This collaboration is the latest example of innovative new practices at Wisconsin DSPS under the leadership of the Evers Administration and Hereth, who was appointed Secretary-designee in August of 2022. Other efforts include working with Wisconsin nurses and the state Nursing Board to create more efficient processes for licensing in that field, working with state dentists and Marquette Dental School to eliminate redundant, post-graduate examinations, and partnering with other states to streamline interstate license verifications through data sharing.

Trades exams will be available at the new testing sites sometime in the first quarter of 2024. DSPS announced last week it is also expanding testing dates at its current locations between now and the end of the year. The four added dates are October 12, and December 19, 20, and 21.

DSPS is notifying people currently signed up for exams in 2024 to offer them a slot on one of the added 2023 dates on a first-come, first-served basis. People registered in January and February 2024 have been offered the first opportunity to move up their exam dates via a [date change request form](#).

Individuals registering for an exam with Pearson VUE will pay a small administration fee to the testing service in addition to the state trades exam fee.

About DSPS: DSPS issues more than 240 unique licenses, administers dozens of boards and councils that regulate professions, enforces state building codes, and maintains the Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a key tool in the multi-faceted public health campaign to stem excessive opioid prescribing. A fee-based agency, DSPS is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With four offices and 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote safety and advance the economy.

About Pearson VUE: Pearson VUE is the global leader in computer-based certification and licensure exam delivery. Pearson VUE delivers more than 19 million certification and licensure exams annually for academic, health, and industry sector clients, leveraging a comprehensive network of nearly 20,000 test centers globally, and online testing capabilities.

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