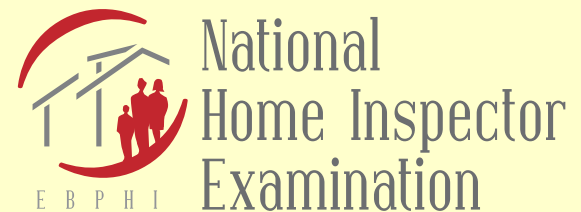


# National Home Inspector Examination: Confidence and Competence

Noël Zak, Executive Director  
National Home Inspector Examination



# Why states regulate professions

- Consumer protection
- Improve the profession—  
“raising the bar”
- Accountability



# What's "licensing?"

- Now 31 states that regulate
- Confusion over terms:
  - 27 "license"
  - 3 "trade practice" or "registration"
  - 1 "voluntary certification"
  - 1 "mandatory certification"

# Types of credentialing

	Entity Recognizing	Voluntary or Mandatory	USUAL Components of the Program
<b>Professional Certification</b>	Association, Certification Board, Corporations, State Governmental Agency	Voluntary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility/application process</li> <li>• Assessment, i.e. testing</li> <li>• Ongoing requirements, e.g. continuing education, retesting</li> <li>• Revokeable/enforced</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum-based Certificate</b>	Association, Certification Board, Academic Institution, Corporation	Voluntary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused and predefined curriculum</li> <li>• Education/training program</li> <li>• Assessment through exam or skill demonstration</li> <li>• No ongoing requirements</li> <li>• Cannot be revoked</li> </ul>
<b>Licensure</b>	State Governmental Agency	Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility requirements demonstrated through application process</li> <li>• Assessment of knowledge or skills by examination</li> <li>• Ongoing re-licensure requirements, such as continuing education, retesting, and/or submission of fees</li> <li>• Revokeable/enforced</li> <li>• Unlawful to practice without license</li> </ul>
<b>Registration</b>	Association, Certification Board	Voluntary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually synonymous with Certification</li> </ul>
<b>Registration</b>	State Governmental Agency	Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State requires all individuals who wish to engage in an occupation to register (list their name and pay a fee) with a designated governmental agency</li> </ul>

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 "Credentialing Programs Compared"  
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# Types of testing

- Knowledge-based—how MUCH do you know?
  - Usually tests to specific curriculum
  - Goal is to obtain highest score
- Competency-based—
  - Tests to a blueprint derived from a role delineation study
  - Scoring is pass/fail

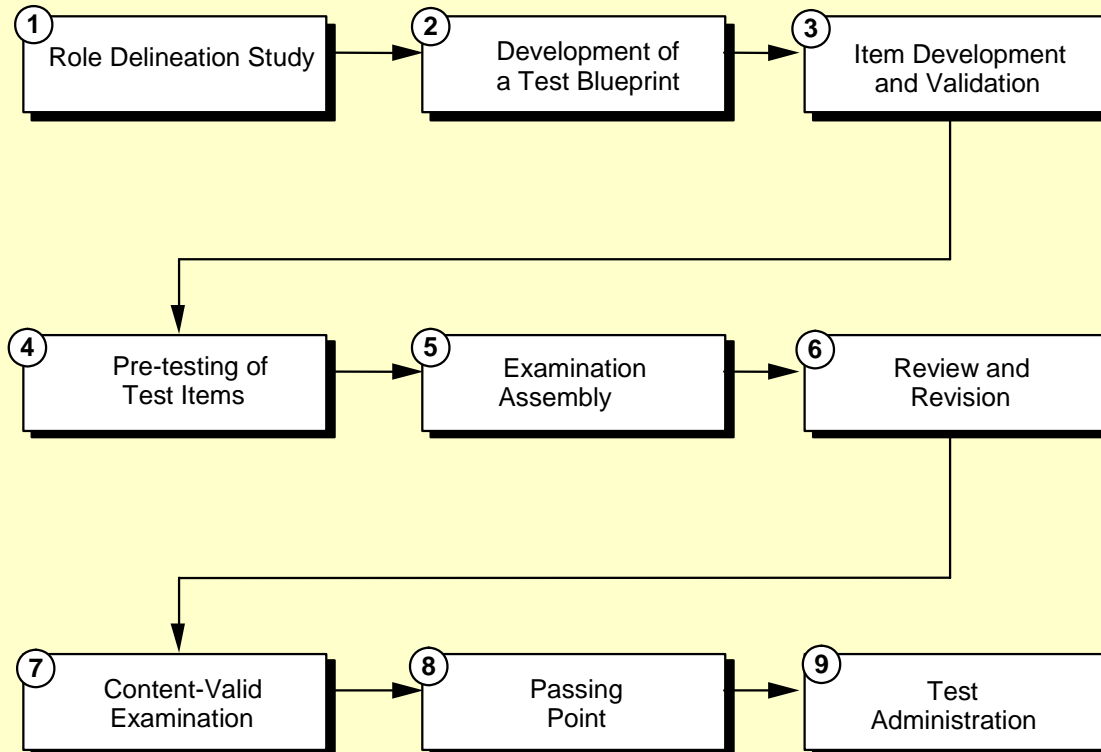
# Psychometrics

- Science of measuring skills, knowledge via standardized mathematic and statistic processes
- “High stakes” testing
- Vital role of subject matter experts
- Reliability, validity, defensibility

# Test development standards

- AERA, NCCA, CLEAR—standard setting
- Maximum compliance ensures validity, reliability, defensibility
- Assess how well, to what depth, does development meet the standards
- Standards also require independence

# Test development cycle



# Result: NHIE test blueprint

- Inspection Methods (27%)
- Building Systems (42%), including exterior, structural, roofing, electrical, heating and cooling, insulating and ventilating, plumbing, interior, and fireplace and chimney.
- Reporting (26%)
- Professional Practice (5%)

# Pitfalls of poor testing

- Undermines public protection
- False sense of consumer security
- Diminishes professionalism
- Legal vulnerability

# Advantages of national test

- NHIE provides uniform foundation for regulation as the legislative trend continues
- National exam sets appropriate competency standard to encourage serious professionals

# National Home Inspector Examination: Confidence and competence

- “Minimum competence” is not “incompetent”
- Must be supported by statutory requirements for qualifying and continuing education
- Regulator and consumer confidence
- Pride and knowledge for home inspectors