



Instructor Development Policy 2025

New Instructor Lumbar Exam Policy

1. To be eligible to apply to be an instructor, prospective instructors (PIs) must be in full-time interventional pain medicine practice for a minimum of three (3) years.
2. PIs must take an IPSIS bio-skills lab prior to taking the written exam. It is strongly suggested that the course the PI attends is the Lumbar Bio-Skills Lab.
3. PIs are required to sit for a written exam as the first step in the process of becoming a lumbar bio-skills lab instructor. A score of 92% is required to pass.
 - a. If the exam is not passed on the first attempt, the PI is given a second attempt in which the questions that were not correctly answered are taken again.
 - b. If the exam is not passed on the second attempt, the PI will be asked to wait one year and then may apply again.
4. Once the written exam is passed, the PI will be asked to submit op notes and images for one case for each of the following techniques on the lumbar exam:
 - a. Interlaminar epidural access
 - i. AP view of needle placement, without contrast
 - ii. Depth view with needle placement, without contrast (depth view of contralateral oblique preferred, but lateral will be accepted).
 - iii. AP view of needle placement, with contrast
 - iv. Depth view with needle placement, with contrast (depth view contralateral oblique preferred, but lateral will be accepted).
 - b. L1-L5 transforaminal epidural injection
 - i. AP and lateral projections of needle placement, without contrast
 - ii. AP and lateral projections of needle placement, with contrast
 - c. S1 transforaminal epidural injections
 - i. AP and lateral views of needle placement, without contrast
 - ii. AP and lateral views of needle placement, with contrast
 - d. Medial Branch Blocks to include at least L5 and L4
 - i. AP and oblique views of needle placement, without contrast
 - ii. AP and oblique views of needle placement, with contrast
 - e. SI Joint injections
 - i. AP, oblique and/or lateral views of needle placement, without contrast
 - ii. AP, oblique and/or lateral views of needle placement, demonstrating contrast in the joint
5. The IDC Review Panel will review the images and procedure notes and will provide constructive feedback to the PI and will ask that any problematic images be resubmitted per the Guidelines and Technical Manual for a second review.
 - a. The image submission reviews will be done with a peer review and professional development lens and are not meant to exclude skilled instructors.
 - b. If the PI has significant issues on additional image review, the IDC members will discuss the issues and create a development plan for the PI if considered appropriate by the IDC.
 - c. Once the review of the images and procedure notes is positive, the PI will be scheduled for the hands-on exam.

6. The last step in the process is the hands-on exam. If the PI has NOT attended a lumbar course, the PI must complete the hands-on exam during one of the lumbar courses offered per year. If the PI has attended a lumbar course, the PI can complete the hands-on exam during any bio-skills lab that has a lumbar cadaver.
 - a. The PI will pay for his/her own hotel and travel expenses.
 - b. The PI may audit the lumbar course in the same weekend as the hands-on exam or if the PI prefers, he/she may audit the course one weekend and be examined at a different course. The latter must be decided prior to the examiners being scheduled and the course taking place.
 - c. If the PI does not pass the hands-on exam, they will receive feedback on how to improve and be allowed to retest at a later date.
 - d. PI's are allowed two attempts to pass the hands-on exam. A third attempt is not guaranteed but may be discussed by the IDC.
7. After the successful completion of the above steps, the PI will be added to the instructor panel and can begin teaching as a new lumbar instructor.
8. Depending on the number of lumbar instructors and the ratio of new to experienced instructors, new lumbar instructors may not be able to teach right away after passing their exams.