NORTH AMERICA · UNITED STATES · FOREIGN GRADUATE ROUTE

US How to register as a pharmacist in United States

Each US state licenses its own pharmacists. With a degree from outside the US, you first earn FPGEC Certification from the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP), then meet one state board's internship and exam rules. Licence or registration: **State pharmacist licence (after FPGEC Certification)**. Regulator: **Board of pharmacy of each state; NABP runs FPGEC and the national exams**. Every fact was checked against official sources on **20 November 2026**.

ENGLISH TEST CHANGES TOEFL iBT minimums now use the new ETS scale (Reading 4, Listening 5, Speaking 5, Writing 4.5) and must be sat at a centre in the US, its territories or listed Canadian provinces. OET for Pharmacy is accepted from 11 Jan 2027. The FPGEE runs once a year; the next date is 7 Oct 2027.

Who decides what	
NABP (FPGEC)	Runs FPGEC Certification and the FPGEE, NAPLEX and MPJE. It does not decide licence eligibility, and certification is not a licence.
Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE)	Verifies your pharmacy degree. The only organisation that can evaluate credentials for NABP.
State board of pharmacy	Sets internship hours, the law exam and exam eligibility, and issues the licence for that state.
USCIS and Department of State	Decide work visas and green cards. US missions in Pakistan handle visa interviews. Separate from licensing.
Employer	Decides hiring and whether to sponsor a visa. A licence is not a job offer.

Who can apply

- A pharmacy degree from a recognised or accredited school outside the US.
- Graduated on or after 1 Jan 2003: at least a 5-year programme at graduation. Before that date: at least 4 years. Later courses, internships and work do not count.
- Post-graduate degrees with clinical patient-care experience may be reviewed case by case towards programme length, at FPGEC's discretion.
- A permanent, unrestricted pharmacist licence or registration from a country outside the US. A degree without the required registration does not qualify.
- Pass an English test and the FPGEE within the 2-year time limits.
- Each state board, not NABP, then decides whether you may sit the NAPLEX and law exam.

The steps, with approximate time and cost

1. **Apply for FPGEC Certification**
   Apply online and pay by card. Send sealed proof of your pharmacist licence to NABP and your degree papers to ECE for a General Evaluation Report.
   Time: about 12 weeks review · Cost: $750 + ECE fee

2. **Pass the TOEFL iBT at an approved centre**
   Sit it at an ETS centre in the US, a US territory or a listed Canadian province. At-home TOEFL is not accepted. OET for Pharmacy counts for tests from 11 Jan 2027.
   Time: 3–6 months (est.) · Cost: set by ETS

3. **Pass the FPGEE**
   200-question computer exam, 4.5 hours, at Pearson centres in the US only. Scaled pass mark 75. Next date 7 Oct 2027. Results in about 8 weeks.
   Time: 1 date a year · Cost: $750 ($850 resit)

4. **Complete state internship hours**
   Register as an intern with one state board and complete its supervised hours in the US. Kentucky, for example, asks for 1,500 hours. Rules differ by state.
   Time: about 9–12 months (est.) · Cost: set by state

5. **Pass the NAPLEX and the law exam**
   NAPLEX: 225 questions in 6 hours. Law exam: MPJE, UMPJE or a state's own test, as the board requires. Both at Pearson centres in the US.
   Time: 3–6 months (est.) · Cost: $620 + $270

6. **Receive your state pharmacist licence**
   Apply to the state board with your results and verified hours. The licence covers that state only; other states need a licence transfer and their law exam.
   Time: set by each state (est.) · Cost: set by state

Typical total: About 3–5 years (est.)

Language requirements

- TOEFL iBT taken on or after 21 Jan 2026 (new ETS scale): Reading 4, Listening 5, Speaking 5, Writing 4.5. Scores are valid for 2 years.
- TOEFL must be sat at an ETS centre in the US, US territories or 10 Canadian provinces. At-home TOEFL is not accepted. MyBest Scores accepted from 1 Nov 2026.
- OET for Pharmacy is accepted for tests from 11 Jan 2027, at a computer-based centre in the same areas. Minimum grades are not yet published.

Read this before you plan

- Licence ≠ visa ≠ job. FPGEC Certification is not a licence, and a state licence gives no right to enter, stay or work in the US.
- Visas and green cards are decided by USCIS and the State Department, not by NABP or a state board. An employer decides hiring.
- All FPGEC and licensing exams are sat in the US. Travelling for them, interning and working each need their own US immigration permission.

Exams, costs and documents

Checked 20 November 2026

Exam pattern and mode: online, test centre or onsite

FPGEE

TEST CENTRE

- 200 computer questions, fixed form
- 4.5 hours (5.5 hours seat time)
- Biomedical 12%, pharm. sciences 31%
- Social/admin 20%, practice and clinical 37%
- Scaled pass mark 75; 5 attempts maximum

Pearson Professional Centers in the US only. Not online and not offered in Pakistan or any other country.

NAPLEX

TEST CENTRE

- 225 questions, 200 scored
- 6 hours, computer, fixed form
- Mostly patient-scenario questions
- Wait 45 days after a fail
- 3 attempts in 12 months, 5 maximum

Pearson Professional Centers in the 50 states, US territories and DC. Not online; no centres abroad are listed.

MPJE or UMPJE (law exam)

TEST CENTRE

- 120 questions, 100 scored
- 2.5 hours, adaptive computer test
- State and federal pharmacy law
- UMPJE: uniform version from 2026
- Wait 30 days after a fail; 5 per state

Pearson Professional Centers in the 50 states, US territories and DC. Not online; no centres abroad are listed.

Official fees	Amount
FPGEC application $650 document evaluation plus $100 administrative fee. Nonrefundable.	**$750**
ECE General Evaluation Report Paid to ECE, plus an extra copy sent to FPGEC. Current price on ece.org.	**see ece.org**
FPGEE First attempt. Second attempt $850, incl. $100 nonrefundable admin fee. Rescore $200.	**$750**
NAPLEX $100 eligibility + $520 exam. Resit $520. Some states add an $85 processing fee.	**$620**
MPJE (state law exam) $100 eligibility + $170 exam. The uniform UMPJE exam is $350 instead.	**$270**
State intern and licence fees Set by each board. Example: Kentucky intern licence $25.	**varies**

All amounts in US dollars, from NABP bulletins dated 2026. TOEFL, travel, US visa and living costs are extra.

Documents usually required

- FPGEC application and Attestation in your NABP e-Profile
- Photo ID matching your e-Profile name exactly
- Official pharmacy transcripts, sent through ECE
- Official proof of degree with title and issue date, through ECE
- ECE General Evaluation Report plus an extra copy for FPGEC
- Licence or registration proof, sealed by the issuing agency
- Licence proof showing issue date, number, seal and signature
- Word-for-word English translations of any non-English text
- TOEFL score report sent by ETS (FPGEC code 9103)

Expected time

- NABP evaluation takes about 12 weeks after all documents, including a passing English score, arrive. Resubmitted documents add another 12 weeks.
- You have 2 years after applying to be accepted, then 2 years to pass the FPGEE. These deadlines are not extended for any reason.
- FPGEE results take about 8 weeks. Internship hours, the NAPLEX, the law exam and state processing come after certification.

Typical total: About 3–5 years (est.)

The US internship stage

- After FPGEC Certification, you register as a pharmacy intern with one state board and complete supervised hours in the US before licensure.
- Hours differ by state. Kentucky, for example, lists 1,500 hours and a $25 intern licence fee.
- Some states accept hours from another state only if that state's board certifies them. Check before you start.
- Choose your state early: it decides the internship, the law exam, the fees and the licence.

Visas, pay and next steps

Checked 20 November 2026

Immigration route (separate from registration)	What official sources say	Status
H-1B specialty occupation	Temporary work visa that needs a US employer to petition. Annual cap 65,000 plus 20,000 for US advanced degrees. From the FY2027 season, selection is weighted by wage level; registration fee $215.	Changes yearly
H-1B $100,000 payment	A September 2025 proclamation added a $100,000 payment for certain new petitions for workers outside the US. A court vacated the guidance on 8 June 2026; USCIS says it follows the order but plans to collect if it is lifted.	Confirm
Employment-based green card	Permanent residence through a sponsoring US employer (for example EB-2 or EB-3). Waiting times follow the monthly Visa Bulletin. Not checked in detail for pharmacists: take advice from an authorised professional.	Confirm
Immigrant visas for Pakistanis	A pause on immigrant visa issuance to Pakistani citizens began on 21 Jan 2026 and, per the State Department, ended on 21 Aug 2026 by court order. A separate 2026 proclamation limits visas for some nationalities.	Confirm

If you are applying from Pakistan

- NABP lists FPGEE, NAPLEX and MPJE centres only in the US, so candidates from Pakistan must travel to the US to sit them.
- A TOEFL iBT taken in Pakistan, or at home, is not accepted for FPGEC.
- Pakistani licence proof must be certified and sealed by the issuing agency; any Urdu text needs a word-for-word English translation.
- The US Embassy in Pakistan said the January 2026 immigrant visa pause did not apply to nonimmigrant visas such as those for skilled workers.

Pay and funding

- No official US pharmacist pay figure was checked for this guide.
- Pay depends on state, employer and role. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes official wage data by occupation and state.

Avoid these common mistakes

- Taking the TOEFL in Pakistan or at home. FPGEC accepts only centres in the US, US territories or listed Canadian provinces.
- Applying with a degree but no pharmacist registration from your country. FPGEC requires a permanent, unrestricted licence.
- Missing the once-a-year FPGEE, or letting a 2-year FPGEC deadline expire.
- Choosing a state late. Internship hours, the law exam and fees all depend on the state.
- Assuming FPGEC Certification or a licence brings a visa or a job.

How ASGHCA supports you

- FPGEE and NAPLEX preparation
- International Career Mapping: consult, assess, roadmap, prepare
- Documentation and registration guidance
- English test preparation: IELTS, PTE and OET
- 1-on-1 mentorship, CV and interview support
- Webinars, CPD sessions and a lifetime community

ASGHCA offers education and guidance. Regulated immigration advice is referred to authorised professionals.

Official sources, all checked 20 November 2026: NABP FPGEC and FPGEE pages (nabp.pharmacy/programs/foreign-pharmacy) · FPGEC Candidate Application Bulletin, Nov 2026 (read.nxtbook.com/nabp/bulletin/fpgec_bulletin) · NAPLEX/MPJE Candidate Application Bulletin, 2026 (read.nxtbook.com/nabp/bulletin/naplex_mpje_bulletin) · NABP news release on OET, Oct 2026 · Kentucky Board of Pharmacy (pharmacy.ky.gov) · USCIS H-1B cap season, weighted selection and H-1B FAQ (uscis.gov) · US Embassy Pakistan (pk.usembassy.gov) · travel.state.gov.

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