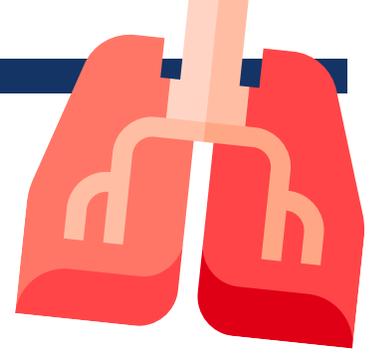


National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Spirometry Training Program: Answers to Top Frequently Asked Questions



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What Is the Goal of the NIOSH Spirometry Training Course?

The course goal is to train technicians to produce valid spirometry test results. Spirometry testing can be fraught with equipment, technique, and data entry errors. NIOSH training addresses each area and incrementally builds attendee knowledge, skills, and ability to recognize and correct errors.

Who Should Take a NIOSH-Approved Spirometry Training Course?

The Cotton Dust Standard [29 CFR 1910.1043], promulgated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), gives NIOSH the responsibility to approve spirometry training courses for individuals who administer spirometry tests to workers exposed to cotton dust.

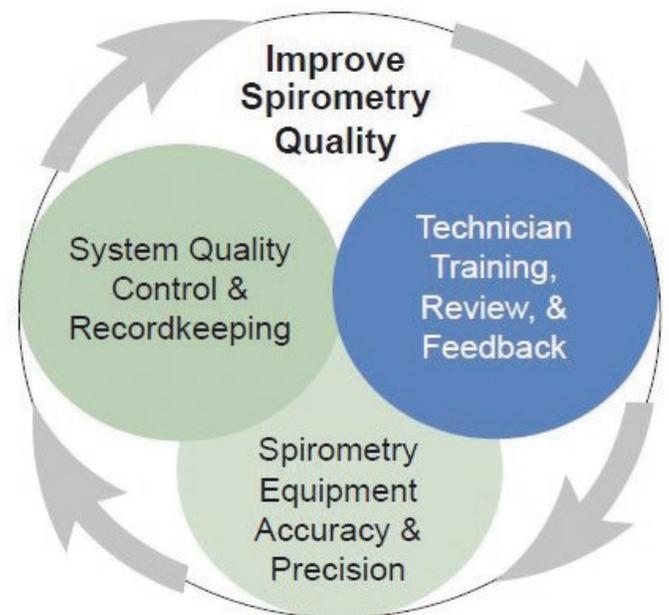
In addition to the Cotton Dust Standard, two other regulations now require NIOSH-approved spirometry training: OSHA's Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard [29 CFR 1926.1153] (general industry, maritime, and construction workers); and the Mine Safety and Health Administration's (MSHA's) Specifications for Medical Examinations of Coal Miners [42 CFR Part 37].

All healthcare professionals who perform or interpret spirometry are eligible and encouraged to take a NIOSH-approved spirometry training course.

Are Medical Professionals Exempt from Federal Requirements for NIOSH-Approved Spirometry Training?

The Cotton Dust Standard is the only federal regulation that includes an exemption for licensed physicians. Federal regulation NIOSH-approved spirometry training requirement excerpts:

COURSE GOALS



- OSHA Cotton Dust Standard (29 CFR 1910.1043) “Persons other than licensed physicians, who administer the pulmonary function testing required by this section shall have completed a NIOSH-approved training course in spirometry” [OSHA 2019]. www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1043
- MSHA Coal Mine Dust Rule (42 CFR Part 37) “Each person administering spirometry tests for the Coal Workers' Health Surveillance Program must successfully complete a NIOSH-approved spirometry training course and maintain a valid certificate by periodically completing NIOSH-approved spirometry refresher training courses” [MSHA 2016]. www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?&n=42y1.0.1.3.21&r=PART&ty=HTML

Note: a separate NIOSH facility approval must also be obtained before testing workers exposed to coal mine dust www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/cwhsp/coalminerhealth.html

- OSHA Respirable Crystalline Silica Regulations (29 CFR 1926.1153/1053) “A pulmonary function test to include forced vital capacity (FVC) and forced expiratory volume in one second (FEV1) and FEV1/FVC ratio, administered by a spirometry technician with a current certificate from a NIOSH-approved spirometry course” [OSHA 2016]. www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.1153

How Long Is a NIOSH-Approved Spirometry Training Course?

Courses are two or three days in length and a minimum of 16 hours. At least eight hours must be spent on practical instruction, which can include hands-on training with equipment and testing, plus interactive sessions developing decision-making skills. Courses include both written and practicum examinations.

Where Are NIOSH-Approved Courses Held?

Initial two- or three-day training courses are taught by 34 NIOSH-approved course sponsors in the U.S. and Mexico. There are no online initial courses. Course sponsors can hold public or private courses, and many course sponsors are willing to travel. In 2018, courses were held in 45 U.S. states, plus Washington, D.C., Guam, and 12 other countries. Use these links to find the NIOSH Spirometry Training Webpage map and course schedule: www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/spirometry/approved-course.html and wwwn.cdc.gov/niosh-rhd/spirometry/TrainingSchedule.aspx

What Is a NIOSH-Approved Certificate?

Students who successfully complete a NIOSH-approved spirometry training course will receive a certificate from the course director. It is important to note the course certificate does not certify, license, or approve the attendee as a pulmonary function technician; it is granted solely by the NIOSH-approved

course sponsorship and verifies the student has successfully completed the 16-hour training. Licensure of respiratory health professionals is generally the function of a state board and a national organization such as the National Board for Respiratory Care.

When Does a NIOSH-Approved Certificate Expire? Are There Refresher Courses?

The course certificate is valid for five years. There is a seven-month grace period allowed after the initial or refresher training course five-year expiration, after which spirometry technicians must retake an initial two- or three-day course in order to continue testing under mandated regulations. NIOSH-approved refresher courses last seven hours and are available in-person or online.

What Is the Cost of a NIOSH-Approved Course?

NIOSH does not oversee course registration fees. Contact course sponsors for prices and registration information: www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/spirometry/sponsors.html

Are There NIOSH Spirometry Training Resources Available?

There are many spirometry training resources available: Learning Curves spirometry training video, “Get Valid Spirometry Results EVERY Time” common error poster (10 languages) and booklet (two languages), NIOSH Spirometry Training Manual, reference calculator/tables, and Spirola software for longitudinal monitoring spirometry data. www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/spirometry/training-materials.html

How Can Our Institution Become a NIOSH Spirometry Training Course Sponsor?

Use this link for further information: www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/spirometry/course-sponsor.html ◀

NIOSH COURSE STRUCTURE

COURSE SPONSOR

Organizations or individuals for sponsoring a NIOSH-approved spirometry training course. Sponsors can be NIOSH Education and Research Center (ERC), academic institutions, non-profit organizations, private companies, or individual professionals.

- To become a sponsor, you must select a Course Director to oversee your course.
- Sponsors submit curriculum vitae for applicants Course Directors to the NIOSH Spirometry Training Program at NIOSHbreathe@cdc.gov for a consideration and approval.

COURSE DIRECTOR

Oversees the training course program, develops course curriculum, and is present at all courses. Course directors enlist Faculty Members.

FACULTY MEMBER

Works under direct supervision of the course director and provides practical course instruction. To become a faculty member, the course director submits a curriculum vitae for NIOSH review and approval.