**NCLC Authority and Autonomy Policy**

*Background:*

This NCLC Policy is in compliance with ISO/IEC 17024, Clauses 4.3 and 5.

**Policy**

The NCLC believes that ensuring the proper authority and autonomy for the certification body is of utmost importance to the credibility and integrity of the certification program. Therefore, the NCLC is guided by the following responsibilities in its activities and when making decisions:

* Develop and implement policies and procedures to ensure the certification program is operated and administered in conformance with best certification practices. The policies address the granting, maintaining, recertifying, expanding, and reducing the scope of the certification, and suspending or withdrawing the certification.
* Provide oversight to the development and administration of a legally defensible, valid, and reliable certification examination. This may include statistical and psychometric analysis and review of exam questions and use of exam development software such as the LXR exam software currently employed by the NCLC. It may also include periodic monitoring of the test question bank to ensure its adequacy and sufficiency. The question bank will be periodically reviewed by committees appointed by the Board of Advisors specific to the Certification Exam involved.
* Provide oversight, through the Board of Advisors, to the development of all elements of the certification scheme, including, but not limited to eligibility criteria, recertification requirements, ethics, and disciplinary procedures and appeals.
* The Board of Advisors will appoint standing and ad hoc subcommittees and staff as required to support all program components. The Board of Advisors itself, and the committee members on the various exam committees, will consist of qualified subject matter experts (SMEs) in the appropriate area of laser use to participate in all aspects of the certification scheme, including, but not limited to examination content; item writing; setting the passing score; maintaining the reliability and validity of the examination, eligibility, and recertification requirements; disciplinary actions; appeals and due process; and nominations of qualified individuals to the NCLC Board of Advisors and its committees.
* Ensure the security of the certification examination and the intellectual property associated with the credential, including the development, maintenance, and administration of the examination.
* Establish and implement the code of ethics required of Certificants and administer the disciplinary program, including appeals.
* Make readily available to applicants, candidates, and certified persons the scope of the certification, all policies, procedures, and related program information relevant to earning and maintaining certification. This is made available in the NCLC Laser Certification Handbook available on the NCLC website.
* Protect the property associated with the credential, including approved uses of logo, marks, and certificate, including the "NCLC Laser Certified™" mark.
* Make available to the public the certification status of certified individuals.
* Develop an annual operating budget to ensure all certification program activities are conducted in a credible manner.

V191221