AMERICAN BOARD OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE (ABEM)

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) certification program, developed by the American Board of Emergency Medicine, is designed to standardize physician training and qualifications for EMS practice, to improve patient safety and enhance the quality of emergency medical care provided to patients in the prehospital environment, and to facilitate further integration of prehospital patient treatment into the continuum of patient care.

Certification in the subspecialty of EMS is available to diplomates of any ABMS member board or diplomate of the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine (AOBEM), who meet the eligibility criteria established by the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM). All applicants are encouraged to review the FAQs for more details about the application process and eligibility criteria.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The general criteria for physicians seeking certification in EMS are as follows:

- The physician must be a diplomate of an American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) member board or a diplomate of AOBEM diplomate. (For AOBEM diplomates, see Special Considerations for AOBEM Diplomates, page 2)
- The physician must be participating in an MOC or the AOBEM Osteopathic Continuing Certification (OCC) program at the time of application and throughout the certification process.
- The physician must fulfill the ABEM Policy on Medical Licensure.

Additionally, the physician must fulfill the eligibility criteria of either the Fellowship Training Pathway, the Practice Pathway, or the Practice Plus Training Pathway.

APPLICATION PATHWAYS

Fellowship Training Pathway

The Fellowship Training pathway requires that physicians successfully complete an ACGME-accredited EMS fellowship that is a minimum of one year. For physicians who apply through the Fellowship Training Pathway, ABEM will seek independent verification of the physician’s successful completion of the EMS fellowship program from the EMS fellowship program director.

The physician must successfully complete the fellowship training by the date of the examination.

Special Consideration for AOBEM Diplomates

AOBEM diplomates may apply for subspecialty certification if all their fellowship training occurs in an ACGME-accredited fellowship on and after July 1, 2015. This opportunity is available to AOBEM diplomates who graduate from an ACGME-accredited fellowship before July 1, 2022. The ABEM
eligibility criteria do not allow AOBEM diplomates who were enrolled in, or who graduated from, ACGME-accredited fellowship programs before July 1, 2015, to apply for ABEM subspecialty certification.

EMS Practice Pathway

The EMS practice pathway will close at the end of the 2019 application cycle, on July 1, 2019. Physicians who apply through the EMS practice pathway must demonstrate that within the six years immediately preceding the date on which they submit their EMS certification application they have completed a minimum of 60 months of EMS practice of at least 400 hours per year. Physicians can have practiced EMS as Assistant Medical Director, Associate Medical Director, Medical Director, or within another leadership role of one or more EMS agencies with patient care responsibility; or as a direct provider of prehospital emergency care; or any combination of these roles.

ABEM will seek independent verification of the EMS practice a physician submits to fulfill the eligibility criteria. ABEM will accept verification of a physician’s EMS practice from someone who served in a supervisory role or someone who had responsibility for the physician’s work schedule. This may be a department chair, regional EMS director, local ED director, former fellowship director, co-medical director, or the highest ranking EMS agency administrative officer.

EMS Practice-Plus-Training Pathway

The EMS practice plus training pathway will close at the end of the 2019 application cycle, on July 1, 2019. Physicians who apply through the EMS practice-plus-training pathway must have:

Successfully completed an acceptable, unaccredited fellowship in EMS, and
Within the six years immediately preceding the date on which they submit their EMS certification application, have completed a minimum of 24 months of EMS practice of at least 400 hours per year. Physicians can have practiced EMS as Assistant Medical Director, Associate Medical Director, Medical Director, or within another leadership role of one or more EMS agencies with patient care responsibility; or as a direct provider of prehospital emergency care; or any combination of these roles.
Physicians must submit the following information on the unaccredited fellowship they completed for review by ABEM:

Documentation that the fellowship was at least one year in length.
Documentation that the fellowship curriculum was based on the Core Content of EMS medicine.

ABEM will seek independent verification of the physician’s successful completion of an unaccredited EMS fellowship program from the program director who had oversight when the physician was training in the fellowship program.

ABEM will also seek independent verification of the EMS practice a physician submits to fulfill the eligibility criteria. ABEM will accept verification of a physician’s EMS practice from someone who served in a supervisory role or someone who had responsibility for the physician’s work schedule. This may be a department chair, regional EMS director, local ED director, former fellowship director, co-medical director, or the highest ranking EMS agency administrative officer.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS
The EMS practice pathways will close at the end of the 2019 application cycle, on July 1, 2019.

EMS practice that occurred prior to the start of specialty residency training cannot be counted.

EMS practice that occurred during specialty residency training cannot be counted.

EMS practice that occurred after specialty residency training but before EMS fellowship training can be counted.

EMS practice that occurred during EMS fellowship training can count if the applicant applies through the practice pathway, but cannot be counted if the applicant applies through the practice-plus-training pathway.

EMS practice that occurred during fellowship in another specialty can be counted.

Physicians seeking certification in more than one specialty or subspecialty may not apply the same postgraduate training period towards fulfilling the requirements of more than one specialty or subspecialty.

CERTIFICATION

Physicians who have met the EMS eligibility criteria and who pass the EMS Certification Examination are recognized as being certified in the subspecialty of Emergency Medical Services. Certification is for a period of ten years.

Original certificates are dated from the day the examination results are made available to the physician, and expire December 31, ten years thereafter. The diplomate's primary certification must be valid in order for the subspecialty certification to remain valid.

To renew certification, a physician must fulfill the requirements of the EMS Maintenance of Certification program.

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