



## **American Board of Emergency Medicine Privacy Statement**

The American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) collects and uses Emergency Medicine (EM) physicians' personal information to administer and improve ABEM's certification and continuing certification processes and examination. These processes also generate new personal information, such as physicians' examination scores and certification history.

Resident physicians, applicants for certification and recertification, and certified physicians participating in continuing certification (physicians) accept this Privacy Statement as a condition of their participation in those processes and may be required to accept other agreements regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of information.

The Privacy Statement describes how ABEM collects, uses, and discloses physicians' personal information. In the interests of public health and safety, it is ABEM's objective to promote the submission of candid and complete information by physicians by ensuring the confidentiality of their information to the extent possible within the scope of ABEM's role as a certifying organization.

### **Personal Information**

ABEM collects and uses personal information primarily to identify and contact physicians and formerly certified physicians, and to verify their credentials to determine eligibility for certification or continuing certification.

Collected personal information may include a physician's name, last four digits of social security number (or Canadian social insurance number), date of birth, medical licensure information, and contact information (email address, phone number, and mailing address), as well as the physician's financial information, ABEM-generated information, and computer use information discussed later in this privacy statement.

Contact information is also collected for physicians who are certified by other American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) member boards if they are actively seeking certification or continuing certification in a subspecialty that ABEM administers. This information is not shared with organizations other than the physician's home board and ABEM's testing vendor for purposes of identifying examinees at the examination site, except as described in this privacy statement.

### **Verification of Identity**

ABEM uses the last four digits of a physician's social security number or social insurance number to verify the physician's identity. Each physician authorizes ABEM to share these numbers and other personal information for record-matching purposes with the ABMS, the Federation of State Medical Licensing Boards, federal governmental agencies, and other research institutions with whom ABEM has a data privacy agreement. ABEM will not share a physician's social security number or social insurance number with any other third-party organization.

ABEM provides physician name and contact information to the ABMS and to ABEM's testing vendors for purposes of identifying examinees at the examination site.

ABEM also uses certain personal information to obtain independent verification from residency program directors that graduates have successfully completed the training requirements of that program.

### **Financial Information**

ABEM uses a third-party vendor to process credit card information for individuals who choose to pay for ABEM services via credit card. To protect the security of this information, ABEM complies with current Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS). PCI DSS includes standards related to maintenance of a network architecture, protection of data during transmission across the network and during storage, secure systems and applications, strong access control measures, restricted physical access to credit card information, regular monitoring and testing of networks, security systems, and processes.

### **ABEM-generated Information**

ABEM generates information about physicians through its certification, recertification, and ABEM continuing certification participation information.

ABEM will publicly share the certification history of ABEM-certified and formerly certified physicians on its website and may otherwise share this information without limitation.

ABEM-related continuing medical education (CME) information, including the physician's name, date of birth, credit earned, and verification that the physician passed the ABEM assessment, will be communicated to the CME provider the physician selected when registering for the CME activity.

Upon request by a person with a physician's date of birth or last four digits of his or her social security number, ABEM will disclose a certified physician's certification dates and certification number, ABEM continuing certification participation status, and clinical activity status.

All other ABEM-generated information is confidential and is disclosed only as follows:

- Upon written request from a candidate for certification, the candidate's status in the certification process will be disclosed. A third party can receive this information from ABEM with a written request, a status verification fee, and a signed release from the candidate.
- A resident's individual In-training Examination results are disclosed to the residency program in which the resident is enrolled at the time the results are determined. A physician's certification examination results are disclosed to that physician. Such results can also be directly reported to the resident pursuant to ABEM policies and practices.
- A physician's certification examination pass-fail results are disclosed to the residency program from which the physician graduated, and aggregated information is provided to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Residency Review Committee for Emergency Medicine.
- Physician demographic and exam performance information is provided for research purposes as explained under "Research Studies" below.

## Computer Use Information

As described in the Website Privacy Policy located at <https://www.abem.org/public/resources/policies>, ABEM collects certain information from individuals who use ABEM's website. Physicians should also refer to that Website Privacy Policy, which applies in addition to this privacy statement. In addition, some information is sent to certified physicians and candidates for certification via mass email, in which case ABEM may track whether the email was opened.

## ABMS Sharing

ABEM shares personal information with the ABMS to the extent necessary to meet ABEM's purpose to publicly report the status of ABEM-certified and formerly certified physicians. The personal information that ABEM shares with ABMS includes: name, address, email, telephone number, and last 4 digits of social security number.

## Research Studies

ABEM conducts and reports research to optimize the fairness, validity, and reliability of its certification processes. ABEM also conducts research that is of importance to the specialty of EM.

By participating in ABEM's examinations, certification, and continuing certification processes and responding to surveys, physicians consent to ABEM using their personal information in ABEM's research and to using the results of that research for internal purposes.

Except as permitted below, ABEM will share the results of its research publicly or with external groups only in aggregate, deidentified form.

ABEM will share physicians' personal information in other than deidentified, aggregate form only under a data sharing agreement with an external researcher or group that satisfies the following requirements:

- Limits use of the shared personal information to matching interorganizational databases with subsequent deidentification and aggregation of the data
- Requires the destruction of the shared personal information after the data is linked and deidentified within 30 days of the data sharing
- Prohibits the research organization from further sharing the personal information, except in deidentified, aggregate form

## Demographic Data

ABEM is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within the EM specialty. Detailed demographic data is essential to making an accurate assessment of the specialty's current state, setting future goals, and measuring progress.

ABEM will request demographic data directly from Physicians to:

- Improve the specialty's understanding of the diversity of practicing emergency physicians
- Advance research about the practice experience of emergency physicians

- Identify gaps in emergency physician diversity representation
- Detect potential bias in Board examinations (in addition to current ABEM Bias and Fairness panels)

Categories include gender identity, race, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. Beginning in summer 2022, physicians will be asked to update their information annually in the ABEM Portal with an easy “no change” option, as appropriate.

Physicians will be able to select “decline to answer” as their answer to any/all demographic questions. The demographic data values were adopted from the collective work of the American Association of Medical Colleges, Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, and American Medical Association.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions regarding this Privacy Statement, please contact ABEM at 517.332.4800, or [abem@abem.org](mailto:abem@abem.org).

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