

American Board of Emergency Medicine

**2021 September Oral Certification Examination Scoring**  
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)**

- 1. What is the passing score on this examination?** The passing score for this exam is **5.25**.
- 2. How was the passing score determined?** To align the passing score with the ABEM Standards for Certification, the passing score was determined through a structured group process involving clinically active emergency physicians. The process involved identifying a unique passing score for each of the operational cases on this examination. The final passing score, 5.25 for this examination, is the average of these scores and was approved by the ABEM Board of Directors.
- 3. What is the passing rate on this examination?** The passing rate for all candidates who took the 2021 September Oral Certification Examination is 96%. The passing rate for all candidates who completed an approved Emergency Medicine residency program and are first-time takers of the examination is 97%.
- 4. What is my percentile rank among all candidates who took the examination?** The Oral Certification Examination is a criterion-referenced examination, meaning that all candidates are judged against a predetermined standard, which is reflected in the passing score. The relative standing of an individual candidate is not relevant. Therefore, percentile rankings are not calculated and are not available.
- 5. If I did not pass, what is my next step?** You will automatically be notified via email of the date of your assignment to a future Oral Exam administration. You also have the option of putting yourself on the waitlist for the upcoming Oral Certification exams. If you have any questions, please contact ABEM at [oralcertification@abem.org](mailto:oralcertification@abem.org) or 517.332.4800.
- 6. Can I obtain a hand score or a rescore of my examination?** No. Scores are automatically hand scored for any candidate below the passing score. If you failed, your score has already been independently verified.
- 7. How can I improve my performance?** ABEM cannot endorse any specific preparation course as this would be a conflict of interest for the Board. Successful candidates meet the Board's standards for practice as exemplified in the EM Model and ABEM's KSAs (<https://www.abem.org/public/resources/>). The Board recommends continued clinical practice, staying up to date with changes in the field, and ensuring familiarity with the Oral Examination process and platform. For more information on the Oral Certification Examination please visit: <https://www.abem.org/public/become-certified/oral-exam>. For more practice and sample cases, please visit: <https://www.abem.org/public/become-certified/oral-exam/types-of-cases-and-samples>.

- 8. Can I obtain information on areas that I can improve on or cases I did poorly on?** ABEM does not provide information on areas for improvement or individual case performance on the Oral Certification Examination because the examination is designed to make a pass-fail determination and not to provide diagnostic information.

This document includes answers to frequently asked questions concerning candidates' examination scores. If you have a question about your examination results after reading this document, please contact the ABEM office:

American Board of Emergency Medicine  
3000 Coolidge Road  
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

Email: [abem@abem.org](mailto:abem@abem.org)  
Telephone: 517.332.4800  
Fax: 517.332.3943  
Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. ET

Some candidates have the same or similar names. Please include your identification number (shown on your score report) in all correspondence and have your number available when you call so that we may correctly identify your records.

**October 2021**