

Professionalism and Professional Standing: Medical Licensure Requirement

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

1. **What is the Professionalism and Professional Standing requirement?** While you are board eligible, certified by ABEM, or in the process of regaining certification, you must continuously meet the [ABEM Policy on Medical Licensure](#) as part of ABEM's [Professionalism and Professional Standing requirement](#).
2. **What do I have to do to meet the ABEM Medical Licensure requirement?** You must continuously hold a medical license in a jurisdiction of the United States, its territories, or Canada that is valid, full, unrestricted, unqualified, current, and active. You may hold other licenses provided that they are valid, full, unrestricted, and unqualified. Any inactive medical licenses must have been voluntarily inactivated.
3. **What does not count as a “current” or “active” medical license?**
 - A license that has expired without renewal is not considered “current” for purposes of fulfilling ABEM policy. The license must have been in good standing when it expired.
 - A license that has been placed on inactive status is not considered “active” for purposes of fulfilling ABEM policy. The license must have been placed on inactive status voluntarily, not made inactive as a result of an action taken by a medical licensing board or to avoid an action being taken.
4. **What happens if there is an action against my license?** When you report action(s) against your medical license(s), or if ABEM has received information from a third-party verification agency regarding actions against your license, ABEM will investigate and the Board will determine if the situation is cause to take further action.
5. **Do I need to report to ABEM any action imposed on my license?** Yes. Report to ABEM all actions imposed on your medical license(s). If you do not report this information, ABEM will determine if the situation is cause to deny you access to an examination, invalidate an examination you took, or revoke your certification.
6. **Do I need to report all my medical licenses, even expired ones?** No. ABEM will independently verify that you hold an active medical license(s).
7. **What does not count as a “valid,” “full,” “unrestricted,” or “unqualified” license?**
 - A license that is under probation
 - A license that is conditioned; e.g., the physician is required to practice under supervision or with modification or to obtain continuing education
 - The license is limited to specific practice settings
 - An institutional, educational, or temporary license

8. **What if my medical licensure does not meet ABEM policy?** You must report to ABEM when your medical licensure does not meet policy.
9. **Can I hold more than one license?** Yes. You must hold at least one license in a jurisdiction in the United States, its territories, or Canada that is current, active, valid, full, unrestricted and unqualified. You may also hold other licenses. All other licenses must be valid, full, unqualified, and unrestricted, but do not need to be current or active.
10. **Is it acceptable for my medical license to be outside the U.S., its territories, or Canada?** Yes. ABEM reviews, on a case-by-case basis, the medical license(s) of ABEM-certified physicians practicing medicine outside the United States, its territories, or Canada who only hold a medical license from the location where they practice. This option is limited to physicians in the continuing certification process and is not an option for physicians in the initial certification process.

If this applies to you, ABEM will provide you with instructions on how to submit specific information to assist in its review and independent verification of the medical license. Specifically, you must include a statement describing your foreign medical practice, your intended duration of that practice, and provide a copy of your foreign medical license. You must also submit appropriate documentation from the relevant licensing authority confirming your license is in good standing and free of conditions or restrictions.

11. **I have a foreign license. Do I need to report it to ABEM?** Possibly. ABEM reviews licenses issued outside of the United States, its territories, and Canada, on a case-by-case basis. If you are an ABEM-certified physician practicing outside the United States, its territories, or Canada, and you only hold a medical license from the country in which you are practicing, you must report it to ABEM. If you are practicing in the United States, its territories, or Canada, and you have a license in another country, you are not required to report your license issued in a foreign country to ABEM, provided that there is no disciplinary action, restriction, or encumbrance on the license.
12. **If my certification is revoked due to issues with my medical licensure, what happens to my participation in ABEM continuing certification?** If your eligibility or certification is revoked, you will not be able to participate in ABEM's certification activities unless or until your licensure issues are fully resolved and your certification is reinstated.
13. **Some specialties require endorsement from peers. Does ABEM have this requirement?** No. ABEM does not currently require peer endorsements or surveys.