



BOARD ELIGIBILITY

BACKGROUND

Beginning January 1, 2015, the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) recognized the term “board eligible” as described in the following policy.

POLICY

ABEM recognizes physicians as board eligible if they meet ABEM requirements. Physicians may participate in the ABEM certification process by taking ABEM certification examinations, or retaking them if necessary, only if they are board eligible.

All physicians who do not meet the ABEM requirements of board eligibility may not describe themselves as “ABEM board eligible.”

Board eligibility starts when the program director approves that a physician has completed all requirements at an Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)–, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC)–, or Australasian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM)—accredited Emergency Medicine residency program, or an ABEM-approved combined residency program. Physicians can be designated as board eligible and maintain that status only if their medical licensure complies with the ABEM Medical Licensure Policy.

The period of board eligibility ends on the date when the physician achieves certification in Emergency Medicine, or December 31, five years after the board eligibility start date, whichever comes first.

If the physician does not achieve certification by the end of the first five-year period of board eligibility, they will enter a second five-year period of board eligibility that ends when the physician achieves certification, or five years after the start date of the second five-year period of board eligibility if they meet the following requirements:

- They must have met their LLSA and CME requirements during their first five-year period of board eligibility.
- They must have passed the Qualifying Examination during their first five-year period of board eligibility.*

Physicians who do not meet these requirements will not be able to enter a second five-year period of board eligibility.

When physicians are not board eligible, they must cease and desist from making any representations of board eligibility. Any violation of this rule constitutes a breach of the ethical standards of medical practice.

* A previous attempt of the Oral Certification Examination counts as an attempt of the Certifying Examination. Details are described in the Certifying Examination Administration Policy.

Requirements to Maintain ABEM Board Eligibility in the First Five Years after Graduation

Physicians without Delays in the Certification Process

Physicians who apply for certification during the first certification application period available to them, pass the first Qualifying Examination available to them, and then pass the first Certifying Examination available to them have no additional requirements under this policy.

Physicians who Graduate from Emergency Medicine Residency Training in or after 2015 and Delay any Portion of the Certification Process

Delays in the certification process include:

- Not applying for certification in the first available certification application period;
- Submitting an application for certification that is not approved as meeting the credential requirements and is therefore closed;
- Not taking the first available Qualifying Examination;
- Not passing the first available Qualifying Examination;
- Not taking the first available Certifying Examination; or
- Not passing the first available Certifying Examination.

Board eligible physicians must continuously maintain medical licensure in compliance with the ABEM Medical Licensure Policy to maintain board eligible status. They must also complete the following requirements starting January 1 of the year after their first delay in the certification process. They must continue meeting these requirements until they achieve certification, or their board eligible status ends, whichever comes first:

- Physicians must complete an average of 25 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*[™], or equivalent, per year. This requirement supersedes and replaces the ABEM Policy on Emergency Medicine Certification Application CME Requirements.
- Physicians must complete an average of at least one ABEM LLSA test per year.

Physicians must meet current CME and LLSA requirements before they can apply for certification, register for a certification examination, or request placement on a Certifying Examination wait list.

Physicians must pass the Qualifying Examination during the first five-year period of board eligibility to be granted a second period of board eligibility.

Requirements to Maintain ABEM Board Eligibility in the Second Five Years after Graduation

Candidates who met their requirements during their first five years of board eligibility status will renew their board eligible status for a second five years. Medical Licensure, LLSA, and CME requirements will continue throughout the second period of board eligibility.

Additional Training Requirements to Regain ABEM Board Eligibility Status

Physicians who lose ABEM board eligible status may become ABEM board re-eligible only by successfully completing ABEM-approved additional training.

Availability of Certifying Examination

If a board eligible physician delays a Certifying Examination by declining an assignment or by failing the examination, ABEM will guarantee an assignment to one of the examination administrations within two years after the year in which the physician declines or fails the examination. If ABEM is unable to honor this guarantee, the candidate's period of board eligibility will be extended. This guarantee does not apply when fewer than one year remains in the physician's final five years of board eligibility.

EXCEPTION

ABEM will consider individual exceptions to the Board Eligibility Policy only in cases where extraordinary circumstances have prevented compliance, as determined solely by ABEM.



BOARD ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURES

Board Eligibility Policy

PROCEDURES

The Qualifying Exam is administered during one week in the fall each year to preserve exam security and integrity. Candidates are limited to five attempts to pass the Qualifying Exam, or five years of board eligibility, whichever comes first.

Each year, the Certifying Examination (CE) seating schedule is created for the next set of exam administrations, comprising both planned and waitlisted candidates. Seating for each CE administration is constrained by examiner availability and facility schedule, as well as other factors. If a physician delays an CE by declining an assignment or failing the exam, they are guaranteed an assignment to one of the examination administrations within two years after the year in which the delay occurred. If a physician wishes to take the CE before their guaranteed assignment, they can request to be placed on the examination waitlist. Some physicians cannot take the exam on the date they are assigned, and as seats become available throughout the year, candidates from the waitlist are offered those seats. Candidates can add themselves to the waitlist immediately after failing or declining an exam. If a physician fails the examination, they will not be scheduled to retake the exam until at least nine months after their examination. Candidates who retake exams after failing have no advantage because each exam is different. Candidates are limited to taking the CE a maximum of five times within six years of board eligibility. Previous attempts at the Oral Certification Examination (OCE) count toward these five attempts. Candidates who fail the CE will not be scheduled for another attempt until 9 months have passed to ensure fairness and prevent undue advantage. Candidates granted a second term of board eligibility will receive a second set of attempts.

Approved applications are considered open and remain open until the candidate for certification achieves certification or is no longer ABEM board eligible. A candidate must have an open application to take certification examinations.

Approved certification applications can be closed if the physician's final period of board eligibility expires. Physicians cannot take ABEM certification exams if their application is closed.
