



Policy on Certification

BACKGROUND

A core purpose of the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) is to grant certification to physicians who meet eligibility and evaluation criteria in Emergency Medicine and approved ABEM subspecialties. .

POLICY

Physician Certification

Certification in Emergency Medicine

There are three steps to become certified in Emergency Medicine:

1. **Application and Credentialing.** A physician must submit an application for certification. ABEM reviews the applicant's medical licensure status, which must comply with the ABEM Policy on Medical Licensure. ABEM also independently verifies with the residency program director that the physician completed training according to the Policy on EM Residency Training Requirements. Applicants whose applications have been approved as meeting the credentialing requirements may register for and take the Qualifying Examination.
2. **Pass the Qualifying Examination.** Once a physician passes the Qualifying Examination, the physician is assigned a seat for the Oral Certification Examination.
3. **Pass the Oral Certification Examination.** A physician who passes the Oral Certification Examination is granted certification and is considered an ABEM-certified physician.

Certification in an ABEM-sponsored Subspecialty

There are two steps to become certified in an ABEM-sponsored subspecialty:

1. **Application and Credentialing.** A physician must submit an application for subspecialty certification. Each subspecialty has its own eligibility criteria. ABEM reviews the applicant's credentials. Applications that meet the eligibility criteria are approved.
2. **Pass the subspecialty certification examination.** When the application is approved, the physician must take and pass the appropriate subspecialty certification examination. A physician who passes the examination is granted certification and is considered an ABEM-certified physician.

The period of certification is from the date when examination results are released or December 31 of the year in which the examination was taken, whichever is earlier, to December 31 ten years from then. Physicians who take and pass an examination on an alternate date are certified on the date used for candidates taking the examination on the regularly scheduled date.

The period of time for a physician to obtain ABEM certification is limited. Refer to the Policy on Board Eligibility or the Policy on Subspecialty Board Eligibility for more information.

Renewal of Certification

ABEM-certified physicians who have met all their continuing certification requirements will renew certification on January 1 immediately following expiration of their previous certification. (See Policy on Required Continuing Certification Activity for the appropriate specialty).

ABEM subspecialty certifications that do not have continuing certification requirements need to complete the continuing certification requirements of their primary Board specialty to maintain subspecialty certification.

Nonrenewal of Certification

Physicians who do not meet all their ABEM or primary Board continuing certification requirements by their certification expiration date are no longer ABEM certified. ABEM provides options for formerly certified physicians to regain certification, defined in the Policy on Regaining Certification. The options for regaining certification are based on the following:

- The number of required ABEM continuing certification activities a physician completed prior to certification expiration
- Whether more than five years have elapsed since the physician's certification expired

Revocation

Certification issued by ABEM is subject to revocation according to current Board policies, procedures and requirements. ABEM may revoke a physician's certification under any of the following conditions:

- a) The issuance of certification or its receipt by the physician is contrary to or in violation of any provision of ABEM's Articles of Incorporation or its bylaws
- b) A physician is not qualified to receive such certification regardless of whether the facts constituting him or her as ineligible were known to or could have been ascertained by ABEM at the time the certification was issued
- c) The physician makes any misstatement of fact in his or her application for certification or in any statement or representation to ABEM or its representatives
- d) The physician is found to have committed an act that the Board, in its sole judgment, determines to be sufficiently egregious that it constitutes cause to revoke the physician's certification
- e) The physician does not fulfill the Board's policies, procedures, or requirements for maintaining a current certificate.

The Board has the sole power and authority to determine whether the evidence or information before it is sufficient to constitute grounds for revocation of any certificate issued by ABEM.

ABEM will report the revocation of a physician's certification to the American Board of Medical Specialties, which will not list the physician as certified, and which may, at its option, report that the diplomate's certification has been revoked.

Reinstatement

A physician whose certification was revoked may request by formal written appeal that the Board reinstate the certificate if the physician believes the reason for the revocation has been resolved, e.g., a medical license made good and the certification expiration date has not yet passed.

If certification is reinstated it will be dated from the date of the Board's reinstatement through the ending date on the certificate when it was first issued.

All reinstated certifications are subject to the bylaws of ABEM and the policies, conditions, rules, and regulations then approved by the Board at the time the certificate is reinstated, including time limits and requirements for certification, recertification, and maintenance of certification.

APPEALS

ABEM maintains an appeal process for applications deemed ineligible.

ABEM does not allow appeals of residency program director's decisions from the independent verification of training. Appealability of these decisions is the prerogative of the residency program.

ABEM maintains an appeal process for physicians with revoked certification to request reinstatement. Certification dates are not appealable.

EXCEPTION

Physicians may have certain rights relating to the reporting of their certification status.

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