

MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION FAQ

Is participation mandatory?

All diplomates are encouraged to participate on a voluntary basis; however, diplomates who were certified prior to January 1, 2001, are not required to participate as their certificates have lifetime validity.

Participation is mandatory for diplomates who were certified in 2001 or later and who want to maintain their certification. Their certificates are valid for 10 years, through December 31 of the tenth year following certification. Thus, a diplomate certified on June 26, 2003, or September 19, 2003, must complete MOC requirements by December 31, 2013.

What happens to my certificate if I don't participate in the MOC program or I fail to meet MOC requirements?

The lifetime certificate of a diplomate who fails to complete the MOC program will remain valid.

Time-limited certificates will expire if MOC program requirements are not met by their expiration date. At that time, inquiries at the board office about a surgeon's status will be answered by stating the date of his or her original certificate and its expiration date.

A surgeon whose certificate has expired because he/she simply did not apply to the MOC program may apply at any time. There is no time limit on regaining certification status through MOC. Once a former diplomate passes the MOC examination, he or she will regain certification status.

A surgeon whose certificate has expired because he/she failed to meet MOC requirements may continue efforts to meet those requirements. There is no limit on the number of times the examination may be repeated.

Is the MOC program the same for diplomates who hold lifetime certificates and those who hold time-limited certificates?

Yes. The MOC process is the same for diplomates who hold lifelong certificates and enter it voluntarily and those who are required to do so to maintain their certification.

Will certificates issued through the MOC program also be time-limited ?

Yes. MOC certificates will be good for a 10-year period, from the date the program is completed (lifelong certificants) or the date the current certificate expires (time-limited certificants) until December 31 in the 10th year to follow—except that if a surgeon holding a time-limited certificate completes MOC requirements more than two years in advance of his or her certificate's expiration date, the new certificate will be valid for 10 years from the date the program is completed.

Further, MOC certificates may be revoked for cause.

What are the specific components of the MOC program?

The ABFPRS endorses the four principles approved by the ABMS, including evaluation of professional standing, evidence of lifelong learning, demonstration of cognitive expertise, assessment of practice performance.

How will professional standing be evaluated?

Professional standing will be assessed in a number of ways, including:

- Possession of a valid ABFPRS certificate.
- Possession of an unrestricted license to practice medicine in a state, commonwealth, territory, or possession of the US or a province of Canada.
- Acceptable responses to a questionnaire regarding past or pending adverse actions by state medical boards, hospital privileging committees, employers, medical societies, courts of law, disciplinary boards, etc.
- Satisfactory status with the Federation of State Medical Boards and the National Practitioners Data Bank.
- Documentation of hospital privileges to practice facial plastic surgery in an accredited institution(s) or satisfactory explanation that lack of privileges is not related to adverse action by accredited institutions; or, if the surgeon operates in an office setting and uses Level II anesthesia or above, documentation of the facility's accreditation by JCAHO, AAAHC, or another third-party entity qualified to issue such accreditation.
- If the surgeon has a history of chemical dependency, documentation of successful completion of a treatment program, attestation to being drug/alcohol free, and submission of a state medical board statement that he/she is physically and mentally able to satisfactorily discharge the responsibilities of practice.
- Attestation to compliance with the ABFPRS Code of Ethics.

How much continuing medical education will be required?

From the date of this policy's promulgation forward, candidates for recertification must complete 100 hours of continuing medical education every two years. All CME must be ACCME-approved Category I of the AMA's Physician Recognition Program, and 80% of the hours must be relevant to the specialty.

It is each diplomate's responsibility to maintain his or her CME records.

As a point of information, the AAFPRS Foundation fall meeting is worth up to 20 CMEs, and a major course counts for up to 40 or 45 credits.

How will cognitive expertise be demonstrated?

Candidates must achieve a passing score on proctored written and oral examinations that are psychometrically validated and scored on an absolute standard.

Candidates who want to requalify in both cosmetic and reconstructive facial surgery must retake the then-current primary ABFPRS written and oral examinations. Certificates issued to candidates who take this exam will be unqualified.

Candidates who want to requalify in cosmetic or reconstructive facial surgery may take a modular exam that focuses on cosmetic or reconstructive procedures. Certificates issued to candidates who take this exam will be qualified, stating "with special emphasis in cosmetic [or reconstructive] facial surgery."

The MOC exams will be administered in Washington, D.C., at the same time as the primary examination to ensure the integrity of the examination process and to safeguard exam materials.

How will practice performance be assessed?

To ensure high practice performance standards, candidates:

(1) must submit a sequential operative log that includes all procedures eligible for credit toward certification as listed on the ABFPRS Acceptable Procedures Chart performed during the year preceding submission of an application for the MOC program, plus operative reports for the last 50 consecutive cases on the operative log;

(2) may submit such other evidence of successful practice performance as the candidate believes demonstrates the caliber of his/her practice, including but not limited to patient satisfaction surveys, risk management and quality assurance programs performed in the candidate's office, and outcomes research documentation.

What is the best way to prepare for the MOC exam?

The exam is based on multiple sources, so there is no one course of study, but rather it is best to keep up with the general literature in the specialty. These study materials are recommended:

- AAFPRS Foundation courses
- Courses offered by other surgical specialty societies
- AAFPRS Foundation Fellowship Bibliography
- ABFPRS Reading List
- General literature in the field

How much will the program cost?

Cost was a major consideration in the ABFPRS Board of Directors' discussion about how to implement the MOC program. It was important to the Board that the program be meaningful, yet practical. For this reason, the Board has incorporated a number of components from its primary certification process in the MOC program, so as to keep development and administration costs as low as possible. The Board estimates that the program described in this document will cost about \$30,000 per year to manage. The cost per diplomate will depend on the number of people who elect to participate, but likely will be between \$1,000 and \$1,250.

Can I enter the MOC program now?

No . . . and yes. Program materials are under development at this time and completion is not anticipated until 2007. However, diplomates who want to renew their certification may do so by repeating the current process for earning the primary ABFPRS certificate.

Once I enter the program, how long do I have to complete program requirements?

Candidates must register to enter the MOC program, then complete all MOC requirements within two years. Documentation of professional standards, CMEs, and practice performance will be required to qualify to sit for the examination.