

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 must 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 25, or October 21, 2022, must complete MOC in FPS® by December 31, 2032.

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

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

For time-limited diplomates who do not submit an MOC In FPS® Practice Performance application within the 10-year time frame, the ABFPRS has a provision for a “grace period”. While this is an uncertified period, it allows diplomates who have passed their 10-year deadline without submitting MOC in FPS® application requirements, the possibility of regaining their certificate without going back to their initial certification examination. If a diplomate passes December 31st of the last year of his/her cycle with incomplete MOC in FPS® Practice Performance requirements, the lapsed diplomate is offered an uncertified grace period for one year. If the lapsed diplomate accepts the “grace period”, the diplomate must sign a form that shows their understanding of the requirements as follows:

- Complete **FACEforward**® within the program's time frame and every year thereafter
- During the grace period, the diplomate may not advertise themselves as being ABFPRS certified
- Complete all other MOC in FPS® requirements and submit an MOC in FPS® application with operative experience by January 15 of the next application cycle
- Pay a \$1,000 late fee/penalty

Once all requirements are met, the diplomate is reinstated and begins a new 10-year cycle based on the original certification date.

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

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

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

Yes. For lifelong certificants, MOC in FPS® certificates will be good for a 10-year period, from the date the program is completed until December 31st in the 10th year to follow. Their primary certification, however, does not expire. Surgeons holding time-limited certification are eligible to submit the Maintenance of Certification in Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery® application three years prior to their certification. Upon successful completion of all Maintenance of Certification in Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery® requirements, the surgeon's certification would be valid for 10 years from the expiration date of his/her original time-limited certificate.

Further, MOC in FPS® certificates may be revoked for cause.

What are the specific components of the MOC in FPRS® program?

The ABFPRS endorses the four principles approved by the ABMS, including evaluation of professional standing, evidence of lifelong learning, demonstration of cognitive expertise, and 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 a current, earned certificate from the American Board of Otolaryngology, or the American Board of Plastic Surgery, or from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Canada (in otolaryngology/head-and-neck-surgery or plastic surgery).
- Possession of an unrestricted license to practice medicine in a state, commonwealth territory, or possession of the U.S. 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 The Joint Commission (formerly 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 50 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 to 45 credits. The AAFPRS also offers AAFPRS members in good standing 15 CME credits for completing the ABFPRS annual longitudinal assessment program, **FACEforward®**. All questions regarding CME credits should be directed to the AAFPRS.

How will cognitive expertise be demonstrated?

All time-limited ABFPRS diplomates must complete the ABFPRS Longitudinal Assessment program, FACEforward®, on an annual basis. FACEforward® offers a series of five longitudinal assessment protocols, each containing ten or more questions, that can be completed over a 7 month period, beginning March 31st and ending on October 31st.

Candidates may choose among three FACEforward® modules:

- COSMETIC: 100% cosmetic surgery
- RECONSTRUCTIVE: 100% reconstructive surgery or
- COMBINATION: 50% cosmetic and 50% reconstructive

Time-limited diplomates must achieve a cumulative 65% passing score over a ten-year period.

How will Practice performance be assessed?

To ensure high practice performance standards, candidates:

1. Must submit a sequential operative log that lists all procedures performed during the year preceding submission of an application for the Maintenance of Certification in Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery® program. The sequential operative log must contain a minimum of 50 procedures, which are eligible for credit toward certification as listed on the ABFPRS Acceptable Procedures Chart. Operative reports for the last 35 sequential operative log entries must be submitted with the application.
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.

How much does the program cost?

The payment of mandatory annual dues covers all MOC in FPRS® costs which are completed within the requisite time-frame.

Fees associated with late applications are assessed separately.

Can I maintain my certification if I am no longer practicing surgery?

There are two designations for diplomates who are no longer full-time surgeons:

ADMINISTRATIVE Designation

Diplomates who no longer see patients but have moved into medically related corporate or academic settings may apply for this designation.

NON-SURGICAL Designation

Diplomates whose practices no consist exclusively of non-surgical procedures such as injectables and energy-based treatments may apply for this designation.

Surgeons who request and complete requirements for the ADMINISTRATIVE or NON-SURGICAL designation as an ABFPRS diplomate will be listed as such on the ABFPRS website and for all verification of certification inquiries.