



AMERICAN BOARD OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

A Founding Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

Contact the Executive Office:
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American Board of Ophthalmology Policy on Eligibility and Timeframe for Board Certification

In 2016, the ABO is instituting a new Board Eligibility policy that requires successful completion of Board Certification requirements (written and a maximum of five oral examination attempts) within five years of residency graduation. This is a change to the Board Eligibility policy implemented in 2012, which required successful completion of Board Certification requirements (written and a maximum of four consecutive oral examination attempts) within seven years of residency graduation. This policy impacts all candidates for Board Certification as described below:

- All candidates for Board Certification who complete residency in 2016 and beyond must successfully complete the written and oral examinations (five maximum attempts) within five years of finishing residency.
- All candidates who completed residency prior to 2013 must successfully complete the written and oral examinations (five maximum attempts) within seven years of the 2012 institution of this policy (December 31, 2018).
- All candidates who completed residency between 2013 and 2016 must successfully complete the written and oral examinations (five maximum attempts) within seven years of years of finishing residency.

During this eligibility period defined above, the candidate will be referred to as Board Eligible and can:

- Sit for the Written Qualifying Examination each year it is offered until successful;
- Sit for the Oral Examination, after the most recent successful completion of the WQE, up to a maximum of five attempts.

Candidates who are unable to obtain Board Certification within the timeframe requirements described above, may complete a re-entry process. The re-entry process will not restore Board Eligibility status; however it will allow the candidate four additional years to obtain Board Certification by completing the following requirements:

1. As of the date of application and at all times throughout certification, the candidate must hold a valid and unrestricted license(s) to practice medicine in the United States, its territories or Canadian province in which the candidate's practice of medicine is regularly conducted and in each other place in which the person practices or has practiced medicine and has an unexpired license;
2. Candidate must provide three letters of attestation of the candidate's practice from Board Certified Ophthalmologists;



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3. Candidates must complete the ABO's Practice Improvement Module (PIM) program which involves a self-review of patient charts, comparison results with peer and national ophthalmic standards, feedback, and the ability to target specific individual process/outcome measures for improvement; and
4. Candidates must complete 25 self-assessment CME within a year of application.

Candidates that successfully complete the re-entry process described above will be eligible to sit for the Written Qualifying Examination. The ABO five-year timeframe requirements are in accordance with the standards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and all 24 ABMS Member Boards. Exceptions to the policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with ABMS guidelines.