# ABMS Initial and Continuing Certification Changes Secondary to COVID-19

Please periodically check the following link for the most recent updates: [https://www.abms.org/initiatives/covid-19-information/](https://www.abms.org/initiatives/covid-19-information/)

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<tr>
<th>Board</th>
<th>Initial Certification</th>
<th>Continuing Certification</th>
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| American Board of Allergy and Immunology   | • ABAI will provide an update on the initial certification exam status no later than 7/31/2020. ABAI is continuously monitoring the availability, safety and availability of exam administration sites which are currently closed and welcomes feedback from program directors and exam candidates.  
• Give 2020 initial certification exam candidates the option to take the exam in 2021 without need to reapply or additional fees. ABAI recognizes that some candidates prefer to take the exam this year whereas others may be impacted to the extent that taking the 2021 exam is preferable.  
• Give 2020 exam registered candidates electing to take the exam in 2021 the option to receive a full refund with resubmission by 3/31/2021. ABAI recognizes the old and new financial challenges faced by graduating fellows. [email refund requests to abai@abai.org]  
• Enable a one-time increase from 8 to 10 weeks for maximum time away from training requirement without a formal exception to policy request from program director for 2020 and 2021 graduates. ABAI will continue to rely on program director evaluations of fellow competencies and will continue to accept case by case requests for exceptions to policy beyond 8-10 weeks away from training.  
• Support inclusion of COVID-19 education and clinical activities in fellowship curricula as determined by the ACGME Allergy-Immunology Review Committee and fellowship programs.  
• Extend the board eligibility window by one year from 7 to 8 for all allergist-immunologists meeting eligibility requirements for the 2020 ABAI initial certification exam regardless of whether they are registered for the exam. The original start date (typically fellowship graduation year) still applies.  
• Cancel the 2020 Continuous Qualification Exam (CQE) for diplomats in the CAP re-entry pathway. | • Extend the expiration date for certificates expiring in 2020 to 12/31/2021. No diplomate will lose their certification this year or next as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.  
• Extend the deadline for completion of 2020 Continuous Assessment Program (CAP) Block 1 from 7/15/2020 to 1/15/2021 and cancel 2020 CAP Block 2.  
• Extend the deadline for all individual MOC requirements (parts I, II, III and IV) due in 2020 to 12/31/2021. |
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<tr>
<th>American Board of Anesthesiology</th>
<th>Give 2020 CQE candidates the option to defer paid exam fee to 2021 or receive a full refund with resubmission by 3/31/2021. [email <a href="mailto:abai@abai.org">abai@abai.org</a> to request a refund]</th>
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| American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery | Here’s what candidates, residents and fellows need to know:  
- We are putting our exam cancellation contingency plan in place and will reach out to candidates as soon as we identify new exam dates. This includes the impact this cancellation has had on fellows’ ability to take a subspecialty examination.  
- We are waiving all exam change and cancellation fees for all virus-related changes and cancellations.  
- Unfortunately, we cannot administer the exam remotely as we cannot ensure the security of a remote oral examination and cannot replicate the hands-on nature of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination using technology.  
- Residents and fellows will not be adversely impacted by ABA requirements during this pandemic.  |
| American Board of Dermatology | In regards to certification by the ABCRS, all application deadlines remain in place. The board utilizes a number of criteria to admit a candidate for the written examination. The program director attestation and case logs will be reviewed with consideration given to the issues we are facing.  
- The oral examination in September remains on schedule.  
- The board will continue to evaluate the situation and communicate any changes to you.  |
| American Board of Dermatology | If a diplomate feels that they cannot meet MOCA requirements because of the COVID-19 pandemic, then the ABA will waive those requirements for the remainder of 2020.  
- There’s no need to inform the Board if requirements need to be waived.  
- Diplomates’ certification will NOT be adversely impacted if they cannot complete MOCA requirements in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.  
- We strongly encourage diplomates to continue participating in MOCA, like answering MOCA Minute questions, should it prove supportive to their current practice needs. Diplomates who continue to participate in MOCA will receive credit.  
- We have already begun to add COVID-19 questions to MOCA Minute and are working to rapidly add more questions that speak to the unique needs of this pandemic. As with all MOCA Minute questions, the new COVID-19 related items include links to learning resources that physicians may find useful.  |
| American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery | ABCRS is monitoring the situation on a regular basis and will make decisions regarding Continuing Certification requirements accordingly. At this time, please contact the ABCRS office via email with any questions or concerns. abcrsadmin@abcrs.org  |
| American Board of Dermatology | The ABD Initial Certification Exam will be offered, as scheduled, at the American Board of Pathology’s test center in Tampa, FL on July 13-17 and 20-23. Please note the July dates could be canceled, depending on the evolving situation with COVID-19.  
- For candidates with concerns about taking the exam in July due to COVID-19, ABD has also made the decision to administer the test again during the weeks of December 7.  |
| American Board of Dermatology | Reducing question volume - Diplomates participating in CertLink® will have a reduced question load, from 4 segments to just 2, and an extended period for their completion. Diplomates will now have until June 30 (instead of March 31) to complete their first segment of questions. The second segment of questions will launch in July and will not be due until December 31.  |
and 14 at the American Board of Pathology's test center in Tampa, FL.
- If necessary and if circumstances related to COVID-19 warrant it, the ABD will administer the exam in Tampa in March 2021.
- The ABD will grant an extra year of eligibility for board certification to residents graduating in 2020. Instead of the normal 5 years of eligibility, residents will have 6 years to pass the exam.

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<tr>
<th>American Board of Emergency Medicine</th>
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<td>• Protection of Training Eligibility - ABEM temporarily reduced minimum training requirements to accommodate any two-week period of quarantine without negatively affecting a resident’s board eligibility status. ABEM strongly supports</td>
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<td>• Nontraditional learning approaches during periods of quarantine. These changes will allow residents to graduate on time and become ABEM certified without delays.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Protection of Subspecialty Candidates - ABEM has relaxed deadlines and simplified logistics for recent residency graduates who are pursuing initial certification in emergency medicine at the same time as pursuing subspecialty certification.</td>
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Diplomates also have the option of designating one of these segments as a “time off” period.
- Modifying MOC exam requirements - Diplomates scheduled to take the MOC Exam before the end of 2020 have two options to provide some flexibility:
  - Participate in CertLink instead. To join the next CertLink segment starting July 1, you must sign up during the upcoming enrollment period (April 1 - May 15). An invitation with instructions will be sent to all eligible diplomates when enrollment opens.
  - Take the traditional MOC Exam and have an extra six months, until June 2021, to complete the requirement.
- Waiving 2020 CME requirement - The CME requirement for 2020 is waived. The ABD will look to AAD, and other specialty societies, for future options to earn CME.
- Deferring 2020 self-assessment - The Self-Assessment requirement for 2020 is deferred until the end of 2021.
- Deferring 2020 practice improvement - Practice Improvement exercises due in 2020 can be now deferred until the end of 2021. To help interested diplomates fulfill this requirement, the ABD recently launched an enhanced library of focused practice improvement exercises.

- In light of the situation related to COVID-19, Pearson VUE has closed its testing centers until April 16, 2020. The spring administration of the ConCert Examination is therefore canceled. ABEM is currently exploring options for rescheduling, and we will share this information with you as soon as possible.
- Due to the high volume of calls we are currently receiving, we ask that you please leave a voicemail (517.332.4800) or send your message to abem@abem.org. We will return all of your calls and emails as soon as possible. Thank you, and we apologize for any inconvenience.
- **Provision of Full Refunds** - ABEM has waived administrative fees for refunds related to the cancelation of the spring ConCert Exam and the spring Oral Certification Exam. The entire examination fee will be refunded to you upon request.
- You can also choose to apply your fees to an upcoming examination. There is no financial consequence for either decision.

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<tr>
<th>American Board of Family Medicine</th>
<th>ABFM Board Eligibility and Certification</th>
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<td><strong>In order for a resident to be eligible for ABFM certification, program directors must attest that the resident has met minimum training requirements as defined by the ACGME.</strong> For residents graduating in 2020, some necessary adjustments will need to be made. ABFM will allow inclusion of precepted televisits and visits in other novel settings (e.g., tent clinics, COVID-19 diagnostic center) toward the 1650 visit minimum. We ask that you document these visits in the ways you have routinely done for in-person continuity visits.</td>
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<td>Similarly, we understand that the situation may not allow the traditional rotation curriculum and we will approve residents for board eligibility with changes in residency rotations forced by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as subspecialty rotations, nursing home experience, or electives. We intend to trust program directors to balance the complex needs of the current time. We also expect program directors, in collaboration with the residency Clinical Competency Committee, to make the final decisions about readiness for autonomous practice. Finally, ABFM will keep the burden of reporting to a minimum—following an attestation form and process similar to what residency directors are currently using. We will communicate any changes as necessary.</td>
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<td>As previously communicated, any COVID-19 mandated quarantine or personal illness will count towards clinical time and will not violate the ABFM One Month Away from Continuity Care rule nor require extension of training. Additionally, we have had questions about the impact of cancelation of the April 2020 initial certification exam on the ability of residents to obtain jobs and become credentialed after training. Residents are board eligible upon graduation as long as the program director has attested to the fact that all minimum requirements have been met.</td>
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- **All Diplomates with a three-year stage ending in 2020 will have a one-year extension on completing all stage requirements.**
- For Diplomates participating in FMCLA, the Quarter 1 deadline has already been extended through June 15, 2020; we anticipate extending completion guidelines further for subsequent quarters. For first year participants, we will adjust the meaningful participation guidelines. |
| Any Diplomate in Year 10 of their certification cycle who opted for the one-day examination will have an additional year to meet their examination requirement. |
| Any board-eligible family physician with an eligibility end date in 2020, or anyone participating in the Re-Entry process with an end date in 2020, will have an additional year to obtain their certification. |
| Any Diplomate who also holds a Certificate of Added Qualification with an examination deadline in 2020 will have the option for an additional year to complete the examination requirement. |
| For those facing financial hardship as the result of the pandemic, we will establish a method for delaying 2020 payments. This will take a short time to be implemented online, but once available, Diplomates will find information about this in their Physician Portfolio. |
they have met all ACGME requirements. Employers will accept board eligible or board certified status for physicians just out of residency. To move from board eligible to board certified, residents must secure an active, valid, unrestricted medical license and pass their initial certification examination. Family Medicine is the only specialty in which the certifying board offers the initial examination prior to graduation.

- Prior to 2012 this examination was offered in July of each year with scores being provided 8 weeks or longer after completion. It did not impact credentialing or jobs then, and we do not expect it to do so this year, especially considering the unique circumstances of a global pandemic. While it was our desire to offer this examination before graduation, that simply is not possible this year. The test centers have closed for the next 30 days beginning March 17, 2020 and may well need to extend. We have explored alternative ways to deliver the examination, and for a variety of reasons that is not possible this year. We are focusing our energy on trying to get exam seats for thousands of family physicians in July or August, if possible, so we can still offer two exam delivery periods in 2020.

| American Board of Internal Medicine | - August 2020 Initial Certification Exam still on - Registration open through 4/28 - Late Fees Waived  
- We wanted you to know that, as of April 6, 2020, we are still planning to administer the Summer Internal Medicine Initial Certification Examination in August 2020.  
- Registration will remain open through April 28, 2020 and—to give you greater flexibility during this challenging time—no late fee will be applied from April 16-28, 2020 (the previously published late registration window). No one will be able to register after April 28, 2020.  
- No one will lose certification if they aren’t able to complete a requirement this year.  
- Any physician who is currently certified and has a Maintenance of Certification (MOC) requirement due in 2020—including an assessment, point requirement or attestation—will now have until the end of 2021 to complete it. Physicians currently in their grace year will also be afforded an additional grace year in 2021.  
- We recognize that each of you faces a different situation, and many of you have been planning to take assessments in the fall. As of now, all fall 2020 MOC assessments will be offered as planned, so you can still take an exam this year if you’d like. We will send information later this spring about additional assessment dates in 2020 and 2021, and how to select one. |
| **American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics** | **Potential Absences from Training:**  
- Residents and fellows may be impacted by mandated quarantines because of Covid-19 exposure or infection. To address concerns about how these unexpected absences may impact eligibility for certification, the ABMGG has developed the following guidelines for trainees:  
- Time spent in mandated quarantine can count as clinical training, as long as the program director defines continued learning and training activities that can be accomplished and documented. Actual time spent and a description of the activities should be documented.  
- Extended absences for trainees who contract COVID-19 infection will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Documentation of COVID-19 infection from a treating physician will be required for consideration. The program director must attest that the overall competency of the trainee at the completion of training was not adversely affected by the absence. However, any required rotation experiences missed may require extension of training.  
- In either circumstance mentioned above, the ABMGG expects that the Program Director will proactively and quickly inform the ABMGG about the situation.  
- We will continue to monitor the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on trainee education. We do not want to add an undue burden to any affected individuals, rather we hope to make reasonable accommodations in our requirements to mitigate any consequences. |  
| *No information found as of 4/16/20, please periodically check website for possible updates regarding continuing certification.* |  
| **American Board of Neurologic Surgery** | **FAQS specific to the 2020 ABNS Primary Exam**  
- Why was the 2020 Primary Exam postponed from the original date of March 13th?  
  - The ABNS made the difficult decision to postpone the 2020 Primary Exam as a response to the COVID-19 virus and our responsibility to “flatten the curve”. The Hippocratic Oath states “I will prevent disease whenever I can, for prevention is preferable to cure.”  
- Why not let the programs who could administer the exam do so and those who could not reschedule for another day?  
  - First and foremost, the safety and well-being of all humans is the highest priority. The security and |  
| *Continue to require all components of Maintenance of Certification* |
integrity of the exam is important. Each year the ABNS prepares a unique version of the Primary exam. Additionally, the NBME had been monitoring the situation leading up to the 3/13 admin and they warned of the psychometric, technical, and logistical difficulties of maintaining the original administration date during such an uncertain time.

- What is the date for the rescheduled 2020 ABNS Primary Exam?
  - The ABNS has identified Friday, May 15th as the date for the 2020 Primary Exam, although that is subject to change based on the status of the COVID-19 virus, which we will continue to monitor closely. This date was chosen specifically to ensure we have the exam scores back in time for people who are graduating or moving into their chief year. We encourage you to check the ABNS website on a regular basis for updates.
  - With over one month to prepare for testing, we encourage program directors to do everything possible such that residents needing to take the primary exam can proceed within the guidelines of the CDC and WHO that will then be in effect specific to COVID-19.

- Can I take the Primary Exam for credit rather than self-assessment this year?
  - Yes, ABNS can modify registrations, however, the difference in cost ($500) must be paid prior to the change being made. Please e-mail abns@abns.org to request the change.

- Can I still take the Primary Exam for self-assessment?
  - Taking the ABNS Primary exam for self-assessment is often used by programs to gauge the performance of the resident. Although we believe taking the exam for self-assessment is best practice, it is not considered mandatory. Therefore, those who are scheduled to take the 2020 ABNS Primary Exam for self-assessment may choose to wait until next year to take the exam. The ABNS will issue refunds to anyone
who elects not to take the exam. Please e-mail abns@abns.org to request a refund. Your registration will be withdrawn at that time. No refunds will be issued without written request.

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<th>American Board of Nuclear Medicine</th>
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<td>• The COVID-19 public health emergency has impacted many people. In a letter dated March 13, 2020, we informed program directors that residents would be permitted to take an additional 2 weeks of leave (10 working days) in 2020 for all COVID-19 related reasons, including home quarantine.</td>
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<td>• We also recognize that cancellation/deferral of non-urgent medical procedures will reduce the number of diagnostic nuclear medicine studies performed in adults and children, and will also likely reduce the number of oral radioiodine therapies for hyperthyroidism if thyroid scans are deferred, and/or patients are maintained on anti-thyroid medication. The impact of COVID-19 on radioiodine treatment for thyroid cancer, and parenteral therapies for other cancers is likely to be less, but may still be significant.</td>
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<td>• Since it may be impossible for residents who complete training this year to obtain experience with the required number of studies, the ABNM has made a one-time modification of the case experience requirements in 2020 for all COVID-19 related reasons, as follows:</td>
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<td>• Cardiovascular stress test supervision (exercise or pharmacologic) - 75 studies (normally 100 studies)</td>
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<td>• Pediatric nuclear medicine - 75 studies (normally 100 studies)</td>
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<td>• Radiotherapy with I-131 - 20 cases (at least 10 benign plus 10 malignant, including 3 ( \leq ) 33 mCi and 3 &gt; 33 mCi) (normally 30 cases) Parenteral therapies requiring a written directive – 3 cases (normally 5 cases)</td>
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<td>• Candidates for the ABNM certification examination are also required to be certified in advanced cardiac life support (ACLS). The American Heart Association is allowing a 60-day extension of ACLS instructor cards beyond the renewal date, and recommends that employers and regulatory bodies extend provider cards 60 days beyond renewal date. The ABNM is adopting this recommendation:</td>
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<td>• The ABNM realizes that physicians may not have time for non-urgent professional activities during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Accordingly, the ABNM has extended the end of the first quarter of CertLink from March 31 to June 30, 2020 to give diplomates more time to answer the questions released in January 2020. No one will receive additional questions during this time (even those who have already completed their assignment), and no one will receive extra questions when new questions become available on July 1. The net effect will be a reduction in the total number of questions in 2020 by one quarter. This action will not have any impact on your CertLink performance, as shown on your dashboard.</td>
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### American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology

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<td>• Extending the application deadline from May 22 to June 22, 2020.</td>
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<td>• Eliminating all late fees associated with the application and case list submission process.</td>
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<td>• Reducing the required case volume for the 2020 case collection year.</td>
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<td>• Extending the case list submission deadline from August 17, 2020 to August 31, 2020.</td>
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- ABOG will grant Improvement in Medical Practice (IMP or Part IV) credit to all diplomates who participate in MOC this year in recognition for the COVID-19 practice improvement you’re already doing during the pandemic. If you’ve already completed the 2020 MOC Part IV requirement, ABOG will apply the IMP credit to meeting your 2021 MOC requirement. You do not need to do anything to implement this measure and receive credit.

- ABOG will help you focus on learning to help you be up to date on emerging knowledge and provide better care during the COVID-19 response. We will incentivize COVID-19 learning and assessment by giving double credit for all MOC COVID-19 articles you read this year. This means you will have fewer articles to complete for the year. There is one COVID-19 article available now, and we will add more to the Emerging Topics category over the coming weeks. This incentive applies to both OB GYN specialists and subspecialists.

### American Board of Ophthalmology

**What’s New**

- The ABO’s information technology team is investigating various platforms for the VOE20 (Virtual Oral Examination – 2020) and is encouraged by the possibilities available for the delivery of a secure virtual examination. For instance, there may be opportunities to learn from how schools have quickly developed alternatives to in-person instruction and interaction.

- For decades, the Oral Examination has been administered by ophthalmologist volunteers who pay their own way to the

**Offering Timely New Resources**

- Many of our colleagues requested that we release Quarterly Questions content ahead of schedule so that they can use unanticipated downtime productively. The second quarter’s installment, originally slated for release on April 1st, was distributed by email on March 24th.

- With the help of many dedicated ophthalmologist volunteers, we released new COVID-19-related...
exam venue in addition to leaving their practices for several
days. Their support of the VOE20 will be key, and we are
pleased with their robust response to participate both in the
preliminary field-testing of the exam and in its subsequent
administration.

What’s Stayed the Same
• We will notify you when potential dates for the
administration of the virtual examination have been
determined.
• Your seven-year board eligibility window following graduation
from residency will be extended by one year if you are unable
to sit for the VOE20.
• Paid examination fees will be credited to the next
administration; there is no need to re-register.

What You Can Expect Next
• I will continue to keep you apprised of progress as the ABO
undertakes what amounts to a sea change in its 104-year
history. You are making history.
• Over the next few weeks, I will share with you some
background about the history and construction of the Oral
Examination: why it was developed, what it is designed to
assess, how it is scored, and why you can be confident that
the online version will remain reliable, fair, and valid.
• The bottom line: any ophthalmologist who successfully
graduates from an ACGME-accredited residency deserves an
opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills to
their patients and the profession through board
certification—and we will continue to work to make this
possible.

American Board of
Orthopaedic Surgery
• Candidates for the 2021 ABOS Part II Oral Examination must
collect and submit all consecutive surgical cases that they
perform as primary surgeon beginning January 1, 2020, for a
minimum of six consecutive months. On July 1, 2020, if the
Candidate has reached 250 surgical cases, he or she can cease
collecting. If not, the Candidate will continue to collect cases
until they have entered 250 consecutive surgical cases, or
• In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in order
to assist orthopaedic surgeons whose schedules may
be altered, the American Board of Orthopaedic
Surgery (ABOS) is pleased to announce that the
administration window of the 2020 ABOS Web-Based
Longitudinal Assessment (ABOS WLA) Program will
open early and be extended through June 1.

article-based material for Quarterly Questions on
March 31st.
• Additional questions written for articles on patient
safety, quality improvement, professionalism, and a
range of subspecialty topics, are coming soon, well
ahead of their previously scheduled July 1st release
date.
• Several dozen diplomates have embraced a new
option for creating Improvement in Medical Practice
projects that are designed to improve the care of
patients with COVID-19 and to protect the health of
ophthalmologists and their staff. Completion earns
credit for one Improvement in Medical Practice
activity.
• Newly approved CME activities focused on the
COVID-19 pandemic are available on the CME Finder
Menu. These activities may be counted toward the
ABO's requirement for lifelong learning and self-
assessment.

Providing Flexibility for Changing Circumstances
• We understand that, in many cases, the day-to-day
activities and priorities of our diplomates have
shifted.
• Extensions may be requested by those whose
certificates expire on December 31, 2020 to allow
additional time to complete Maintenance of
Certification (MOC) activities. Email moc@abop.org
to submit a request.
• Similarly, the ABO will consider a reduction or waiver
until 2021 of the annual $200 fee for those currently
suffering financial hardship. Requests must be
submitted to moc@abop.org.
| American Board of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery | until September 30th, whichever comes first. This modification was designed to help those individuals whose practice caseloads have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, ensuring each Candidate every opportunity to reach the caseload minimum and effectively represent their typical practice pattern. A review of recent years demonstrated that given a 3-month downturn of cases without extending the collection period could have resulted in more than 200 candidates not reaching the minimum case load that would allow them to sit for the 2021 Part II Oral Examination. | • The ABOS WLA administration window will now run from Wednesday, April 1 at 9 am ET and stay open until 5 pm ET on June 1. • In addition, the ABOS will make the ABOS WLA program available to Diplomates who did not start the program last year. Diplomates who have ABOS Board Certification expiration dates between 2020 and 2025, and who did not participate in the 2019 ABOS WLA, may now participate beginning this year. Previously, they were not able to participate this year without having participated last year. • The ABOHNS recognizes that scheduled rotations for PGY-1 residents might need to change to best accommodate for the local situation at each institution. For the PGY-1 residents for the 2019-2020 academic year, the ABOHNS expects a minimum of 3 months of otolaryngology rotations and 3 months of non-otolaryngology rotations chosen from amongst the options described in the Booklet-of-Information dated June 2019. For the remaining 6 months, the ABOHNS will allow flexibility for the rotations at the discretion of the residency program director if necessary to ensure best care for patients with COVID-19. If changes need to be made to a resident’s rotations that result in the usual requirements not being met, the Residency Program Director needs to inform the Board at the conclusion of the resident’s PGY-1 year. No rotations will need to be made up as long as the minimum requirements described above are met. • The ABOHNS recognizes that Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery residents at all levels might be needed to provide care for COVID-19 patients, especially while elective surgeries and clinics are being postponed. Clinical time caring for patients with COVID-19 will be counted toward the training requirements for Board Eligibility. At the conclusion of the academic year, the residency program director with input from the CCC will still be required to decide whether a resident has acquired/demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to advance to the subsequent PGY-year or graduate from residency and enter autonomous practice if in the penultimate year. If a determination is made... | • No information found as of 4/16/20, please periodically check website for possible updates regarding continuing certification. |
that a resident’s training needs to be extended based on effects of the COVID pandemic on their Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery training/experience, then the ABOHNS requests being proactively informed by the program director of this decision as soon as feasible.

- The ABOHNS recognizes that residents can be exposed to COVID-19 as they care for patients, which will lead to mandated self-isolation/quarantines. If an Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery resident requires a 2-week self-isolation/quarantine, this time will not count toward the 6-weeks allowed leave time for the PGY-year if the program arranges for the resident to complete academic/study activity during that time. The Residency Program Director will need to provide a written description of the academic/study activity to the ABOHNS. Extended absences (> 2 weeks) for residents that contract and require care for COVID-19 will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In either circumstance, the ABOHNS expects that the residency program director will proactively inform the ABOHNS about the situation as soon as feasible.

| American Board of Pathology | The American Board of Pathology (ABPath) recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic is creating a difficult time for many of our diplomates. To ease concerns about meeting the ABPath CertLink (ABPCL) participation requirements, we are announcing that there will be no jeopardy to your certification for non-participation in ABPCL for the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2020 (January-June 30, 2020).

  - Unanswered questions in ABPCL are marked as incorrect; this is a function of the platform that we cannot change. If you do not want unattempted questions marked incorrect, which will show on your CertLink dashboard, you can request a sabbatical for one or both quarters by contacting abpath@mycertlink.org. You must make this request before the end of the quarters (March 31 and June 30). There will be no penalty for taking a sabbatical.
  - We encourage you to continue to participate in ABPCL as your current situation allows. Remember to keep a daily log of time spent and a brief description of the activities. The Program Director must attest that the overall competency of the resident/fellow at the completion of training was not adversely affected by the absence.

    - COVID-19 illness or exposure
    - Mandated quarantine
    - Shelter in place/shelter at home directives
    - Self-imposed isolation because of significant underlying health issues
    - Care for a sick or quarantined immediate family member
    - Providing childcare due to school/childcare closures
    - Volunteering or being assigned to other institutional or clinical duties |

| | The American Board of Pathology will allow the following reasons for absence from on-site training to count as clinical training if the resident/fellow arranges with their program director to continue learning and training activities. Residents/fellows should keep a daily log of time spent and a brief description of the activities. The Program Director must attest that the overall competency of the resident/fellow at the completion of training was not adversely affected by the absence.

- COVID-19 illness or exposure
- Mandated quarantine
- Shelter in place/shelter at home directives
- Self-imposed isolation because of significant underlying health issues
- Care for a sick or quarantined immediate family member
- Providing childcare due to school/childcare closures
- Volunteering or being assigned to other institutional or clinical duties |
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<tr>
<th>The ABPath will consider additional requests for absences on a case-by-case basis from residents who miss training for an extended period of time for other reasons.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Autopsy Temporary Policy</strong></td>
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<td>o We understand that currently Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is in short supply. To support your institutions and departments of pathology, ABPath will temporarily allow the gross prosection of a shared autopsy to be performed by only one resident (the items highlighted in yellow below). You may want to get creative and consider using photos or videos to share the gross findings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Both residents must participate in all other aspects of the autopsy to claim credit for that case.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ review of the clinical history and circumstances of death</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ external examination of the body</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ gross dissection, including organ evisceration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ review of the microscopic and laboratory findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ preparation of a written description of gross and microscopic findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ development of an opinion as to the cause of death</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ clinical-pathologic correlation</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ review of the autopsy report with a faculty member.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2020 candidates for certification have already completed their 50 autopsies. The ABPath recognizes that some 2021 candidates may have difficulty achieving 50 autopsy cases. We will address this when applications become available for them in the fall.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We want to support you and your residents during this stressful and difficult time. For any questions, please reach out to us at <a href="mailto:questions@abpath.org">questions@abpath.org</a>.</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**ABPCL is still in a pilot phase, so your performance is not being assessed. If you are using ABPCL to claim SAM credits, you will only be able to claim credit for quarters that you complete.**

**At this time, the ABPath Continuing Certification (CC) requirements, except for ABPCL participation, have not changed. We will continue to monitor the pandemic and its effect on our diplomates and will be supportive of your continuing certification.**
American Board of Pediatrics

General Pediatrics Initial Certifying Exam
- The ABP recognizes that physicians are experiencing unprecedented challenges, both professionally and personally, due to COVID-19. We have heard from many physicians who wish to apply for the fall examination, but due to the current circumstances, need to be able to apply later in the registration period. Although the regular application period has expired, the late application fee has been waived and applications may be submitted until 3 p.m. ET on May 15, 2020.

Subspecialty Initial Certifying Exams
- All subspecialty initial certifying examinations that were scheduled in March have been rescheduled for August. Fellows who were accepted to take an exam in Adolescent Medicine, Child Abuse Pediatrics, Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, or Pediatric Nephrology may now schedule their exam for any one of the four available dates: Aug. 3, Aug. 10, Aug. 13, or Aug. 20, regardless of specific subspecialty. Although the regular application period has expired, the late application fee has been waived and applications may be submitted until 3 p.m. ET on April 30, 2020.

Training Absences
- For trainees who are affected by the COVID-19 situation, please address with your program director.

- For program directors and coordinators who have questions about affected trainees, please see our Absences from Training (PDF) information, and if there are additional questions, please contact the ABP through the online Program Portal.

American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Part I
- April 9, 2020: Full Carryovers Now Available for Part I Examination
- While remaining hopeful the Part I Examination can still occur in August, we also recognize that pressures around COVID-19 may not allow candidates to prepare as normal this year. The ABPMR is now offering full exam fee carryovers (to the 2021 exam) to all 2020 ABPMR Part I Examination candidates. Candidates, for more information and instructions for how to

March 24, 2020: Extension of LA-PM&R Quarter 1 Deadline
- Recognizing the tremendous burden physicians are being asked to carry during this global crisis, the ABPMR is extending the LA-PM&R Q1 deadline to June 30, 2020. LA-PM&R users, you will see the new deadline reflected on your CertLink dashboard within the next week.
- If you’ve already finished your Q1 questions, you will not receive new questions until after June 30. The
request a carryover, please refer to the email you received on 4/9.

Part II
- Rescheduled
- New dates: Sept. 12-13, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American Board of Plastic Surgery</th>
<th>No information found as of 4/16/20, please periodically check website for potential updates regarding initial certification.</th>
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</table>
| American Board of Preventive Medicine | ABPM will make accommodations for early graduations or truncated residency and/or fellowship training for physicians who would otherwise qualify to sit for this year’s ABPM Initial Certification Exams.  
- The letters to the ABPM’s Specialty and Subspecialty Program Directors may be viewed at the following links:  
|                                  | No information found as of 4/16/20, please periodically check website for potential updates regarding continuing certification. |
| American Board of Preventive Medicine | In an effort to ease the burden on an already-strained physician workforce and in an effort to support its Diplomate population that is on the front lines in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) announced today that it has implemented a structure that will allow for the waiver of the current Transitional MOC requirements for its Diplomates. Effective as of April 1, 2020 and continuing through December 31, 2022, Diplomates who meet the qualifications below will not be required to complete the Transitional MOC Part 2 (CME), Part 4 (Improvement in Medical |

ABPMR is discussing how to handle the rest of 2020 in LA-PM&R; those discussions are fluid as we continue to monitor rapid developments related to COVID-19. Our goal is to continue to provide learning opportunities for those who have time, but also ease the burden on physicians on the front lines of the COVID-19 battle.

March 24, 2020: Exam Application Deadline Extensions
- The ABPMR had a number of examination application deadlines set for the end of March 2020. Understanding that many physicians are currently attending to more pressing matters related to COVID-19, we are extending current deadlines for an additional month for these examinations:
  - Brain Injury Medicine  
  - Neuromuscular Medicine  
  - Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine  
  - Spinal Cord Injury Medicine  
  - Sports Medicine  
- And for:
  - Longitudinal Assessment for PM&R (LA-PM&R) 2020  
  - Longitudinal Assessment for Pain Medicine (LA-Pain) 2020

American Board of Plastic Surgery
- No information found as of 4/16/20, please periodically check website for potential updates regarding initial certification.

American Board of Preventive Medicine
- ABPM will make accommodations for early graduations or truncated residency and/or fellowship training for physicians who would otherwise qualify to sit for this year’s ABPM Initial Certification Exams.
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• Program directors, residents, and fellows who have questions about the updated policies may contact the ABPM directly at abpm@theabpm.org.

Practice) or the Patient Safety Course (PSC) requirements. ABPM will recognize these qualified Diplomates as fully participating in MOC through the remainder of the ABPM’s Transitional MOC Period.

• To qualify for this waiver of Part 2, Part 4 and PSC requirements, Diplomates must possess current, unexpired Certification in at least one ABPM Specialty or Subspecialty and must, by December 31, 2020:
  - Register their Diplomate account on the ABPM’s online Physician Portal at https://certification.theabpm.org/diplomate-registration
  - Diplomates with ABPM Certificates expiring between August 1, 2020 and January 31, 2023 and who have; (i) taken and passed the MOC Exam prior to the expiration date on the Diplomate’s Certificate and, (ii) by the December 31, 2020 deadline, have registered their Diplomate account on the ABPM’s Physician Portal, will be deemed to be fully compliant with the Transitional MOC requirements.
  - Diplomates with ABPM Certificates expiring on or after February 1, 2023 and who have, by the December 31, 2020 deadline, registered their Diplomate account on the ABPM’s online Physician Portal, need take no further action and shall be deemed to be fully compliant with all Transitional MOC requirements.
  - While not required, Diplomates who complete a Part 4 activity between February 1, 2020 and December 31, 2022 will receive credit towards the first Improvement in Medical Practice requirement (or its equivalent) of ABPM’s Continuing Certification Program which is currently scheduled to launch in April of 2023.

• Diplomates who do not qualify for the waiver by registering their Diplomate account on the ABPM’s Physician Portal by the December 31, 2020 deadline will be required to complete all Transitional MOC requirements as set forth on the ABPM website at www.ohsu.edu/school-of-medicine/cpd/maintenance-certification-moc
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology</strong></th>
<th>Read the ABMS Statement Regarding Continuing Certification During COVID-19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Deadline extension for final installment payment for 2020 Psychiatry, Neurology, Child Neurology and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Initial Certification exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>• ABPN has extended the deadline for the final installment payment for those who have applied for the 2020 Psychiatry, Neurology, Child Neurology or Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Initial Certification exam to June 1, 2020. In addition, all late payment fees have been waived.</td>
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<td>• All those making installment payments should have received an email on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 with this information. For questions, contact <a href="mailto:payments@abpn.com">payments@abpn.com</a>. As a reminder, payments are required to be made through your Physician Folios account at <a href="http://www.abpn.com/folios">www.abpn.com/folios</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Late fees waived for select 2020 Subspecialty Initial Certification exam applications</td>
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<td>• Applications will continue to be accepted until the posted Late Deadline without a late fee for the following 2020 exams:</td>
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<td>o Brain Injury Medicine Certification, scheduled for September 22, 2020</td>
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<td>o Addiction Psychiatry Certification, scheduled for October 13-16, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Geriatric Psychiatry Certification, scheduled for October 13-16, 2020</td>
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<td>o Epilepsy Medicine, scheduled for October 19-30, 2020</td>
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<td>o Neuromuscular Medicine, scheduled for October 19-23, 2020</td>
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- For diplomats whose specialty or subspecialty certificates would have expired in 2020, we will defer the 2020 Continuing Certification(CC)/MOC exam requirement for one year until December 31, 2021. Therefore, certificates expiring in 2020 will be extended to the end of 2021. This extension does not include certificates that lapsed prior to February 1, 2020.

- For diplomats enrolled in the Pilot Project and scheduled to complete all article assessments in 2020, we will extend their article assessment completion date to December 15, 2021.

- For diplomats currently in the CC Program, we will not change a certification status negatively even if there are insufficient or incomplete activities (CME, Self-Assessment or PIP) recorded in Physician Folios at the end of 2020. Incomplete CC Program activities will be deferred until the end of 2021.

- For those diplomats who have certificates expiring in 2020:

  o As of now, we still plan on offering ABPN examinations this year. Diplomates with certificates expiring in 2020 are not required to take a deferment and may still choose to sit for the CC/MOC exam or complete the Pilot article assessments this year.

- You will be contacted by the ABPN about next steps on how to elect for a deferment, if needed:

  o Before May 1, 2020 (for approved subspecialty CC/MOC exam applicants) and
## Vascular Neurology, scheduled for October 19-23, 2020

**Deadline extension for final installment payment for 2020 Subspecialty Initial Certification exams**

- ABPN has extended the deadline for the final installment payment for those who have applied for the 2020 Addiction Psychiatry, Brain Injury Medicine, Epilepsy, Geriatric Psychiatry, Hospice and Palliative Medicine, Neuromuscular Medicine, or Vascular Neurology Initial Certification exam from April 6, 2020 to June 1, 2020. In addition, all late payment fees have been suspended.
- All those making installment payments will receive an email reminding them of this information. For questions, contact payments@abpn.com. As a reminder, payments are required to be made through your Physician Folios account at www.abpn.com/folios.

### Before June 1, 2020 (for primary specialty CC/MOC exam applicants)

- We want to reassure our diplomates that their certification status will not be negatively impacted by this healthcare crisis. The ABPN remains committed to supporting you and thanks you for all that you do to care for your patients and for each other.

## Diagnostic Radiology and Therapeutic Radiology/Radiation Oncology

Because of the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic, the Radiation Oncology Biology/Physics and Clinical Qualifying Exams scheduled for July have been postponed. We will be working with Pearson VUE and other stakeholders to choose new exam dates, which will be no earlier than September 15, 2020. We will provide a more detailed update as soon as possible.

- **RO Oral Exam Rescheduled**
  - The Radiation Oncology Oral Exam, originally scheduled for early May, will be held October 11-13, 2020. We appreciate your being patient as we worked through the impacts of the developing novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation on the exam.
  - To secure an exam appointment for the new dates, you must accept or decline an invitation, which will be emailed to you by July 1, 2020.
  - If you accept the invitation, specific appointment details, including the date and time of the exam, will be sent to you approximately two months before the exam.

- **MP Oral Exam Rescheduled**
  - The Medical Physics Part 3 (Oral) Exam, originally scheduled for late April, will be held October 24-27, 2020.

### No information found as of 4/16/20, please periodically check website for potential updates regarding continuing certification.
2020. We appreciate your being patient as we worked through the impacts of the developing novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation on the exam.

- To secure an exam appointment for the new dates, you must accept or decline an invitation, which will be emailed to you no later than July 1, 2020.
- If you accept the invitation, specific appointment details, including the date and time of the exam, will be sent approximately two months before the exam.

- **Urgent Notice for Those Eligible to Take DR Certifying Exam**
  - In response to the growing health situation posed by the coronavirus (COVID-19), in early March, the ABR canceled the DR Certifying Exam administration scheduled for April 6, 2020, in Tucson. The next available DR Certifying Exam administration is October 5-6, 2020, at the ABR Exam Centers in Tucson and Chicago.
  - You will receive an exam invitation no later than July 6, 2020, and will need to complete the outlined process in order to secure a seat for the October administration.

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<tr>
<th>American Board of Surgery</th>
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<tr>
<td>Please use the links below or in the menu to the left to access specialty-specific FAQs pertaining to the global recommendations and hardship modifications announced by ABS in March.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unless noted otherwise, these hardship modifications apply to individuals completing training in 2020 only. As we begin to understand the impact of COVID-19 and the tools, options, and situational changes employed during this time, we will be better positioned to make recommendations for the future trainees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- General Surgery Hardship Modifications FAQs</td>
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<td>- Vascular Surgery Hardship Modifications FAQs</td>
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<td>- Pediatric Surgery Hardship Modifications FAQs</td>
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<td>- Surgical Critical Care Hardship Modifications FAQs</td>
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<td>- Complex General Surgery Oncology Hardship Modifications FAQs</td>
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<td>The 2020 Continuous Certification Assessment window will be extended beyond the typical eight weeks to give diplomates extra time to complete it. Diplomates will still have two weeks to complete the assessment once started, with up to two attempts to pass. This year’s assessment will be available from Monday, Sept. 7 – Monday, Nov. 16, 2020.</td>
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<td>Diplomates who are enrolling in the Continuous Certification Program for the first time or who are already in the program and are on the normal Continuous Certification Assessment schedule will be able to take the assessment before completing the majority of their ongoing requirements. Diplomates may have a hard time fulfilling requirements such as CME and obtaining reference letters right now, and we don’t want that to prevent someone from being able to complete the assessment earlier in the window, if they choose. Once</td>
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you pay your annual fee for 2020, you will immediately be able to unlock and complete the assessment.

- As long as you complete your remaining requirements by Nov. 16, 2020, your status as of Jan. 1, 2021 will be listed as "Certified – Meeting CC Requirements." If you pass your assessment in 2020 but do not complete your requirements by Nov. 16, your status will be displayed as "Certified – Not Meeting CC Requirements" and will remain as such until those requirements are fulfilled.

- ABS encourages anyone who has a grace year available to them and feels that they are unprepared or unable to take the assessment this year in 2020 to take advantage of the grace year. Grace years are provided to diplomates who are enrolled in the Continuous Certification Program and do not pass an assessment when it is due.

- For diplomates who are entering the Continuous Certification Program for the first time this year, you are considered enrolled in the program once you complete the ongoing requirements, such as reporting CME, and pay your annual fee.

- Diplomates who used their grace year in 2019 will NOT be extended an additional grace year, and must complete and pass the assessment by 11:59 p.m. ET on Nov. 16.

- Diplomates who are participating in the lapsed pathway to regain certification will need to meet all requirements of the lapsed pathway (including providing all outstanding requirements BEFORE taking the assessment), pay for and pass the 2020 assessment by 11:59 p.m. ET on Nov. 16.

- We are currently working to update our Continuous Certification website pages to reflect the above information. Additional details and Continuous Certification Program information will be sent in the coming weeks to diplomates who are due to complete an assessment in 2020.

| **American Board of Thoracic Surgery** | • Programs or Candidates, who anticipate a problem in achieving the ABTS case requirements for a particular pathway should contact the ABTS (Dr. Fullerton) by 30 April 2020 to request a ruling from the ABTS as to whether or not... | • Due to COVID-19, the American Board of Thoracic Surgery will be limiting the number of staff available. Until further notice, please be aware your call may take up to 48 hours to be returned. For a quicker... |

**Updated: 4/23/2020**

[www.ohsu.edu/school-of-medicine/cpd/maintenance-certification-moc](www.ohsu.edu/school-of-medicine/cpd/maintenance-certification-moc)
their case-list (or the anticipated case list projected to be achieved by the end of June) would be acceptable for entry into the certification process. We should then be able to offer the candidate and the Program Director information as to whether additional time-in-training for that resident may be necessary.

- **June 2020 Oral Exams Postponed.** At the present time, it is unclear when the situation with COVID-19 will be resolved. Therefore, the American Board of Thoracic Surgery (ABTS) has made the decision to postpone the Part II (Oral) Primary Certification Examination which had previously been scheduled to be held on June 5-6, 2020. The Primary Certification Oral Exam is now tentatively rescheduled for October 16-17, 2020 in Chicago.
- The Part II (Oral) Congenital Examination is now tentatively rescheduled for October 15, 2020 in Chicago.

**American Board of Urology**

**Update regarding 2020 Qualifying Exam (QE)**

- During these times of uncertainty, we continue to evaluate all of the developments happening around the world and are working hard to make decisions that are required to protect the health and safety of our candidates. We are sensitive to the additional stress and anxiety this pandemic has placed on you, your training, and your preparation for sitting the Qualifying (Part 1) examination. We are working with Pearson VUE to reschedule the July examination. We will advise you as soon as an alternative date has been selected. Please be assured that the administration of the test and its contents will remain unchanged and this will not penalize you in any way. Currently our office is closed to limit exposure of our staff during this difficult time. However, we are all working remotely and plan to continue to answer the phones and support you all as seamlessly as possible. Never hesitate to call our dedicated staff at any time if we can help.

- No information found as of 4/16/20, please periodically check website for updates on continuing certification.

response to your inquiries and/or questions, please send an email to the following email addresses: for SESATS questions: sesats@abts.org, for MOC questions for Primary Certification: moc@abts.org or mvalencia@abts.org, for Congenital Subspecialty Certification questions: agardner@abts.org, for all other questions and/or inquires: info@abts.org.