American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR)
External Policies

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Disclaimer

The ABPMR reserves the right to change any information, including dates, exam format, fees, policies, procedures, and requirements, without prior notice or issuance of a revised publication. It is the applicant’s responsibility to seek the most current information. The most current information supersedes all previously published information.

The ABPMR does not discriminate among applicants on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, disability, or marital status.
Privacy Policy

The American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) stores personal identification and contact information of residents, examination candidates, and diplomates.

Examination Administration and Maintenance of Certification

Background information on each individual’s graduate medical education is collected and stored to determine eligibility for certification. In connection with examination registration and administration, the ABPMR stores each candidate’s name, gender, mailing address, email address, and date of birth. A candidate’s phone, mailing, and/or email addresses will be used to provide information relating to examination registration, examination administration, and/or maintenance of certification. Herein this information is known “personal information.”

Third-Party Disclosure

In order to deliver and score examinations, the ABPMR releases personal information to third-parties, including Pearson VUE, Prometric, and other member boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). For examinations where the ABPMR is not the administering board, the ABPMR releases personal information to the administrating board to allow candidates to schedule and take an examination.

The ABPMR releases basic personal information to outside organizations that provide ABPMR–approved self assessments, practice improvement projects, or other activities in order for diplomates to maintain their certification. The ABPMR also releases personal information to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) for the purpose of aggregate tracking and online publication in The Official ABMS Directory of Board Certified Medical Specialists published by Elsevier Science.

Examination Results

The ABPMR regards the results of an individual’s examination as private. In response to third party inquires about examination results, the ABPMR only reports passing attempts and does not report numerical scores. The ABPMR does release individual examination scores to residency training programs. The ABPMR publishes summary examination results (pass rates) on the ABPMR website and provides de-identified, aggregate examination results to Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). The ABPMR may choose to provide de-identified examination results for research use.

The ABPMR reserves the right to disclose information to appropriate investigators or entities (eg, state medical boards or other credentialing bodies). The ABPMR will disclose all relevant information in its possession for which the ABPMR does not have claim of legal privilege in response to a lawful subpoena, court order, or an authorized request by a government or regulatory entity.

Computer Use Information

The ABPMR can access basic information about website users including the user’s IP address, browser type, and type of operating system. For purposes of user authentication, the ABPMR website places temporary cookies in the user’s browser during use of the ABPMR website. The ABPMR stores tracking information necessary to document credit card transactions, but does not store full credit card numbers.

The ABPMR website contains links to other websites. The ABPMR has no control over and is not responsible for the privacy or content of such sites.

Questions regarding the Privacy Policy should be directed to the ABPMR at office@abpmr.org.
Licensure Policy

Certification and maintenance of certification is contingent upon medical licensure and continuing compliance with all Board policies, rules and codes. Physicians must hold a valid, unrestricted allopathic and/or osteopathic medical license in at least one jurisdiction in the United States, its territories, or Canada. If more than one license is held in these jurisdictions, all licenses must meet the requirement of being unrestricted. Should any medical license become restricted at any time, the Board may undertake proceedings consistent with due process to revoke the certificate(s) and/or take other actions against the physician. Physicians are responsible for immediately notifying the ABPMR of any restriction placed on any medical license held. Upon successful reinstatement or remedy of the encumbered medical license(s), and upon the ABPMR being notified of such by the former diplomate, and subsequent verification of such by the ABPMR, a physician may file an appeal for reinstatement of certification (see Appeals 4.002 – section “Revocation of Certification”).

A physician’s license may be deemed “restricted” for purposes of this policy if, as a result of action by a State or other legally constituted Medical Board (hereafter “State Medical Board”), the physician:

   a. has had his/her license revoked or surrendered his/her license in lieu of investigation, disciplinary action or revocation or as part of a settlement of a disciplinary action;
   b. has had his/her license suspended or placed on probation;
   c. has had special conditions or requirements placed on his/her license (such as, but not limited to, supervision, chaperoning during the examination of patients, additional training beyond that required of all physicians for the maintenance of licensure), regardless of whether or not such conditions or requirements are imposed by order of the State Medical Board or are the result of a voluntary agreement and/or stipulation between the physician and the State Medical Board.

At the sole discretion of the ABPMR, the ABPMR may review instances of licensure actions to determine whether such actions constitute a restriction in violation of this policy.

Foreign Licensure

For purposes of maintaining certification(s), physicians practicing exclusively abroad, i.e., who are not practicing in the US or Canada, and who do not hold a US or Canadian license, must provide proof of licensure in the country in which they practice.

Additionally, the following requirements must be met:

   a. The physician must comply with all legal and regulatory requirements governing the practice of medicine in the country in which the physician is practicing
   b. The physician’s license to practice medicine in any state or territory of the United States or Canada must not be suspended or revoked and not lapsed or surrendered in one or more jurisdictions to avoid sanctions by the jurisdiction’s licensing authority.
Institutional Licensure

The ABPMR may allow a physician to become certified while holding a training or “institutional” license during the period that the physician is undertaking subspecialty training.

The following requirements conditions apply:

a. The physician must provide proof of the training license.
b. The physician must provide proof of full and unrestricted licensure within 60 days following the last day of the physician’s full participation in the training program.
c. The ABPMR will revoke or suspend the certification of any physician who has not provided proof of full licensure within 60 days of completion or discontinuation of training.
Disciplinary/Sanctions Policy

Scope
The ABPMR may impose sanctions upon physicians who engage in professional misconduct related to ABPMR certification. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

- a letter of reprimand
- sanctions outlined in the ABPMR Examination Irregularity Policy, Nondisclosure Policy, and Cooperation Agreement
- referral of matters to appropriate authorities, including state medical boards
- other actions that the ABPMR believes to be warranted in order to protect third parties, the public, or the ABPMR

Basis for Sanctions
Sanctions may be imposed on the basis of any of the following, but not limited to:

1. Misstatement of fact in the application for such certificate or otherwise, or to any third party concerning the diplomate's certification status.
2. Failure to maintain moral, ethical, or professional behavior satisfactory to the ABPMR or involvement in misconduct that adversely affects professional competence or integrity.
3. Violation of the ABPMR Examination Irregularity Policy, Nondisclosure Policy, and Cooperation Agreement.

Procedures for Registering a Complaint
The ABPMR generally does not investigate personal complaints. The ABPMR may consider and investigate complaints containing substantiated allegations that fall within the basis for sanctions. Any person may register a written complaint against an applicant, diplomate, or person claiming to be a diplomate. The complaint must be in writing, signed, provide details supporting the complaint, and identify the ABPMR policies or requirements violated.

Appeal
To appeal sanctions refer to the ABPMR Appeal Policy:

- Section 5: Examination Irregularity/Revocation, Suspension, or Lapse of Certificate
- Section 6: Oral Hearing Appeal
Board Certification Status

Diplomates of the ABPMR must accurately state their certification status at all times. This includes descriptions in curriculum vitae, advertisements, publications, directories, letterhead, business cards, websites, and any other format. Diplomates with expired or revoked certification may not claim board certification by the ABPMR and must revise all descriptions of their qualifications accordingly. When an individual misrepresents certification status, the ABPMR may notify local credentialing bodies, licensing bodies, law enforcement agencies, and/or others. The ABPMR may also take legal action against individuals who misrepresent certification status. For more information regarding how to state your certification see “Guidelines for Stating Certification Status”.
Confidentiality, Assignment, and Conflict of Interest Policy

This policy applies to all American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) staff, consultants, and volunteers, and those serving on the ABPMR Board of Directors, committees, and task forces.

**ABPMR Examination Content**

No examination content may ever be disclosed to another source. Volunteers may not disclose in any manner, directly or indirectly, to anyone outside of the ABPMR, its committees, task forces, or staff, any confidential information related to any of the ABPMR certification examinations, including the content and wording of examination questions/material. This restriction shall apply at all times and in any circumstances even after participation with the ABPMR has concluded, unless otherwise directed by the ABPMR.

**Board Examination Preparation Activities**

Current ABPMR volunteers must not participate in board examination preparation activities—including but not limited to books, online materials, or courses—as such activities are considered to be an actual or perceived conflict of interest. This conflict of interest exists because there are both financial concerns (unique opportunity to benefit from offering preparation activities for an examination which the individual has helped to create) and content contamination/testing concerns (possible use of the same materials in the preparation activities as in the examination itself). This prohibition shall be effective during the time of and for two years following the conclusion of the volunteer’s service to ABPMR.

**Educational Activities**

Educational activities must be kept free from reference to board examination content or preparation. The volunteer should use good judgment, and if any concerns arise, disclose their role with the ABPMR and state that their participation in the activity is not sanctioned by or representative of the ABPMR.

**ABPMR Online Writing Portal**

It is the ABPMR's expectation that when volunteers are granted access to proprietary information (exam content, etc.) that access is restricted to only the specific volunteer. The security and integrity of ABPMR exam content is dependent upon full compliance by all. ABPMR volunteers must not provide access information or instructions to any other persons, including but not limited to: assistants, colleagues, and residents. Any unauthorized receipt, possession, uploading/downloading, or transmission of ABPMR examination content or materials, in whole or in part, by any means, including but not limited to reconstruction from memory, is strictly forbidden. Once a volunteer or employee has resigned, or no longer serves the ABPMR, his/her portal access will be disabled immediately.

**Assignment**

Any materials the volunteer prepares for the ABPMR must be original, not copyrighted, and shall be owned by the ABPMR. The ABPMR is hereby assigned all right, title, and interest to any information or material developed, conceived, modified, or created relating to the ABPMR certification program and its certification examinations.

**Conflict of Interest**

ABPMR volunteers may not engage in actions that may constitute actual, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest with the mission or activities of the ABPMR, and must disclose to the ABPMR any such conflicts of interest and any business, financial, or organizational interest and affiliations which are or could be construed to be a conflict of interest.

As a condition, and in consideration, of being selected and serving with the ABPMR, and in recognition of the importance of the ABPMR certification program to the profession and the public, please indicate your agreement with this policy by signing below. Note: ABPMR diplomates must meet the board’s requirement of continuous certification in physical medicine and rehabilitation.

Signature ___________________________________________ Date __________
Print Name ___________________________________________
Examination Volunteer Policy

The American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) requires all board directors and examination volunteers to pay for, take, and pass their respective certification and maintenance of certification examinations.

Volunteers must not have any actions toward their board certification. Any action during the volunteer term will result in removal from the position.

Additional volunteer requirements include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part I Item Writers and CertLink Writers</th>
<th>Part II Examiners or Vignette Writers</th>
<th>Subspecialty Item Writers and Associate Committee Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five years’ experience in PM&amp;R</td>
<td></td>
<td>Must be certified in the subspecialty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No failures on primary exams</td>
<td></td>
<td>No failures on the primary or subspecialty exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain primary PM&amp;R certification and fully and actively participate in the ABPMR Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program</td>
<td>Item writers or associate members for subspecialty examinations may drop their primary PM&amp;R certification and maintain only their subspecialty certification while fully and actively participating in the ABPMR MOC Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part II Vignette writers must have completed one three-year term as an examiner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Request for Reimbursement of Expenses

Please itemize reimbursable expenses and attach all receipts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals: Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airfare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi, Parking, Rental, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Auto Expenses*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone, Internet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please use the Mileage Calculator below to figure personal auto expenses.

## Mileage Calculator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Total Miles</th>
<th>Amount*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Amount should be figured at .58 cents per mile for travel connected with this trip. Enter total mileage amount under Personal Auto Expenses above.

For purposes of annual auditing of our books, it is imperative that you enclose airline receipts, hotel receipts, and any other receipts or records that you have relative to your expenses for attendance at the meeting.

This form should be signed, dated, and all receipts should be attached. Send original to ABPMR and keep a photocopy for your records.

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

For office use only
Approved: ___________________________
Examination Irregularity Policy, Nondisclosure Policy, and Cooperation Agreement

ABPMR Examination Irregularity Policy
All American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) certification examinations, including the content and wording of examination questions, constitute confidential ABPMR information protected by copyright law. Any unauthorized receipt, possession, or transmission of ABPMR written, computer-based, or oral examination questions, content, or materials, either before the examination, on site, or after an examination administration, is strictly forbidden. Use of ABPMR examination materials for the purpose of examination preparation or training is also strictly forbidden.

To ensure examination integrity, the ABPMR uses data forensic techniques to identify patterns of test fraud, including cheating and copyright infringement. The ABPMR will investigate all reports of irregular and/or improper behavior that is observed, made apparent by data forensic analysis, or uncovered by other means.

Violation of the ABPMR Examination Irregularity Policy, Nondisclosure Policy, and/or Acknowledgement/Cooperation Agreement, the giving or receiving of aid in any ABPMR examination, or engaging in other conduct that subverts or attempts to subvert the examination or the ABPMR certification process is sufficient cause for the ABPMR to:
- bar an individual from the examination and/or future examinations,
- terminate participation in the examination,
- withhold and/or invalidate the results of the examination,
- withhold a certificate,
- revoke a certificate, or
- take other appropriate action.

The ABPMR reserves the right to take whatever measures are necessary to protect the integrity of its examinations.

ABPMR Nondisclosure Policy
All ABPMR examinations are confidential and are protected by copyright law. The examinations are made available to you, the candidate, solely for the purpose of becoming certified or maintaining certification in the specialty or subspecialties of physical medicine and rehabilitation. You are expressly prohibited from disclosing, publishing, reproducing, or transmitting any ABPMR examination content, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means, verbal or written, electronic or mechanical, for any purpose.

Acknowledgement/Cooperation Agreement
I understand and agree that the ABPMR has the final authority to determine whether I have the privilege of sitting for an examination and whether the score I receive is valid. In the event that the ABPMR investigates potential examination irregularity, I agree to cooperate fully with the ABPMR and to provide information in my possession to the ABPMR.

I have read the policies and agreement carefully and understand, agree to, and accept the obligations the policies and agreement impose on me.

_____________________________________________________           __________________
Signature         Date
Appeals Policy

Purpose
The ABPMR has established the Appeals Policy to resolve concerns regarding decisions made by the board relative to the following areas:

- Applications for certification
- Request for accommodation due to disability
- Computer-based examinations
- The Part II (Oral) Examination
- Exam irregularity
- Revocation, suspension, or lapse of certificate

The policy provides for the following avenues for resolution of concerns:

- Inquiries and requests as to status or requirements
- Requests for reconsideration by the board
- Appeals/complaints
- Oral hearing

Procedures
All appeals, inquiries, and requests must:

- be made in writing and submitted via email or certified letter
- be addressed to the executive director
- be sent or postmarked within 30 days of the date indicated on the letter from the ABPMR providing written notification of the board inquiry or decision
- include all appropriate documentation along with a check for the appeal fee within 30 days of the board inquiry or decision

Additional Requirements
Appeals, requests, or inquiries are subject to the following additional requirements dependent on the nature of the concern:

Board Eligibility
A physician who is in the final year of their board eligibility period and believes their extraordinary circumstances merit an extension of the original period may appeal for an exception. The written request for an appeal must be accompanied by a nonrefundable $200 appeal fee. The statement and fee must be submitted prior to the end of the published “on-time” application window for the applicable certification exam. The Executive Committee, or its designee(s), will review the materials and make a decision which will be final and binding on the board and the applicant.

Applications for Certification
A physician who has submitted an examination application and whose credentials for admission to the examination are rejected may appeal that decision. The written request for an appeal must be accompanied by a nonrefundable $350 appeal fee within 30 days of the decision. The Executive Committee, or its designee(s), will review the materials and make a decision which will be final and binding on the board and the applicant.

Request for Accommodation Due to Disability
An applicant who is exam admissible and whose formal request for accommodation due to a disability is denied may appeal that decision. The written request for an appeal must be accompanied by a nonrefundable $350 appeal fee and submitted within 30 days of the decision. The Executive Committee, or its designee(s), will review the materials and make a decision which will be final and binding on the board and the applicant.
Computer-Based Examination: Review of Examination Result

A candidate who receives a failing score on a computer-based examination has the right to request to have his or her examination responses reviewed. A review is limited to verifying that the candidate’s responses were correctly recorded and that the scoring process accurately transformed the candidate’s responses into a scaled score. A review is not an evaluation of the content of examination items or the corresponding answers. A review also does not involve a re-evaluation of the passing standard for the examination.

The written request for a review must be accompanied by a nonrefundable $200 appeal fee within 30 days of the decision. The candidate will be informed of the results of the review in writing. The results will be final and binding upon the board and the candidate.

The Part II (Oral) Examination

A. Complaint and Notice of Intention to Request an Appeal

A candidate who does not follow the proceeding process waives any right to appeal or otherwise challenge the Part II Examination. A candidate who believes that any of his or her examiners committed misconduct or fraud during a portion of the Part II Examination may file a complaint and notice of intention to request an appeal as follows:

1. The complaint and notice must be in writing, list all reasons supporting the complaint, and be signed by the candidate. Forms may be obtained from ABPMR staff.
2. The written complaint and notice must be submitted within one hour following conclusion of the candidate’s examination.
3. The written complaint and notice shall be given to any member of the Part II Examination Committee.

B. Appeal of Part II Examination

A candidate who has filed a written complaint and notice of intent to request an appeal as outlined above and has received a failing score may file an appeal by submitting a letter to the board office requesting an appeal of his or her Part II Examination results along with a nonrefundable $500 appeal fee within 30 days of the decision.

C. Decision

If the Part II Examination Committee determines that misconduct or fraud occurred, the candidate will be allowed to take the next regularly scheduled Part II Examination without paying processing or examination fees.

D. Review of the Part II Examination Result

The only recourse a candidate has after receiving notification of a failing score is to request to have his or her examination scores reviewed. A formal review consists of tracking the candidate’s scores from origination through each step of the scoring process. The written request for review must be accompanied by a nonrefundable $200 appeal fee within 30 days of the decision. The candidate will be informed of the results in writing. The results will be final and binding upon the board and the candidate.

Examination Irregularity

A candidate or diplomate who has been given written notification of suspected exam irregularity may appeal.

A. The written request for an appeal must be accompanied by a nonrefundable $500 appeal fee within 30 days of the decision.
B. The written request for an appeal must be accompanied by all information upon which the candidate or diplomate relies for the contention that the board’s proposed action or revocation or suspension of certification is erroneous.
C. The Executive Committee or its designee(s) will review the materials and make a decision which will be final and binding on the board and the applicant.

Revocation of Certification
A Diplomate who has had his or her primary specialty and/or subspecialty certification revoked may appeal to be reinstated by submitting a written request.
A. The written request must be accompanied by a nonrefundable $500 appeal fee.
B. The written request must be accompanied by documentation that indicates compliance with the ABPMR Licensure Policy.
C. The Executive Committee or its designee(s) will review the materials within a reasonable time frame and make a final decision. The decision will be binding on the board and the applicant.
D. Should certification be reinstated, the $500 appeal fee will be applied to the reinstatement fee.

Oral Hearing Appeal
The ABPMR may, in its discretion, grant a candidate or diplomate’s written request for an oral hearing in cases where the ABPMR makes an unfavorable ruling regarding an individual’s application for certification or imposes discipline on a candidate or diplomate including, but not limited to, the revocation of certification. A written request for an oral hearing must:
A. be made within 30 days from the date of the letter notifying the candidate or diplomate of the board’s decision,
B. be accompanied by a nonrefundable $1000 hearing fee, and
C. include a statement justifying the need for an oral hearing.
Part II Examination Appeal Form

The Appeal Policy for the Part II Examination of the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) is listed below:

Complaint and Notice of Intention to Request an Appeal
A candidate who believes that any of his or her examiners committed misconduct or fraud during a portion of the Part II Examination may file a complaint and notice of intention to request an appeal as follows:

• The complaint and notice must be in writing, list all reasons supporting the complaint, and be signed by the candidate. Forms may be obtained from ABPMR staff.
• The written complaint and notice must be submitted within one hour following the conclusion of the candidate’s examination.
• The written complaint and notice shall be given to any member of the Part II Examination Committee.

A candidate who does not follow the above process waives any right to appeal or otherwise challenge the oral examinations.

Appeal of Part II Examination
A candidate who has filed a written complaint and notice of intention to request an appeal, as outlined above, and has received a failing grade, may file an appeal by submitting the following:

• A letter to the ABPMR office requesting an appeal of his/her Part II Examination
• A nonrefundable $500 appeal fee

The letter requesting an appeal with the appeal fee must be postmarked within 30 days of the date indicated on the letter notifying the candidate that he or she failed the Part II Examination.

Decision
If the Part II Examination Committee determines that misconduct or fraud occurred, the candidate will be allowed to take the next regularly scheduled Part II Examination without paying any processing or examination fees.

I have reviewed and understand the above Appeal Policy of the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. I am aware that I may ask questions regarding this policy if I do not understand it. I have no such questions.

Signature __________________________________________  Date ____________________________
Procedures for Requesting Accommodations under the ADA

Introduction
The ABPMR supports the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and makes reasonable accommodations in examination procedures for individuals with documented, covered disabilities. Candidates with disabilities may request modifications in the administration of the examination. The ABPMR will grant such requests unless the modifications would place undue burden on the ABPMR or fundamentally alter the measurement of the knowledge and skills the examination is intended to assess. This document outlines the process for requesting examination modifications.

Timelines
Candidates requesting accommodations must submit an application, supporting documentation, and the examination fees to the ABPMR within 30 days of the date of initial submission of the examination application. Upon review of an application for special accommodations, additional information may be requested of the candidate or the diagnostic professional in order to determine the appropriate accommodations.

The absolute deadline to mutually finalize special accommodations arrangements is 90 days before the first examination date. If special accommodations arrangements are not finalized prior to the absolute deadline, the candidate may choose to take the examination under normal testing conditions or may choose to withdraw from the examination (thereby forfeiting the processing fee and any late fee).

General Requirements
All candidates requesting accommodations must complete an Application Requesting Accommodation and provide documentation supporting the request for accommodation as indicated below. The ABPMR may ask clarifying questions of the candidate or request additional documentation in order to determine reasonable and feasible accommodations. The ABPMR will not contact the candidate’s physician(s) unless it is determined to be necessary. In that case, the candidate’s consent would be requested via an information release form. Documentation and other evidence substantiating the disability may include, but is not limited to:

- A report written by a professional appropriately qualified to evaluate the disability. The report must include the name of the candidate, the date of testing, and the signature of the professional writing the report.
- Diagnostic information. The diagnosis of the specified disability should use standard nomenclature (eg, International Classification of Diseases [ICD] and American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders [DSM]).
- A history of any previous settings in which accommodations have been granted (eg, MCAT, USMLE).
- Recommended accommodations with a rationale for why each accommodation is needed.

Requirements for Learning Disabilities
- A psychoeducational evaluation and report is required. The evaluation should be completed by a qualified professional (eg, licensed psychologist, board-certified psychiatrist, certified learning disabilities specialist). The report should be current (ie, completed when the candidate is an adult).
- The report must include a complete intellectual assessment using a methodology generally accepted in the profession of the qualified professional completing the report. It is required that the major test instruments be statistically valid, reliable, and standardized for adult populations. Test performance must be reported in standard scores and/or percentiles.
- The report should contain informational methods of assessment and analysis such as interviews, direct observations, curriculum-based assessment, and diagnostic testing.
The report must include a history of the candidate’s educational performance documenting the nature of school difficulties and the history of prior accommodations.  

The report must document cognitive discrepancies, deficient information and language processing, or a discrepancy between IQ and achievement that is consistent with current concepts of learning disabilities.  The candidate’s profile of strengths and weaknesses must provide a rationale for the accommodations that are recommended.

Requirements for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

The diagnostic evaluation should involve one or more qualified professionals (e.g., physician, psychologist, neuropsychologist, learning specialist) and include historical, observational, medical, neuropsychological, and educational testing information.

The report should document the nature of school difficulties and history of prior accommodations.

The report should include a summary of clinical interviews, observations, and information from the candidate.

Each test must be listed and results must be reported using standard scores and/or percentiles.

Review of Documentation

Each application is carefully reviewed before accommodations are provided.  The board reserves the right, at its own expense, to have the candidate’s documentation reviewed by an expert and such expert may perform an independent assessment of the candidate.  If the board does not find appropriate and sufficient evidence on which to base a decision to grant accommodations, the candidate will be informed of the need for additional information.

All information submitted by a candidate for the purpose of requesting an accommodation shall remain confidential and shall only by used by the ABPMR to determine if the candidate has a covered disability and if there is an accommodation that can be provided to the candidate.

Any candidate whose request for accommodations is denied may choose to follow the steps outlined in the ABPMR Appeals Policy (EXPOL 4.002).
Application for Accommodations

This form must be completed by individuals requesting special accommodations for examination administration under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Forms and supporting documentation must be postmarked and mailed to the ABPMR within 30 days of the date of initial submission of the examination application. All applications must be accompanied by the supporting documentation described in the ABPMR Procedures for Requesting Accommodations under the ADA.

Name: ___________________________ Date of birth: ___________________________

Examination for which you are requesting accommodations:

☐ Part I ☐ Part II ☐ Maintenance of Certification

☐ Brain Injury Medicine ☐ Hospice/Palliative Med ☐ SCI Medicine

☐ Neuromuscular Med ☐ Sports Medicine

☐ Pain Medicine

Disability:

☐ hearing disability ☐ learning disability ☐ chronic health problem

☐ visual disability ☐ physical disability ☐ temporary injury

☐ other (please specify) ___________________________

Prior test accommodations you have received:

☐ physician licensure exams (eg, NBME, FLEX, USMLE) month/year _____________

☐ Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) month/year _____________

☐ other (eg, SAT, ACT) month/year _____________

Briefly describe prior educational accommodations you have received:

☐ residency training ___________________________________________

☐ medical school ____________________________________________

☐ other (eg, college, K-12) ______________________________________

What type of accommodation do you request for the ABPMR examination? ________________

I attest that the provided information is accurate. I understand that the ABPMR may ask clarifying questions of me in order to determine reasonable and feasible accommodations. I understand that the ABPMR will not contact my physician(s) unless it is determined to be necessary. In that case, my consent would be requested via an information release form.

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
Interrupted Computer-Based Examinations Policy

If an ABPMR computer-based examination is interrupted due to situations such as emergency evacuation, natural disaster, or power outages, it may be necessary to interrupt or stop the examination. If the interruption is short, the remaining portion of the examination may continue. If the interruption prevents the examination from continuing, the examination will be cancelled and/or rescheduled at the discretion of the ABPMR.

The ABPMR reserves the right to cancel an examination if holding an examination would put candidates, test center staff, or the security of the examination at risk. The ABPMR and the testing vendor will make every attempt to reschedule the cancelled examination at the earliest possible time.

Candidates will not be compensated for travel costs to the examination, loss of time, loss of certification benefits, or any other incurred costs by the candidate.
**Interrupted Part II (Oral) Examination Policy**

If the ABPMR Part II (Oral) Examination is interrupted due to situations such as emergency evacuation, natural disaster, or power outages, it may be necessary to interrupt or stop the examination. If the interruption is short, the remaining portion of the examination may continue. If the interruption prevents the examination from continuing, the examination will be cancelled and/or rescheduled at the discretion of the ABPMR.

The ABPMR reserves the right to cancel an examination if holding an examination would put candidates, examiners, staff, or the security of the examination at risk. The ABPMR will make every attempt to reschedule the cancelled examination at the earliest possible time. Candidates will not be compensated for travel costs to the examination, loss of time, loss of certification benefits, or any other incurred costs.

**Process**

Candidates will
- be notified by the ABPMR as soon as possible regarding the new examination date
- apply online at www.abpmr.org to reschedule the Part II Examination
- receive a carry-over of the exam fees
- receive an admission card with date and time of the rescheduled examination
Board Eligibility Policy

Introduction
In September 2011, the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Board of Directors established that each member board must implement a policy outlining the use of a board eligibility status to be effective January 1, 2012. Under the new ABMS policy, the board eligible period may be defined by an ABMS member board as no fewer than three (3) and no more than seven (7) years following the successful completion of accredited training.

A defined status of “board eligibility” tightens the connection between training and certification. It is not in the best interests of the medical specialty, the credentialing community, patients, or the public for the “board eligibility” status to continue indefinitely. The status of “board eligibility” is not valid any time after initial certification is achieved.

Physicians who completed training prior to January 1, 2012
Physicians who completed training prior to January 1, 2012, must successfully complete the initial certification process and become board certified by December 31, 2019.

Physicians who complete residency training on January 1, 2012, and beyond
Physicians who complete residency training on January 1, 2012, and thereafter, have seven calendar years (after satisfactory completion of residency training) to successfully complete the initial certification process and become board certified.

After the period of board eligibility has expired, candidates who have not successfully completed the initial board certification process can no longer identify themselves as board eligible. Following expiration of the board eligible period, physicians

- must cease and desist from making any representations of board eligibility
- are no longer eligible for certification without first completing all re-entry requirements as defined by the ABPMR
- will no longer be reported as “board eligible” by the ABPMR

Exceptions to the Board Eligibility Period
The extension of eligibility shall not extend beyond a period of ten years from the satisfactory completion of ACGME–accredited physical medicine and rehabilitation residency training, however:

- The board eligibility period can be extended by documented successful completion of an additional year of PM&R training in an institution with an ACGME–accredited PM&R residency program (i.e., ACGME accredited or non-accredited PM&R fellowship).
- In circumstances such that a physician passes the Part I Examination in the final year of their board eligibility, the board eligibility period will be automatically extended by no longer than two calendar years.
Subspecialty Board Eligibility Policy

Introduction
In January 2012, the ABPMR announced primary board certification eligibility limits (see policy 4.008). In January 2014, the ABPMR adopted similar eligibility limits for subspecialty exams. The time limits tighten the connection between concentrated practice, training, and certification.

Policy
This policy defines a time limit by which a physician must successfully apply for and pass a subspecialty certification examination. This policy is applicable to physicians who qualify for a subspecialty examination by way of ACGME–accredited training and to physicians who were previously admissible to a subspecialty examination by way of practice or non-accredited training. The policy affects different candidates in different ways as described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Eligibility Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physicians who finished ACGME–accredited fellowship training on 1/1/2014 and beyond</td>
<td>7 calendar years after the completion of fellowship training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians who finished ACGME–accredited fellowship training prior to 1/1/2014</td>
<td>Through 12/31/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians who were admissible on 1/1/2014 and beyond under temporary criteria</td>
<td>Next 2 administrations beyond the expiration of temporary criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians who were previously admissible under temporary criteria prior to 1/1/2014</td>
<td>Through 12/31/2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the period of subspecialty board eligibility has expired, candidates who have not successfully completed the corresponding subspecialty examination are no longer eligible to apply for the subspecialty examination. Per rules from the American Board of Anesthesiology, pain medicine applicants may not reapply under previous temporary application criteria.
Refunds and Forfeiture of Fees

This policy is applicable for all ABPMR examinations. This policy contains information on the breakdown of total fees paid at the time of application; steps to initiate a request to withdraw an examination application; the portion of the total fees paid that are refundable, nonrefundable, or eligible for carryover based on when the applicant withdraws an application; and using a fee carryover.

Breakdown of total fees paid at time of application
The total fees paid for an examination include:

• Examination fee
• Processing fee
• Late fee (if applicable)

The processing fee and the late fee (if paid) are nonrefundable and may not be carried over to a future examination. Refer to the ABPMR Examination Calendar to see the fee breakdown for each examination type.

Active Duty Provision
Applicants for ABPMR examinations who are deployed, redeployed, or called to active military duty at a time that conflicts with available examination dates may receive a carryover of all fees paid. See sections “Fee carryovers” and “Time frame for using a fee carryover” below for more information. Physicians must notify the ABPMR office in writing of such circumstances.

Withdrawing an application
The applicant must initiate a request to withdraw an application by phone (507-282-1776) or by email (office@abpmr.org). The ABPMR will provide written confirmation of receipt of the withdrawal request and, if applicable, information on the partial refund or the fee carryover. If an applicant does not receive written confirmation of their request to withdraw an application, the applicant is responsible for confirming it was received by the ABPMR. A request to withdraw from an examination cannot be processed by the testing center.

Admission eligibility (admissibility) to the current examination is immediately revoked once intent to withdraw is confirmed by the ABPMR. The corresponding seat appointment will be cancelled at the same time that the ABPMR confirms that the application is withdrawn.

Determining the amount of refund or carryover based on when the applicant withdraws an application
As defined below, partial refunds or fee carryovers are based on the application status at the time the applicant withdraws. Refer to the ABPMR Examination Calendar to see the final admissibility date for each examination type.

If an applicant is declared not admissible
If an applicant is declared not admissible to an examination, the examination fee will be refunded by the original payment method. The ABPMR does not assume responsibility for notifying an applicant of inadmissibility due to an incomplete application or insufficient qualifications.
If an applicant withdraws before admissibility
If an applicant withdraws an application prior to the final admissibility date, the applicant may choose to have the examination fee refunded by the original payment method or accept a fee carryover. Only the examination fee is eligible for refund or carryover. All other fees paid may not be carried over.

If an applicant withdraws after admissibility and ten business days prior to the scheduled examination
If an applicant withdraws after the final admissibility date and at least ten business days prior to the scheduled examination, then a fee carryover may be issued to the applicant. Only the examination fee is eligible for carryover.

If an applicant withdraws less than ten business days prior to the scheduled examination
If an applicant withdraws less than ten business days prior to the scheduled examination, no refund or carryover of the examination fee is available.

Fee carryovers
Fee carryovers are subject to the following conditions:

- If a fee carryover is authorized, the applicant will be required to complete an online form to formally accept the carryover and related conditions. The fee carryover is null and void if it is not formally accepted online.
- The fee carryover is only available for the same examination type. At the time that an examination application is resubmitted, any available carryover will automatically be applied. The applicant is responsible for paying the processing fee and, if applicable, the late fee.
- A carryover may only be used once. Funds carried over and applied towards an exam cannot be carried over to a subsequent exam.
- A carryover is not a guarantee of future exam eligibility. A carryover is null and void in the case of ineligibility to an examination.
- Fee carryovers must be used within a certain time frame.
  - For examinations offered once a year or once every other year, the fee carryover must be used at the next administration.
  - For examinations with two administrations per year, the fee carryover must be used at one of the next two administrations. Refer to the ABPMR Examinations Calendar to determine the frequency of examination administrations.
  - The fee carryover is null and void if it is not used within the specified timeframe.
J-1 Visa Policy

Effective July 1, 2003, the US Department of State and the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) formally recognized J-1 Visa sponsorship for non-standard programs if they meet published criteria including a letter of support from the appropriate American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) specialty board.

The American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation’s (ABPMR) support for non-standard training requires programs to submit a

- detailed description of the program specifying the educational objectives, core curriculum, nature of supervision, method of evaluation, and duration of the program (including start date and end date)
- separate letter of support from the department chair, if different than the program director

Additionally, the following supporting documentation is required:

- A letter from the applicant’s home country confirming the need for the specific subspecialty training
- Evidence of compliance with requirements for J-1 Visa
- Letters from both the applicant and the program director stating the profound intention of the applicant to return to their home country and not work in the US for at least two years following completion of training unless a waiver is obtained from the US Department of State
- Evidence that the unaccredited fellowship is affiliated with an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)–accredited program

If approved, the ABPMR will send a letter of support to ECFMG for use in their approval process. Letters of support are only provided to applicants who are in compliance with the US Department of State J-1 Visa Policy.
International Rotations Policy

Thirty-six (36) months of training in the specialty of physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) is required. If any proposed elective rotation, US or international, is within the PM&R curriculum, supported by the program director and home institution Graduate Medical Education (GME) office, and is approved through existing PM&R Residency Review Committee (RRC) policies, it will be acceptable to the ABPMR. If the rotation does not fulfill those requirements, the resident may use whatever time is available as a "not-for-credit" rotation.

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Program Requirements for Residency Education in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation include the following:

- Four years of graduate medical education are necessary to complete training for a physician seeking specialization in this field, three years of which must be physical medicine and rehabilitation training.
- Of these three years, no more than six months can be elective.
- No more than one month of this elective time may be taken in a non-ACGME-accredited program unless prior approval is given by the RRC.
Absence from Training

A candidate must not be absent from residency or fellowship training for more than six weeks (30 working days) annually. Regardless of institutional policies regarding absences, any leave time beyond six weeks would need to be made up by arrangement with the program director. “Leave time” is defined as sick leave, vacation, maternity or paternity leave. A candidate may not accumulate leave time or vacation to reduce the overall duration of training.
Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Continuous Participation Policy

Diplomates’ MOC participation status, as defined below, will be available to the public when using the searchable “Verify a Physician’s Certification” tool on the ABPMR website. It will also be reported to the ABMS and publicly available through their “Is Your Doctor Certified?” search tool.

MOC participation status definitions for time-limited certificate holders are as follows:

1. **Meeting MOC Requirements**
   - Diplomate is actively participating in the MOC program by making continuous progress on requirements, including continuing medical education (CME), self-assessments, and annual fees.

2. **Not Meeting MOC Requirements**
   By meeting one of the two criteria listed below, a diplomate may be declared as “Not Meeting MOC Requirements”:
   - Time-limited certificate issued before 2012:
     Diplomate is one or more years behind on annual fee payments and/or CME reporting.
   - Time-limited certificate issued in 2012 or beyond:
     Diplomate has not completed all appropriate five-year milestones by the due date and/or one or more years behind on annual fee payments. The status of “Not Meeting MOC Requirements” does not affect board certification status; however, it does limit access to ABPMR Online Services.

A reinstatement fee is applied to any nonparticipant who wishes to resume participation in MOC.

When individuals who were making continuous progress encounter problems with CME or other requirements due to unforeseen circumstances, such as a prolonged illness, exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Diplomates must notify the ABPMR office in writing of such circumstances.

**Active Duty Provision**
ABPMR diplomates who are deployed, redeployed, or called to active military duty during participation in their MOC cycle may be granted an exception to, or flexibility in, completing their MOC requirements. Physicians must notify the ABPMR office in writing of such circumstances.
Diplomates with Lifetime Certificates
Participation in Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Policy

1. Diplomates who hold a **lifetime** certificate may wish to participate in part, or all, of the ABPMR MOC program. Those who participate will not jeopardize the status of their permanent certificate.

2. Diplomates who hold a lifetime certificate may have a need or desire to participate in the computer-based MOC Examination. Should they do so, they will receive ABPMR acknowledgment that they have participated in a portion of the MOC program (i.e., taken the examination). They will receive notice as to whether they have passed or failed the examination. They will be charged a registration-processing fee and an examination fee.

3. Diplomates who hold a lifetime certificate may have a need or desire to participate in the entire ABPMR MOC program. Should they do so, they will be subject to all ABPMR MOC process requirements and fees. They will receive ABPMR acknowledgment regarding their success/failure in completing the entire process.
Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Activity Reciprocity Policy

The American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) recognizes that all American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) member boards’ Maintenance of Certification (MOC) programs were created based on guidelines and criteria developed by the ABMS. Therefore, ABPMR diplomates who are participating in the MOC program of another ABMS member board (e.g., American Board of Pediatrics), may receive ABPMR MOC credit for self-assessments and/or practice performance projects completed through that ABMS member board by providing verification that they have met the corresponding MOC requirements of that board.

The ABPMR will continue to require completion of the ABPMR MOC licensure, continuing medical education (CME), examination, and annual fee requirements.

Active Duty Provision
ABPMR diplomates who are deployed, redeployed, or called to active military duty during participation in their MOC cycle may be granted credit towards Parts II and IV for actives completed during active duty status. Physicians must notify the ABPMR office in writing of such circumstances.
Clinical Activity Status Policy

1. Clinically active status is defined as any amount of direct and/or consultative patient care that has been provided in the preceding 24 months.

2. Clinically inactive status is defined as no direct and/or consultative patient care that has been provided in the past 24 months.

3. It should be the responsibility of the individual diplomate to inform the ABPMR of changes in clinical activity status that relate to any/all certificates held by that diplomate. The public will be informed that this information is self-reported. In addition, the ABPMR will routinely, on a regular basis, query certificate holders about their clinical activity status. If information regarding clinical activity status cannot be determined, this will be so stated in public reporting.

4. With respect to re-entry, those physicians who have been clinically inactive but wish to reacquire active certification status must meet the re-entry criteria established by the ABPMR.

5. With respect to public reporting, the ABPMR may, as an alternative to using the terms clinically active and clinically inactive, indicate whether the diplomate is or is not currently engaged in patient care activities.
Clinical Activity Re-entry Policy

In order to indicate a physician’s participation in patient care activities, the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) has defined terms associated with a physician’s clinical activity status. Following the recommendations of the ABMS Maintenance of Certification Task Force, a designation of “clinically active” refers to any amount of direct and/or consultative patient care that a physician has provided in the preceding 24 months. “Clinically inactive” describes a physician who has provided no direct and/or consultative patient care in the past 24 months. Clinical activity status is self-reported by the diplomate to the appropriate certifying board(s) and member boards are responsible for transmitting this data to the ABMS for the purpose of making the information available to the public.

Diplomates who have been clinically inactive, defined as having provided no direct and/or consultative patient care in the past 24 months, and intend to become clinically active, must notify the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) in writing. The notification involves the completion of an online form, which includes

- statement of intent to resume clinically active status
- date of notification
- date for resuming active status
- name and address where practice is being resumed
- description of activities or responsibilities that will be associated with the clinically active status change

Self-reported clinically active/inactive information is publicly available and is submitted by the ABPMR to the ABMS.
Revocation or Suspension of Certificate

All certificates issued by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) are subject to revocation or suspension. The ABPMR will not suspend or revoke a diplomate's certification without giving the diplomate prior notice and an opportunity to respond. The ABPMR may report any suspension or revocation of certification to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), state medical licensing board(s), and any related organization that the ABPMR deems appropriate.

The ABPMR may, at its discretion, revoke or suspend certification for due cause. Examples of such due cause include, but are not limited to:

- misstatement or omission of fact in the application for such certificate or otherwise, or to any third party concerning the diplomate's certification status
- failure to maintain moral, ethical, or professional behavior satisfactory to the ABPMR or engaging in misconduct that adversely affects professional competence or integrity
- conviction of a felony, related or not related to the practice of medicine, resulting in incarceration or probation in lieu of incarceration, or the entry of a guilty, nolo contendere plea, or an Alford plea, or deferred adjudication without expungement
- violation of the ABPMR Examination Irregularity Policy, Nondisclosure Policy, and Cooperation Agreement
- failure to satisfy the MOC requirements
- a medical license that is not in compliance with the ABPMR Licensure Policy

Appeal

To appeal a revocation or suspension, refer to the ABPMR Appeals Policy:

- Section 5: Examination Irregularity/Revocation, Suspension, or Lapse of Certificate
- Section 6: Oral Hearing Appeal
Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Reinstatement Policy for Primary Time-Limited Certification

Expired Certifications
American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) time-limited certification will expire if all maintenance of certification (MOC) requirements are not satisfactorily completed by the end of a diplomate’s MOC cycle.

The requirements include:
- taking and passing the primary physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) MOC Examination or, for pediatric rehabilitation medicine (PRM) subspecialty certified diplomates only, the PRM Examination (through 2018)
- being up-to-date on all applicable MOC requirements
- paying any outstanding MOC fees in effect at the time

Diplomates who hold an expired certificate are no longer reported in the “Verify a Physician’s Certification” search tool on the ABPMR website. In addition, the ABPMR notifies the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) of changes in diplomate status; such information is publicly available through the ABMS website.

Reinstatement Policy
Former diplomates whose time-limited certification has expired under this policy may reinstate certification by completing any outstanding MOC requirements in effect at the time of reinstatement.

1. A grace period may be given for a lapse of up to 60 days.
2. For a lapse of more than 60 days but less than six months, in order to be reinstated, individuals must:
   - pay the reinstatement fee
   - complete all outstanding requirements
3. For a lapse of more than six months and less than one year, in order to be reinstated, individuals must:
   - pay the reinstatement fee
   - complete all MOC requirements, including any additional requirements applicable at the time the final requirement is completed
4. For a lapse of more than one year and less than 10 years, in order to be reinstated, individuals must:
   - pay any outstanding MOC fees
   - complete all MOC requirements, including any additional requirements applicable at the time the final requirement is completed
   - take and pass the primary PM&R MOC Examination within four years of the reinstatement date; those certified in pediatric rehabilitation medicine can substitute the PRM Examination for the primary MOC Examination through 2018.
   
   If the lapse in certification is greater than two years, individuals must provide adequate documentation of continued clinical activity.
5. For a lapse of greater than or equal to 10 years, individuals must complete the initial (original) certification process (Parts I and II of the ABPMR initial certification process).

Upon successful completion of all MOC requirements as determined by the ABPMR, diplomates will begin a new certification cycle for their primary PM&R certificate.
Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Reinstatement Policy for Subspecialty Certification

Expired Certifications
American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) time-limited subspecialty certification will expire if all maintenance of certification (MOC) requirements are not satisfactorily completed by the end of a diplomate’s MOC cycle.

The requirements include
- taking and passing the respective MOC Examination(s)
- being up-to-date on all applicable MOC requirements
- paying any outstanding MOC fees in effect at the time

Diplomates who hold an expired certificate are no longer reported in the “Verify a Physician’s Certification” search tool on the ABPMR website. In addition, the ABPMR notifies the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) of changes in diplomate status; such information is publicly available through the ABMS website.

Reinstatement Policy
If a diplomate’s subspecialty certificate expires, the physician has a maximum of three years to pay any outstanding MOC fees and complete all applicable MOC requirements, including any additional requirements in place at the time the final requirement is completed, and become reinstated.

In order to complete the exam requirement beyond the three-year period, the physician must also meet the application requirements in effect at the time of examination application (ie, complete an ACGME-accredited fellowship).

Upon successful completion of all MOC requirements as determined by the ABPMR, diplomates will either resume their current or begin a new subspecialty certification cycle.
Retirement Status Change Policy

Retirement and ABPMR Board Certification:

The ABPMR recognizes the commitment and service that each board-certified physician demonstrates over the course of their career. Further, the ABPMR acknowledges that a physician may make a personal decision to cease professional activities. A physician in such a circumstance may wish to formally notify the board of their retirement and request a change to their certification status.

Impact of Retirement on ABPMR Board Certification:

A physician with a “retired” status will be displayed on the online verification tool at www.abpmr.org. The primary source to verify a physician’s status is the online verification tool at www.abpmr.org. Status information is provided to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and partners as described in the ABPMR Privacy Policy.

Physicians with a retired status will not be required to participate in the ABPMR MOC Program.

Requesting a Status Change:

A physician may request a status change by logging into their account and completing the “Retirement Status Request Form.” The request will be verified and confirmed by ABPMR. If applicable, all MOC requirements must be current at the time of the request. When a physician applies for Retired status, they must hold an active certificate and must attest that they are not engaged in direct and/or consultative patient care. The physician’s medical license must be clear of any ongoing disciplinary action at the time of the request. Retirement status cannot be granted in lieu of revocation of board certification or other disciplinary action. Physicians holding retired status must either meet the ABPMR Licensure Policy or have no active medical licensure.

Physicians who wish to reinstatate their board certification status after receiving a confirmed retired status from the ABPMR will need to follow the steps outlined in the ABPMR Reinstatement Policy.
Reinstatement Policy for Primary Lifetime Certification

Following revocation, a former diplomate may request a review of their current medical license status and performance for the purpose of reinstatement of certification.

At its discretion, the Board may reinstate the certificate or issue a new time-limited certificate to former lifetime diplomates whose certification has been revoked under the Revocation or Suspension of Certificate policy.
Option for Time-Limited ABPMR Diplomates to Maintain Subspecialty Certification Only

Diplomates who hold time-limited, primary physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) certification and any subspecialty certification(s) through the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) have the option to drop their primary PM&R certification and maintain their subspecialty certification(s) only. Participation in maintenance of certification (MOC) for the subspecialty certificate(s) is required.

Before dropping primary PM&R certification, diplomates must meet the following eligibility criteria by December 31st of the last year of their MOC cycle:

- Hold time-limited primary PM&R certification (certified in 1993 or after)
- Hold at least one current ABPMR subspecialty certification
- Be in the final year of the primary MOC cycle
- Have completed all requirements in MOC Parts I, II, and IV
- Be current on all MOC fees

Impacts of Dropping Primary PM&R Certification

The ABPMR encourages all diplomates to carefully investigate and weigh the potential consequences of dropping primary certification before making their decision. These consequences include but are not limited to:

- A diplomate with certification in a subspecialty only may no longer state or imply, verbally or in writing, that he/she is board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation. All advertising, CVs, directory listings, business cards, signature lines, etc will need to be corrected immediately.
- In response to any requests regarding the diplomate’s PM&R certification status, the ABPMR and the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) will verify that status as “not certified.”
- Various external stakeholders (including but not limited to state licensing boards, medical staff, and insurance panels) may require maintenance of primary certification and there may be negative effects of dropping this certification. All contracts should be reviewed to see if primary certification is required.
- Primary certification in PM&R is required in order to become additionally certified in another subspecialty offered by the ABPMR.
- A diplomate with subspecialty certification only may not volunteer for the ABPMR as an examiner or item writer for the Part I or Part II Examinations (this does not apply to item writers or associate members for subspecialty examinations).

Attestation Requirement

The initial step in dropping primary certification is to complete the ABPMR’s Intent to Drop Primary Certification attestation form. The link to this online form will become available to eligible diplomates in the final year of their MOC cycle by logging into the My MOC Status page of the secure Online Services section on the ABPMR website at www.abpmr.org. The form must be completed, signed, and returned to the ABPMR by December 31st of the year in which a diplomate is eligible to drop.
This is a copy of the attestation form. If you choose to drop your primary PM&R certification, you will need to electronically submit the actual attestation form by logging into your My MOC Status page at www.abpmr.org.

Intent to Drop Primary Certification Attestation

Effect on Certification Status
I am aware that I can no longer state or imply, verbally or in writing, that I am board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) and I agree to immediately correct all advertising, CVs, directory listings, business cards, signature lines, etc. I understand that in response to any requests regarding my primary PM&R certification status, the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) and the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) will verify my status as “not certified.”

Subspecialty MOC Requirements in Effect
I understand that in dropping my primary certification, I am still responsible to fulfill all maintenance of certification (MOC) requirements (Parts I-IV) to maintain my subspecialty certification.

Impact on Practice
I understand that the ABPMR has encouraged me to investigate and carefully review the policies of various external stakeholders (including but not limited to my state licensing board, medical staff, and insurance panels) and any contracts that I may be a party to in an effort to ensure that dropping my primary PM&R certification will not have a negative impact on me, my practice, or these other entities.

Impact on Future Subspecialty Certification
I am aware that I must have primary PM&R certification in order to become certified in any additional subspecialty offered by the ABPMR.

Impact on Volunteer Participation
I understand that I must maintain primary PM&R certification in order to volunteer as an examiner or item writer for the Part I or Part II Examinations. This does not apply to item writers or associate members for subspecialty examinations.

Regaining Primary Certification
I understand that I must comply with the ABPMR policies in effect at the time that I seek to regain primary PM&R certification. See Regaining Certification for Previously Dropped Primary PM&R Certification policy.

Compliance with Policy Requirements
I agree that the ABPMR is not liable for any consequences, seen or unforeseen, of my choice to drop my primary PM&R certification.

I understand that all requirements to drop primary PM&R certification must be met by December 31st of this year or my primary PM&R certification will expire, causing my subspecialty certification(s) to also expire.
Requirement to Participate in MOC for all ABPMR Diplomates with Non-Time-Limited ("lifetime") Primary Certification and Subspecialty Certification

All American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) diplomates with non-time-limited ("lifetime") primary certificates who also hold ABPMR subspecialty certificates, are required to participate in parts I-IV of the ABPMR Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program to maintain their subspecialty certification(s).

For each diplomate, this requirement takes effect in the first year of the next ABPMR subspecialty certification cycle. For those with multiple ABPMR subspecialty certificates, the policy will take effect with the earliest-expiring ABPMR subspecialty certificate. Diplomates will automatically be entered into the MOC Program in place at the time of their subspecialty recertification.

Participation or nonparticipation in the MOC Program will have no impact on non-time-limited primary certification; however, failure to meet the established deadlines will result in revocation of the subspecialty certificate(s). See the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Reinstatement for Subspecialty Certification Policy.
Requirement to Participate in MOC for Non–PM&R, Non-Time-Limited ("lifelong") Primary Certified Physicians with ABPMR Subspecialty

All physicians with American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) subspecialty certification who hold non–physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R), non-time-limited ("lifelong") primary certification by an American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) board other than the ABPMR, are required to participate in maintenance of certification (MOC). For each physician, this requirement takes effect in the first year of the next ABPMR subspecialty certification cycle. For those with multiple ABPMR subspecialty certificates, the policy will take effect with the earliest-expiring ABPMR subspecialty certificate.

To maintain their subspecialty certification(s), the physician can choose to participate in MOC through his or her primary certification board or through the ABPMR. If participating in MOC through another ABMS board, verification of status will occur on an annual basis and physicians are responsible for reporting any change in status to the ABPMR.

Failure to meet the MOC requirements by the established deadlines will result in revocation of the subspecialty certificate(s). See the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Reinstatement for Subspecialty Certification Policy.
Requirement to Maintain Primary Certification for Non–PMR, Time-Limited Primary Certified Physicians who hold an ABPMR Subspecialty

All physicians with American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) subspecialty certificate(s) who hold time-limited primary certification through an American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) member board other than the ABPMR are required to maintain their primary certification through that board.

Verification of valid primary certification and ongoing participation in MOC will occur on an annual basis. Physicians are responsible for reporting any change in status to the ABPMR. Should the verification process indicate that primary certification is no longer valid, the ABPMR will send notice granting 60 days to regain primary certification or the subspecialty certification status will be changed to “certified, not meeting MOC requirements”.

The primary certification must be reinstated no later than December 31st of the current year. Failure to regain primary certification by the established deadlines will result in revocation of the subspecialty certificate(s) and a $500 reinstatement fee will be assessed. See the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Reinstatement for Subspecialty Certification Policy.

The ABPMR reserves the right to take similar action if a physician is not participating in their primary certification board’s MOC program.
Regaining Certification for Previously Dropped Primary PM&R Certification

The American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (ABPMR) diplomates who previously completed the process of dropping primary physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) certification may regain that certification subject to certain conditions, which may be amended from time to time.

Criteria for regaining primary PM&R certification include:
- taking and passing a current primary PM&R MOC Examination (Part III)
- being up-to-date on all other MOC requirements (Parts I, II, IV)
- paying any outstanding MOC fees in effect at the time

Upon regaining certification, diplomates will begin a new certification cycle for their primary PM&R certificate.