



ABMS Board Certification Credentials Profile Display of Board Certification and MOC Participation FAQ

Updated January 2019

The *ABMS Board Certification Credentials Profile* includes information about a physician's board certification and MOC participation status. This document provides an overview for how the status information is displayed.

What does being “board certified” mean?

Physicians seek board certification from an ABMS Member Board to differentiate themselves by demonstrating that they have the specialized knowledge and clinical judgment to provide safe, quality patient care. Board certification provides public confirmation that a physician meets specific specialty standards and works to improve their practice throughout their career.

How is certification status displayed in the ABMS Board Certification Credentials Profile?

The “Certification” display includes the status of all a physician's specialty (and subspecialty, if any) certificates from an ABMS Member Board. For each certificate listed, the status is shown as either “certified” or “not certified”.

What does “participating in MOC” mean?

Participating in MOC means that a physician is committed to and engaged in the assessment and learning activities required by his or her certifying board(s) to improve the effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of their practices. The physician's certifying board(s) determines whether or not a physician is in compliance.

How is MOC participation displayed in the ABMS Board Certification Credentials Profile?

The “Participating in Maintenance of Certification (MOC)” display includes the status of all a physician's specialty (and subspecialty, if any) certificates from an ABMS Member Board. For each certificate listed, either “Yes”, “No” or “Not Required” is shown to indicate status.

What does each of the status designations in the Profile mean?

- **“Yes” status** indicates the physician is engaged in the MOC assessment and learning activities required by his or her certifying Member Board(s).
- **“No” status** may be listed due to a variety of reasons. For example, a physician may have chosen not to participate in MOC. Or, the physician may be participating, but not meeting the Member Board(s) MOC program requirements. More information is available from the particular ABMS Member Board.
- **“Not required” status** indicates that the physician became board certified before the Member Board established its MOC program and is therefore not required to participate. This is noted in a disclaimer at the bottom of the profile page.

What if the “participating in MOC” information is missing from the Profile?

If the participation status information is missing, the physician's certifying Member Board(s) has not made it available to ABMS. Examples of why the information has not been provided to ABMS could include technical issues, delays in confirming the MOC status of a board certified physician, or other factors specific to the physician. ABMS will display publicly whether that physician is participating in MOC as soon as it receives the information from his or her certifying board(s).



If a physician is not participating in MOC, does that mean they are not or cannot be certified?

Physicians with time-limited certificates from an ABMS Member Board who are not participating in MOC will remain board certified until the time on their certificate expires according to the certifying board's policy. The physician's Board Certification Credentials Profile will show "No" for Participating in MOC. The Profile also will indicate a certificate that has expired when that date has passed.

Physicians with board certifications from ABMS Member Boards that have eliminated end dates in favor of a Continuing MOC process could have the status of their certificate changed (according to board policy) if 1) he or she is not participating in MOC, 2) has exhausted any grace periods related to participation, and 3) is at the end of the cycle set by the Member Board.

With regard to physicians who have non-time limited certificates, participation in MOC is strongly encouraged by their certifying Member Boards. For more information, call the Member Board regarding their particular policy.

When does ABMS update the information in its certification database?

The information in the ABMS certification database is supplied by the Member Boards according to their established schedule. The database is refreshed daily, but occurs only after the information received from the Member Boards is thoroughly reviewed and verified by ABMS for completeness and accuracy. Once this process is complete, the information is incorporated into the database and made accessible through ABMS Solutions' products and ABMS licensee partners. The information is displayed within the *ABMS Board Certification Credentials Profile*, which is officially recognized as primary source documentation by the Joint Commission, NCQA, URAC and other key accrediting agencies.

- In the case of newly certified physicians, the certifying Member Board submits information within two weeks of when the physician is formally notified or the physician's certification status is publically displayed.
- Information about a physician's MOC status is provided by the certifying Member Board according to their established MOC cycle.
- Physicians also may make a request of their certifying Member Board to update personal information in their record, such as a name change or home or business address. The Member Board provides this information to ABMS.



What is an MOC reverification date and how is it used?

ABMS Member Boards that have eliminated certificate end dates recognize that some entities may still need a date to complete Primary Source Verification. To ensure accurate certification status, the Member Boards provide an annual reverification date. The physician certification status will only change once a year, unless a certificate is revoked for disciplinary reasons.

This table provides a summary of the ABMS Member Board time limited certificate end dates, duration time, and reverification date to help with the credentialing process.

ABMS MEMBER BOARD TIME LIMITED CERTIFICATES			
American Board of	Time Limited Certificates End Dates	Time Limited Certificates Duration	Annual MOC Reverification Date
Allergy and Immunology	12/31	10	
Anesthesiology	12/31	10	
Colon and Rectal Surgery	12/31	10	
Dermatology	12/31	10	
Emergency Medicine	12/31	10	
Family Medicine	12/31	Continuing*	2/15
Internal Medicine	12/31	Continuing*	4/1
Medical Genetics and Genomics	12/31	Continuing*	3/1
Neurological Surgery	12/31	10	
Nuclear Medicine	12/31	10	
Obstetrics and Gynecology	12/31	1,6	
Ophthalmology	12/31	10	
Orthopaedic Surgery	12/31	10	
Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery	12/31	10	
Pathology	12/31	Continuing*	1/31
Pediatrics	12/31	Continuing*	2/15
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	6/30, 11/30, 12/31	10	
Plastic Surgery	12/31	10	
Preventive Medicine	1/31	10	
Psychiatry and Neurology	12/31	Continuing*	3/1
Radiology	12/31	Continuing*	3/15
Surgery	12/31	Continuing*	
Thoracic Surgery	12/31	10	
Urology	2/28	10	

* Starting in 2012, these boards have no end dates to their certifications. Pathology transitioned their certifications in January 2016, Medical Genetics and Genomics transitioned in September 2017, and Surgery transitioned in 2018. To maintain certification from their specialty board, physicians must successfully complete specialty-specific requirements throughout their ongoing MOC cycles.