



**American Board of Preventive Medicine**  
A Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties

111 WEST JACKSON BLVD.,  
SUITE 1408  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604  
ABPM@THEABPM.ORG  
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April 10, 2023

**VIA EMAIL ONLY:** [rhawkins@abms.org](mailto:rhawkins@abms.org)

Ira Papel, MD  
Chair, ABMS COCERT  
C/O Richard Hawkins, MD  
President & CEO  
American Board of Medical Specialties  
353 North Clark Street, Suite 1400  
Chicago, IL 60654

Re: Name Change for Occupational Medicine Specialty

Dear Dr. Papel:

Pursuant to my letter dated March 9, 2023, to ABMS' CEO, Dr. Rich Hawkins, the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) is proposing to change the name of its certification in Occupational Medicine to Occupational & Environmental Medicine (OEM) in order to properly reflect the breadth and scope of OEM specialty as it has been practiced by the Diplomates of the ABPM over the last several decades. For convenience, I have enclosed my letter to Dr. Hawkins for your review and consideration.

By way of further background, it is important to note that as one of the first Member Boards of the ABMS, the ABPM has certified physicians in public health and preventive medicine since 1949. Over time, the ABPM and specialty names have evolved, and by 1957, ABPM offered specialty certification exams in three primary specialties: Public Health and General Preventive Medicine (PM), Occupational Medicine (OM) and Aerospace Medicine (AM). These three specialties have in common a core set of preventive principles and yet are three distinctly different disciplines of medicine. This is reflected in the ABPM's certification testing regime of inclusion of a set of "core" items on each of its specialty certification examinations which encompass the shared competencies of PM, OM and AM disciplines. Despite this design and clear differences between these specialties, the ACGME's long-standing combination of program requirements for all three specialties into a single document did not do justice to the distinctly different disciplines and in fact, resulted in a confusing combination of all three disciplines into a single specialty classification of "Preventive Medicine" on the ACGME website. This singular classification resulted in reduced visibility of ABPM's distinct primary specialties, limiting the choices for student physicians looking to match their interests to all the specialties offered by the ABPM.



By way of example, the Association of American Medical College’s (AAMC) Residency Explorer tool did not list the ABPM’s primary specialties for medical student awareness. Moreover, the AAMC Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) completely omitted PM specialties while the American Medical Association’s (AMA) Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database (FREIDA) listed PM but places all GPM/PH, OM and AM residencies together resulting in confusion as to what an applicant to a particular program was to expect in terms of training. Further, while the AMA’s Specialty Guide lists PM and OM there was no separate reference to AM but instead, AM could only be found under the PM nomenclature as if AM was a subspecialty of PM.

Based on the foregoing, the ABPM, began working collaboratively with its specialty societies and the ACGME to separate each of the ABPM’s specialties and, as part of that work to obtain the ACGME’s approval of a change in the name of the OM specialty to Occupational & Environmental Medicine (OEM). On or about June 11, 2022, the ACGME approved separation of the ABPM’s three specialty areas of practice and, as part of that favorable vote, also approved the name change from OM to OEM.

The aforementioned approval by the ACGME meant that effective July 1, 2022, that each of the ABPM’s specialties, AM, OEM and PM had their own set of Program Requirements, FAQs and Application Forms. Despite these changes, ACGME confirmed there were no significant changes to the curriculum or Core Competencies but that the changes, including the administrative change in the name from OM to OEM were made to properly reflect the differences in practice of each specialty. Now individuals are able to use the ACGME public site to search for programs in AM, OEM and PM (as opposed to the previous search functionality that required selecting “Preventive Medicine” and then a concentration from a sub-menu).

Based on the administrative nature of the name change from OM to OEM as approved and now fully implemented by the ACGME, and to remain consistent with the update as approved by the ACGME, the ABPM is seeking COCERT approval of the name change of its Occupational Medicine specialty to Occupational & Environmental Medicine. In furtherance of this administrative update, the ABPM has included letters of support from the following entities;

Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education

American College of Occupational & Environmental Medicine;

Association of Occupational & Environmental Clinics; and

Aerospace Medical Association



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As part of this request, I would emphasize the comments as included in the letter of support from the American College of Occupational & Environmental Medicine as specifically the following:

“As our name implies, “OEM” (Occupational and Environmental Medicine) has been the correct discipline’s nomenclature since 1992, when the college officially changed its name from the American College of Occupational Medicine to the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

This name change was instituted to reflect the increasing importance that environmental health played within workplaces and the significance of a preventive medicine platform regarding the environment. Physicians who practice in environmental medicine are engaged in research, clinical aspects, consulting, and policy interests in this expanding and changing health arena. As environmental exposures differ from occupational exposures in that they impact all segments of the population, the college and the discipline have now expanded to address these environmental health issues.

Please note that the requested change is in concert with the recent ACGME change, which will bring consistency across all regulatory entities. Additionally, the name change will meet the contemporary needs of the specialists who practice OEM with a focus on patient care.”

Lastly, the ABPM does not anticipate any effect on the practice of ABPM Certified specialists in OEM nor does the ABPM anticipate any negative effect on the practice of other specialists or subspecialists certified by any of the other ABMS Member Boards.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and please do not hesitate to call or email me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Ondrula, JD  
Executive Director

cc: Wendy E. Braund, MD, MPH, MEd, FACPM  
ABPM Board Chair

Jeffrey L. Levin, MD, DrPH  
ABPM Vice-Chair, Occupational & Environmental Medicine

Paul Lawlor  
ABMS, Manager Certification Programs & Standards



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March 9, 2023

**VIA EMAIL ONLY:** [rhawkins@abms.org](mailto:rhawkins@abms.org)

Richard Hawkins, MD  
President & CEO  
American Board of Medical Specialties  
353 North Clark Street, Suite 1400  
Chicago, IL 60654

Re: Name Change for Occupational Medicine Specialty

Dear Rich:

Please accept this correspondence as the American Board of Preventive Medicine's (ABPM) formal request for a name change for the Specialty of Occupational Medicine. The proposed name is Occupational and Environmental Medicine and is being requested in order to properly reflect the breadth of the Specialty as it has been practiced by the Diplomates of the ABPM over the last several decades. The full proposal will be submitted to you on or before the COCERT deadline of July 28, 2023.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and please do not hesitate to call or email me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Ondrula, JD  
Executive Director

cc: Wendy E. Braund, MD, MPH, MEd, FACPM  
ABPM Board Chair

Jeffrey L. Levin, MD, DrPH  
ABPM Vice-Chair, Occupational & Environmental Medicine

Mia Katzenberger  
ABPM Credentialing Coordinator

Paul Lawlor  
ABMS, Manager Certification Programs & Standards



March 21, 2023

Richard Hawkins, MD  
President & CEO  
American Board of Medical Specialties  
353 North Clark Street, Suite 1400  
Chicago, IL 60654

Re: Support for specialty name change to Occupational and Environmental Medicine

Dear Dr Hawkins:

The Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics (AOEC) enthusiastically supports the change of specialty name from Occupational Medicine to Occupational and Environmental Medicine (OEM). AOEC has long recognized the integrative nature of practice in these two areas, specifically that the history, knowledge base, clinical skills, and sources of expertise in occupational and environmental medicine are intertwined and reinforce each other. The recent decision by the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) to designate the specialty as OEM is the most current example of this recognition that the two areas are truly inseparable from each other in practice. Both workers and the public at large will benefit from the increased expertise of practitioners with a deep knowledge of both the workplace and the ambient environment.

Established in 1987, AOEC represents a network of more than 50 clinics in 24 US states and two Canadian provinces, all committed to improving the practice of occupational and environmental medicine through information sharing and collaborative research. All the major university-based training sites for OEM are represented in AOEC's membership. From the outset, the organization has integrated environmental health practice and training into the specialty and assisted its member clinics with medical and administrative responses to both occupational and environmental health concerns. AOEC's mission is to facilitate the prevention and treatment of occupational and environmental illnesses and injuries through collaborative reporting, investigation, and encouragement of high-quality clinical services for people with occupational or environmental health problems. To these ends, we applaud the recent ACGME decision that incorporates environmental medicine training into the specialty, and we urge you to assist this effort, on behalf of our trainees and practitioners, through your approval of the requested change of name.

Thank you for your consideration and please let us know if we can provide any further information.

Sincerely yours,

Janie Gittleman  
Executive Director, AOEC

Kathy Fagan  
President, Board of Directors, AOEC

ASSOCIATION OF OCCUPATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CLINICS  
P.O. Box 91096 • Washington, DC 20090  
(202) 347-4976 • FAX (202) 347-4950 • e-mail: [aoccc@aoccc.org](mailto:aoccc@aoccc.org)



March 27, 2023

Richard Hawkins, MD  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
American Board of Medical Specialties

Dear Dr. Hawkins,

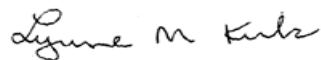
During the June 2022 meeting, the ACGME Board of Directors approved the request to designate aerospace medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, and public health and general preventive medicine as accredited specialties. This decision was made with consideration of all comments received during the public review and comment period during the spring of 2022, as well as support from the ACGME Review Committee for Preventive Medicine. These specialties were previously “areas of concentration” under the umbrella designation of preventive medicine.

The specialty designation represents an administrative change to the way preventive medicine programs are categorized and displayed in ACGME data systems. No significant changes were made to the content of the specialty program requirements of the three specialties. As a result of the designation of Occupational and Environmental Medicine as an accredited specialty, programs in this specialty received new program numbers in the Accreditation Data System. Additionally, the specialty now has its own set of Program Requirements, Frequently Asked Questions, and Application Form, all of which are posted on the ACGME website and reflect the specialty name of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

The Review Committee for Preventive Medicine continues to have oversight over all programs in all three specialties. The change to the title of the specialty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine was requested by that professional community to better reflect the clinical care provided by physicians in the specialty. The ACGME has standardized all communication and organization in its data systems to reflect the specialty name as Occupational and Environmental Medicine and keep consistent with the specialty name with the American Board of Preventive Medicine.

Should you have any further questions, please let us know.

Regards,



Lynne M. Kirk, MD, MACP  
Chief Accreditation Officer



Judith G. McKenzie, MD, MPH, FACP, FACPM, FACOEM  
Chair, Review Committee for Preventive Medicine



Cindy Y. Riyad, PhD  
Executive Director, Review Committee for Preventive Medicine



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF  
OCCUPATIONAL AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE

March 27, 2023

Christopher J Ondrula, JD  
Executive Director  
American Board of Preventive Medicine  
111 W Jackson Blvd., Suite 1408  
Chicago, IL 60604

RE: Formal Request of Nomenclature Change from Occupational Medicine to Occupational & Environmental Medicine to the ABMS

Dear Mr. Ondrula:

Please allow this letter to confirm support for the nomenclature change from “Occupational Medicine” to “Occupational and Environmental Medicine” as is being required by the American Board of Medical Specialties.

As you are aware, earlier the ACGME separated the ABPM’s three specialty designations and approved the name change to Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

As you are also aware, the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) is the specialty membership home for over 3,000 physicians who practice in the discipline.

As our name implies, “OEM” (Occupational and Environmental Medicine) has been the correct discipline’s nomenclature since 1992, when the college officially changed its name from the American College of Occupational Medicine to the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

This name change was instituted to reflect the increasing importance that environmental health played within workplaces and the significance of a preventive medicine platform regarding the environment. Physicians who practice in environmental medicine are engaged in research, clinical aspects, consulting, and policy interests in this expanding and changing health arena. As environmental exposures differ from occupational exposures in that they impact all segments of the population, the college and the discipline have now expanded to address these environmental health issues.



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF  
OCCUPATIONAL AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE

Please note that the requested change is in concert with the recent ACGME change, which will bring consistency across all regulatory entities. Additionally, the name change will meet the contemporary needs of the specialists who practice OEM with a focus on patient care.

This change is administrative only. It does NOT involve any change in the scope of practice, training standards, certification standards, continuing education standards, or expectations among professionals within the specialty or colleagues outside of it. It is simply a request to bring the nomenclature in line with what ACOEM has known for 31 years.

If you have any additional questions or need for clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Douglas W. Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Douglas W Martin MD FACOEM  
President 2022-2023



## *Aerospace Medical Association*

*President*  
**Susan E. Northrup, MD, MPH, FAsMA**  
Crystal City, Virginia



*Executive Director*  
**Jeffrey C. Sventek, MS, CAsP, FAsMA**  
Association Headquarters Office

320 South Henry Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-3579  
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March 13, 2023

Christopher J. Ondrula, JD  
Executive Director  
American Board of Preventive Medicine  
111 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 1408  
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. Ondrula,

The Aerospace Medical Association fully supports the decision to change the ABPM specialty name of Occupational Medicine to Occupational and Environmental Medicine. This desired change to the specialty name is justified since the change will provide:

- Clarification of the breadth of Occupational and Environmental Medicine practice by Diplomates for the last several decades;
- Recognition of the recent separation of the three specialties by ACGME and, specifically, the need for consistency with ACGME update from Occupational Medicine to Occupational and Environmental Medicine;
- Clarification that the name meets the contemporary needs of the specialists and is focused on patient care.

The Aerospace Medical Association understands this change is administrative only and does not involve any change in the scope of practice, training standards, certification standards, or continuing certification standards.

Please direct any questions you may have regarding our support of this proposed specialty name change to Jeff Sventek, Executive Director, at 703-739-2240 x105 or [jsventek@asma.org](mailto:jsventek@asma.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan E. Northrup', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Susan E. Northrup, MD, MPH  
President