

**The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc.®**



# **CONTINUOUS CERTIFICATION IN PLASTIC SURGERY**

## **BOOKLET OF INFORMATION FOR 2023 ACTIVITIES**

**Telephone: 215-587-9322**

**Email: [staff@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:staff@abplasticsurgery.org)**

**ABPS website: <https://www.abplasticsurgery.org>**

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## Important Dates and Deadlines for the 2023 Continuous Certification Program Requirements

<b>January 2023</b>	<b>All 2023 Continuous Certification Activities available on ABPS Tracking Page</b>
<b>April 1 – 30, 2023</b>	<b>Self-Assessment Questions available after login on ABPS website</b>
<b>June 15, 2023</b>	<b>Continuous Certification Fee due</b> Payment accepted by credit card only via ABPS website  (\$50 late fee applied after this date)
<b>December 1, 2023</b>	<b>Deadline - 2023 Continuous Certification Activities</b> Year 3, 6: Practice Improvement Activity Year 6, 9: CME Report Year 3, 9: Professional Standing Update
<b>December 2 – 31, 2023</b>	<b>Late Deadline Period - 2023 Continuous Certification Activities</b> Year 3, 6: Practice Improvement Activity Year 6, 9: CME Report Year 3, 9: Professional Standing Update
<b>December 1, 2023</b>	<b>Continuous Certification Certificates mailed prior to original certificate expiration date.</b> Diplomates must be current on all requirements.

- Email reminders will be sent from the Board Office periodically before approaching deadlines
- Log in to the Board’s website, [www.abplasticsurgery.org](http://www.abplasticsurgery.org)
  - 🖥️ Click “Tracking Page” to view your Continuous Certification Requirements and to complete all activities
  - 🖥️ Click “My Profile” to update contact information and to provide a public address reported in the Public Search results available on the Board’s home page through the “Is Your Plastic Surgeon ABPS Board Certified?” link
- Contact the Board Office at [staff@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:staff@abplasticsurgery.org) with questions

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# **Continuous Certification Program Preliminary Reference Information**

# Target Audience

**2023 Continuous Certification Activities Booklet audience:**

**Time-limited Certificate Holders**






**Lifetime Certificate Holders participating in the  
ABPS Continuous Certification Program**

*For specific deadline information, please visit your Tracking Page  
after logging into the ABPS Website*

## Physician Profile and Log in





**Update your contact information and stay current on your Continuous Certification requirements.** Diplomates must log in to the Board’s website to access their Profile and complete online processes.

## Log in to the Board’s website

-  Go to [www.abplasticsurgery.org](http://www.abplasticsurgery.org)
-  Click Login in the top right corner of the home page and enter your username and password.
-  Unless previously customized, your username is your six-digit Board ID number and your password is your last name with the first letter capitalized (e.g. Smith).
-  You may change your username and/or password at any time in the “My Profile” tab.
-  Contact the Board Office if you need log in assistance.

## My Profile page

Diplomates may update the following information by clicking on “My Profile”:

-  contact information including email address
-  public address and telephone number for consumers
-  username and/or password
-  retired status with effective date – please also email this information to [info@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:info@abplasticsurgery.org) to report retirement

**The Board Office will send email notices to the applicable diplomates prior to any deadlines. Be sure that your email address is updated on your profile page.**

## Continuous Certification Online Tracking page

The Board's website features individual tracking for each diplomate participating in the Continuous Certification Program. Once logged in, access the **Tracking Page** tab for a customized list of requirements, deadline dates, status and completion dates. Once the requirements are met each cycle year, diplomates have the ability to download an annual Verification letter.

**Help the Board keep each diplomate on track! If you notice an "overdue" or "incomplete" status under your Alerts, please email the Board Office [staff@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:staff@abplasticsurgery.org) to verify and update if necessary.**

## "Is Your Plastic Surgeon ABPS Board Certified?" - Public Search Tool

The link to the public search tool on the Board's website is available on the home page. This tool allows consumers and credentialing specialists to search for board-certified plastic surgeons by name and/or geographic location.

The diplomate's name, city, state, zip code, certification status, certification history, and participation status are automatically reported in the search results.

- Diplomates should perform a personal search using this online feature to ensure accuracy of the information reported.
- Diplomates may log in to the Board's website and access "My Profile" to enter a public address and phone number for consumers. This information is only published if entered by the diplomate. Otherwise, only the current city, state and zip code of the diplomate's address of record is displayed.

## Reporting Continuous Certification Participation

The Board reports Continuous Certification participation status for each diplomate through the "Is Your Plastic Surgeon ABPS Board Certified?" link. A status of **"not current"** will only be reported if the diplomate is **more than six months overdue** on one or more requirement.

The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) also reports Continuous Certification Participation status on the consumer-focused website, [www.certificationmatters.org](http://www.certificationmatters.org).

## Alerting the Public to Medical License Actions

If the ABPS is notified of a state medical board action in the primary state where the diplomate practices, an alert to "See FSMB" may appear in the certification status column. Additional information may be obtained from the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) by following the link provided. Certification may be placed on suspended, on probation, or revocation based on medical license action. An active, unrestricted license is a requirement for certification.

## ABPS Status Definitions for Reporting Certification and Continuous Certification Status to the public on the Board’s website

<b>Certification Status Definitions</b>	
<b>CERTIFIED</b>	Diplomate has met the Board’s residency training requirements in an accredited institution in the U.S. or Canada. Diplomate successfully completed both written and oral plastic surgery examinations to achieve ABPS Board certification.
<b>EXPIRED</b>	Certification has lapsed. The diplomate has not met the requirements to renew certification.
<b>RETIRED</b>	Diplomate is no longer in the active practice of plastic surgery.
<b>REVOKED</b>	Certification is no longer valid due to failure by the diplomate to maintain required ethical or professionalism standards.
<b>SUSPENDED</b>	Certification is suspended due to action on medical license by a state medical board. Length of certificate suspension may run concurrent with medical license limitations or any additional requirements required by the Board.
<b>PROBATION</b>	Certification is placed on probation due to action on medical license by a state medical board. Length of certificate probation may run concurrent with medical license limitations or any additional requirements required by the Board.
<b>SEE FSMB</b>	ABPS was notified of a state medical board action in the primary state where the diplomate practices. Contact the individual state medical board for details via the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) service, <a href="http://www.docinfo.org">www.docinfo.org</a>
<b>Continuous Certification Participation Status Definitions</b>	
<i>Participating/Current</i>	All current requirements have been fulfilled. All diplomates with time-limited certification (certified since 1995) are automatically enrolled upon initial certification. Diplomates with lifetime certification (certified prior to 1995) may voluntarily participate in the Continuous Certification Program.
<i>Participating/Not Current</i>	Diplomate is participating, and also 6 months overdue with one or more requirements.

**Time-limited certification** – applies to diplomates certified 1995 and thereafter. Certificates are valid for 10 years. **Participation in the Continuous Certification Program is mandatory.**

**Lifetime certification** – applies to diplomates certified prior to 1995. Certificates are valid indefinitely. **Participation in the Continuous Certification Program is voluntary, but expected and encouraged.**

# **Continuous Certification Program Activities**



# ABPS Continuous Certification Program

## *Timeline of Activities*

<b>Year 1</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*		
<b>Year 2</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*		
<b>Year 3</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*	Professional Standing Update	Practice Improvement Activity
<b>Year 4</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*		
<b>Year 5</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*		
<b>Year 6</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*	CME Report	Practice Improvement Activity
<b>Year 7</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*		
<b>Year 8</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*		
<b>Year 9</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*	Professional Standing Update <i>(full audit)</i> with CME Report	
<b>Year 10</b>	Continuous Cert Fee	Self-Assessment Questions*		

\*Diplomates who successfully complete 8 self-assessments in the 10-year cycle will satisfy the examination component of Continuous Certification. For diplomates expiring between 2023 and 2026, passing each assessment offered will be accepted.

# Annually: Self-Assessment

In 2019, the ABPS introduced a Longitudinal Learning Assessment, referred to as “Self-Assessment.” The Board’s focus is to pilot a format that more closely matches the objective of lifelong learning while being less burdensome to the diplomate, compared to a longer high-stakes exam at a testing center. This Self-Assessment is available the entire month of April and contains 30 questions in the diplomate’s chosen module (Comprehensive, Cosmetic, Craniomaxillofacial, or Hand) and is completed annually. Diplomates must accrue at least eight successfully completed assessments within the ten-year cycle.

## New Testing Format

The annual Self-Assessment questions will be available in an Internet-Based Testing format, rather than a Computer-Based Test which traditionally involved traveling to a testing center. The questions can be completed on any device with internet connection and is no longer limited to one day with a four-hour window.

The Self-Assessment incorporates relevant content for each question, essentially a built-in study guide. After answering a question, the diplomate will be directed to the supporting rationale. After reading the rationale, the diplomate will be offered an additional opportunity to answer the question if incorrectly answered on the first attempt.

## Accessing the Self-Assessment

The Self-Assessment can be accessed at any point throughout the administration period April 1-30 and diplomates can exit and re-enter as many times as necessary to complete. The questions must be completed by April 30th. **No extensions or exceptions will be granted.**

The Self-Assessment will be accessed through a link on the diplomate’s Tracking Page. Clicking this link will direct the diplomate to the testing website where they will enter the provided access information.

Email notifications and reminders will be sent in the weeks and days leading up to the assessment window. The Board recommends diplomates sign in and complete the tutorial exam on any device they plan to use to complete the questions.

## Self-Assessment Content

The Self-Assessment consists of 30 multiple choice questions, taken annually in the month of April. The questions are based on a broad range of professional activities encompassing the specialty of plastic surgery. Because the questions emphasize current surgical practice and continuing education, the emphasis is different from the cognitive emphasis of the initial Written Examination of the Board. This assessment is designed in a modular form to allow diplomates to match the assessment to their practice profiles. Diplomates may take a

Comprehensive Plastic Surgery module or one of the specialty modules: Cosmetic Surgery, Craniomaxillofacial Surgery, or Hand Surgery. Each assessment includes 24 questions specific to the module, and 6 core and contemporary questions common to all modules.

Assessment and examination questions prepared by, or at the direction of, The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc. (hereinafter "Board"), are the sole and exclusive property of the Board, and said items are protected under the copyright laws of the United States and other countries. The assessment and examination items may only be used for such purposes as are designated from time to time by the Board. The assessment materials cannot be used for other purposes without explicit permission. The Board reserves all other rights. The Board appreciates the cooperation of the Plastic Surgery Foundation and American Society for Surgery of the Hand for granting permission for use of In-Service test items and the journals, *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* (PRS) and *Aesthetic Surgery Journal* (ASJ) for use of CME Journal items for the Continuous Certification examination. Copying, by any means, of all or any part of such assessment or examination items or the unauthorized use in any way whatsoever of said items is strictly prohibited.

## **Results**

**Scoring for the assessment is based on the final response.** When the diplomate completes all 30 Self-Assessment questions, a final preliminary score will be shown immediately. Content-based evaluation methods will be utilized by subject matter experts for each module of the assessments annually, determining the final passing score. This is formally reported to the diplomates in June each year.

Though the passing score is determined by the final response, the initial first responses will be analyzed to acknowledge and attempt to correct any knowledge gaps. The Board will provide an individualized performance report, linking to society and other outside educational resources according to the topics in which the diplomate performed poorly.

The Board will develop "clone" items for the following year's assessment to reinforce certain topics based on initial responses. The Board will share de-identified item analysis with specialty societies for the purpose of developing new educational material

## **Failing or Missing an Administration**

Diplomates must accrue at least eight passing scores within the ten-year cycle to complete the cognitive component of the Continuous Certification Program. With this requirement, the diplomate will have up to two opportunities to fail to obtain a passing score: either by substandard performance, or by not completing the questions within the 30-day administration window.

If a diplomate does not complete the Self-Assessment within the administration window, those questions will be archived and carry over to the following year's Assessment. All past due Self-Assessments will be available in April of each year, with the ability to complete all missing years during one administration window.

If a diplomate does not successfully complete the eight Self-Assessments before the expiration of the original certificate, the certificate will expire.

### **Transitioning to Longitudinal Learning**

ABPS has recently participated in a pilot program with the American Board of Medical Specialties, which concluded in 2021. The pilot considered statistical analysis of the performance data of those who completed the traditional 200-question exam compared to the same group's performance on the Self-Assessment. The 200-question Continuous Certification Exam was available congruent to this pilot timeline, last administered April 2021.

**The Board understands that a majority of diplomates will be in the middle of their certification cycles at the beginning of the Self-Assessment requirement in 2019. Diplomates with certificates expiring between 2023 and 2026 are required to complete the Self-Assessments each year before their certificate expires in order to satisfy the exam component of their recertification. Diplomates expiring after 2026 are required to successfully complete eight of the ten assessments offered throughout the cycle.**

For any questions about specific timelines or requirements, please contact the Board Office at [staff@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:staff@abplasticsurgery.org) or by telephone at 215-587-9322.

## **Annually: Continuous Certification Fee**

This fee is mandatory for diplomates with time-limited certificates. This fee assists in maintaining the databases for reporting certification to health care consumers, tracking Continuous Certification activities over the 10-year cycle and developing additional web-based services for diplomates. Payment is made via credit card after secure log in to the Board's website. The link is accessed on the Tracking Page. A \$50 late fee is applied to all Continuous Certification Fees paid after the deadline date listed.

**Note: The Board is a nonprofit organization, IRS Code 4011(6), and the fees of diplomates are used solely for defraying the actual expenses of the Board. ABPS does not engage in lobbying activities. The Directors of the Board serve 6-year terms without remuneration.**

# Years 3 and 6: Practice Improvement Activity

The Practice Improvement component of the ABPS Continuous Certification Program was designed to recognize the work that physicians are already doing to improve patient care in their practices. Physician participation in one of four options can satisfy the diplomate's Practice Improvement Activity:

- **Quality Improvement Publication**
- **Quality Improvement Project**
- **Registry Participation**
- **Tracer Procedure Log**

To complete the Practice Improvement Activity, log in to the Board's website, [www.abplasticsurgery.org](http://www.abplasticsurgery.org), to access your Tracking Page and click the "Practice Improvement Activity" link to select an activity. The guidelines and applications are available on the Board's website.

## Submission of Applications

Applications to submit a QI Publication, QI Project, or Registry Participation for consideration are available for download on your Practice Improvement Activity page on the ABPS Website after secure log in. After completion, please submit to [staff@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:staff@abplasticsurgery.org)

Submissions are reviewed by the Continuous Certification Program Committee and, upon approval, will satisfy the Practice Improvement requirement. Please contact the Board Office with any questions regarding these alternative options to the Tracer Procedure Log.

## Quality Improvement Publication

The ABPS will accept a recently authored article within five years of publication as evidence of a Quality Improvement activity for credit towards completing the Practice Improvement component of the Continuous Certification program. The article must describe a Quality Improvement process that resulted in a demonstrable improvement in patient care.

## Quality Improvement Project

The ABPS will accept a recent Quality Improvement project within three years of completion for credit towards completing the Practice Improvement component of the Continuous Certification program. To be eligible for credit the project must have a specific aim to be evaluated and identify specific metrics to measure.

## Registry Participation

Participation in national registries, followed by practice comparison to those of peers, can result in improved practices. The ABPS will recognize this type of activity for the Practice Improvement

component of the Continuous Certification program. To be eligible, please submit the application available on the website with a report that documents the entry of at least 10 cases of the same procedure, within three years of submission. This report should display your practice results for this procedure compared to the registry aggregate.

**Tracer Procedure Log (no application required)**

1. **Select ONE tracer procedure from the list of 24** by accessing the Tracer Procedure Log under the Practice Improvement Activity link on the Board’s website. Review 10 consecutive patient charts for cases completed in the last three year period. Complete the data fields for each of the 10 cases selected. The data entry must be finalized by December 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - The required content for each of the tracer procedures is available for preview before selection. Click the **“Preview/Print tracer procedure data fields”** link found at the top of Practice Improvement Activity page under Reference Documents.
  - Diplomates are encouraged to repeat the same tracer procedure for two sequential cycles in order to document practice improvement from the first to second assessment.

**Tracer Procedures for Practice Improvement**

<b>Comprehensive</b>	<b>Cosmetic</b>	<b>Craniofacial</b>	<b>Hand Surgery</b>
1. Reduction Mammoplasty	1. Augmentation Mammoplasty	1. Cleft Palate	1. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
2. Breast Reconstruction (Primary) – Autologous	2. Face Lift	2. Zygomatoc/Orbital Fractures	2. Dupuytren’s Disease
3. Breast Reconstruction (Primary) – Implant	3. Suction-Assisted Lipectomy	3. Secondary Cleft Nasal Deformity	3. Thumb Carpo-Metacarpal Arthritis
4. Facial Skin Malignancy	4. Blepharoplasty	4. Non-syndromic Craniosynostosis	4. Flexor Tendon Laceration
5. Lower Extremity Acute Trauma	5. Abdominoplasty	5. Mandible Fractures	5. Metacarpal Fractures
6. Wound Management (including burns)	6. Rhinoplasty	6. Unilateral Cleft Lip Repair	
7. Pressure Sores			

**NOTE: Diplomates must contact the Board Office in writing with a detailed explanation if they do not perform any of the tracer procedures available.**

2. **Review benchmarking report:** This is a self-assessment step for the practitioner to compare to his or her peers. A “pearl” of best evidence is provided with the benchmarking report for each tracer procedure.

3. **Complete only ONE of the following educational articles** aligned with the selected tracer procedure by reading an ABPS-approved article, from *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* (PRS) Journal or other specialty society journal (CME credit for this activity is not required). **The article must be aligned with the specific tracer procedure selected.**

The following societies and medical journals offer ABPS-approved articles:

- ❖ American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) and the Journal, *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* (PRS) - <https://ednet.plasticsurgery.org>
  - ❖ The Aesthetic Society and *Aesthetic Surgery Journal* (ASJ) – [www.theaestheticsociety.org](http://www.theaestheticsociety.org) or [www.aestheticsurgeryjournal.com](http://www.aestheticsurgeryjournal.com)
  - ❖ American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH) and *Journal of Hand Surgery* (JHS) – [www.assh.org](http://www.assh.org) or [www.jhandsurg.org/cme/home](http://www.jhandsurg.org/cme/home)
4. **Complete the Action Plan** (Self Evaluation for Improvement) to note planned changes in practice after completion of the practice-assessment module, educational activity and review of your benchmarking report. Select at least two areas where improvement can be made to your practice/patient care.

## Years 6, 9: CME Report

- **Upload a report, from a CME Provider, of 125 hours of CMEs completed between the period starting January 1, 2018 and ending December 31, 2023.** The flexibility of more than 5 years is offered to assist those completing the requirement early in the year. **The CME requirement must be completed by the deadline and meet the following minimum categories:**
  - At least 125 hours in Category I in plastic surgery activities
  - At least 25 hours in patient safety
- ◆ Submission of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) Summary of CMEs (current and previous CME cycle reports) or the American Medical Association (AMA) Physicians Recognition Program Report is preferred.
- ◆ **ASPS members who use the society’s website to track CME credits can transfer their CME files directly from the ASPS website.** Simply click the “Import” button on the CME Report link from the Tracking Page of the Board’s website.

- ◆ A self-reported summary of CME activities is acceptable. **A certificate for each Category I CME course listed must be uploaded online to complete each record manually entered.** The certificates must include the name of the course; date of the course; category; and number of CMEs awarded.
- ◆ Patient Safety Credits must be identified on the certificates or CME provider report to be accepted. If needed, patient safety CME resources are listed on the Board’s website under the Diplomates section accessible from the home page. Refer to the Board’s policy for the Acceptance of Patient Safety CME Credits, also available on the Board’s website.

## Year 3: Professional Standing Update

- **State Medical License(s):** List all state licenses with license numbers and expiration dates
- **Hospital Privileges:** List hospital names, addresses, dates of appointments. The hospitals must be accredited by the Joint Commission or other approved organization authorized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Active, inpatient admitting hospital privileges in plastic surgery are required.
- **Advertising Materials from the last 12 months:** Select all that apply.
- **Peer Evaluation:** List names, titles and email addresses of three peers.
- **Outpatient Facility Accreditation:** List all outpatient facilities with name, city, state and accrediting body. **It is expected that all surgery performed under IV sedation or a general anesthetic will be performed in an accredited center.**

## Year 9: Professional Standing Update (*full audit*)

Diplomates completing the Year 9 Professional Standing Update will be required to upload documentation as a *full audit*. This update replaces the previously required MOC-PS Exam Application.

The Board reserves the right to audit the professionalism information provided by the diplomate at any time during the Continuous Certification Program cycle by requiring supporting documentation. If a diplomate receives the request via email from the Board Office, the documents must be emailed as PDF file attachments.

**All supporting documentation is required in order to finalize.** Please assemble all required documents and scan each file to a PDF.



- **State Medical License(s):** All state medical licenses with license numbers and expiration dates. Diplomates may print to PDF the online verification from the State Medical Board website or scan any licenses.
  
- **Hospital Privilege Letters:** List hospital names, addresses and dates of appointments. All hospitals must be accredited by the Joint Commission or other approved organization authorized by CMS. Appointment Letters must include the following:
  - ◆ Dated in the current year or current appointment dates included
  - ◆ Signed letter in English on the hospital’s official letterhead
  - ◆ Indication of status: **Current, inpatient admitting privileges in plastic surgery are required**
  - ◆ Confirmation of “plastic surgery” privileges. If letters do not specify “**plastic surgery,**” include your delineation of privileges indicating that your privileges extend to performing **plastic surgery** procedures
  - ◆ If practice is outside the United States, verification of privileges to practice in a hospital accredited by the appropriate country is required (must be translated into English)
  - ◆ *Privileges held exclusively at outpatient surgical facilities do not meet the requirements*
  
- **Advertising Material:** Upload a current copy of the home page & bio page of any active practice website(s). Also include screen shots of social media accounts created for your practice or other internet advertisements (e.g. Groupon). Upload copies of all print advertising materials published within the past 12 months.
  - ◆ Examples of print advertisements include, but are not limited to, letterhead, brochures, telephone book (yellow pages), billboard images (digital proof copy in a PDF file is acceptable), announcement flyers, and magazine and newspaper advertising. Scan all advertising material as a group or separately by category and upload to professional standing form (**4 megabyte limit for each PDF file**).
  
- **Three Peer Evaluations are required:** Enter the name, titles and email addresses of three peers. A secure link will be emailed to your peers to complete an evaluation for you that will be submitted electronically to the Board Office. **Peer Evaluations are due by the activities deadline of December 1<sup>st</sup>.** The diplomate must check their individual Tracking Page on the Board’s website to verify that the Peer Evaluations have been completed. The dashboard page will update automatically as the online forms are received. Peers must fall into the following categories:
  - ◆ Chief of Staff, Chief of Surgery or Chief of Plastic Surgery\*
  - ◆ ABPS certified plastic surgeon

- ◆ Anesthesiologist
- ◆ Nursing Supervisor

**\*At least one evaluation must be completed by the Chief of Surgery, Chief of Staff or Chief of Plastic Surgery** at one hospital where the diplomate practices plastic surgery. The hospital must be accredited by the Joint Commission or other approved organization authorized by CMS. **Chief positions held only at outpatient surgery centers are not acceptable.**

- **Outpatient Facility Accreditation:** List all outpatient facilities. Letters or certificates from AAAASF, AAAHC, State Board or Medicare certification are acceptable. **It is expected that all surgery performed under IV sedation or a general anesthetic is performed in an accredited center.**
  - ◆ Certificates are not required for hospital-based surgical centers accredited by the Joint Commission but the outpatient facilities must be identified on the professional standing form and the affiliated hospital indicated.

### **Reciprocity for Continuous Certification credit**

The Board will accept Continuous Certification credit for Professionalism and Lifelong Learning activities if completed through the American Board of Surgery or other relevant ABMS Board. Valid documentation from the ABMS member board must be submitted verifying completion to receive credit. Contact the Board Office for assistance.

### **Confirmation of Participation**

#### **Annual Verification of Status**

When all Continuous Certification requirements are completed each year, a letter of verification is available for download on the diplomate's Tracking Page when logged in to the Board's website.

### **Consequences of incomplete requirements**

- **Continuous Certification Status – “Not Current”:** The Board will report a diplomate's Participation status as “Not Current” to consumers and to ABMS if the diplomate is six months overdue on one or more Continuous Certification requirement.
- **250 Category 1 Plastic Surgery CME credits** for the 10-year period must be submitted. Those who do not submit 125 credits in year 6 of the 10-year certification cycle must document 250 total CME credits by year 9.
- **All past due fees and requirements, including the Annual Continuous Certification Fee, must be complete to recertify and begin a new cycle.**

## **Consequences for Diplomates who do not complete all Continuous Certification requirements by year 10 of the certification cycle**

The components of Continuous Certification must be completed in the required time frame as outlined in the beginning of this booklet. If the components are not completed in the required time frame, the following will occur:

- **Certification will expire.** All previous incomplete Continuous Certification requirements must be satisfied in order to renew primary certification.
- Expired certification will be reported on the Public Search page on the Board's website.
- Notification to ABMS and removal from database of certified diplomates.
- Notification to the Board's Sponsoring Organizations and major plastic surgery societies.

### **Technical Support**

For technical support, contact Web Data Solutions at 312-944-0642 or [ABPS@dataharsolutions.com](mailto:ABPS@dataharsolutions.com) (M-F 9:00am – 5:00pm CST)

For other questions, contact the Board Office at 215-587-9322 or [staff@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:staff@abplasticsurgery.org) (M-F 8:30am – 5:00pm EST)

# **Board Policies & Reference Information**

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KANT Y-K. LIN, MD	Milwaukee, WI
JOAN E. LIPA, MD	Toronto, CAN
MICHELE A. MANAHAN, MD	Baltimore, MD
STEVEN L. MORAN, MD	Rochester, MN
MICHAEL W. NEUMEISTER, MD	Springfield, IL
SCOTT N. OISHI, MD	Dallas, TX
FRANCIS A. PAPAY, MD	Cleveland, OH
J. PETER RUBIN, MD	Pittsburgh, PA
MICHELE A. SHERMAK, MD	Lutherville, MD
PETER J. TAUB, MD	New York, NY
MARK M. URATA, MD	Los Angeles, CA

Gabriel M. Kind, MD  
Historian

Chris Fox, PhD  
RRC-PS, Executive Director, ABPS Ex-Officio

## **2022-2023 Continuous Certification Program Committee**

Amy K. Alderman, M.D.  
Keith E. Brandt, M.D.  
Heidi G. Conrad, M.B.A.  
Jack L. Cox, M.D.  
Nolan S. Karp, M.D.  
Bernard T. Lee, M.D.  
Kant Y-K. Lin, M.D.  
Joan E. Lipa, M.D.

Michele A. Manahan, M.D.  
Steven L. Moran, M.D., Chair  
Francis A. Papay, M.D.  
J. Peter Rubin, M.D.  
Michele A. Shermak, M.D.  
Peter J. Taub, M.D.  
Mark M. Urata, M.D.

### **Advisory Council Members**

The members listed below were nominated from the American Association of Plastic Surgeons (AAPS), the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS), the American Association for Hand Surgery (AAHS), the American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH), the American Society of Maxillofacial Surgeons (ASMS), the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery (ASRM) and the American Society of Craniofacial Surgery (ASCFS).

#### **Comprehensive Plastic Surgery**

Lynn A. Damitz, MD  
Gayle M. Gordillo, MD  
Amanda A. Gosman, MD  
C. Scott Hultman, MD  
Nolan S. Karp, MD (ABPS), Chair  
Julie E. Park, MD  
Lee L. Q. Pu, MD

#### **Craniofacial Surgery**

Lisa R. David, MD  
John A. Giroto, MD  
Reza Jarrahy, MD  
Kant Y-K. Lin, MD (ABPS), Chair  
Russell R. Reid, MD  
Jesse A. Taylor, MD  
Jack C. Yu, MD

#### **Cosmetic Surgery**

Amy K. Alderman, MD (ABPS), Chair  
J. Brian Boyd, MD  
Jorge I. de la Torre, MD  
W. John Kitzmiller, MD  
Ali M. Mosharafa, MD  
Galen Perdikis, MD  
Lorne K. Rosenfield, MD

#### **Hand Surgery**

Jayant P. Agarwal, MD  
Benjamin Chang, MD  
Jeffrey B. Friedrich, MD  
Randy M. Hauck, MD  
Scott N. Oishi, MD (ABPS), Chair  
Amorn N. Salyapongse, MD  
Anthony A. Smith, MD  
Thomas H-H. Tung, MD

Keith E. Brandt, MD, Executive Director, is an Ex-Officio member of each council.

#### **Board Staff**

Melissa A. Karch, MBA, Administrator  
Maria K. D'Angelo, Test Development Manager/Examination Editor  
Gwen A. Hanuscin, Written Examination and Projects Coordinator  
Melissa M. Hill, Oral Examination Coordinator  
Stephanie L. Kash, Continuous Certification and HSE Coordinator  
Cassandra Kosielowski, Examination Associate  
Sarah S. Praul, Examination Associate

## **Sponsoring Organizations of The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc.**

Aesthetic Surgery Education and Research Foundation (**ASERF**)

American Council of Academic Plastic Surgeons (**ACAPS**)

The American Association for Hand Surgery (**AAHS**)

American Association of Pediatric Plastic Surgeons (**AAPPS**)

American Association of Plastic Surgeons (**AAPS**)

The American Burn Association (**ABA**)

American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association (**ACPA**)

American College of Surgeons (**ACS**)

American Society for the Peripheral Nerve (**ASPN**)

The Aesthetic Society

The American Society for Craniofacial Surgery (**ASCFS**)

American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery (**ASRM**)

American Society for Surgery of the Hand (**ASSH**)

American Society of Maxillofacial Surgeons (**ASMS**)

American Society of Plastic Surgeons, Inc. (**ASPS**)

American Surgical Association (**ASA**)

Canadian Society of Plastic Surgeons (**CSPS**)

Plastic Surgery Research Council (**PSRC**)

Plastic Surgery Foundation (**PSF**)

American Head & Neck Society (**AHNS**)

## **Mission Statement**

The Mission Statement of The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc. is to promote safe, ethical, efficacious plastic surgery to the public by maintaining high standards for the education, examination, certification and continuous certification of plastic surgeons as specialists and subspecialists.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this Booklet of Information is to describe the Board's Continuous Certification Program Activities. This Booklet of Information supersedes all previously published information of the Board covering requirements, policies and procedures and may be modified at any time.

## **The Board approved Continuous Certification for the following reasons:**

1. To uphold the mission of the Board to promote safe, ethical, efficacious plastic surgery to the public by maintaining high standards for examination and certification.
2. To allow diplomates a mechanism to confirm their Lifelong commitment to Learning and Practice Improvement.
3. To provide diplomates who hold a 10-year time-limited certificate an opportunity to renew certification.
4. To remain in the mainstream of contemporary medicine and join with the other Member Boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).
5. Certain State Medical Boards and some organizations will accept Continuous Certification participation as documentation of compliance with CME and other requirements. Contact your State Board or privileging hospital to determine what documentation they will accept.

## **Who needs Continuous Certification?**

Continuous Certification is offered to all diplomates who voluntarily seek evidence of their continuing qualifications in the specialty of plastic surgery. All 24 member boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties offer a similar program. The Continuous Certification Program replaced the Maintenance of Certification Program (MOC-PS) effective January 1, 2019, and before that, the Recertification in Plastic Surgery in 2007.

1. Diplomates certified in 1995 and after, who hold a 10-year time-limited certificate, are required to participate in the Continuous Certification Program to renew certification.
2. Directors, Advisory Council Members, Examiners of the Board and ABPS-approved course instructors are required to participate in Continuous Certification.
3. The Board of Directors of ASPS, PSF, ASAPS, AAPS, and all Program Directors are strongly encouraged to participate.
4. Diplomates certified in 1994 or earlier who hold a lifetime certificate and who may desire to show evidence of Lifelong Learning and Practice Improvement in plastic



surgery by participating voluntarily in the program. All diplomates are expected and encouraged to participate in Continuous Certification.

## **Board Office Policies and Reminders**

- Diplomates with incomplete materials will be notified via email.
- Change in address, telephone number, email, etc. must be updated on the Board's website. Diplomates must log in and click "My Profile."
- Payment is accepted only by credit card – VISA, Master Card, or American Express.
- Note all Board deadline dates carefully to avoid late fees or exclusion from assessments.
- Log in to the Board's website to review your Tracking Page and stay current on all Board requirements.

## **Web-based Services**

The Board's web-based services for the Continuous Certification processes include:

- Customized Physician Profile with online tracking of Continuous Certification requirements, status and deadline dates.
- Submission of change of address and questions to the Board.
- Downloadable reference documents, approval letters, and result letters.
- Online submission of registration, peer evaluation, and Continuous Certification Activities.
- Notification of examination results.
- Completion of Continuous Certification activities, including Practice Improvement.
- Payment by credit card.
- Payment history for Continuous Certification Fee.
- Annual verification of status documents, available once the requirements are met each year.
- Consumer Look-up feature "Is Your Plastic Surgeon ABPS Board Certified?" to verify physician certification and Continuous Certification participation status.

## **Rules and Regulations**

The Board at its sole discretion may change the requirements for the Continuous Certification Program, issuance of certificates, and notice of requirements as necessary.

All diplomates must comply with the current regulations in effect for the year in the Continuous Certification Program. It is the responsibility of diplomates to seek information concerning the current requirements for the Continuous Certification program through the Board. The Board will make every effort to notify diplomates of changing requirements, incomplete requirements, or expiration of certified status. To do this, the Board must have the diplomate's current contact information. Please log in to

the Board's website annually to confirm your status and update your contact information if necessary via your physician profile.

## **Decisions of the Board**

No Officer or Director of the Board is solely empowered to make decisions on the qualifications of any diplomate. Decisions on certification status are rendered only on the basis of completed program requirement materials submitted to the Board Office, the completion of all requirements of the Board as published, and upon successful completion of the cognitive examination or equivalent Self-Assessment activities.

## **Request for Special Consideration or Review**

Diplomates who do not meet the established requirements and require a Committee review must send a detailed letter of request or letter of explanation, Credentials Review Fee (as listed on the Fee Schedule), Curriculum Vitae and recommendation letters. Deadlines are as follows:

- ◆ Spring Meeting (deadline for receipt of all material and fees is February 1<sup>st</sup>)
- ◆ Fall Meeting (deadline for receipt of all material and fees is September 1<sup>st</sup>)

## **Inquiries as to Status**

The Board does not consider a diplomate's record to be in the public domain. When an inquiry is received regarding a diplomate's status with the Board, a general, but factual, statement is provided which indicates the diplomate's status within the Continuous Certification Program. The Board will provide the date of the original certificate, whether or not it is still in effect, and whether the plastic surgeon is currently maintaining certification. ABMS reports only on the current status of certified diplomates and if they are participating in Continuous Certification.

## **Certificates**

New certificates are mailed in December of the year of expiration. Certificates issued by the Board shall be in such form as the Directors determine. Certificates are signed by the Chair, Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Director of the Board.

Certificates shall state that the holder has met the requirements and is certified by the Board as a medical specialist in plastic surgery and is entitled to be known as a "**diplomate of The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc.**" Since 1995, certificates issued by the Board are dated and will be valid for 10 years but subject to participation in the Continuous Certification Program. Certificates issued prior to 1995 are valid indefinitely. Because certificates awarded prior to 1995 were not time-limited when granted, the Board has no mechanism or right to revoke the certificate if recertification is not obtained. The Board must adhere to the requirements in effect at the time of certification.

The names of all diplomates will be submitted to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) for publication in its directory. Diplomates should notify the Board in advance if they do not wish to be listed.

Additional certificates are available upon written request to [info@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:info@abplasticsurgery.org). A fee according to the current Fee Schedule for each certificate ordered must be included with the request. The diplomate's name should be listed as it should appear on the certificate. Only medical degrees (e.g. M.D., D.O., D.M.D., and D.D.S.) verifiable by documents submitted during the application process and present in the diplomate's file can be listed.

### **Physicians with Special Circumstances**

The Board's policy for Physicians with Special Circumstances is located on the Board's website under the "About Us – Policies" links. This policy allows a diplomate to maintain their certification if they do not meet all of the Continuous Certification requirements due to current state of practice, academic position held or retirement. Contact the Board Office at [staff@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:staff@abplasticsurgery.org) or 215-587-9322 for further details. A formal request from the diplomate outlining his or her current practice situation must be received in the Board Office for consideration of approval by the Board's Executive Director.

For those approved and participating in the Continuous Certification Program under the Physicians with Special Circumstances Policy, a patient safety educational activity must be completed in lieu of the Practice Improvement activity in years 3 and 6 of the 10-year cycle. The ABMS has worked with the National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF) to offer a patient safety curriculum via a web-based link accessible through the Board's website. ASPS and other societies also offer ABPS-approved patient safety educational activities. Physicians with Special Circumstances must also complete the Professional Standing Update in years 3 and 9, in addition to the CME report in Year 6 and all assessments and fees.

### **Re-entry to Surgical Practice**

The ABPS supports the re-entry of surgeons to active surgical practice after a significant leave of absence (two or more years) and endorses guidelines for surgeons seeking to re-establish their clinical careers. The ABPS has developed a policy for Re-entry to Surgical Practice to assess the skill set of a returning physician and assist with their assimilation back into clinical practice.

Those diplomates who wish to re-enter practice after a leave of absence of two or more years should contact the Board Office for assistance.

# Continuous Certification Program Requirements over the 10-year cycle

## Each Year:

- ✓ Self-Assessment\* (30 questions in selected module)
- ✓ Continuous Certification Fee

\*Must accrue eight successfully completed assessments in 10-year cycle

## In years 3 and 9:

- ✓ Professional Standing Update which requires the diplomate to:
  - List medical license, hospital privileges, outpatient facilities, advertising material and peer evaluations.
  - In year 9 only, supporting documentation is required as part of a full audit. *An audit of 10% of diplomates is performed in Year 3.*

## In years 6 and 9:

- ✓ Upload CME summary report(s) confirming at least 125 CMEs from the last five years, imported from the ASPS website or uploaded from another CME Provider.

## In years 3 and 6:

- ✓ Select one Practice Improvement Activity of the following options:
  - Quality Improvement Publication
  - Quality Improvement Project
  - Registry Participation
  - Tracer Procedure Log (benchmarking, educational activity, and action plan)

Please contact the Board Office if you have any questions  
[staff@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:staff@abplasticsurgery.org)

# Fee Schedule

The fees for the Continuous Certification Program are determined by the Board. The fees are set annually and may be adjusted at the discretion of the Board to cover the expenses of the Continuous Certification Program. Payment for all online processes must be submitted by credit card. All fees are non-refundable and must be submitted in United States currency only. Foreign currencies, including Canadian, are unacceptable.

<b>ABPS ITEM</b>	<b>FEE</b>
<b>Annual Continuous Certification Fee</b>	<b>\$395.00</b>
<b>Late Fee for Continuous Certification Fee paid after June 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>Missing/Incomplete Items Fee</b>	<b>\$130.00</b>
<b>Program Committee Review Fee &amp; Ethics Review Fee</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>
<b>Informal Appeal Fee</b>	<b>\$800.00</b>
<b>Formal Appeal Fee</b>	<b>\$1,780.00</b>
<b>Additional Certificate Fee</b>	<b>\$145.00</b>

As of January 1, 2019 the ABPS Continuous Certification Fee of \$395 will encompass all other processing fees throughout the ten year cycle, resulting in an overall reduction of fees.



The registered trademark logo of the American Board of Plastic Surgery depicts Gaspare Tagliacozzi (1545-1599) of Bologna, considered to be the father of modern plastic surgery. His contributions are summarized in the treatise he authored in 1597, "De Curtorum Chirurgia per Insitionem." The founding year of the Board, 1937, is included on the Logo. **The Board's trademarked logo is not permitted for use on diplomate or candidate websites.**



**Member Board of ABMS: The Power of 24**