

# The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc.®



## **Advertising Policy for Candidates during Admissibility to the ABPS Examination and Certification Process Effective January 1, 2017**

After candidates have an approved ABPS Application for examination and certification, they may use the term **“Board Eligible”** denoting status with the ABPS for only the initial five years after successful completion of plastic surgery residency.

Candidates are required to reapply after five years. If the reapplication is approved, admissibility to the certification process will be extended for three additional years to the maximum limit of 8 years. Candidates may again use the term **“Board Eligible”** once a reapplication is approved. The 24 Boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties limit the number of years of eligibility to seven years. ABPS candidates receive an additional year because of the 9 month Oral Examination case list requirement.

### **Reference**

Candidates must successfully complete both the Written and Oral Examinations to achieve certification within eight years **after** completion of plastic surgery residency. Time spent in fellowship training is included in the eight year limit. If the candidate has not successfully completed both the Written and Oral Examinations within five years of eligibility, an approved Reapplication is required for continued admissibility to the examination process up to the eight year limit.

## Excerpt from the ABPS Booklet of Information

### Advertising & Marketing Requirements

The Board recognizes the role of legitimate advertising in the changing medical scene; but it does not approve of advertising which is false or misleading, which leads to unrealistic expectations, which minimizes the magnitude and possible risks of surgery, or which solicits patients for operations that they might not otherwise consider.

Such advertising is improper and inconsistent with the high standards of professional and ethical behavior implied by certification by The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc. Misstatements regarding Board status are also inconsistent with the minimum ethical standards of the certified physician.

**NOTE TO RESIDENTS: Active practice websites or commercial blogs may not be published before the completion of residency training in plastic surgery.** Any advertisement that will be posted prior to the start of clinical practice must document the start date of clinical practice.

**Candidates who have an approved ABPS Application for examination and certification may use the term “Board Eligible” denoting status with the Board for the initial 5 years after successful completion of plastic surgery residency. Candidates are required to reapply after 5 years and if approved, admissibility to the certification process will be extended for 3 additional years to the maximum of 8 years. The 24 Boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties limit the number of years of eligibility to 7 years. ABPS candidates receive an additional year because of the 9-month Oral Examination case list requirement. If a candidate fails to achieve certification after 8 years they must apply for the ABPS Extended Admissibility Application process.**

Candidates are required to submit photocopies of all advertising materials to the Board during the Oral Examination process.

**The Board recommends that candidates perform a web-based search** to identify any instances of internet advertising before submission of materials to the Board. The candidate is responsible for all instances of advertising, including websites of third party employers or physician rating websites

Candidates also may **not** represent themselves as active members of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) by statements or use of the Society’s Symbol of Excellence or that of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS). The public may regard this as evidence of certification by the Board. Although the Board may not penalize a candidate for use of the Society Symbol alone, it is recommended that candidates and senior partners contact the marketing department of ASPS or ASAPS to determine adherence to the Society’s policies before placing practice advertisements in print.

**Marketing events are prohibited where injectables, procedures or operations are provided in a social or educational setting where alcohol is served.**

Candidates may be deferred from the examination process for at least one year if the Board receives written documentation of such advertising or other Code of Ethics violations. Refer to the Board’s Code of Ethics available at [www.abplasticsurgery.org](http://www.abplasticsurgery.org).