

The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc.®



CONTINUOUS CERTIFICATION IN PLASTIC SURGERY

BOOKLET OF INFORMATION FOR 2026 ACTIVITIES

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Important Dates and Deadlines for the 2026 ABPS Continuous Certification Program Requirements

January 2026	All 2025 Continuous Certification Activities available on ABPS Tracking Page
April 1 – May 18, 2026	Self-Assessment Activity administration opens. One 30-question module per calendar year.
June 15, 2026	Continuous Certification Fee due Payment accepted by credit card only via ABPS website (\$50 late fee applied after this date)
December 1, 2026 for 10-year cycles	Deadline - 2025 Continuous Certification Activities Year 3, 6: Practice Improvement Activity Year 6, 9: CME Report Year 3, 9: Professional Standing Update
December 2 – 31, 2026 for 10-year cycles	Late Deadline Period - 2025 Continuous Certification Activities Year 3, 6: Practice Improvement Activity Year 6, 9: CME Report Year 3, 9: Professional Standing Update
December 1, 2026	Continuous Certification Certificates mailed prior to original certificate expiration date. 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
 - 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 with questions

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Continuous Certification Program

Preliminary Reference Information

Target Audience

2026 Continuous Certification Activities Booklet audience:

Time-limited Certificate Holders

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

For specific deadline information for your individual certification cycle, 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
- 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 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 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 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.

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 placed on probation, suspended or revoked based on a state medical board action against a diplomate’s medical license. 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

Certification Status Definitions	
CERTIFIED	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.
CERTIFIED ON PROBATION	Certified with probationary status. Diplomates on probation are required to fully participate in the ABPS Continuous Certification process and must complete all requirements stipulated by any State Medical Board action. ABPS may remove probationary status when the Diplomate has a fully unrestricted license without any obligations.
NO LONGER CERTIFIED	The physician is not currently certified and is not meeting requirements for certification. The certificate may have expired or lapsed. If requirements are met, the status may be reevaluated.
RETIRED	Diplomate is no longer in the active practice of plastic surgery or providing patient care.
REVOKE	Certification is no longer valid due to failure by the diplomate to maintain required ethical or professionalism standards.
SUSPENDED	Certification is suspended for a limited amount of time, due to suspension of medical license by a state medical board. ABPS may restore a suspended certificate after the Diplomate has a fully unrestricted license without any obligations.
SEE FSMB	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, www.docinfo.org .
Continuous Certification Participation Status Definitions	
Participating/Current	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. All current requirements have been fulfilled.
Participating/Not Current	Diplomate is participating, and also overdue with one or more requirements.

Time-limited certification - applies to diplomates certified 1995 and thereafter. Certification cycles from 1995 – 2023 were valid for 10 years. Certification cycles beginning 2024 and after are valid for 5 years. Current participation status can always be viewed on the ABPS website. **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.**

ABPS Continuous Certification Program

Timeline of Activities: 10-Year Cycle

(for diplomates with cycles beginning 12/1/2023 or earlier)

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

*Diplomates who successfully complete 8 self-assessments in the 10-year cycle will satisfy the examination component of Continuous Certification. For diplomates expiring between 2025 and 2026, passing each assessment offered will be accepted. Diplomates are encouraged to use every opportunity and complete one self-assessment module annually.

ABPS Continuous Certification Program

Timeline of Activities: 5-Year Cycle

(for diplomates with cycles beginning 12/1/2024 and after)

Each Year:

- ✓ Self-Assessment Activity* (30 questions in selected module)
- ✓ Continuous Certification Fee
 - In Year 1 only: opportunity to pay all 5 years at one time at a discount (\$2000 total)

*Must accrue four successfully completed assessments in five-year cycle.

By December 1st of Year 4:

- ✓ Professional Standing Update which requires the diplomate to:
 - List medical license, hospital privileges, outpatient facilities, advertising material and peer evaluations. Upload accompanying documentation as PDF.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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

Continuous Certification Program Activities

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 for six weeks starting April 1st, 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, or four within the five-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 testing day.

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 completing the assessment, the diplomate will be offered an additional opportunity to answer any questions incorrectly answered on the first attempt.

Accessing the Self-Assessment

The Self-Assessment can be accessed at any point throughout the administration period beginning April 1st, and diplomates can exit and re-enter as many times as necessary to complete. The questions must be completed by the published deadline. **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 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 after the diplomate completes their second opportunity to answer any questions incorrectly answered during the first opportunity. This final score is used for certification renewal and formally reported to the diplomates in July 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, or four within the five-year cycle, to complete the cognitive component of the Continuous Certification Program. With this requirement, the diplomate will have up to two (or one) 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 administration. 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 required number of Self-Assessments before the expiration of the original certificate, the certificate will expire.

The Board understands that a majority of diplomates were in the middle of their certification cycles at the beginning of the Self-Assessment requirement in 2019. Diplomates with certificates expiring in 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 or by telephone at 215-587-9322.

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 cycles 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 501c(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.

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, 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.

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. Some examples may be changes to OR protocol, patient education, prescribing, materials used.

Registry Participation

Participation in national registries, followed by practice comparison to those of peers, can result in improved practices. Some examples include NBIR, GRAFT, TOPS, Aesthetic One, and any other registry that is a part of a partnering society. 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.

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

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.

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 1st of the deadline year.
 - 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

Comprehensive	Cosmetic	Craniomaxillofacial	Hand Surgery
1. Reduction Mammoplasty	1. Augmentation Mammoplasty	1. Cleft Palate	1. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
2. Breast Reconstruction (Primary) – Autologous	2. Face Lift	2. Zygomatic/Orbital Fractures	2. Dupuytren’s Disease
3. Breast Reconstruction (Primary) – Implant	3. Suction-Assisted Liposuction	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 or www.aestheticsurgeryjournal.com
- ❖ American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH) and *Journal of Hand Surgery* (JHS) – www.assh.org or 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.

CME Report

➤ **Ten-Year Cycle CME Date Range:**

Report 125 hours of CMEs completed between the period starting January 1, 2021 and ending December 31, 2026.

➤ **Five-Year Cycle CME Date Range:**

Report 125 hours of CMEs completed between Year 1 and Year 4 of your cycle dates (for example, for a cycle starting 12/1/2025 – 12/31/2030, you can submit any CME earned during from 2025 through 2029). If the requirement is not met by the end of Year 4, you will have the entirety of Year 5 to continue to log CMEs but will be marked as “Not Current” until completed.

➤ **The CME requirement must be completed by the published deadlines 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.

Professional Standing Update (*full audit*)

Diplomates completing the Professional Standing Update will be required to upload documentation as a *full audit – this will be required by Year 4 for those in 5-year cycles, and in Year 9 of the 10-year cycles*. Within the 10-year cycle, the Professional Standing Update in Year 3 does not require uploaded documentation unless specified.

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, active, 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) or enter the URL. Also include screen shots of social media accounts created for your practice or other internet advertisements. 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, directories, 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 1st.** 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 a CMS-approved accrediting organization are acceptable, including but not limited to AAAHC, ACHC, the Joint Commission, and QuadA. Accreditation by a State Board or

Medicare certification are also 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 Practice Improvement 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

A letter of verification is available for download on the diplomate's Tracking Page when logged in to the Board's website. This will display certification dates as well as current participation status.

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 end 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.** The Regain Certification policy must be adhered to begin a new cycle. Activities vary based on how long the break in certification is. This policy can be found on the Policies page of the ABPS website.
- A status of “No Longer Certified” 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.

Board Policies & Reference Information

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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 Nolan S. Karp, MD (ABPS), Chair Devra B. Becker, MD Lynn A. Damitz, MD Gregory A. Dumanian, MD Jamie P. Levine, MD Albert Losken, MD Bruce A. Mast, MD Minh-Doan T. Nguyen, MD Vu T. Nguyen, MD Loren S. Schechter, MD Thomas H-H. Tung, Jr., MD	Craniomaxillofacial Surgery Jesse A. Taylor, MD (ABPS), Chair John A. Girotto, MD Reza Jarrahy, MD Timothy W. King, MD Delora L. Mount, MD Kamlesh B. Patel, MD Richard J. Redett, III, MD Alison K. Snyder-Warwick, MD
Cosmetic Surgery Michele A. Shermak, MD (ABPS), Chair Anureet K. Bajaj, MD J. Brian Boyd, MD Jerome D. Chao, MD David A. Jansen, MD John Y.S. Kim, MD Lorne K. Rosenfield, MD Gary A. Tuma, MD Susan D. Vasko, MD Michael S. Wong, MD	Hand Surgery Scott N. Oishi, MD (ABPS), Chair Timothy S. Johnson, MD Scott D. Lifchez, MD Ines C-Y. Lin, MD Amy M. Moore, MD

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

Board Staff

Melissa A. Karch, MBA, Executive 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, Ethics Coordinator and Examination Associate
Sarah S. Praul, Credentialing Specialist and Examination Associate

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

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

American Council of Educators in Plastic Surgery (**ACEPS**)

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 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 are required to participate in the Continuous Certification Program to renew certification. Diplomates certified from 1995-2023 must complete a 10-year certification cycle. Diplomates certified from 2024 and after must complete a 5-year certification cycle.
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, The Aesthetic Society, 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.

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

Certificates issued by the Board shall be in such form as the Directors may, from time to time, determine. Certificates are signed by the Chair, Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Director of the Board and shall have placed upon them the official seal of the Board.

Certificates of the Board shall state that the holder has met the requirements of the Board 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." Effective 1995-2023 certificates issued by the Board were dated and valid for ten years and subject to participation in the Continuous Certification Program.

Starting January 1, 2024, each new class of diplomates will start a 5-year cycle of Continuous Certification. **All new ABPS certificates issued will NO LONGER include expiration dates.** Any diplomate certifying or recertifying in 2024 and beyond will receive a new paper certificate without an expiration date. Once a new or recertified diplomate has received the non-dated ABPS Certificate, no additional paper certificates will be issued unless duplicate copies are ordered. Current certification status and historical certification dates of Diplomates will be maintained on the ABPS Website for patients, the public, and credentialers.

The American Board of Plastic Surgery considers certification to be a lifelong endeavor. The ABPS expects and encourages all Diplomates including those with non-dated certificates to participate in the ABPS Continuous Certification program.

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. A fee for each certificate ordered must be included with the request as listed on the Fee Schedule on the back cover of this Booklet and on the Board's website. The diplomate's name should be listed, as it should appear on the certificate. Only medical degrees (e.g. MD, DO, DMD, and DDS) verifiable by documents submitted during the application process and present in the candidate'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 the Continuous Certification requirements due to current state of practice, academic position held, or retirement. Contact the Board Office at 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.

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

Continuous Certification Program Requirements over the 5-year cycle

Each Year:

- ✓ Self-Assessment* (30 questions in selected module)
- ✓ Continuous Certification Fee
 - In Year 1 only: opportunity to pay all 5 years at one time at a discount (\$2000 total)

*Must accrue four successfully completed assessments in five-year cycle

By December 1st of Year 4:

- ✓ Professional Standing Update which requires the diplomate to:
 - List medical license, hospital privileges, outpatient facilities, advertising material and peer evaluations. Upload accompanying documentation as PDF.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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

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.

ABPS ITEM	FEE
Annual Continuous Certification Fee	\$410.00
Late Fee for Continuous Certification Fee paid after June 15th	\$50.00
Missing/Incomplete Items Fee	\$130.00
Program Committee Review Fee & Ethics Review Fee	\$500.00
Informal Appeal Fee	\$800.00
Formal Appeal Fee	\$1,780.00
Special Circumstances Hospital Waiver Review Fee	\$250.00
Regain Certification Review Fee	\$250.00
Additional Certificate Fee	\$145.00

As of January 1, 2024 the ABPS Continuous Certification Fee of \$410 will encompass all other processing fees throughout the ten-year cycle.



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



The new ABPS Diplomate Certification Logo was created in an effort to allow ABPS Diplomates a common method to represent themselves as ABPS Board Certified Plastic Surgeons. Use is encouraged by all diplomates certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc., including both lifetime certificate holders and time-limited certificate holders. The circle logo design represents the diplomate's commitment both to the public interest and to voluntary participation in a continuous program of assessment, education, and practice improvement.

A full style guide and multiple versions of the logo are available after log in on the [Board's website](#). Diplomates can access this through the My Profile page. **Diplomates must agree to the Terms of Use prior to download. The logo was trademarked by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc. in 2019.**