

# The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc.

Seven Penn Center · Suite 400 · 1635 Market Street · Philadelphia, PA 19103-2204  
Phone: 215-587-9322 · Fax : 215-587-9622 · Internet: <http://www.abplsurg.org>



## **POLICY FOR ADMISSIBILITY TO ABPS EXAMINATIONS**

**Effective 2012 – Revised 5-9-14**

***ABPS certification must be achieved within eight years after successful completion of plastic surgery residency training.***

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) approved an eligibility policy which sets limits for attaining board certification after residency completion effective January 1, 2012. Member boards must limit the period of time that may lapse between the completion of an ACGME or RCPSG accredited residency training program and attainment of board certification to no more than seven years plus any time in practice required for admission to the certifying examination. January 1, 2019 is the outer limit set by ABMS for candidates currently in the examination process to obtain certification. The ABPS is in accordance with the ABMS Eligibility Policy, will initiate the following policy for surgeons seeking certification in plastic surgery:

Residents who complete an accredited plastic surgery residency training program in 2012 and thereafter must complete the certification process within eight years of the conclusion of residency. This allows for the practice requirement of one year which is necessary to collect and submit cases for the Oral Examination.

Candidates currently in the examination process must become certified by successfully completing the Oral Examination by November 2018 to meet the January 1, 2019 ABMS Policy deadline. On that date, the transition for the policy will be in full effect and applicable to all candidates for certification by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. The Board may grant exceptions to the eight year certification timeline in certain instances, such as military deployment, catastrophic illness or other special circumstances, after review and approval by the Board.

It remains the Board's requirement that a candidate may not advertise any status with the Board until successful completion of the Oral Examination. The Booklet of Information states, "Although in the examination process, candidates may not advertise any status with the Board until certified after passing the Oral Examination. Candidates may be deferred from the examination process for at least one year if the Board receives written documentation of such advertising." In addition to advertising, candidates may also be deferred for other ethical violations. This period of deferral will count toward the maximum eight year period.

Candidates must successfully complete both the Written and Oral Examinations required to achieve certification within eight years after completion of plastic surgery residency training. Reapplication requirements are required at the end of the first five years of admissibility, if the Written Examination is not successfully completed. Candidates are advised to utilize every opportunity (i.e. examination administration years) to complete the certification examinations. That focus will help candidates avoid reaching the maximum admissibility limits and being subject to the additional reapplication requirements after five years of admissibility has expired. More rigorous requirements for the Re-Entry Application for Admissibility must be met after eight years is exhausted in the examination process.

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## Standard Reapplication

### Required five years post plastic surgery residency training

Candidates must successfully complete both the Written and Oral Examinations required to achieve certification in no more than eight years after completion of plastic surgery residency. If the candidate has not successfully completed either the Written Examination five years post-plastic surgery residency training, an approved reapplication is required for continued admissibility to the examination process up to the eight-year limit required to achieve certification.

The following Reapplication requirements must be submitted after the initial admissibility period has expired:

1. **Reapplication Form** – including submission of all of the documents below and fee. If material is incomplete after three months, it is considered invalid and the candidate is required to resubmit all material.
2. **Reapplication Fee** – according to the current fee schedule.
3. **State Medical License** – copy of all valid and unrestricted state medical licenses including expiration date(s).
4. **Hospital Privileges in Plastic Surgery** - appointment/reappointment letters verifying all hospital privileges in plastic surgery at each hospital are required. *Active inpatient admitting privileges in plastic surgery are required.* Verification of privilege letters from outpatient surgical facilities are not required or accepted.
5. **Accreditation of Outpatient Surgical Facilities** – certificates or documents from each facility are required, if applicable, or a letter indicating that the candidate does not operate in an outpatient surgical facility.
6. **ABPS Peer Review Forms** – one evaluation must be completed by the Chief of Staff/Chief of Surgery at each hospital where the candidate holds privileges and two evaluations completed by peers in any of the following four categories: Chief of Plastic Surgery, Anesthesiologist, Nursing Supervisor, ABPS board certified plastic surgeon.
7. **CME Completion Report** – documented proof of 150 hours of CME credits are required within the preceding three years. Of the 150 hours, **a minimum of 75 hours must be Category I educational activities in plastic surgery and a minimum of 20 hours must be in patient safety.**
8. **Membership in Professional Medical Organizations** – a copy of verification of membership in regional and local plastic surgery societies (cards, certificates or letters).
9. **Certification or admissibility to another ABMS Member Board** – a copy of certificate or letter indicating examination status (if applicable).

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10. **ABPS Malpractice Claims Form** – summary of malpractice claims during the last five years.
11. **Advertising and Marketing** – copies of all printed and website materials.
12. **Curriculum Vitae** – a copy of current Curriculum Vitae.
13. **Recommendation Letters** – two recommendation letters from plastic surgeons who are familiar with your work. These letters are in addition to the required Peer Review Forms. These letters must be submitted by individuals other than those who completed the peer review forms.

## **Standard Reapplication requirements:**

- Candidates must complete the Standard Reapplication and obtain approval.
- An approved Reapplication provides additional years of admissibility to the examination process up to the expiration of the eighth year after completion of plastic surgery residency training.
- A Re-Entry Application for admissibility is required if the candidate has not successfully completed the Written and Oral Examinations eight years after completion of plastic surgery residency training.

## **IMPORTANT DEADLINE DATES:**

- The deadline for all completed Reapplication material is February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The approved reapplication candidate must complete either the Written or Oral Examination Reply Form by the published deadline date.

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## Re-Entry Application

### Required if certification is not achieved within eight years after successful completion of plastic surgery residency training

The following Re-Entry Application requirements must be submitted after the eight year admissibility expiration date:

1. Report of completion of the ASPS In-Service Examination in a **proctored training program location** with a total test score in the **33<sup>rd</sup> percentile** or higher as compared to all resident level scores. Results are available online from ASPS by the first week of May.
2. Demonstration of completion of an ABPS MOC-Approved CME activity for each of the four plastic surgery module topics, Comprehensive, Cosmetic, Craniomaxillofacial and Hand Surgery. An educational activity is defined as an ABPS MOC-Approved Journal Article or an ABPS MOC-Approved course.

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 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. Unilateral Cleft Lip	5. Metacarpal fracture
6. Wound Management (including burns)	6. Rhinoplasty	6. Mandible Fractures	
7. Pressure Sores			

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3. **Re-Entry Application Form** – including submission of all of the documents below and fee. If material is incomplete after three months it is considered invalid and the candidate is required to resubmit all material.
4. **Re-Entry Application Fee** – according to the current fee schedule.
5. **State Medical License** – copy of all valid and unrestricted state medical licenses including expiration date(s).
6. **Hospital Privileges in Plastic Surgery** - appointment/reappointment letters verifying all hospital privileges in plastic surgery at each hospital are required. *Active inpatient admitting privileges in plastic surgery are required.* Verification of privilege letters from outpatient surgical facilities are not required or accepted.
7. **Accreditation of Outpatient Surgical Facilities** – certificates or documents from each facility are required, if applicable, or a letter indicating that the candidate does not operate in an outpatient surgical facility.
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## Re-Entry Application requirements:

- Candidates must complete the Re-Entry Application and obtain approval within two years of the expiration of admissibility to the ABPS examination process.
- Candidates who do not complete the Re-Entry Application process and obtain approval within two years, must submit a written request for a review by the Credentials and Requirements Committee.
- An approved Re-Entry Application provides an additional four years of admissibility to the examination process, beginning with the Written Examination. **This includes successful completion of both the Written and Oral Examinations.**
- If certification is not achieved during the four years of admissibility, review by the Credentials and Requirements Committee is required.

## IMPORTANT DEADLINE DATES:

- The deadline for all completed Re-Entry Application material is February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The approved Re-Entry candidate must complete the Written Examination Reply Form by the published Resident Reply Form deadline date.