

# 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: <https://www.abplasticsurgery.org>



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

**(Approved 2012 – Revised 5-18)**

**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 effective January 1, 2012, which sets limits for attaining board certification after residency completion. Member boards must limit the period of time that may lapse between the completion of an ACGME or RCPSA accredited residency 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 who completed plastic surgery in 2010 or earlier to obtain certification. The ABPS, in accordance with the ABMS Eligibility Policy, will initiate the following policy for surgeons seeking certification in plastic surgery:

ABPS candidates 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. Time spent in fellowship training will count against the eight year limit.

Candidates who completed training in 2010 or earlier, 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, Inc. 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.

Reapplication requirements are required at the end of the first five years of admissibility, if the Written and Oral Examinations are 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 Extended Admissibility Application must be met after eight years is exhausted in the examination process.

Refer to the ABPS Advertising Policy outlining the use of the term “board eligible” during the admissibility period.

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## **Notice to Candidates on Re-Entry to Surgical Practice**

### **Candidates who desire entry into the certification process**

Candidates who are eligible or who are applying to the certification examination process must inform the Board if they are not actively practicing plastic surgery or if there is a gap in active practice for any period of time. For those who are clinically inactive for two or more years, the Re-Entry Program Elements will apply.

Please refer to the Re-Entry to Surgical Practice policy which can be found on the Board's website [www.abplasticsurgery.org](http://www.abplasticsurgery.org), under the About Us tab – Policies.

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## Standard Reapplication

### Required five years after plastic surgery residency training if certification is not achieved

Candidates must successfully complete both the Written and Oral Examinations required to achieve certification within eight years after completion of plastic surgery residency. If the candidate has not successfully completed the Written and Oral Examinations five years after completion of 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 initial Application, if approved, will grant admissibility up to 5 years after graduation from plastic surgery residency.

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

Forms can be found on the Board's website [www.abplasticsurgery.org](http://www.abplasticsurgery.org), under the Candidates tab – Reapplication Information.

#### 1. ABPS Reapplication Form

- ) Including submission of all of the documents below and fee.
- ) If material is incomplete after three months of submission, it is considered invalid and the candidate is required to resubmit all materials.

#### 2. ABPS Reapplication Fee

- ) As listed on the current fee schedule.

#### 3. State Medical License

- ) Copy of all valid, full and unrestricted state medical licenses including expiration dates. Restricted state medical licenses will defer the candidate from the certification process until the restrictions are removed.

#### 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 in lieu of plastic surgery hospital privilege letters.

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## 5. Accreditation of Outpatient Surgical Facilities

) Accreditation certificates or documents from each facility are required. If the outpatient facility is in the process of accreditation, a document detailing the status is required. If the candidate does not operate in an outpatient surgical facility, a letter confirming such is required.

## 6. ABPS Peer Evaluations

) One evaluation must be completed by the Chief of Staff or Chief of Surgery at each hospital where the candidate holds plastic surgery privileges and two evaluations must be 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 from an accredited CME Provider of 150 hours of CME credits is 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. Certification or admissibility to another ABMS Member Board (if applicable)

) Copy of certificate or letter indicating examination status.

## 9. ABPS Malpractice Claims Form

) Summary of malpractice claims during the last five years.

## 10. Advertising and Marketing

) Copy of all printed and website materials from the past 12 months. Examples of practice advertisements include, but are not limited to, business cards, letterhead, brochures, proof copy of billboard images, telephone book (yellow page) listings, other print advertisements such as announcement flyers, magazine and newspaper advertisements and articles. Include practice's homepage, profile (About the Doctor) page, any page with candidate qualifications and credentials, any page that includes any Board or society emblem for the practice or the candidate and any page with references to Board Certification for the candidate or practice. Include Realself, Yelp, Healthgrades, Doximity, etc. For social media sites, include the profile pages only. This could be your practice profile pages for Facebook, Snap Chat, Twitter or other social media sites, and/or a list of videos from your practice posted to YouTube. **Do not include multiple procedure information pages with photos or audiovisual ads.**

## 11. Curriculum Vitae

) Copy of current Curriculum Vitae.

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## 12. Recommendation Letters

) Two recommendation letters from ABPS certified plastic surgeons who are familiar with your work. These letters are in addition to the required peer evaluations. These letters must be submitted by individuals other than those who completed the peer evaluations.

### **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.

The approved Reapplication candidate must complete the Written Examination Reply Form by the deadline date or complete and submit the online case collection for the Oral Examination by the deadline date, followed by the Reply Form if the case list is approved.

An additional Extended Admissibility Application for admissibility is required if the candidate has not successfully completed both the Written and Oral Examinations eight years after completion of plastic surgery residency training.

Contact the Board Office at [written@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:written@abplasticsurgery.org) for current deadline date and fee.

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## Extended Admissibility Application

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

The following Extended Admissibility Application requirements must be submitted after the eight year admissibility period has expired.

Forms can be found on the Board's website [www.abplasticsurgery.org](http://www.abplasticsurgery.org), under the Candidates tab – Reapplication Information.

#### 1. American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) In-Service Examination

Results from the ASPS In-Service Examination taken in a **proctored setting with a plastic surgery residency training program**. Must achieve 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. ABPS MOC-approved educational activities

Documentation of completion of an ABPS MOC-approved educational activity from each of the four plastic surgery MOC 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 related to the tracer procedures listed below.

Refer to list of activities aligned with the tracer procedures (divided by module) available on the Board's website [www.abplasticsurgery.org](http://www.abplasticsurgery.org) under the Diplomate tab, CME Resources. Submit proof from CME provider after completion.

Comprehensive	Cosmetic	Craniomaxillofacial	Hand Surgery
1. Reduction Mammoplasty	1. Augmentation Mammoplasty	1. Cleft Palate (Primary)	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/Expander	3. Suction Assisted Lipectomy	3. Secondary Cleft Nasal Deformity	3. Carpo-Metacarpal Joint Arthroplasty
4. Facial Skin Malignancy	4. Blepharoplasty	4. Non-Syndromal Craniosynostosis	4. Flexor Tendon Laceration

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5. Lower Extremity Acute Trauma	5. Abdominoplasty	5. Unilateral Cleft Lip Repair	5. Metacarpal fracture
6. Wound Management (including burns)	6. Rhinoplasty	6. Mandible Fractures	
7. Pressure Sores			

**Requirements #1 and #2 above must be completed and documentation submitted to the Board Office for approval prior to the completion and submission of the below remaining requirements.**

**3. ABPS Extended Admissibility Application Form**

- ) Including submission of all of the documents below and fee.
- ) If material is incomplete after three months of submission, it is considered invalid and the candidate is required to resubmit all materials.

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## **Extended Admissibility Application requirements:**

Candidates must complete the Extended Admissibility Application and obtain approval within **two years** of the expiration of admissibility to the ABPS examination process.

Candidates who do not complete the Extended Admissibility Application process and obtain approval within two years must submit a written request for a review by the Credentials and Requirements Committee.

An approved Extended Admissibility Application provides an additional four years of admissibility to the examination process, **beginning with the Written Examination. The candidate must successfully complete both the Written and Oral Examinations within the additional four years of admissibility. Note: If the candidate previously passed the Written Examination, it must be retaken during the Extended Admissibility period. There are no exceptions.**

If certification is not achieved during the additional four years of admissibility, a written request for review by the Credentials and Requirements Committee is required to continue in the process of certification.

The approved Extended Admissibility candidate must complete the Written Examination Reply Form by the deadline date.

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