

Board Eligibility Policy
The American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM)
Version 2017-3
Adopted Effective May 1, 2014

As of May 1, 2014, the Board Eligibility policy, approved by the ABFM Board of Directors in accordance with the ABMS Board Eligibility policy, will only apply to physicians attempting to certify for the first time. It does not apply to physicians who have previously been certified by the ABFM. For physicians whose certification expired prior to May 1, 2014, the ABFM will provide verification of physicians who are able to sit for the next examination. The previous policy relative to board eligibility may continue to be applied, but for no longer than seven years.

The American Board of Family Medicine defines the seven-year period of board eligibility as (1) the period that begins January 1, 2012, for any physician eligible to apply for initial certification prior to that date, or (2) the period that begins the day after the successful completion of an ACGME-accredited Family Medicine residency training program, on or after January 1, 2012.

A physician who wishes to be designated as board eligible must continuously comply with the Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure and Personal Conduct. In addition, the physician must continue to participate in meeting the requirements for Certification Resident Entry or Certification Entry process.

After expiration of the seven-year period of board eligibility, a family physician can no longer use the designation "board eligible" without meeting additional requirements. Likewise, the physician may not register to take the Family Medicine Certification examination. In order to keep or regain the "board-eligible" designation for an additional seven-year period, the physician must successfully complete at least one year of additional training in an accredited family medicine residency training program (or an ABFM-approved alternative). During this 7-year period, the previous requirements remain in place with regard to continuous compliance with the Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure and Personal Conduct, and continuous participation in meeting the requirements for the Certification Entry process.