



## At-A-Glance

To meet the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Assessment Standards for Continuing Certification, ABFM is transitioning to a new Continuous Certification 5-Year Cycle.

The ABMS Standards for Continuing Certification state that “member boards must determine at intervals no longer than five years whether a Diplomate is meeting continuing certification requirements to retain each certificate.” This change will help Diplomates maintain awareness of increasingly rapid medical advancements and changes in practice guidelines.

Beginning in 2025, every ABFM Diplomate will be enrolled in the new 5-Year Cycle when their next exam requirement is due. The new 5-Year Cycle is built on the same four foundational components that make up the current certification process: professionalism and licensure, self-assessment and lifelong learning, performance improvement and cognitive expertise.

## Certification Components



### Professionalism and Licensure

Designed to assess professional standing, board-certified family physicians are subject to compliance with the ABFM Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure and Personal Conduct (Guidelines), which includes maintaining record of approved medical licensure.



### Self-Assessment and Lifelong Learning

Designed to help family physicians identify gaps in knowledge through participation in self-assessment activities, this component enhances medical knowledge by reviewing the most up-to-date clinical content.



### Performance Improvement

Designed to support high-quality patient care, this component will help family physicians identify an improvement opportunity or a performance gap, implement a change in care delivery, and measure the impact of that change to their patients/practice.



### Cognitive Expertise

Designed to assess and measure clinical knowledge, the Family Medicine Certification Longitudinal Assessment (longitudinal assessment) and Family Medicine Certification Examination (one-day exam) serve to assure the public that you are up-to-date and aware of the best practices in medical care across the wide spectrum of conditions treated by family physicians.

### Benefits

The 5-Year Cycle provides the choice to customize how you meet your certification requirements! Benefits include:

- If you are currently certified, you do not have to take the one-day exam before starting the 5-Year Cycle.
- You never have to take the one-day exam again to maintain your certification, unless you want to.
- Continuous learning by answering 25 quarterly exam questions and receiving immediate feedback.
- More time and flexibility to complete your certification activities.
- A fifth year off if you complete all requirements in four years.
- Built-in time to complete remaining requirements, if needed.

# How It Works

## 5-Year Certification Cycle

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Longitudinal Assessment</b> Complete up to 25 exam questions per quarter (100/year).			Additional Longitudinal Assessment Time (if needed) OR One-Day Exam* (if you choose)	
	<b>60 Certification Points</b> Earn 60 points through completion of certification activities, including at least one Self-Assessment and one Performance Improvement activity.			<b>Year Off (no requirements)</b> OR <b>Time to Catch Up (if needed)</b>
	<b>Average of 50 CME per Year</b> Earn a total of 200 CME with a minimum of 50% in Division I.			
	<b>Medical License</b> Continuously hold medical license(s) that meet ABFM Professionalism Guidelines.			
	<b>Annual Certification Fee</b>			

\*If longitudinal assessment minimum passing standard not met or opt for traditional one-day exam.

## Beginning the 5-Year Cycle

ABFM is committed to honoring your 10-year exam requirement. This means currently certified Diplomates who met the exam requirement between 2014 and 2024 will not be required to transition to new 5-Year Cycle until their current exam expires. For example, if you met your exam requirement in 2024, you will not be required to transition to the new 5-Year Cycle until 2034.

For anyone new to certification (or coming back to recertify) in 2025 and after, you will be required to pass the traditional one-day exam to become certified and will immediately start the 5-Year Cycle the following January 1.

Refer to your MyABFM Portfolio to find information specific to when you will start the 5-Year Cycle. AFBM will provide instructions via email and within your MyABFM Portfolio when it's your time to register.



To determine when you will transition to the 5-Year Cycle, please visit your MyABFM Portfolio by scanning the QR code.

You never have to take the one-day exam to maintain your certification unless you want to. Instead, you will answer 25 quarterly exam questions over three to four years through the longitudinal assessment. However, if you prefer the one-day exam, you can opt to take it in year four.

Similar to the current certification process, you can choose from a variety of self-assessment and performance improvement activities to earn certification points, and submit CME credits you've recently completed.

## Benefits of the Longitudinal Assessment

Since being introduced in 2019, more than 70% of eligible physicians have chosen the longitudinal assessment to meet their exam. More than 42,000 Diplomates have participated and provided the following feedback.

### What AFBM Diplomates Are Saying:

- 99% report it is relevant to family medicine
- 85% report intentions to make changes in practice based on what they learned
- 85% seek more information after participating
- 92% report less test anxiety
- 95% use references and critiques

### Want to Learn More?

Visit [www.theabfm.org](http://www.theabfm.org) or contact the AFBM Support Center at 877-223-7437.

