



American Board
of Family Medicine



Get to Know ABFM Certification



Understanding Certification

Continuous Certification Process

Points Requirement (50 points required per 3-year stage)	Self-Assessment <i>Minimum 1 KSA, 4 CKSAs, or 10 NJC articles</i>
	Performance Improvement <i>Minimum 1 PI activity</i>
	Additional Self-Assessment and PI Activities <i>Your choice</i>
CME Requirement	Continuing Medical Education <i>Minimum 50% from Division 1 Credit</i>
Professionalism, Licensure, and Personal Conduct Requirement	Comply with ABFM Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure, and Personal Conduct <i>Continually hold a valid and unlimited medical license</i>
Annual Certification Fee Requirement	Submit an Annual \$200 Certification Fee** (or \$600 per 3-year stage)

*The online applications for the one-day exam and FMCLA open in fall of year nine and must be completed prior to enrollment in either exam option.

**The \$200 annual certification fees allow you to complete all of these activities and to utilize as many additional activities beyond the requirements as you wish for your own learning.

Family Medicine Certification Components

Professionalism

The purpose of this component is to demonstrate your commitment to professional behavior and adherence to the social contract that physicians are expected to follow with patients, peers and staff. ABFM has Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure and Personal Conduct that specify requirements and expectations that Diplomates must demonstrate as part of remaining certified. Foundational to these guidelines is the maintenance of a current, valid medical license without practice limitations. These guidelines can be found on our website at: theabfm.org/ABFMGuidelines

Self-Assessment and Lifelong Learning

The purpose of this component of Family Medicine Certification is to help you identify your knowledge gaps so you can close these through the accompanying critiques, additional self-study and CME. ABFM currently offers four types of Self-Assessment activities:

- **Knowledge Self-Assessment (KSA)**
KSAs are comprised of 60 single best answer questions centered around core competencies focused in a particular condition (e.g., Diabetes) or area of patient care (e.g. Care of Children). You will need to answer 80% of the total questions correctly in order to receive credit, and can retake the assessment until you are successful. A critique that explains the rationale for the correct and incorrect answers is provided for each question, as well as references for further review.
- **Continuous Knowledge Self-Assessment (CKSA)**
This activity allows you to complete 25 questions in a quarter that cover a breadth of conditions encountered in family medicine. There is no passing standard for this activity. After you complete 100 CKSA questions, you may access a performance report that summarizes your performance by topic to help you identify knowledge gaps.
- **ABFM National Journal Club (NJC)**
This service offers a convenient solution to access peer-reviewed articles to help you stay current with advances in medical literature, support shared decision making with patients and families, and advocate for your patients with subspecialists, health systems and payers. As an added value, participation in the service offers the opportunity to earn one (1) CME credit and one (1) certification point for each article activity completed; 10 completed journal article assessments will fulfill the Knowledge Self-Assessment (KSA) requirement for each stage.
- **Alternative Self-Assessment**
Additional activities are available for you to use for your own learning and certification points. These can help you complete the 50 point requirement for each stage, but do not count toward the minimum KSA requirement.

Years 1-3	Years 4-6	Years 7-9	Years 10-12	
10 points	10 points	10 points	YEAR 10 Complete One-Day Examination — OR — Begin FMCLA Quarterly Longitudinal Assessment*	10 points
20 points	20 points	20 points		20 points
20 points	20 points	20 points		20 points
150 CME	150 CME	150 CME		150 CME
✓	✓	✓		✓
✓	✓	✓		✓

CERTIFICATION PROCESS CONTINUES

Performance Improvement

The purpose of this component is to demonstrate that you are able to look reflectively at your practice, identify opportunities to improve the care of patients, or the processes of care delivery, and then to develop and implement an intervention that would address the performance gap. Using a quality improvement process, these activities will facilitate your use of data to determine if the intervention you designed resulted in the improvement you sought.

ABFM intends for this to be a meaningful activity that helps you to continuously improve the care you deliver, and a wide array of options are available for you to choose from.

Using the Performance Improvement Locator in your MyABFM Portfolio, you can identify the most relevant activities for completing this requirement based on your practice type and scope.

Credit is easily available for performance improvement efforts that you are already engaged in within your own practice or as part of any larger organization in which you work with other physicians to improve care. More information can be at theabfm.org/continue-certification/performance-improvement or in your MyABFM Portfolio.

Cognitive Expertise

The purpose of regular assessment of your cognitive expertise is to show that you are undergoing objective measurement of the knowledge that sets you apart from non-certified physicians and other non-physician providers with less training and experience. In doing so, it serves to assure the public that you are up to date with best practices in care across the wide spectrum of conditions treated by family physicians. There are currently two types of examination options available:

- **One-Day Family Medicine Examination**

Consists of 300 multiple-choice questions that you will take once every 10 years. These are administered semi-annually in April and November, at a proctored test center like the one in which you took your recent certification exam.

- **Family Medicine Certification Longitudinal Assessment (FMCLA)**

FMCLA is an alternative designed to be more flexible in delivery and supportive of ongoing learning and retention of knowledge than the one-day examination. You will receive 25 timed multiple-choice questions each quarter that mirror the same types of questions on the one-day exam. These are completed in the location and time of your choice and can be answered via computer or tablet. References may be used when answering questions, though consultation with another physician is prohibited. You have up to four years to complete 300 questions, which allows for either completion at the end of three years or taking breaks in up to four quarters as needed.



MyABFM Portfolio

The American Board of Family Medicine provides you with an individual physician portfolio. Here, you can access the required activities for each of the 3-year stages, as well as track your ongoing progress in maintaining Family Medicine Certification over your practice lifetime.

The MyABFM Portfolio includes a personal profile for you to keep important information updated such as your physical address, email, clinical status, medical license and more. It's important to review and update this information periodically to ensure you receive timely and relevant communications regarding your certification requirements.

Clinical Status Designation

In circumstances where career changes take place, you can update your Clinical Status online in your MyABFM Portfolio. It is not necessary or advisable to update your status for vacation or a short leave of absence.

Clinically Active is defined as physicians who have direct and/or consultative patient care of **ANY** type, even if not within a traditional continuity practice.

Clinically Inactive is defined as physicians **who do not have** direct and/or consultative patient care (e.g. fully administrative or research and do not see patients in any setting). If you are Clinically Inactive and designate this in your portfolio, you are exempt from completing a clinically based Performance Improvement (PI) activity. The 50-point requirement for activities within each stage remains, and these may be satisfied by completing additional self-assessment or non-clinically-based PI activities.



We're Here to Help

Should you have questions or feedback regarding your participation in continuous Family Medicine Certification, you can find most of your answers through our website at www.theabfm.org.

Additionally, our expert and knowledgeable Support Center team is eager to assist you. They are available to help answer your questions via phone, email, fax or live chat.

PHONE: 877-223-7437

FAX: 859-335-7516

EMAIL: help@theabfm.org

LIVE CHAT: www.theabfm.org –
Locate live chat at top of page

HOURS: Monday–Friday:
8 AM – 9 PM (Eastern)
Saturday:
9 AM – 5 PM (Eastern)

WEBSITE: www.theabfm.org



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Certification | August | 2022

