



FAMILY MEDICINE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION FAQ

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

One-Day Family Medicine Certification Examination

The One-Day Family Medicine Certification examination consists of 300 multiple-choice questions that are to be completed within four 95-minute timed sessions of 75 questions each, with pooled break times provided. This exam is administered each April and November at a proctored test center. Scores are sent to you within 6-8 weeks of completing the examination. To learn more, download the [One-Day Family Medicine Certification Examination Candidate Booklet](#).

Family Medicine Certification Longitudinal Assessment (FMCLA)

FMCLA is an alternative to the one-day examination and designed to support both assessment and ongoing learning during your participation. In FMCLA, you will receive 25 timed, multiple-choice questions each calendar quarter that can be answered via computer or tablet at the location of your choice. FMCLA provides flexibility to complete the questions over time in one or several sittings. Print or online references may also be utilized. Like the one-day examination, FMCLA covers topics that represent the breadth of family medicine and requires 300 questions to be answered. You will have up to four years to complete this, which allows for some quarterly breaks, if needed along the way. To learn more, download the [FMCLA Candidate Information Booklet](#).

[One-Day Family Medicine Certification Examination](#)

1. How do I access the application for the One-Day Family Medicine Certification examination?

You may apply for the One-Day Family Medicine Certification examination as follows:

1. Log into your [Physician Portfolio](#).
2. Under the "My Certification" section, click the "Certification Examination" link.
3. Click the blue application button.
4. Proceed as prompted.

2. What are the costs for the One-Day Family Medicine Certification examination?

As of 2020, the cost of the initial certification examination is \$1300. For physicians in Continuous Certification, the majority of the cost of the one examination attempt is included in the annual certification fee, but a \$250 processing fee is due upon registration. Any repeat attempt after an unsuccessful examination attempt does require a full examination fee of \$1300 to retake the examination.

3. When will the official results be released?

It takes approximately 6-8 weeks from the last date in the examination window for candidates to receive their final and official examination results, which may be accessed in your Physician Portfolio when available.

4. Why did I receive a pending preliminary result?

ABFM is able to release scores more quickly in cases where there is high certainty that the pass or fail result is accurate. If you receive a pending review, that means that a preliminary result is unable to be determined based on your initial exam results data. Reasons why a preliminary score may be pending include:

- A score is too close to the minimum passing standard to provide a preliminary result at this time. The complete scoring process must be conducted in order to determine the final outcome.
- An exam day incident was reported and requires additional investigation to determine the impact the incident had on the exam performance. Exam incidents take time to review the exam log information, video/audio recordings and exam day details.
- Findings in the preliminary exam data review indicate a detailed examination review is required. For example, an exam with multiple unanswered questions will result in a detailed examination review to ensure there wasn't an exam incident.

5. Why is the scoring process so extensive?

Numerous steps must occur between the time you complete your examination and the time you receive your final exam score. First, your exam data must be transmitted from Prometric to ABFM. Upon receipt of your exam data, ABFM conducts several quality assurance checks to ensure accuracy before it can be scored. After scoring, a report is generated and available in your [Physician Portfolio](#). Each of these steps is critical to ensure the greatest degree of accuracy of your final result.

6. I failed my examination. What are my options?

If your exam attempt was unsuccessful, you may attempt the exam again as long as you continue to meet the requirements to do so. Requirements can vary depending on the timing of when you took your examination. Please review your Physician Portfolio to find those details. If your requirements are met, you may register for the next available examination date. Note: A new examination fee is required for any subsequent examination attempts.

7. What is the pass rate for the One-Day Family Medicine Certification examination?

Pass rates are available on our website at this link: [Pass Rates](#)

8. How do I review my performance on my previous exam?

You may review previous performance reports by accessing your "Exam Results" page within your [Physician Portfolio](#). Previous performance reports contain your overall score and a detailed analysis of performance, analyzed by exam blueprint categories. This may be a helpful resource in guiding your efforts to maintain and grow your knowledge of Family Medicine over time.

Family Medicine Certification Longitudinal Assessment Pilot

1. Who can participate in FMCLA?

Any Diplomate currently certified in their 10th year of continuous certification will have the opportunity to choose FMCLA when the examination application period opens in the fall before the 10th year begins. Any eligible Diplomate who chooses FMCLA by completing the online application process will be permitted to utilize this alternative to take their examination, as long as all certification requirements continue to be met.

2. How do I access the application for the FMCLA?

You can access the application in your Physician Portfolio when it becomes available each year as follows:

1. Log in to your [Physician Portfolio](#).
2. Under the "My Certification" section, click the "Certification Examination" link.

3. Click the blue application button.
4. Proceed as prompted.

4. What are the costs for FMCLA?

There are no additional costs to take FMCLA other than the one-time \$250 process fee, just as with the one-day examination.

5. What is the Meaningful Participation requirement for FMCLA?

In your first year of FMCLA, you will need to answer a minimum of 80 questions by the end of the calendar year in order to have demonstrated Meaningful Participation and move into the second year of quarterly questions. The 80 items completed is what we refer to as Meaningful Participation. Please note that you will meet this requirement when your total number of questions answered reaches 80, irrespective of whether they were answered correctly or incorrectly (the requirement is 80 items completed, not 80% correct responses). After the first year, there is no minimum requirement for the number of questions you answer in a year, as long as you are able to answer 300 questions by the end of four years. If you do not meet the Meaningful Participation threshold in year one, you will be removed from FMCLA and will need to take the one-day examination in the following year. Your certification will remain valid to the end of that year to allow for you to take the one-day examination.

6. When will I receive my results for FMCLA?

FMCLA results are divided into three stages:

- **Immediate Feedback.** Once an answer is submitted for a question, you will receive an immediate response indicating whether the answer is correct or incorrect and the percentage of participants who selected each option. A critique explaining why the answer is correct or incorrect will also be provided. You will have an opportunity to provide comments about any question that only ABFM will see. We will use your feedback to evaluate items.
- **Annual/Quarterly Feedback.** Once you have met the first year of Meaningful Participation, you will receive a performance report at the start of the following quarter that reflects what your estimated score would be if you had completed the examination at that point. This estimated score will be updated at the end of each subsequent quarter. You can use these scores to monitor your progress towards achieving the minimum passing standard and determine whether you need to alter your continuing education plan. Your score report also provides you with information about the percentage of questions you answered correctly in each blueprint content category and some item descriptors so you can identify your knowledge gaps.
- **Final Score.** A final score and detailed report will be provided once you have completed 300 scorable items. If you do not complete a total of 300 questions at the end of four years, any unanswered questions will be counted as incorrect.

7. I did not achieve a passing score for FMCLA. What are my options?

If you were unsuccessful at achieving a passing score on FMCLA, you will have one calendar year to take the one-day examination without losing your certification. Details about how to register for the examination can be found in your Physician Portfolio. You will need to be current on all certification requirements before registering and an examination fee of \$1300 is required for this attempt.

8. What is the difference between FMCLA and CKSA?

Because of the similarities of the quarterly questions included in FMCLA, one-day exam alternative and CKSA, Continuous Knowledge Self-Assessment activity, these two activities are often confused as being the same thing. The chart below describes the difference between the two certification activities.

	FMCLA The One-Day Exam Alternative	CKSA Knowledge Self-Assessment Credit
Who is Eligible?	Current Diplomates who are in their exam year	<i>Anyone</i> , as part of their knowledge self-assessment activities
Meets Requirement For:	Assessment of Cognitive Knowledge (the exam)	2.5 certification activity points & 2.5 CME credits per quarter; four completed quarters meets the minimum KSA requirement for a three-year stage
Is There a Performance Standard?	Yes Performance must meet a minimum passing standard	No There is no minimum passing standard for this activity
Are Questions Timed?	Yes 5 minutes per question <i>If there is no clock, you are <u>not</u> in FMCLA!</i>	No Questions are not timed
Can I Revisit Questions?	No While you can review questions and critiques after answering each question, because this is your examination, they cannot be revisited later for item security	Yes Questions <i>can</i> be reviewed after answering and critiques can be reviewed after the fact
Where Do I Access?	FMCLA button in the fmcla.theabfm.org	Certification Activities link in the Physician Portfolio

For additional help, contact our Support Center

- Phone: 877-223-7437
- Email: help@theabfm.org
- Live Chat
- Fax: 859-335-7516