

## Board Certification Eligibility in Family Medicine

There are two frequently accepted pathways to Board Certification in Family Medicine from residency training:

**American Board of Family Medicine:** <https://www.theabfm.org/become-certified/i-am-acgme-residency-program> Training requirements for initial ABFM Family Medicine Certification include:

Medical school completion: Documentation that you have received an M.D. degree from a United States or Canadian medical school that is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education or the Committee for Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools, or a D.O. degree from a college of osteopathic medicine accredited by the American Osteopathic Association.

If you are an international medical graduate, recipient of a Standard Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) Certificate, or in compliance with other Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requirements for entry into U.S. graduate medical training, you may qualify for entry into an ACGME-accredited residency that would meet training requirements for initial certification.

Residency completion: Satisfactory completion of three years of training (defined as a full 36 calendar months with 12 months in each of the PGY-1, PGY-2, and PGY-3 years) in an ACGME-accredited Family Medicine residency program. If your residency program does not meet ACGME requirements, your training will not be recognized by the American Board of Family Medicine.

Satisfactory Completion of Residency: ABFM prefers that all three years of your family medicine residency training occur in the same ACGME-accredited program, or its equivalent (e.g., Flexible/Transitional Year, AOA Osteopathic Internship, etc.). However, we recognize that circumstances may occur that lead you to change specialty and/or location of residency training. In these cases, your residency program must notify ABFM that you are entering training with advanced placement credit, using the RTM system. This must be done before you start at the new program in order to count toward your minimum requirements for board eligibility. If the necessary information is not submitted before the start of your training at a new program, this could extend the duration of your training.

The last two years of your family medicine residency training must be completed in the same accredited program, to allow for satisfactory continuity of care experience. Transfers after the beginning of the PGY-2 year are approved only in extraordinary circumstances. All education and training experiences are subject to review by ABFM before you are approved to take the Family Medicine Certification Examination.

The Resident Certification Entry requirements you will need to complete before receiving your initial board certification are as follows:

The completion of self-assessment and quality improvement activities totaling a minimum of 50 points, achieved through:

At least one of the following ABFM-developed Knowledge Self-Assessment Activities:

- Knowledge Self-Assessment (KSA)
- Continuous Knowledge Self-Assessment (CKSA)
- At least one Performance Improvement (PI) activity, utilizing data from your patient population
- Additional activities to reach a minimum of 50 activity points.

## Board Certification Eligibility in Family Medicine

- Continuous compliance with ABFM Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure, and Personal Conduct which includes holding medical license(s) which meet the licensure requirements of the Guidelines
- Successful completion of the Family Medicine Certification Examination

Final Verification: Successful completion of the certification examination is one major step to becoming board certified, but it is not the only step. Your residency program must also verify your satisfactory completion of residency training through the RTM system. The effective date of your initial certification will be the date on which you have met all certification requirements:

- Successful performance on the Family Medicine Certification Examination
- Program Director verification that you have met all the ACGME program requirements
- Continuous compliance with ABFM Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure, and Personal Conduct which includes holding medical license(s) which meet the licensure requirements of the Guidelines

**American Osteopathic Board of Family Medicine:** <https://certification.osteopathic.org/family-physicians/board-policies/> A physician's eligibility for AOA board certification begins upon completion of their specialty or subspecialty training program and ends on Dec. 31st of the following sixth year.

To be eligible for certification from the AOBFP, candidates must meet the criteria below:

- Be a graduate of a COCA-accredited college of osteopathic medicine
- Complete specific training and other requirements for the desired specialty or subspecialty
- You have completed two osteopathic in-service exams (ISE or ISE+) produced and administered by ACOFP
- Register for the Early Entry Initial Certification Written (Cognitive) Exam, offered during spring of PGY3, provided you meet one of the following eligibility requirements:
  - You are a DO in a Family Medicine residency.
  - You are an MD candidate in a designated osteopathic resident position in a Family Medicine program with Osteopathic Recognition (view definitions from ACGME).
  - You are an MD candidate enrolled in a Family Medicine residency and have completed OMT/OPP training (the AOBFP is in the process of establishing requirements for this training).
- Hold an active license to practice in a state or territory
- Adhere to the AOA Code of Ethics
- Board eligibility status will be automatically terminated in the following circumstances:
  - After completion of the board eligibility timeframe
  - Upon denial of an appeal to extend the board eligibility timeframe for an individual
  - Upon award of certification
- AOBFP written verification of board eligibility requires your submission of all application documents and fees.
- OMT Performance Examination requirements (Optional):  
<https://certification.osteopathic.org/family-physicians/certification-process/early-entry-certification-program/omt-performance-exam/>
- See the AOBFP Handbook for more information.