Time-Limited Alternative Pathway for Board Certification

The American Board of Podiatric Medicine is pleased to offer a time-limited alternative pathway for ABPM Board Certification for those who did not complete three years of qualified, CMPE-approved residency training as per section 6.2 of CPME 220.

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1 Overview

1.1 The ABPM Time-Limited Alternative Pathway for Board Certification is available to podiatrists who do not qualify for board certification through the current CPME-approved pathway requiring completion of three years of CPME-approved residency training as per section 6.2 of CPME 220. *Candidates who qualify for board certification through the current process must apply through the standard pathway*.

1.2 Previous Diplomates of the ABPM with revoked, suspended, inactive or similar designations to their certifications and status are not eligible to apply.

1.3 Applications for The ABPM Time-Limited Alternative Pathway for Board Certification through this time-limited process will be accepted during the 2027 and 2028 calendar years. Candidates who do not secure board certification in 2027 may reapply in 2028.

1.4 Certification via the ABPM Time-Limited Alternative Pathway is obtained by achieving 75 points cumulatively from any of the six available categories listed in this document. Categories are derived from the six ACGME core competencies as a blueprint for demonstrating physician competence.

1.5 Please note that the total points available in each available category may exceed the maximum number of points that may be applied from that respective category when calculating the final score.

2 Categories

2.1 Patient care

Maximum points that may be applied from this category: 30

Candidates may submit up to 12 total cases, each case worth 3 points.
Case reviews should include an initial history and physical with a defined problem, and resolution of that problem.
Please see Case Review Process (page 7) for how to submit cases.

2.2 Medical knowledge

Maximum points that may be applied from this category: 50

ABPM Alternative Pathway Examination: Applicants may sit for a standardized 100-question examination. This examination will consist of the didactic portion of the ABPM Certification Examination. Scoring on the examination is not pass or fail. Rather, the percent scored in the certification examination will be used to determine the total number of points the candidate receives from a 50-point maximum available.
Please see Certification Exam (page 9) for further explanation of this process and examples on how scoring is calculated.

Recognition by Medical Organizations: Fellowships or certifications awarded by approved medical or podiatric organizations and/or boards may provide up to 10 total points (5 points each). Organizations approved by the ABPM Board of Directors include, but are not limited to, the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (40-hour training course certificate), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow (fellowship), the American College of Podiatric Medicine (fellowship), the American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine (fellowship), the American Board of Multiple Specialties in Podiatry (certification), the American Professional Wound Care Association (fellowship), and the American Board of Wound Healing (CWSP). Certifications from other organizations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

(Categories continue on next page)

(Categories continued)

2.3 Practice-based learning

Maximum points that may be applied from this category: 10

Candidates may submit a list of peer-reviewed publications authored or CME/CECH approved lectures presented, with each being worth up to 2 points.
Candidates may submit appropriate evidence of residency or fellowship training, with each year of training worth 5 points, up to a potential of 10 points.

2.4 Communication skills

Maximum points that may be applied from this category: 10

Candidates will obtain points for a submission of a clean National Practitioner Databank Report. This includes no history of malpractice liability and no adverse actions related to licensure, certification, or clinical privileges.
Please see Communication Addendum (page 13) for further explanation.

2.5 Professionalism

Maximum points that may be applied from this category: 20

2.5.1 Profession Letter: Candidates may submit 1 letter of recommendation, worth eight points, from a CEO, CMO, Chief of Staff, Department Chair, or Service Line Chief of a hospital or accredited medical facility.

Hardcopy letters should be signed and written on appropriate letterhead; these may be mailed directly to:
ABPM
5015 Campuswood Dr. Suite 206
East Syracuse, NY 13057

Digital letters must be electronically mailed by the writer to:
admin@podiatryboard.org.

Please see Professional Letter Addendum (page 14) for details required in this letter.

(Categories continue on next page)

(Categories continued)

2.5.2 Peer Reference: Candidates may submit 2 peer references, each worth six points.
Candidates must use ABPM's Peer Reference Form when seeking reviews.
No other forms will be accepted in its place.
This form is available online through the ABPM Online Dashboard.
Please see attached Peer Reference Form (page 15) for additional information.

2.6 Systems-based practice
Maximum points that may be applied from this category: 10

Candidates may receive up to 10 points for work experience which demonstrates evidence of diverse medical practice experiences, i.e. hospital inpatient, hospital outpatient, ambulatory surgical center, nursing home, and physician office.
Candidates may submit evidence of serving on committees of accredited medical facilities, two points for each committee.
Please see System-based Practice Addendum (page 12) for the required form for submission.

3 Timeline and Fees

3.1 The Time-Limited Alternative Pathway for ABPM Board Certification is available for those who did not complete 3-years of qualified, CMPE-approved residency training as per section 6.2 of CPME 220.

3.2 This pathway is not approved for board certification for individuals who would otherwise qualify for board certification through the standard process.

3.3 Applications for this pathway will be available in 2027 and 2028.

3.4 The fee for candidates participating the Time-Limited Alternative Pathway for ABPM Board Certification is: $1,750.00.

3.5 January 1: Applications open.

The application includes submission of practice-based learning experience and systems-based practice experience.

3.6 June 1: Enrollment in the Alternative Pathway Examination opens.

Candidates MUST separately enroll in the Alternative Pathway Examination. The cost of the examination is included in their application fees. When enrolling in the examination through the ABPM Online Dashboard, candidates will be transferred to Pearson, our testing partner, to arrange their on-site testing location.

3.7 August 1: Applications for the Alternative Pathway close.

3.8 August 1: Enrollment in the Alternative Pathway Examination close.

3.9 December 1: Case review and professionalism submissions due.

3.10 First week of December (Final Date TBD): Alternative Pathway Examination.

3.11 Late January, 6-8 weeks after Alternative Pathway Examination: Candidate will receive notification of final results.

3.12 If a candidate chooses to withdraw from the process before results are revealed, only a partial refund of $1,250.00 will be provided from the original $1,750.00 application fee.

3.13 Candidates who are unsuccessful in 2027 may reapply in 2028; however, full application materials and fees will be required.

4 Case Review Process

4.1 A total of 12 cases may be submitted on the applicant's ABPM Online Dashboard. Cases must include the diagnosis and management of a podiatric problem. Each individual case is worth 3 points. The maximum for this category is 30 total points.

4.2 A variety of cases should be submitted demonstrating the candidate's utilization of their complete skillset. There is no diversity requirement as to what cases need to be submitted. ABPM recognizes that every practice is different and how an individual podiatrist chooses to use their degree is ultimately their decision.

4.3 Submitted cases must include:

1. Initial complete or problem-focused history and physical examination.
2. Progress notes documenting diagnosis.
3. Progress notes documenting an acceptable treatment plan with the use of medical, physical, and/or surgical modalities and appropriate consultation referrals, as necessary.
4. Documentation of the outcome of the diagnosis.

4.4 For all submitted cases involving surgical intervention, the required documentation listed below must be included; *submissions missing any required elements will be considered incomplete and not scored*.

1. Preoperative clinical evaluation, including the surgical plan.
2. Preoperative imaging demonstrating diagnosis.
3. Pertinent laboratory and pathology findings, when applicable.
    a. Cases involving infections.
    b. Cases involving amputations.
    c. Cases involving soft-tissue masses or tumors.
4. The operative report.
5. Postoperative imaging demonstrating surgical intervention.
6. Postoperative clinical evaluation documenting resolution of diagnosis.

(Case review process continues on next page)

(Case review process continued)

4.5 Documentation requirements:

1. All documents pertaining to each case will need to be submitted through the ABPM Online Dashboard.
2. Imaging, laboratory reports and pathology reports will need to be submitted through the ABPM Online Dashboard.
3. All documents must contain legible documentation.
4. Images must be clear.
5. Photographs taken of a computer screen will not be accepted.
6. Scanned copies of physical documents may be used; however, the forms must be converted to the appropriate format before uploading.
7. Images must be saved and uploaded as .JPEG, .PNG, or PDF format.

5 Certification Examination

5.1 Candidates applying for the ABPM Time-Limited Alternative Pathway are allowed to sit for the ABPM Alternative Pathway Examination.

5.2 The examination will consist of a standardized 100-questions.

5.3 The examination will be administered on-site at Pearson testing centers.

5.4 This examination is not pass or fail, rather it will be used to tabulate a score up to a maximum of 50 points. Following the outcome of the examination, a percent correct score will be calculated. This will be converted to a 50-point scale to determine the total number of points the candidate receives for the examination.

Examples:

a. Candidate scores 90% correct on the certification exam
   Points earned: 45
b. Candidate scores 81% correct on the certification exam
   Points earned: 41
c. Candidate scores 50% correct on the certification exam
   Points earned: 25

6 Professional Letter Addendum

6.1 When seeking a letter from a CEO, CMO, Chief of Staff, Department Chair, or Service Line Chief of a hospital or an accredited medical facility letter must be signed and written on appropriate letterhead and include review of the candidate on the following four competencies:

1. Patient care
2. Systems-based practice
3. Communication skills
4. Professionalism

6.2 Hardcopy letters should be signed and written on appropriate letterhead; these may be mailed directly to:
ABPM
5015 Campuswood Dr. Suite 206
East Syracuse, NY 13057

ABPM reserves the right to verify the letter with the writer

Digital letters must be electronically mailed by the writer to: admin@podiatryboard.org.

6.3 Please see page 14 for a sample professional letter.

7 Peer Reference Addendum

7.1 Candidates seeking evaluation from their peers must use the ABPM Peer Reference Form. No credit will be provided if any other source of review or other forms are used. Forms must be printed, completed by hand, and signed by the reviewer.

7.2 Completed forms may be scanned and electronically submitted through the ABPM Online Dashboard. ABPM has the right to request the paper copies of these forms be physically mailed to our office.

7.3 Alternatively, these may be mailed directly to ABPM at the following address:
ABPM
5015 Campuswood Dr. Suite 206
East Syracuse, NY 13057.

7.4 Please see page 15 for a sample Peer Reference Evaluation Form.

8 Systems-Based Practice Addendum

8.1 Candidates may receive up to 10 points for work experience which demonstrates evidence of diverse medical practice experiences.

8.2 Medical practice experiences may include: hospital inpatient, hospital outpatient, ambulatory surgical center, nursing home, and physician office-based care.

8.3 Evidence may be submitted in the following forms:

1. Signed letter confirming current or past employment.
   Letter should be written and signed by CEO, CMO, Chief of Staff, Department Chair, or Service Line Chief or Human Resources (HR).
   Please note that Profession letters may also serve as dual purpose for this category.

2. Signed letter from accredited medical facility committee chair/co-chair confirming past or current involvement in each respective committee.

8.4 Completed forms may be scanned and electronically submitted through the ABPM Online Dashboard. ABPM has the right to request the paper copies of these forms be physically mailed to our office.

8.5 Alternatively, these may be mailed directly to ABPM at the following address:
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5015 Campuswood Dr. Suite 206
East Syracuse, NY 13057.

9 Communication Addendum

9.1 It has been well documented that teachable communication behaviors (e.g., listening, information giving, time spent) are associated with fewer malpractice claims among physicians.

9.2 This relationship has been established by numerous peer-reviewed studies, including the following:

1. Levinson W, et al. Physician-patient communication. The relationship with malpractice claims among primary care physicians and surgeons. JAMA. 1997 Feb 19;277(7):553-9.
2. Moore PJ, et al. Medical malpractice: the effect of doctor-patient relations on medical patient perceptions and malpractice intentions. West J Med. 2000 Oct;173(4):244-50.
3. Stelfox HT, et al. The relation of patient satisfaction with complaints against physicians and malpractice lawsuits. Am J Med. 2005 Oct;118(10):1126-33.

[Institution Letterhead]

Date
Re: Professional Letter of Support – John Doe, DPM
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in my capacity as [CEO / CMO / Chief of Staff / Department Chair / Service Line Chief] at [Institution Name], an accredited medical facility, to provide this professional letter of support for John Doe, DPM in connection with his application through the American Board of Podiatric Medicine Alternative Pathway.

I have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Doe in a professional capacity and to observe his clinical practice within our institution. Based on my experience, I offer the following assessment of Dr. Doe in the required competency areas:

Patient Care
Dr. Doe consistently demonstrates sound clinical judgment and delivers high-quality, patient-centered care. His approach reflects appropriate assessment, treatment planning, and follow-through, with a clear focus on patient safety and outcomes.

Systems-Based Practice
Dr. Doe understands and effectively functions within the healthcare system. He collaborates appropriately with interdisciplinary teams, utilizes institutional resources responsibly, and adheres to hospital policies, regulatory requirements, and quality-improvement initiatives.

Communication Skills
Dr. Doe communicates clearly and professionally with patients, families, colleagues, and hospital staff. He explains diagnoses and treatment plans in an understandable manner and contributes constructively to team-based discussions and decision-making.

Professionalism
Dr. Doe conducts himself with integrity, accountability, and respect. He demonstrates ethical behavior, reliability, and a commitment to maintaining professional standards consistent with hospital expectations and the medical profession.

Based on these observations, I believe Dr. Doe meets the professional standards expected of a podiatric physician seeking recognition through the American Board of Podiatric Medicine. I offer this letter in support of his application.

Sincerely,

[Name, Degree(s)]
[Title]
[Institution Name]
[Address]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

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American Board of Podiatric Medicine
Certifying Today's Podiatrist

Peer Reference Evaluation Form

Alternate Pathway Candidate Evaluation

Candidate Name _____
Evaluator Name _____
Date _____

Evaluator Information

In what capacity do you know the candidate?

☐ Colleague ☐ Supervisor ☐ Residency Director ☐ Other:_____

Have you had direct observation of the candidate's practice?

☐ Yes ☐ No

How long have you known the candidate?

☐ < 1 year ☐ 1–3 years ☐ 3–5 years ☐ > 5 years

Please rate the candidate on each ACGME Core Competency using the scale below by checking the appropriate box.
1 = Unsatisfactory | 2 = Needs Improvement | 3 = Competent | 4 = Proficient | 5 = Exceptional | N/A = Unable to Assess

Competency	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Patient Care – Provides compassionate, appropriate, and effective care; demonstrates sound judgment and timely referral.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Medical Knowledge – Demonstrates and applies relevant biomedical, clinical, and surgical knowledge.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Practice-Based Learning & Improvement – Engages in self-assessment, feedback, continuous improvement, outcome evaluation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interpersonal & Communication Skills – Communicates respectfully and effectively with patients, families, and colleagues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professionalism – Demonstrates integrity, accountability, respect, and fulfills professional responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Systems-Based Practice – Understands healthcare systems, coordinates care, advocates for quality and safety.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Overall Recommendation

Would you recommend this candidate for board certification through the alternate pathway?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ With Reservations (please explain below)

Additional Comments

_____
_____
_____
_____

Evaluator Signature _____

5015 Campuswood Dr, Suite 206, East Syracuse, NY, 13057 – Ph: (315) 498-1588
admin@podiatryboard.org www.PodiatryBoard.org