



ABFM: COVID 19 - Certification Requirements and Outreach

March 18, 2020

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve rapidly and the need for family physicians to care for patients during the outbreak increases, the ABFM is committed to keeping you aware of adjustments they are making with respect to certification activity requirements to accommodate these extraordinary times.

Like many organizations, the ABFM has had to make a number of changes over the last week to support Diplomates during this time. ABFM leadership has developed and implemented a robust business continuity plan to ensure they are able to do so. Effective Monday, March 16, 2020 all ABFM staff have begun to work remotely, and will continue to operate under normal business hours at this time.

With everything that front-line family physicians are facing right now, ABFM does not want them to have unnecessary concerns about their certification. While the underlying certification requirements remain unchanged, it is far more important for family physicians to care for their patients and to support their families than be concerned about certification. As such, ABFM is planning in advance for appropriate accommodations and is enhancing communications, both directly and through their COVID-19 updates on their website. ABFM will keep chapters updated so they can help Diplomates navigate their certification questions. Also, ABFM would appreciate hearing from chapters about any questions they are getting so that they may address them.

Here are some of the current updates:

1. ABFM learned today that Prometric, the company that provides testing sites for the Family Medicine Certification examination, is closing their centers in North America at least through April 17 of this year. All April 2020 administrations of the Family Medicine Certification examination have been cancelled. ABFM is working with Prometric to identify possible examination dates over the summer and are committed to attempting to offer two examination cycles during this calendar year.
2. The deadline for participants in FMCLA to complete their first quarter questions has been extended to June 15, 2020 (previously was March 31).
3. ABFM has been receiving inquiries with regards to meeting CME requirements, especially given that so many conferences have had to be canceled. Please remind members that ABFM does not require LIVE hours to meet certification requirements. Online and other virtual CME opportunities will suffice if they are unable to attend live

sessions. They should continue reporting their CME hours through the AAFP if they do so today, and their completed hours will be reported to ABFM on their behalf once their minimum required hours have been reached.

4. For those who had planned to participate in a Group KSA that has been canceled or postponed, remind them they can still do these activities online, individually, in the ABFM Physician Portfolio to meet their certification points and to earn CME. This will be most important for those physicians with a stage ending deadline of 12/31/2020.

5. We are working with ACGME to coordinate accommodations to residency training related to rotation and continuity visit requirements. More details to come on this, but you can assure your members who are involved in residency education that we are working to support their needs and those of their residents. More to come on this soon.

6. All travel for ABFM staff has been suspended through the month of March, and will potentially extend into April and beyond, depending on what happens with the Coronavirus pandemic in the U.S. Likewise, many chapters have had to cancel or postpone their meetings. Chapters expecting ABFM staff representation at their upcoming chapter meeting(s) should contact Ashley Webb with any information with regards to changes.

Rest assured that ABFM is monitoring the situation and continuously preparing for all scenarios, and will be communicating updates and changes as decisions are being made providing updates via email to those who are affected by upcoming deadlines and examination change, as well as through ABFM's website. Keep up to date by visiting the following page: <https://www.theabfm.org/covid-19> (<https://www.theabfm.org/covid-19>).



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https://www.aafp.org/chapters/communications/chex-mix/2020/abfm-covid.html?cmpid=em_CM_20200319

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