



American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc.

A Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

Initial Certification

What are the Board's requirements for certification?

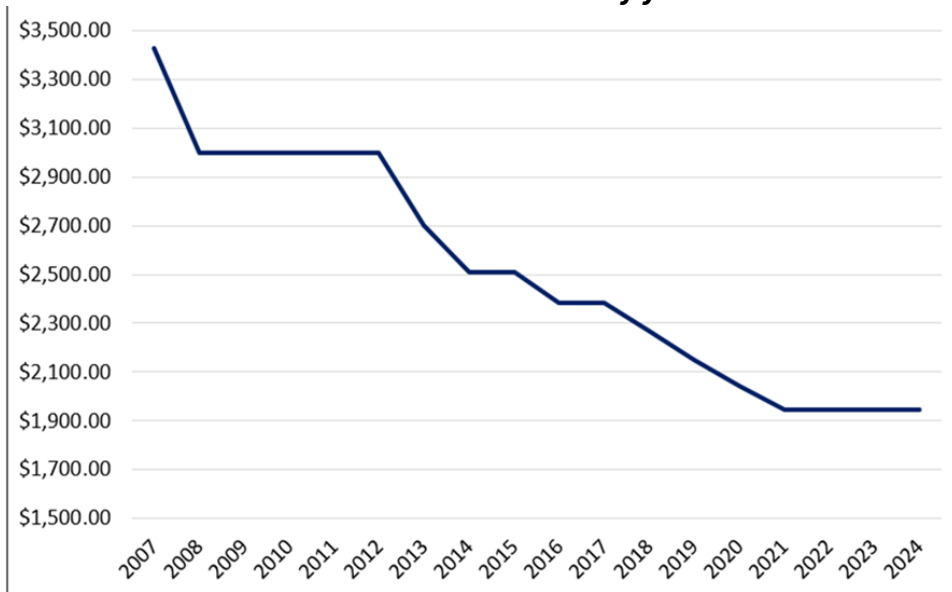
To be Board-certified in psychiatry, neurology, or neurology with special qualification in child neurology, a candidate must:

1. Be a graduate of an accredited medical school in the United States or Canada or of an international medical school listed by the **World Health Organization**.
2. Complete all training in either a U.S. program accredited by the ACGME or approved by the ABPN or in a Canadian program accredited by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada as well as meet the other requirements specified in the reciprocity agreement.
3. Have an active, full, unrestricted medical license* in the U.S. or Canada as defined in the [ABPN Board Policies](#) on this website. Applicants are required to update their active, full, unrestricted medical licenses in their **ABPN Physician Portal** account.
4. Have satisfactorily completed the Board's specialized training requirements described on the corresponding specialty or subspecialty sections of the website.
5. Apply online and submit an application through **ABPN Physician Portal**. Required documents should be emailed, mailed or faxed to 847.229.6600 separately.

What is the cost of an initial certification exam?

ABPN has lowered initial certification fees by 54 percent since 2007, and these fees are approximately 31 percent below the average of other ABMS boards. See the chart below for more information. The cost of an initial certification exam fee is \$1,945 and is non-refundable. Payments are made online in the **Physician Portal** account at the time of application.

ABPN Initial Certification Fees by year



The ABPN initial certification examination fees remain in the bottom half of the 24 ABMS Member Boards. The current examination fee is \$1,945 and candidates are offered the option of selecting a split payment when submitting the applications. This fee covers the cost of the examination and credentialing due to ongoing board eligibility requirements.

Does certification expire?

Physicians certified in psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, neurology, or neurology with special qualification in child neurology before October 1, 1994, were granted lifetime certificates.

Between October 1, 1994, and December 31, 2011, all individuals achieving specialty Board certification by the ABPN were issued time-limited certificates that expired December 31, ten years after they were issued. Certificates issued in all subspecialties except child and adolescent psychiatry have always been time-limited. Time-limited certificates for child and adolescent psychiatry began in 1995.

Beginning January 1, 2012, all certificates are dependent upon continuous maintenance of certification based on a three-year cycle of requirements with certificates being valid as long as they are maintained. The examination cycle remains at ten years.

What are the ABPN's rules regarding transferring between programs?

Effective for residents entering residency training (PGY-2) as of July 1, 2002: The 36 months of full-time, specialized residency training must be completed in no more than two blocks. If completed in two blocks, the blocks must not be more than 10 years apart. If completed in two blocks, the blocks must not be more than ten years apart. In addition, credit is not given for less than one-year blocks of training (including the PGY-1).

Effective for residents entering residency training (PGY-2) as of July 1, 2011: Full time residency training must be completed in no more than two blocks. If completed in two blocks, the blocks must not be more than five years apart and the shorter block must not be less than six months long.

One [1] year full-time equivalent of subspecialty residency training must be completed in a continuous block of not less than one-half time.

The ABPN Credentials Committee considers exceptions to these rules only under extraordinary circumstances. In such cases, respective program directors should contact the Board office, in writing, prior to the transfer. The letters must outline the resident's training content, duties, and responsibilities, including exact dates (from month/day/year to month/day/year) of training, and indicate clearly that the resident will satisfy all ACGME program requirements. Each case is considered on an individual basis.

May training be completed on a part-time basis?

Training may be completed on a part-time basis, provided that it is no less than half time.

May vacation or leave time be used to complete training earlier?

The ABPN requires that all programs allow a minimum of four weeks of leave time (including vacation, sick time, maternity/paternity leave, etc.) during training per year. These four weeks should be averaged over the four-year training period. Leave or vacation time may NOT be used to reduce the total amount of required residency training or to make up deficiencies in training. Programs must allow a minimum of 6 weeks of time away from training for purposes of parental, caregiver, and medical leave at least once during training, without exhausting all other allowed time away from training and without extending training. Within ABPN and ACGME policy guidelines, it is up to the program director and the program clinical competency committee to determine whether a given resident has met training requirements or must extend their period of training. [Click here](#) to view ABPN's Leave of Absence Policy.

May an applicant with a temporary education or training license apply for examination?

Applicants who do not yet have an unrestricted medical license because they are in training are not required to submit a copy of their medical license at the time of application for examination in psychiatry, neurology, or child neurology.

However, such applicants must submit a copy of their unrestricted medical license(s) no later than the date specified in the appropriate *Information for Applicants* publication. These dates differ for different examinations and failure to meet the deadlines for licensure could result in delay of scheduling or invalidation of scores. Applicants holding more than one license must submit a copy of each license.

How many times may an applicant apply for the Board certification examinations?

There is currently no limit on the number of times an applicant may apply for examination.

What does it mean to be “Board Eligible”?

The ABPN recognizes a finite amount of time to sit for a board certification examination; however, does not issue statements concerning “Board Eligibility.” The Board informs an applicant of admissibility to examination only when the applicant has an active, approved application on file in the Board office. For inquiries about board status, email questions@abpn.org.

- Effective January 1, 2012, ABPN will require a physician to become Board certified within seven years following successful completion of ACGME-accredited or ABPN-approved residency training in their primary specialty or ACGME-accredited subspecialty.
- Graduates can take the ABPN Certification Examination as many times as allowed during the seven-year period.
- For example, individuals who completed an accredited residency program prior to January 1, 2012, had until January 1, 2019, to become board certified.
- Individuals who do not become certified during the 7-year period (or before January 1, 2019 for those who completed residency training before January 1, 2012) will be required to (1) repeat the required clinical skills evaluations; and (2) complete one block of Continuing Certification (CC) requirements [(90 CME credits, 24 self-assessment CME credits, and 1 PIP activity (includes a clinical module or feedback module)] in order to apply and be credentialed to take the ABPN Certification Examination. CC block requirements are valid for three years and must be completed at the time of the application.
- Diplomates must obtain initial certification in an ABPN primary specialty prior to obtaining subspecialty certification. Physicians who do not pass the subspecialty certification examination within seven years of graduating from an ACGME-accredited subspecialty program will be required to complete one block of CC activities (90 CME credits, 24 self-assessment CME credits, and one PIP activity) in order to apply and be credentialed to take an ABPN subspecialty certification examination. CC block requirements are valid for three years and must be completed at the time of the application.

Posted: 1/26/2024