American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc.

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

2020
Information for Applicants

Initial Certification Examination in Pain Medicine

The information contained in this document and the 2020 ABPN Board Policies Manual supersedes all previously printed publications concerning Board requirements, policies, and procedures. For the most current information, please visit our website at www.abpn.com.

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Initial Certification Exam in Pain Medicine

Dates Choice	September 12, 2020
Application Deadline	July 3, 2020
Late Deadline	July 24, 2020

2020 Fee Schedule*

Application fee**	$700
Examination fee	$1200
Total Fee	**$1900**
Miscellaneous Fees	
Late application fee (in addition to the above)	$500
Reexamination fee***	$1200
International testing fee	$500
Application/licensure appeal fee****	$350
Examination appeal fee****	$300
Irregular behavior appeal fee****	$350
Application for testing accommodations appeal fee****	$350
Duplicate certificate fee	$150
Returned check charge	$50
*All fees must be submitted in U.S. currency	
**Fee is non-refundable	
***Reexamination fees are in addition to any appeal fees	
****Appeal fees are refundable if the decision is in the appellant's favor	
Please note: The ABPN reserves the right to revise fee schedule at any time. Throughout this publication, the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc. may be referred to as "the Board" or as "ABPN". ATTENTION VETERANS: Some or all of your exam fees may be reimbursed through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Please contact the DVA for further information.	

Important Dates for Initial Certification Exam in Pain Medicine

Exam Date Choice	September 12, 2020
Applications Available	December 1, 2019
Deadline for required certification in psychiatry, neurology or child neurology	December 31, 2019
Applicant completing training after July 31, 2020 should contact the Board regarding eligibility	January 15, 2020
Application Deadline	July 3, 2020
Deadline for Application for ADA Accommodations	July 3, 2020
Scheduling instructions emailed to approved candidates by the ABA*	Rolling
Pearson VUE Registration Opens	Rolling
Deadline for Nursing Mother Accommodations	July 14, 2020
Graduation verification due to the Board for residents graduating June 30, 2020	July 15, 2020
Late Application Deadline	July 24, 2020
Applicant should contact the Board if they have not received notification regarding their application	July 31, 2020
Graduation verification due to the Board for residents graduating July 31, 2020	August 15, 2020

*The American Board of Anesthesiology will email candidates scheduling instructions approximately six months prior to the start of the examination. Candidates may schedule their examination upon receipt of the email.

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I. Training Requirements for Initial Certification Exam in Pain Medicine

Applicants for certification in pain medicine must be certified by the Board in psychiatry, neurology, or child neurology by December 31 of the year prior to the examination administration and maintain certification in a specialty of the ABPN. All training requirements must be met by July 31 of the year of the examination.

All candidates applying or reapplying for certification in pain medicine must complete 12 months of ACGME-accredited training in pain medicine.

Training programs approved by the residency review committees and accredited by the ACGME can be found on the ACGME website, www.acgme.org.

The required years of training may be completed on a part-time basis, provided that it is no less than half-time.

The ABPN recommends that all programs allow a minimum of four weeks of leave time (including vacation, sick time, maternity/paternity leave, etc.) during training per year. Leave or vacation time may NOT be used to reduce the total amount of required residency training or to make up deficiencies in training.

II. Requirements for Admission to the Initial Certification Exam in Pain Medicine

A. General Requirements for All Applicants

To qualify to sit for examination, an applicant 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. Have an active, full, unrestricted medical license as defined in the **separate Board Policies Manual** on the ABPN website. Applicants are required to update their active, full, unrestricted medical licenses in their ABPN Physician Folios account.
3. Be certified by the Board in psychiatry, neurology, or neurology with special qualification in child neurology by December 31 of the year prior to the examination administration.
4. Have satisfactorily completed the Board's specific training requirements in pain medicine, as described in Section I.
5. Submit an application.
   A. ABPN Diplomates must apply online through the ABPN Physician Folios at www.abpn.com/folios. A completed official online application must include all required attachments and the appropriate application and examination fees by the specified deadlines. All training must be confirmed by way of submitting documentation noting the completion of training requirements.
   OR
   B. Diplomates from ABA or ABPMR are required to apply for certification through their respective board.

B. Specific Requirements for Pain Medicine Applicants

To qualify to sit for the initial certification in the subspecialty of pain medicine, an applicant must:
1. Have met all training requirements by July 31 of the year of the pain medicine examination.
2. Be certified by the Board in neurology, child neurology or psychiatry by December 31 of the year prior to the examination administration and maintain certification in a specialty of the ABPN.

C. Initial Certification in the Subspecialty of Pain Medicine

Pain medicine is the medical discipline concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of the entire range of painful disorders. Because of the vast scope of the field, pain medicine is a multidisciplinary subspecialty.

The expertise of several disciplines is brought together in an effort to provide the maximum benefit to each patient. Although the care of patients is influenced heavily by the primary specialty of physicians who subspecialize in pain medicine, each member of the pain treatment team understands the anatomic and physiologic basis of pain experience and the basic principles of pain medicine.

In March 1998, the ABPN and the ABPMR joined the ABA in recognition of pain medicine as an interdisciplinary subspecialty. The respective Boards have agreed on a single standard of certification.

III. Pain Medicine Initial Certification Exam: Application Process, Procedures, Format and Content

A. Application Process Information

The ABA will administer a computer-based examination covering the various content areas of pain medicine. Diplomates who are recertifying in pain medicine must apply through their original certifying Board.

Applications are to be completed and submitted using the online application through ABPN Physician Folios at www.abpn.com. Through ABPN Physician Folios, physicians may update licensure information and change their contact information.

See Important Dates at the beginning of this document for application availability. INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS documents are revised each year and may be downloaded from the website. Only applications submitted through ABPN Physician Folios are accepted. Faxed copies or revised applications from a previous administration year are not accepted.

Applications are reviewed in the order of receipt. It may take up to 16 weeks for the applicant to receive further information regarding the status of the application. Certification in Pain Medicine applicants who do not receive any notification from the Board regarding their application by July 31, 2020 should contact the Board office to inquire about the status of their application.

Applicants accepted for examination are notified via email. Applicants denied admission to the examination are notified of their deficiencies in meeting the standards of the Board via regular mail.

Approximately six months prior to the examination date, accepted candidates will be emailed scheduling instructions by the American Board of Anesthesiology.

Applications remain active for three consecutive examinations only. Candidates who fail to present themselves for the first scheduled examination following the date of acceptance of their applications are required to reapply online and pay the current application fee and examination fee.

Application fees are not refundable.

B. Applicants with Disabilities

The Board recognizes that physicians with disabilities may wish to take the examinations and will attempt to make accommodations for applicants with verified disabilities. The Board supports the intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and amendments thereto. The Board will provide reasonable accommodations during testing to provide equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. Applicants are reminded that modifications, accommodations, auxiliary aids and/or services can only be offered if they do not "fundamentally alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge the examination is intended to test" (28 C.F.R. §36.309(b)(3)).

Any applicant who requests accommodations because of a disability must advise the Board electronically or in writing no later than the deadline for submitting applications for examination and complete:

- An Application for Testing Accommodations pdf form,
- All appropriate checklists,
- All documentation, and
- All other evidence substantiating the disability.

All items must be submitted to the Board no later than one month after the application deadline regardless of previous requests and/or granted accommodations.

C. Applicants who are Nursing

Diplomates who will be nursing at the time of their examination may request a private space for lactating purposes. The request must be emailed to questions@abpn.com no less than 60 days prior to the first day of the examination.

D. Computer-Administered Examination Procedures

Note: ADA candidates will receive individual scheduling and examination materials.

Approximately six months prior to the examination, the American Board of Anesthesiology will begin emailing scheduling instructions to candidates whose applications have been approved. Candidates are urged to contact Pearson VUE as soon as scheduling opens to make an appointment for the examination. A delay in contacting Pearson VUE can result in fewer available openings for the examination in a candidate's choice of date and location. ABPN does not guarantee the availability of locations, dates and/or times of Pearson VUE test centers.

ABPN candidates may schedule an exam at a Pearson VUE center outside the United States or Canada for an additional $500 fee. Candidates choose international testing during the application process. The Board will contact candidates by email regarding the additional payment and with information concerning testing outside the United States or Canada. Those who schedule themselves for international testing without first paying the additional fee may have their testing appointment with Pearson VUE canceled by the Board or may have grades withheld until payment is received. ABPN does not guarantee the availability of locations, dates and/or times of International Pearson VUE test centers.

Candidates are required to present two forms of identification upon arrival at the testing center. One of the forms of identification must be government issued and must display a recent, permanently affixed photograph. Both forms of identification must be signed, and both must be valid (not expired). The first and last names on both identifications must match the name on file with the ABPN. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the candidate's inability to gain admission to the examination. If a name change has recently occurred, it is recommended to bring a copy of legal documentation to the testing center on the appointment date. Government- issued identification includes military identification, passports, driver's licenses, and state identification cards. Secondary Identification includes a Social Security card, valid credit card, bank automated teller machine card.

Candidates may NOT bring food, drink, cellular phones, pagers, other electronic devices, books, study materials, or other personal belongings, including watches and wallets, into the examination room. A secure locker is available to store personal items. Candidates may not access phones or other devices of any kind while on an unscheduled break. Accessing prohibited items during unscheduled breaks constitutes irregular behavior and may be cause for invalidation of examination result (See separate Board Policies Manual).

Candidates are NOT permitted to leave the testing center's building during a test section. Leaving the building during a test section constitutes irregular behavior and may be cause for invalidation of examination results (See separate Board Policies Manual).

Candidates are photographed and are required to provide an electronic signature at the computer test centers. For security purposes, candidates are required to place each hand on a palm vein device each time they enter or leave the computer test center. This information is stored electronically. Candidates must agree to the Pearson VUE Professional & Regulatory Candidate Rules. Candidates must agree to the *ABPN Nondisclosure Agreement* before taking the examination.

Candidates are observed at all times while taking the examination. This observation includes direct monitoring by testing center staff, as well as video and audio recording of the examination session.

General questions about requirements and logistics of ABPN examinations may be asked of ABPN staff by telephone. Verbal complaints to staff, directors, proctors, or examiners that continue after explanation of ABPN policy that rise to the level of harassment may be considered irregular behavior (See Policies Manual).

Applications remain active for three consecutive examinations only. Candidates who fail to present themselves for the scheduled examination(s) following the date of acceptance of their applications are invited to the next administration of the examination until they have exhausted three opportunities.

Candidates withdrawing from an examination:
The examination fee is refunded to candidates withdrawing from an examination, provided the President and CEO of the Board is notified in writing 60 or more days prior to the first date of the examination date range.

Failure to notify the Board in writing 60 or more days prior to the first date of the examination date range may result in forfeiture of the examination fees. Application fees are not refunded for any reason.

Candidates unable to sit for their scheduled examination due to an unforeseen medical or other emergency:
Candidates who are unable to sit for their scheduled examination due to an unforeseen medical or other emergency should submit a personal statement and supporting documentation of the emergency to the Board office, no later than 30 days after the date of the examination. The Board will then evaluate the documentation and determine whether the absence is excusable. In determining whether an absence is excusable, the Board will consider whether the claimed emergency could have been anticipated and/or foreseen prior to the examination. Candidates suffering from pre-existing and/or chronic conditions generally will not be excused for medical or other emergencies relating to such conditions. If the absence is determined excusable, the candidate is rescheduled for the next ABPN computer-administered examination, and the examination fee will be transferred. Such candidates will be responsible for paying a rescheduling fee of $400 and may be responsible for paying any difference in the examination fee. In the event a candidate is granted two consecutive excused absences, subsequent requests for rescheduling will be denied, only the candidate's examination fee (but not rescheduling fees) will be refunded, and such candidates will be required to re-apply in order to sit for examination.

Negative Determination and Reexamination:
A failing grade on the examination is considered a negative determination. A candidate who receives a negative determination on the first examination for which he or she was accepted will have two additional opportunities to pay a reexamination fee and repeat the examination. All additional opportunities must be used within the prescribed period for which the application is active.

E. Pain Medicine Certification Examination Format and Content

Examinations are administered at Pearson VUE testing centers. The content outline, blueprint and sample questions for the examination may be found on the ABA's website at http://www.theaba.org/Exams/Pain-Medicine-Certification/Pain-Medicine-Certification.

The Board recommends that examinees use the following resources for test preparation: peer-reviewed journals, current monographs and textbooks, review publications, practice guidelines, accredited CME programs, and attendance at professional meetings.

F. Grade Letters and Certificates

1.Grade Letters
The President and CEO of the Board notifies candidates in writing of their results no later than ten to twelve weeks from the last date of the testing date range.

2.Certificates
Successful candidates receive their certificates approximately three months after grade letters are mailed. It is the diplomate's responsibility to notify the Board office, in writing, if they do not receive a certificate within six months. If a diplomate does not submit a written notification that the certificate was not delivered, the diplomate must request a duplicate certificate and pay the appropriate fee. (See Fees at the beginning of this document.)

3.Duplicate Certificates
Photocopies of Board certificates are not available from the ABPN. Requests for duplicates of ABPN certificates must specify the diplomate's:

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Birth date
- Signature
- Preference of how their name will be printed on the certificate
- Specialty or subspecialty certification for which they are requesting a duplicate certificate

The diplomate must include:

- A copy of each current medical license held, showing the expiration date
- For security purposes, a copy of government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's license or passport
- The appropriate fee (See Fees at the beginning of this publication.)

NOTE: For any name changes on a certificate, the diplomate must submit certified, legal documentation (marriage license, name change determination, etc.) to the Board office.

A form for requesting a duplicate certificate may be obtained from the ABPN website at www.abpn.com. Certificates are printed approximately four times per year. Depending on when a duplicate certificate is requested, it may be four to six months until the diplomate receives the duplicate certificate.

G. Computer-Administered Examination Appeal Procedures

The Board provides applicants appeals procedures for certain negative determinations. Specifically, a candidate may appeal:

- The rejection of credentials for admission to an examination (See procedure 1 below)
- Invalidation of an examination score due to irregular behavior (See procedure 1 below)
- The denial of a request for disability accommodations (See procedure 1 below)
- A failing grade on a computer-administered examination (See procedure 2 below)

1. Appeal Procedure for Rejection of Credentials, Invalidation of Examination Score Due to Irregular Behavior, or Denial of a Request for Disability Accommodations

An applicant may appeal the decision if:

- The applicant submitted a formal application and received a negative determination regarding the application
- The applicant's examination scores are invalidated because of irregular behavior
- The applicant's request for disability accommodations was denied

Such applicants or candidates must submit the following materials to the President and CEO at the Board office:

- Written request for a formal appeal
- Applicable appeal fee (See Fee Schedule)
- Additional written information that supports the appeal

The appeal materials must be sent in a single mailing that is post-marked within 30 days of the date indicated on the letter of negative determination. The materials are sent to the respective Appeals Committee, which reviews the materials, deliberates, and makes a determination. In all events, the Appeals Committee's determination is final and binding on both the Board and the candidate.

If the appeal is granted, the appeal fee will be returned to the candidate.

2. Appeal Procedure for Computer-Administered Examination Failing Grade

A candidate who believes that there was a compromise in the administration of the examination may choose to appeal a negative determination. A failing grade on a computer-administered examination is considered a negative determination.

Appeals are limited to a review of an alleged compromise in the administration of the examination. Specifically, that the examination was administered in a manner that was atypical or did not meet the Board's guidelines. An appeal does not result in a review of a candidate's performance on an examination.

An appeal will never reverse a negative determination of a computer-administered examination. Rather, a successful appeal will result in the examination being invalidated and the candidate being rescheduled to sit for the examination at the next available administration.

Candidates who wish to appeal a negative determination must submit the following materials to the President and CEO at the Board office:

- Written request for a formal appeal of the negative determination
- Applicable appeal fee (See Fee Schedule)
- Additional written information in support of the appeal

The appeal materials must be sent in a single mailing that is post-marked within 30 days of the date indicated on the letter of negative determination.

The materials are sent to the respective Appeals Committee, which reviews the materials, deliberates, and makes a determination. In all events, the Appeals Committee's determination is final and binding on both the Board and the candidate.

If the appeal is granted, the appeal fee will be returned, the score for the examination will be invalidated, and the candidate will be rescheduled to sit for the examination at the next available administration.

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