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# **ABFAS 112-2019**

## **Maintenance of Certification Program for Time-limited Certificates**



**This document contains information specific to the 2019 examinations only.**

### **American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery®**

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Americans with Disabilities Act. In compliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery® will make reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities provided the candidate submits a written request and all required documentation no later than thirty (30) days prior to the date(s) of the examination. Candidates will find additional information including how to apply on the ABFAS website.

## Introduction

The Board of Directors of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery (ABFAS) has approved a Maintenance of Certification Program (MOC). This MOC Program has replaced the ABFAS Recertification process. Other certification boards, including all of the boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties, have adopted an MOC program. ABFAS believes this change to MOC will allow us to stay current with other certification boards and ensure continued competency among our Diplomates.

*Note: Diplomates of the American Board of Ambulatory Foot Surgery (a section of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery) do not have an ongoing evaluation.*

### ABFAS MOC PROGRAM

All Diplomates issued a time-limited certificate must participate in the MOC program to maintain certification.

Diplomates issued a lifetime certificate are required to meet all components of MOC, except their examination will be administered as a self-assessment examination. See [Document 111](#) for more details if you fall into this category.

MOC has replaced ABFAS Recertification as of 2016. The process will be implemented according to each Diplomate's 10-year recertification cycle.

In summary, the ABFAS MOC program consists of the following requirements.

1. Maintain a valid, unrestricted podiatric license in the United States or Canada.
2. Maintain active surgical privileges at either a hospital or surgical center.
3. Obtain 200 continuing education credits per 10-year cycle.
4. Complete a formalized, secure examination consisting of the fundamental diagnostic skills, medical knowledge, and clinical judgment to provide quality care during every 10-year cycle.

### Calendar of Important Dates

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| November 1, 2018    | Registration opens   |
| January 18, 2019    | Registration closes  |
| January 25, 2019    | Last day to withdraw   |
| February 1-2, 2019  | Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery Recertification Surgery Exam |
| February 1-16, 2019 | Foot Surgery Recertification Exam                                  |

## Requirements

### **I. Maintain a valid, unrestricted podiatric license in the United States or Canada.**

All Diplomates must maintain a valid and unrestricted license within the United States or Canada. ABFAS will collect license validation information for each Diplomat for the state(s) in which he/she practices. Currently, ABFAS updates this information in conjunction with each state's licensing cycle. Diplomates are required to report to ABFAS any change in their licensing status.

### **II. Maintain active surgical privileges at a hospital or surgical center.**

Diplomates must request their hospital/surgery center to submit proof of active surgical privileges in each category. The documentation must contain a notarized signature of a hospital/surgery center official if possible, or said signature with the seal of the hospital or surgery center. Please scan and send the proof of privileges to [privileges@abfas.org](mailto:privileges@abfas.org), or fax to 415.553.7801. Appendix A contains a template that you can provide to your hospital.

*Note: If you are no longer actively doing foot and/or ankle surgery, but still practicing podiatry, you may be eligible for "Certified Active: retired from active podiatric surgery" status. You still need to meet other MOC requirements. Please contact [info@abfas.org](mailto:info@abfas.org), or call our office at 415.553.7800 for more information.*

### **III. Obtain 200 hours of Category 1 CME credits.**

Diplomates must participate in 200 hours of Category 1 or CPME-approved continuing education (CE) credits per 10-year cycle. All continuing education must be pertinent to the practice of podiatric medicine and/or surgery and cannot include practice management. Risk management credits are allowed. It is the Diplomat's responsibility to obtain documentation of continuing education credits, not the organization that offers the program. Diplomates may submit continuing education credits only for programs in which they actively participated. Category 1 activities are those that have been approved by an accredited sponsor. An Accredited Sponsor may include, but is not limited to CPME, AMA, and AOA.

**Diplomates must attest to their continuing education credits, there is no need to send in documentation.** ABFAS may perform audits to ensure the accuracy of the submitted data.

Continuing education credit requirements will be prorated per year as follows:

|                    |                                    |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2016 – 20 credits  | 2021 – 120 credits                 |
| 2017 – 40 credits  | 2022 – 140 credits                 |
| 2018 – 60 credits  | 2023 – 160 credits                 |
| 2019 – 80 credits  | 2024 – 180 credits                 |
| 2020 – 100 credits | All years after 2024 – 200 credits |

Category 1 activities are those that have been approved by an accredited sponsor. Accredited Sponsors may include, but are not limited to CPME, AMA, and AOA.

Your CME certificate should also state that the activity has been approved for Category 1 credit and name the institution or organization that awarded the credit. If you have participated in Category 1 activities, the provider should provide you with a certificate of completion.

Acceptable certificates/documentation must include:

- Name of the licensee
- Name of the course
- Date of the course
- Number of credit hours earned
- Provider of the course
- Category type

**IV. Complete a formalized, secure examination (Recertification Exam) that demonstrates the physician has the fundamental diagnostic skills, medical knowledge, and clinical judgment to provide quality care.**

Diplomates must take a secure examination within 10-year cycles. The computerized examination is administered at regional, secure computer sites.

**V. Upload the last two years of hospital/surgery center case logs**

Diplomates must request a copy of their hospital/surgery center case logs for the last two years. During the exam registration process, diplomates will receive instructions for uploading the documents in PDF form into the website registration portal.

**Three-year Window of Opportunity**

Diplomates may take the examination in the eighth, ninth, or 10<sup>th</sup> year of their MOC cycle. Examinations taken and failed in the eighth or ninth year may be retaken. Failure of the examination in the 10<sup>th</sup> year will result in loss of certification. **Diplomates are encouraged not to wait until their 10<sup>th</sup> year to sit for the examination.**

## Effects of Passing or Failing

Diplomates passing the Foot Surgery Recertification Examination are recertified in Foot Surgery. Diplomates passing the Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery Recertification Examination are recertified in Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery (except as defined in paragraph [2] below). Diplomates receive a time-dated recertification label that expires in a 10-year increment from the date of initial certification (e.g., initial certification in 2000, passed recertification in 2008, 2009 or 2010, recertification expires in 2020)

**Designation:** “A Diplomate of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery, certified in Foot Surgery (and Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery) in 19XX. Recertified in Foot Surgery (and Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery in 20XX”

Failure to pass the Foot Surgery Recertification Examination within the three-year window results in the Diplomate’s status expiring, and the Diplomate must apply to reestablish board certification under the policy established by the ABFAS Board of Directors.

**A Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery Diplomate who passes only the Foot Surgery recertification examination is recertified in Foot Surgery only.** In such cases, a Diplomate may continue taking the Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery Recertification Examination until the three-year window of opportunity closes.

**Designation:** “A Diplomate of the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery certified in Foot Surgery and Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery in 19XX. Recertified in foot Surgery in 20XX.

**A Diplomate certified in both Foot Surgery and Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery who fails the Foot Surgery recertification examination, but passes the Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery recertification examination, is not recertified in either category.** Foot Surgery recertification is a prerequisite to Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery recertification. However, the Diplomate does not need to retake the Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Recertification Examination. The Diplomate may continue taking the Foot Surgery Recertification Examination until the three-year window of opportunity closes. If a Diplomate is unsuccessful in passing the Foot Surgery Recertification Examination within the three-year window, her/his status expires, and the Diplomate must apply under the policy established by the Board of Directors.

A Diplomate achieving certification in Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery in a year subsequent to Foot Surgery certification must maintain certification in Foot Surgery to remain certified in Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery. Should a Diplomate be unsuccessful in passing the Foot Surgery recertification examination, such Diplomate’s certified status in Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery is suspended until reestablishing Foot Surgery certification, unless status in RRA expires before reestablishment in Foot Surgery.

## Recertification Examination Information

### Format

The recertification examinations consist of multiple-choice questions, including those based on visual presentations. Following each question are at least four possible answers. Each question has only **ONE** best answer.

### Online Study Guide

To access the Didactic Examination online study guide, login to the StepUp eLearning website (<http://www.stepupelearning.org>) using your ABFAS username and password. The guide contains information about subject areas covered in ABFAS examinations and examples of examination questions. The practice examination (please use the one marked Recert) demonstrates the types and formats of questions to expect on the didactic examination. It is not designed to predict performance on the actual examination or identify knowledge gaps. The StepUp website also provides information about the Computer-based Patient Simulation Exam which is not applicable to those already certified so you can ignore.

### Location and Dates

ABFAS offers the Foot Surgery Recertification Examination on February 1 through 16, 2019 as a computer-adaptive examination. The Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery Recertification Examination is offered only on February 1 and 2, 2019 as a computer-administered test. Both exams are offered at Pearson VUE centers. If applying to take both the Foot and RRA surgery examinations, a candidate may take both on February 1 and/or 2 or may choose to take the RRA examination on February 1 or 2 and the Foot Surgery examination on any day, February 1 through February 16, 2019. *Examination site selection opens November 1, 2018. Seats are limited, so please register early.*

### Examination Site Selection and Admission

Candidates taking a recertification examination schedule their date, time, and location after payment of registration fees. Click on “Schedule/View Exam with Pearson Vue” after registering for the exam. After selecting a date, time, and location, **print a copy of the confirmation**. The confirmation includes the schedule, location of the testing center, and directions to the center. You will also receive a confirmation email.

Candidates must present **two forms of current identification** at the testing center. Please note that one of the pieces of identification must be an unexpired government-issued photo identification with signature. The name as it appears on the two forms of ID must match the name as it appears on the registration confirmation. If for example, a maiden name is used for

ABFAS records and a married name appears on the driver's license or passport. Please contact ABFAS directly if you need to update the name on your record.

Failure to present acceptable identification as noted above prevents entry into the test center to examine. If this occurs, a candidate is marked "Absent" and forfeits the entire examination fee.

### MOC Foot Surgery Examination

**Test Specifications:** The MOC Examination in Foot Surgery involves diagnostic and perioperative care of the podiatric surgical patient encompassing the foot and ankle. Intraoperative technical aspects will include reconstructive and non-reconstructive procedures of the forefoot and non-reconstructive procedures of the rearfoot/ankle. The examination emphasizes generally accepted procedures and technology related to the practitioner's daily practice. The examination contains a maximum of 145 computer-adaptive administered questions. As each question is answered, the computer assesses the response and selects the next question based on whether the previous answer was answered correctly. The questions become progressively more or less difficult as the software assesses and establishes the ability level of the examinee.

### Examination Content Map

| Major Subject Area                     | %          |
|--|------------|
| A. Podiatric History and Physical      | 10         |
| B. Diagnostic Studies/Medical Imaging  | 10         |
| C. Differential Diagnosis              | 10         |
| D. Surgical Principles                 | 15         |
| E. Surgical Procedures/Techniques      | 15         |
| F. Procedural Perioperative Management | 15         |
| G. Complications                       | 15         |
| H. General Medical                     | 10         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                           | <b>100</b> |

## MOC Reconstructive Rearfoot and Ankle Surgery Examination

**Test Specifications:** The MOC Examination in Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery involves diagnostic and perioperative care of the podiatric surgical patient who requires reconstructive rearfoot and ankle procedures. This examination emphasizes generally accepted procedures and technology related to the practitioner's daily practice. The fixed-form examination contains a maximum of 100 questions.

### Examination Content Map

| Major Subject Area                     | %          |
|--|------------|
| B. Diagnostic Studies/Medical Imaging  | 10         |
| C. Differential Diagnosis              | 10         |
| D. Surgical Principles                 | 15         |
| E. Surgical Procedures/Techniques      | 25         |
| F. Procedural Perioperative Management | 20         |
| G. Complications                       | 20         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                           | <b>100</b> |

### Scoring

ABFAS provides scores and results for examinations as scale scores. Examinations are not graded on a curve. The Board of Directors sets passing scores based on psychometric evaluation of the examination. ABFAS does not provide copies of the test items since all questions remain in the active examination item pool for future use, unless removed by authority of the psychometric consultant or the examinations committee.

### Review of Scores/Appeals

ABFAS does not have an appeal process for its examinations. An independent psychometric consultant rescues and reviews all failed examinations. Candidates may write to [examconcerns@abfas.org](mailto:examconcerns@abfas.org) if they have questions about their exam score reports.

**Confidentiality**

ABFAS considers the status of an individual's participation in and the stage of completion of all Certification components, including an individual's certification status and certification history, to be public information. ABFAS reserves the right to publish and share public information in any and all public forums determined by ABFAS to be reasonable, including the posting of public information on the ABFAS website, sharing the public information with medical licensure boards, managed care organizations, third party payers, or others. While ABFAS generally regards all other information about individuals as private and confidential, there are times that ABFAS must release certain information to fulfill its responsibilities as a medical specialty board.

ABFAS specifically regards the results of an individual's Qualification, Certification, or Recertification examination (score and whether the individual passed or failed) as private and confidential.

**Exam Results**

ABFAS will notify candidates via email, as to when they can find their test results on their ABFAS personal profile page.

## Notification and Fees

### Eligibility Notification

ABFAS will notify Diplomates whose certification dates fall within the three-year window of opportunity for the 2019 recertification examinations in the fall of the year preceding the examination.

### Fees<sup>1</sup>

| Examination   | Application fee<br>(non-refundable) | Examination Fee | Total fee |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Foot Surgery  | \$225                               | \$675           | \$900     |
| Foot Surgery <b>and</b> Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery | \$225                               | \$1,350         | \$1,575   |
| Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery (RRA)                   | \$225                               | \$675           | \$900     |

### Registration and Payment of Fees

The application is online. Beginning November 1, 2018, go to <http://www.abfas.org> and login using an ABFAS username and password; click “Register for an Exam” under “Exam Quick Links” and follow the instructions on the application screen. Candidates must pay by debit or credit card (American Express, VISA, or MasterCard). Follow the online instructions when completing the registration.

### Late Withdrawal Penalty

There is a late withdrawal penalty of \$100 for any withdrawal made after January 25, 2019. If you withdraw after January 28, 2019 you will not receive a refund.

### Absence without Withdrawing

Any candidate who has registered but does not take the examination forfeits all fees.

### Request for Additional Documentation

ABFAS reserves the right to request additional documentation to clarify or expand on the information submitted as part of the application process.

<sup>1</sup> Diplomates completing recertification do not pay the annual fee for the year following completion of recertification.

## DEADLINES

Registration opens – November 1, 2018

Registration closes – January 18, 2019

Last day to withdraw without penalty<sup>1</sup> – January 25, 2019

Last day to withdraw with penalty – January 28, 2019

Examination dates – February 1-16, 2019

No refunds for withdrawals after January 28, 2019.

Requests to withdraw must be received and approved by ABFAS no later than 5:00 pm Pacific time zone. No exam fee refunds will be authorized after that time.

1. The application fee is nonrefundable

If you need additional information after reading these instructions,  
please contact ABFAS at

**Voice: 415.553.7800    FAX: 415.553.7801**

M-F 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Pacific Time)

Or e-mail questions to **[info@abfas.org](mailto:info@abfas.org)**.

## Appendix A

### ABFAS SAMPLE HOSPITAL/SURGICAL CENTER PRIVILEGE LETTER

This letter is a **sample only** and may be used as reference when requesting your appointment letter. The items listed are the critical data elements that **MUST** be provided on all privilege letters. Contact ABFAS at [info@abfas.org](mailto:info@abfas.org) or 415-553-7800 if you have questions.

**Please submit when you take your MOC (Recertification or SAE) examinations.**

**(Official Hospital/Surgical Center Letterhead)**  
**Hospital/Surgical Center Name**  
**Street Address**  
**City, State/Province, Postal Code**

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)  
 (must be currently dated, within three months of submission to ABFAS, or include dates of appointment below)

American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery  
 445 Fillmore Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94117

To Whom It May Concern:

\_\_\_\_\_, DPM, was granted the following privileges in podiatric foot and ankle surgery at \_\_\_\_\_ (hospital/surgical center name) on \_\_\_\_\_ (appointment date):

| <b><u>Category</u></b>                | <b><u>Type</u></b>                                       |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Active       | <input type="checkbox"/> Foot Surgery                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Courtesy     | <input type="checkbox"/> Foot and Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consulting   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provisional  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Surgical |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  | (describe)   |

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ is due for reappointment on \_\_\_\_\_ (reappointment date).

Sincerely,

Medical Staff Director or Credentialing Coordinator  
**(Signature Required)**