
ABFAS 112-2020

Maintenance of Certification Program for Time-limited Certificates



This document contains information specific to the 2020 examinations only.

American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery®

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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. ABFAS is preparing to change the process to one of Continuous Certification in the near future.

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 Recertification Examination Dates

November 4, 2019	Registration opens
January 17, 2020	Registration closes
January 24, 2020	Last day to withdraw
January 31 – February 1, 2020	Exam Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery
January 31 – February 15, 2020	Exam Foot Surgery

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 Diplomate 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, 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: Surgically Inactive" status. You still need to meet other MOC requirements, except your hospital privileges do not need to be surgical. Please contact 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 Diplomate'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. Attest to Having Performed Foot and/or Reconstructive Rearfoot and Ankle Surgery within the last Two Years

During the exam registration process, diplomates will attest to having performed podiatric surgery. There is no need to upload case logs and there are no minimum case requirements. If you have not performed surgery in the last two years, please contact the ABFAS office, 415.553.7800. Diplomates will see the following screen when registering.

Case Log Attestation

You do NOT have to submit case logs to register for the exam. ABFAS reserves the right to conduct a random audit of your case logs.

**ABFAS Maintenance of Certification requirement for 2020: attestation of being surgically active within the last two years.
(There are no minimum case requirements).**

Please select: * :

- I have performed surgery within the last two years: I have not performed surgery within the last two years.:

SAVE

CANCEL

Three-year Window of Opportunity

Diplomates may take the examination in the eighth, ninth, or 10th year of their MOC cycle. Diplomates who fail their exam in their eighth or ninth year may retake it. They will lose their certification if they fail in their 10th year. **ABFAS encourages diplomates not to wait until their 10th 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.

Foot Surgery Recertification Didactic Examination Structure	
Examination Type	Computer Adaptive (CAT)
Time Allotted	180 minutes
Item Type	Didactic/Multiple-Choice
# of Questions	125

RRA Surgery Recertification Didactic Examination Structure	
Examination Type	Linear
Time Allotted	180 minutes
Item Type	Didactic/Multiple-Choice
# of Questions	100

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 January 31 through February 15, 2020 as a computer-adaptive examination. The Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery Recertification Examination is offered only on January 31 and February 1, 2020 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 January 31 and/or February 1 or may choose to take the RRA examination on January 31 and the Foot Surgery examination on any day, February 1 through February 15, 2020. *Examination site selection opens November 4, 2019. Seats are limited, so please register early via the ABFAS website.*

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 on the ABFAS website. 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. For example, if your maiden name is in your ABFAS records, but your married name appears on the driver’s license or passport, you must contact ABFAS directly to update the name on your record.

If you fail to present acceptable identification as noted above, you will not be able to enter the test center to take the examination. If this occurs, a candidate is marked “Absent” and forfeits the entire examination fee.

Failure to Appear

Candidates who fail to appear for their scheduled examination(s) without completing the formal withdrawal process forfeit all fees.

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 125 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
TOTAL	100

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
TOTAL	100

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 didactic examinations. An independent psychometric consultant rescues and reviews all failed examinations. Candidates may write to 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 certification 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 2020 recertification examinations in the fall of the year preceding the examination.

Fees

Examination	Application fee (non-refundable)	Examination Fee	Total fee
Foot Surgery	\$225	\$675	\$900
Foot Surgery and 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 4, 2019, go to <http://www.abfas.org> and login using your 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 24, 2020. If you withdraw after January 28, 2020 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.

DEADLINES

Registration opens – November 4, 2019

Registration closes – January 17, 2020

Last day to withdraw without penalty¹ – January 24, 2020

Last day to withdraw with penalty – January 28, 2020

Examination dates – RRA Recertification January 31 – February 1, 2020

Foot Recertification January 31 – February 15, 2020

No refunds for withdrawals after January 28, 2020.

Requests to withdraw must be received and approved by ABFAS no later than 72 hours prior to the scheduled exam start time at the local testing center. 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**.

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 or 415-553-7800 if you have questions.

**Please submit proof of privileges before you take your MOC (Recertification) examinations.
Submit documentation to: privileges@abfas.org**

(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):

- | <u>Category</u> | <u>Type</u> |
|---|--|
| <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)