



# 2026 Oral Certifying Examination

ABOMS

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## **Mission**

The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS) ensures that Diplomates meet our standards of training, education, and professionalism through our certification process. As the certifying body in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, ABOMS provides contemporary and innovative programs that promote optimal care and service to the public.

## **Vision**

To be the recognized leader in Board Certification of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and related disciplines.

## **Organization**

ABOMS is the certifying Board for the specialty of oral and maxillofacial surgery in the United States and is recognized and approved by the Council on Dental Education of the American Dental Association.

A committee was authorized at the 1945 annual meeting of the American Society of Oral Surgeons to establish an American Board of Oral Surgery, which would conduct examinations for the certification of specialists in oral surgery. In 1946, the American Board of Oral Surgery was incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois. During the following year, the American Board of Oral Surgery was approved by the Council on Dental Education of the American Dental Association and was authorized to proceed with the certification of specialists in oral surgery. The American Board of Oral Surgery was renamed the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery in 1978 to reflect the scope of the specialty. The name modification was incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois.

The operation of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery is entrusted to an eight-member Board of Directors. These Directors are Diplomates of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Fellows of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. One Director is elected each year to an eight-year term by the House of Delegates of the



American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. An Examination Committee composed of Diplomates of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery is appointed by the Board of Directors to prepare and conduct the annual certification examination. The Board of Directors and its Examination Committee serve without salary.

## **Examinations**

The certification process is comprehensive, covering the biological sciences and clinical practice of oral and maxillofacial surgery. The certification process in oral and maxillofacial surgery consists of two examinations:

- Qualifying Examination (QE)
- Oral Certifying Examination (OCE)

## **Education**

Candidates for certification by ABOMS must have graduated from a U.S. or Canadian dental school that is recognized by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) of the American Dental Association. They must have also completed advanced education in an oral and maxillofacial surgery program that is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) of the American Dental Association.

## **Licensure**

Candidates must provide evidence of an active dental/medical license from the appropriate authority enabling the individual to practice independently in the specialty of oral and maxillofacial surgery. An individual with limited licensure, which permits practice only under supervision, such as a “resident license” or a “fellowship license,” is not enough to satisfy this requirement.



## About the Oral Certifying Examination

The final step to becoming a board-certified oral and maxillofacial surgeon is taking the Oral Certifying Examination (OCE). Once a Candidate has successfully completed the Qualifying Examination (QE) , they are eligible to begin their application for the OCE. **It is important to note that each Candidate has three consecutive opportunities to take and pass the OCE. Non-submission of application, cancellations, no show, and failures are considered one opportunity.**

The OCE is an oral-based examination designed to test a Candidate’s clinically applicable knowledge and judgement. The examination consists of three sections. Each with four twelve-minute cases for a total exam time of 144 minutes.

### Deadlines

It is the Candidate’s responsibility to be aware of and meet all deadlines.

Oral Certifying Examination	
Examination Application Opens	June 10, 2025
Applications Due	September 25, 2025
Individual Exam Day Information Emailed	Mid-December
Examination Administered (Raleigh, NC)	February 2-6, 2026
Examination Results Mailed	March 2026



## Examination Roadmap

The OCE is an oral based examination designed to test a Candidates clinically applicable knowledge and judgement. The examination consists of three sections. Each with four twelve-minute cases for a total exam time of 144 minutes.

<b>Section I</b>	<b>Section II</b>	<b>Section III</b>
Orthognathic Surgery	Trauma	Adult Medical-
Infection	Implants	Assessment/Anesthesia
TMJ	Reconstruction	Pediatric Medical-
Pathology	Dentoalveolar	Assessment/Anesthesia
		Emergency Management
		Focused Additional Short Topics (FAST)*

\*Examples of topics that may be covered within Focused Additional Short Topics are Aesthetic Surgery, Sleep Apnea, MRONJ, Ethics, Professionalism, Pre-prosthetic Surgery, Soft Tissue Grafting and others. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but simply to highlight some topic examples.

## OCE Applications

Application forms must be completed electronically using the Candidate profile on the ABOMS website ([www.ABOMS.org](http://www.ABOMS.org)). Supporting materials must be uploaded to your application file on the website. All application materials will be reviewed by the ABOMS Board and staff for approval.

The ABOMS goes to great lengths to assist Candidates when participating in the certification process. In return, it is requested that individuals seeking Board Certification comply with set requirements and deadlines. All application materials must be received by the stated deadline.



## Application Requirements

- Application Fee of \$450.00 USD
- Examination Fee of \$2,850.00 USD
- Verification of Hospital Staff Privileges Appointment
- Verification of Current Licensure
- Professional Badge Image

**All fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.**

## Hospital Staff Privileges

Candidates must have the ability to manage patient care at a hospital where they maintain privileges to perform core oral and maxillofacial surgery procedures. A hospital is an institution primarily engaged in providing, by or under the supervision of physicians, in patient diagnostic and therapeutic services or rehabilitation services; and is accredited by the Joint Commission or approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Privileges at an ambulatory surgery center are acceptable if it is associated with a hospital where the Candidate maintains surgical privileges.

Candidates that are actively enrolled in an ADA accredited fellowship may use the hospital privileges they have as part of their fellowship. Candidates must provide documentation from the institute verifying their enrollment in the fellowship that includes their start and anticipated end date. An individual with limited licensure, which permits practice only under supervision, such as a “resident license” or a “fellowship license,” is not enough to satisfy the licensure requirement.

Candidates must use the ABOMS approved form labeled Verification of Hospital Staff Privileges and upload the completed document to their application.



## **Verification of Current Licensure**

Candidates seeking Board Certification must have a current unrestricted dental/medical license. The photocopy must clearly state an active status. An individual with limited licensure, which permits practice only under supervision, such as a “resident license” or a “fellowship license,” is not enough to satisfy the licensure requirement.

## **Badge Image**

Candidates must upload a professional photo to their profile. This photo will appear on the Candidates exam day badge. Images will be viewed by the ABOMS Board and Examiners. Images with logos, university names, selfies, and with other individuals are not accepted. Scrubs, athletic or military uniforms will not be accepted. Pictures must have a non-descript background. A profile image is an application requirement.

## **Oral Certifying Examination Audit Process**

The submission of an application indicates your agreement to comply with the terms of the audit process. All applications are subject to an audit, although only a percentage of applications are selected. The selection of an application for audit is random. If your application is selected for an audit, you will be notified by email. If you fail to meet the audit requirements, your fees will be forfeited, and your applications will be moved to void.

During an audit, the ABOMS Credentialing Chair/committee will verify the following documents:

- Verification of Hospital Staff Appointments
- Verification of Current Licensure

## **Candidates’ Responsibilities Policy**

The timely submission of applications and the accuracy of the information submitted therein are the sole responsibility of the Candidate. The ABOMS recommends reading and following all instructions thoroughly.





It is the Candidate's responsibility to keep the current address, e-mail, and telephone number on file. ABOMS does not share contact information with any other organization. Third party request for information on a Candidate's application, Board status, or results will not be granted. Time-sensitive information regarding applications, test registration and results require direct contact.

The ABOMS will not be responsible for missed communications when the Candidate does not have current information on file. Candidates may check their contact information and the status of their applications by logging into their profile online at [www.aboms.org](http://www.aboms.org).

### **Accommodation Policy for Candidates**

ABOMS will make every effort to provide all appropriate and reasonable efforts to accommodate any requests in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Issues such as a second language, test anxiety, slow reading without an identified underlying physical or mental deficit, and failure to achieve a desired outcome are not learning disabilities and are not covered by the Americans with Disability Act.

Applicants that require special accommodations must contact Linh Le, Examinations Services Coordinator, with specific accommodation requests and required documentation by the application due date, **September 25, 2025**. Documentation must not be older than three years.

**ABOMS offers all examinations in the English language only.** Extra time or other accommodation can be granted for all examinations on completion and acceptance of a special accommodation application.

Candidates that require special accommodation must contact the ABOMS administrative office to receive detailed information concerning documented disability or qualifying medical conditions.



### **Extensions on Expiring Application**

Requests for extension of application must be made after expiration of the current application for the Oral Certifying Examination (OCE). Requests for extensions must be in writing and additional supporting documents may be required. Each request will be individually reviewed and considered by the ABOMS Credentials Committee

### **Refunds**

When an application/Candidate registers for an examination, significant costs are incurred by ABOMS. Therefore, all fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

### **Receipts for Fees Paid**

Candidates who submit application materials online will receive e-mail confirmations including transactions numbers for any fees paid. Candidates can also visit their profile and locate their receipt under “View my Past Payments.”

### **Release of Examination Results**

The ABOMS will not release any examination result information by phone or e-mail. The ABOMS reserves the right to withhold examination results if any application materials are found to be deficient, expired, or inaccurate.

Following the examination, the ABOMS will release a list of the new Diplomates with American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (AAOMS). Please contact the ABOMS if you would prefer to opt out.

The ABOMS does not report pass or fail information to other third parties.



## Appeal Mechanism

- A. Upon completion of the examination, the Candidate must contact the ABOMS headquarters if they believe the examination has not been conducted in a fair manner. The request with an explanation of why an appeal is needed must be made in writing and received via e-mail or certified mail within **five (5)** calendar days of their examination.
- B. All appeals will be reviewed by the OCE Chair for evaluation and decision. During this time, the results of the said exam will not be disclosed to the Candidate.
- C. If the request is granted:
  - 1. The result of the appealed examinations, regardless of whether pass or fail, will be discarded and never disclosed.
  - 2. A second examination will be provided one year later at the regularly scheduled time.
  - 3. a Candidate must resubmit any required application materials and submit an amended examination fee as defined by the OCE Chair.
- D. Candidates on their last year of eligibility may appeal their examination however will lose their “Candidate” status. A Candidate cannot appeal two years in a row.
- E. The ABOMS will not consider appeals based on Candidate result, examination content, delivery or scoring of the examination, or psychometric validation.

**The decision of the ABOMS Board of Directors shall be considered final.**

## ABOMS Examination Fairness

ABOMS abides by the Principles of Fairness, developed by *The Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR)*, to ensure fairness through the design, development, administration, and scoring of the examinations. ABOMS makes every attempt to provide the necessary information before, during and after the examination to candidates to ensure testing fairness.



## Contact Information

### ABOMS Administrative Mailing Address

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