

American Board of Emergency Medicine

5-Year Continuing Certification and Annual Fee Emergency Medical Services

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

- 1. How long is the current certification period?** Your current certification will remain valid until the expiration date on your certificate. EMS certifications expiring in 2023 or later will receive 5-year certification when your certification renews.
- 2. Why did ABEM change from a 10-year to a 5-year certification cycle?** A number of factors contributed to the decision to change the certification cycle.
 - Instituting the 5-year cycle with the launch of MyEMSCert and the annual fee will minimize the number of disruptions and help to simplify the continuing certification process. Five-year certification cycles foster a more continuous approach to keeping up with medical knowledge and key advances in the specialty and demonstrating ability to meet certification standards.
 - Public and patient groups do not view the 10-year certification process as sufficient for certification. They assume certification programs are much shorter.
 - The ABMS Vision Commission report recommends moving to a continuing certification process. A 5-year cycle, while not continuous, moves in the direction of continuing certification.
 - As a result of the Vision Commission recommendations, the ABMS continuing certification standards now include a 5-year certification cycle requirement.
- 3. Will the date my current certification expires change now that there is a 5-year certification cycle?** No. All current EMS board certification expiration dates remain the same. Beginning in 2023, when you next renew your certification, you will be certified for another 5 years. This takes place after your current certification expiration date.
- 4. I am confused about what my options are for renewing certification. What should I do?** If your certification expires in 2023 or 2025, you will be receiving an email from ABEM outlining your options for recertification, or, if you have met all of your requirements, you will receive an email confirming your status. In late fall 2022, your ABEM portal will show you what requirements you have, although you will not be able to access any MyEMSCert modules until February 2023. You can also email subspecialties@abem.org or call 517-332-4800, option 4.
- 5. Did certification requirements increase with the change to a 5-year certification cycle?** No. To obtain 10-year certification, physicians were required to:
 - Complete 8 LLSAs
 - Pass the EMS Cognitive Expertise Exam
 - 2 IMP attestations
 - Maintain all medical licenses in compliance with ABEM's [Policy on Medical Licensure](#) and adhere to ABEM's [Code of Professionalism](#)

With the new 5-year certification cycle, physicians must, when MyEMSCert is fully phased in:

- Complete 4 MyEMSCert modules (EM-certified physicians have the option of taking 1 MyEMCert module in place of 1 MyEMSCert module. Please refer to the [ABEM website](#) for additional information.)
- 1 IMP attestation
- Pay the annual fee
- Maintain all medical licenses in compliance with ABEM's [Policy on Medical Licensure](#) and adhere to ABEM's [Code of Professionalism](#)

The MyEMSCert, 5-year certification cycle eliminates the high-stakes EMS Cognitive Expertise Exam from total requirements.

- 6. What happens if I don't pass a module? Can I retake it?** Yes, you have three opportunities to pass any given module. However, if you do not pass a MyEMSCert module, you will need to wait three months before being able to take it again. You should therefore consider starting early on meeting your requirements in order to have sufficient time to complete them.
- 7. Will the way I pay for EMS continuing certification change?** Yes. For physicians who renew EMS certification or achieve initial EMS certification in 2023 or later, an annual fee requirement will be implemented. All EMS-certified physicians will move to an annual fee at the same time they move to a 5-year certification cycle (after they next renew their certification). Rather than having to pay individually for MyEMSCert modules, physicians will pay an annual fee, which spreads payments evenly over the certification cycle. Physicians will also have the option of paying for all 5 years of certification in one lump sum in their first year of certification.
- 8. What is the annual fee?** The annual fee for your first continuing certification is \$300, \$215 for your second certification. If you have any additional subspecialty certifications, they are free. (Please note that fees are subject to change.)
- 9. When do I have to pay the annual fee?** The fee can be paid any time before December 31st. However, the fee must be paid in order to access continuing certification activities. You can also pay the entire 5-year annual fee in one lump sum during the first year of your certification.
- 10. Can I pay my annual fee in one payment?** Yes, you can pay the annual fee for all 5 years of certification in one lump sum during the first year of your 5-year certification, or you will need to make annual payments.
- 11. What if I don't pay the fee by December 31?** ABEM provides a grace period of one year to pay the fee. A late fee of \$140 will be charged for those paying during the grace period. If the fee is not paid by April 1, the status of Conditional Certification will be applied to the physician's certificate. Conditional Certification is a status of notice, not discipline nor sanction. The status alerts physicians that they are at risk for becoming decertified if they do not pay the annual fee by the end of the calendar year.
- 12. What happens if I don't pay the fee by the end of the grace period?** Physicians who do not pay the fee by the end of the grace period will be decertified.

- 13. I didn't pay the annual fee on time and was decertified. How do I obtain a refund for the payments that I made?** There are no refunds issued for failing certification requirements or for any other circumstances.
- 14. How do I regain certification if I didn't pay my annual fee?** You can regain your certification once your past due fees are paid and any outstanding requirements are completed. Your certificate dates will reflect the lapse in certification.

March 2024