

ABMS Board Eligibility and Transition Dates

The ABMS Board Eligibility policies enable ABMS Member Boards to set parameters for how candidates can use the term "board eligible" to signal their preparations for certification. The term applies only to the period prior to initial certification in a specialty or subspecialty. Member Boards with existing board eligibility policies aligned their board eligible periods with the principles of the ABMS policies. Those that do not have an existing policy have established transition dates.

BOARD ELIGIBLE PERIODS AND TRANSITION DATES			
American Board of	SPECIALTIES*	SUBSPECIALTIES	
	Board Eligible Period (+practice requirement)	Board Eligible Period (+practice requirement)	Transition Date
Allergy and Immunology	7 years	No subspecialties	
Anesthesiology	7 years	7 years	*
Colon and Rectal Surgery	7 years ¹	No subspecialties	
Dermatology	5 years	5 years	*
Emergency Medicine	5 years	7 years	*
Family Medicine	7 years	7 years	*
Internal Medicine	7 years	7 years	*
Medical Genetics and Genomics	6 years	6 years	*
Neurological Surgery	6-7 years		1/1/2025
Nuclear Medicine	7 years	No subspecialties	
Obstetrics and Gynecology	7 (+1) years	7 (+1)	*
Ophthalmology	7 years	No subspecialties	
Orthopaedic Surgery	5 years ²	7 (+2) years	*
Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery	5 years	7 years	*
Pathology	5 years	7 years ³	*
Pediatrics	7 years	7 years	*
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	7 years	7 years	*
Plastic Surgery	7 (+1) years	7 (+2) years	*
Preventive Medicine	7 years	7 years	*
Psychiatry and Neurology	7 years	7 years	*
Radiology	6 years	6 years	1/1/2025
Surgery	7 years		1/1/2025
Thoracic Surgery	7 years ⁴	7 years ⁵	*
Urology	6 years	6 years ⁶	*

*The Member Board either had a policy in place prior to the effective date of the ABMS policy, or the transition date has passed.

¹ Colon and Rectal Surgery requires candidates to pass the traditional examination given by the American Board of Surgery. Candidates have seven years to complete both the traditional and oral examinations after application approval.

² Orthopaedic Surgery candidates have five years to achieve certification after passing the traditional examination.

³ Pathology subspecialty applicants who completed training before 2019 receive five years eligibility from completion of training or primary certification, whichever is later.

⁴ Thoracic Surgery will accept a Vascular Surgery residency in lieu of a General Surgery residency as long as the Vascular Surgery training leads to primary certification by the American Board of Surgery.

⁵ Thoracic Surgery requires diplomates to apply within one year of completing training.

⁶ Urology requires applicants to complete the examination process within six years with up to three attempts to take the examination.



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