



# **VOLUNTARY RECERTIFICATION BOOKLET OF INFORMATION**

## VOLUNTARY RECERTIFICATION PROCESS

The ABP offers a process for recertification that enables its diplomates to demonstrate continued competency in the practice of pathology. Based on the tenet that practicing pathologists maintain high educational, professional, ethical, and moral standards in their practices, the recertification process serves as an assessment of individual credentials and a measure of quality of professional practice for pathologists who have been certified by the ABP. This voluntary recertification process is designed to evaluate the basic parameters of a pathologist's practice and assure a current review of credentials, leading to a certificate of recertification.

Voluntary recertification is available only to diplomates of the ABP who hold non-time-limited certificates in one of the primary disciplines of pathology and who meet the stated requirements. **Voluntary recertification in subspecialties is not available.** Each applicant successfully completing the recertification process will receive a certificate of recertification as a diplomate of the ABP dated January 1 of the year following completion of the process and effective for ten years. **The voluntary recertification program will accept applications through July 1, 2013. After that date, diplomates who wish to recertify or are required to pass a secure examination for licensure purposes can do so through the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program.**

Applicants who do not satisfy the requirements will be so informed and are encouraged to reapply when the deficiencies are corrected. An appeal process will be available to all applicants who are denied recertification. Recertification certificates are subject to revocation for cause.

Please address all inquiries to Betsy D. Bennett, M.D., Executive Vice President.

## APPLICATION

Application forms are available on the ABP Web site (<http://www.abpath.org>). Completed **original** application forms should be returned with the required credentials and the application fee. An application cannot be given consideration unless it is accompanied by the appropriate application fee. Applications are accepted through March 1 for the Spring administration and July 1 for the Fall administration. **Applications received after July 1 will be processed for recertification in the next year.**

## RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### **Certification by the ABP**

An applicant for recertification must hold a non-time-limited certificate issued by the ABP in one of the primary disciplines of pathology (AP/CP, AP, or CP).

### **Period of Qualification**

All diplomates who apply for recertification will be expected to complete the process within the calendar year.

### **Medical Licensure**

The applicant must hold a current, valid, full, and unrestricted license to practice medicine or osteopathy in at least one jurisdiction of the United States, its territories, or Canada. If a diplomate holds more than one license, all must be full and unrestricted. The medical board in the state where a diplomate is practicing must be aware of disciplinary actions other states have taken against the physician's medical license. It is the responsibility of the diplomate to assure the ABP that the state is aware of actions taken by other states.

### **Healthcare Privileges**

A diplomate seeking voluntary recertification must provide the ABP with documentation of medical staff membership and scope of healthcare organization privileges. If the diplomate's practice is such that this information is not applicable, then the diplomate must submit a description of his/her practice.

### **Physical and Mental Health: Chemical Dependency**

A diplomate applying for voluntary recertification who has been diagnosed as chemically dependent, has been treated for drug or other substance abuse, and/or has entered a rehabilitation or diversionary program for chemical dependency authorized by the applicable medical licensing authority will be required to provide additional information to the ABP. The diplomate must show that he/she has successfully completed the authorized rehabilitation or diversionary program, is successfully enrolled in such a program, or is successfully enrolled in or has completed a private treatment program. In the latter case, the responsible program administrators and physician must attest, to the satisfaction of the ABP, that the diplomate has been free of chemical dependency for a period of time sufficient to establish that the individual is not currently engaged in the use of illegal drugs or other substance abuse and/or that the use of illegal drugs or other substance abuse is not an ongoing problem. This documentation must accompany the completed application form.

### **Continuing Medical Education**

The recertification process is based on the assumption that diplomates of the ABP have a broad base of knowledge in the foundations of pathology and are proficient in new developments in the field. To document this level of competence, applicants must demonstrate continued self-study appropriate to the practice of pathology. Candidates for voluntary recertification must document 150 credits of continuing medical education (CME) acceptable to the ABP during the three years prior to the recertification application. Of the 150 hours, at least 100 must meet the criteria for Category 1 of the AMA's Physician Recognition Award. At least 80 of the 100 Category 1 CME credits must be directly related to the applicant's practice. The remainder may be in areas of general relevance to pathology, such as administration, ethics, etc. The ABP will ensure to its satisfaction that the course content of all CME listings is relevant to the specialty, imparts knowledge in pathology, and is conducted as a scholarly exercise. CME granted by any organization accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education will be acceptable for meeting these requirements.

### **Accreditation of Laboratory**

Accreditation of laboratories (where applicable) is considered to be an essential element of systems-based practice. Accordingly, each pathologist applying for voluntary recertification must document the accreditation status of his/her laboratory. The accrediting agency must be appropriate for the diplomate's scope of practice, such as Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, College of American Pathologists, American Association of Blood Banks, and the National Association of Medical Examiners.

### **Medical Staff Standing**

The recertification process is offered only to diplomates certified in one of the primary disciplines of pathology who are active in the practice of pathology. Each applicant should be a member in good standing of the medical staff at the primary health care facility in which the practice is located. The ABP requires a written statement from the applicant regarding medical staff status and a reference from the chief of the medical

staff for verification. Applicants who are not members of the staff of a health care facility must submit a description of their practices in order to meet this requirement.

**Quality of Practice**

An applicant must be able to demonstrate that his/her practice meets the standards of professional care as established by the institution, the medical staff, the departmental section, and the department. A comprehensive reference from the head of the department or section chief is required and will serve as documentation of the applicant’s satisfactory quality of practice.

In addition, the applicant must be able to demonstrate membership in good standing in appropriate professional organizations. A listing of memberships is sufficient for documentation.

**Voluntary Recertification Examination**

Voluntary recertification by the ABP is accomplished by meeting the requirements described above. An examination is not required by the ABP except in the following circumstance: an applicant whose credentials do not satisfy the requirements but otherwise indicate a high level of competence and professionalism will be required to pass a secure examination as a supplement to his/her credentials.

A secure, proctored examination will also be available to applicants who are required to pass such an examination to obtain or maintain licensure in a particular state. This examination will be given twice annually, if necessary, in the ABP Examination Center in Tampa, Florida.

Applicants who do not satisfy the requirements for recertification are encouraged to reapply when the identified deficiencies are corrected.

**Fees**

Voluntary Recertification without examination .....	\$1000
Voluntary Recertification with examination .....	\$1800

**Examination Dates**

- June 23, 2010 (final filing date is March 1)
- October 20, 2010 (final filing date is July 1)

**Certificates**

Each applicant successfully completing the recertification process will receive a certificate of recertification as a diplomate of the ABP dated January 1 of the year following completion of the process and effective for ten years.