**American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc.**
A Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

# Frequently Asked Questions about the MOC Program

## What is the ABPN Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program?

Maintenance of Certification (MOC) is an initiative of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) aimed at insuring that physician specialists, certified by one of the 24 member boards of the ABMS, offer quality patient care through an ongoing process of self-improvement.  MOC entails four basic requirements: Professionalism and professional standing; Continuing Medical Education (CME), Self-Assessment (SA) and Patient Safety; Assessment of knowledge, judgment and skills; and Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP).

## When does the MOC process begin?

Diplomates who sat for an exam after October 1, 1994 are automatically enrolled in the MOC Program after achieving board certification.  A diplomate should log into his/her ABPN Physician Folios account at www.abpn.com/folios to view and manage his/her MOC Program requirements.

## Is participation in the MOC Program mandatory?

While Board certification is voluntary, participation in the MOC Program is required to maintain certification for diplomates with time-limited certificates.  Holders of time-limited certificates must complete all components of the ABPN MOC Program to maintain their Board certification.

## Who does the 10-Year MOC Program pertain to?

**Diplomates who passed a certification or MOC exam prior to 2012 and are due for recertification in 2019-2021 are in the 10-Year MOC Program.**  10-Year diplomates (time-limited certificate holders) should become familiar with their current MOC requirements in their ABPN Physician Folios account.  All diplomates in the 10-Year MOC Program will be automatically enrolled in the Continuous MOC (C-MOC) Program upon passing the MOC exam.  The 10-Year MOC Program will sunset in 2021.

## What are the 10-Year Program MOC requirements?

1. Maintain a full, unrestricted medical license.
2. Complete the following MOC activities **prior to applying** for a MOC exam:
   - 300 Category 1 CME credits (includes SA CME)
   - 24 Self-Assessment (SA) CME credits
   - One Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP) Unit
3. Pass a MOC exam for each certification every 10 years.  10-Year MOC diplomates will pay for board certification and attest to completing the MOC activities at the time they apply for the MOC exam.

## How do I track/submit documentation of my credit if I'm in the 10-Year MOC Program?

Diplomates in the 10-Year MOC Program must retain documentation (certificates/transcripts) of their completed activities over a 10-year period.  Diplomates will be required to attest to the completion of the activities when applying for the MOC exam.  Diplomates do not need to submit documentation to the Board, or record activities in Physician Folios, unless they are audited.  The ABPN Audit Guidelines for Diplomates document lists the documentation needed in the event of an audit.

Your ABPN Physician Folios account has an optional "Activity Records" section to monitor the progress of completed MOC activities.

## What happens if I do not complete the MOC activities and/or sit for the MOC exam?

Diplomates in the 10-Year MOC Program who are not recertified before their certificates expire are no longer board certified in that area of certification.  Once a former diplomate completes all MOC activity requirements and passes the MOC examination, he or she will regain certification status.  Physicians with expired certificates who wish to recertify must meet the MOC activity requirements of the year in which they wish to take the MOC examination.

## What happens if I fail the MOC examination?

Diplomates must pass a MOC exam every ten years and have two consecutive attempts per application to do so.  If a diplomate does not pass the MOC exam on the first attempt in the tenth year, she/he will be able to retake the examination at the next scheduled MOC exam administration without change in Board certification status.  If the diplomate fails the MOC exam on the second attempt, his/her certification status will be reported as "Not Certified".

## What happens if my certificate expired already?

Diplomates who are not recertified before their certificates expire are no longer Board certified in that area.  However, once a former diplomate completes all the MOC activity requirements and passes the MOC examination, he/she will regain certification status.  It is not necessary to sit for the initial certification examination again or complete additional training.

## What do I do for MOC if I have multiple certificates?

Diplomates who have multiple certifications only need to complete one set of MOC activity requirements (CME, SA, and PIP).  The activities can be in either a general specialty and/or subspecialty field.  Diplomates still must take and pass the MOC exam for each certification.  Diplomates may now opt to sit for a Combined MOC exam.

## Who does the C-MOC Program pertain to?

**Diplomates who pass an ABPN examination in 2012 or later (initial certification and/or recertification) are automatically enrolled in the Continuous MOC (C-MOC) Program.**  C-MOC Program diplomates should become familiar with their current MOC requirements in their ABPN Physician Folios account.

## What are the C-MOC Program requirements?

1. Maintain a full, unrestricted medical license.
2. Complete and attest to the following MOC activities for each 3-year block in the Folios account "Activity Attestation" section:
   - 90 Category 1 CME credits (includes SA CME)
   - 24 Self-Assessment (SA) CME credits
   - One Patient Safety Activity (Required during first C-MOC block.  Your Folios account will indicate if the new Patient Safety Activity requirement applies to you)
   - One Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP) Unit
3. Pay the Annual Fee.
4. Pass a MOC exam for each certification every 10 years.

## Do I get any credit for a fellowship?

A three-year block of C-MOC requirements (CME, SA, and PIP) will be waived for diplomates who graduated from an ACGME-accredited subspecialty fellowship training program, an ABPN-approved Triple Board, or an ABPN-approved Post Pediatrics Portal program in 2011 or later **AND** who pass the corresponding ABPN subspecialty exam. Diplomates will receive a three-year block MOC activity waiver for the current block they are in at the time of passing the subspecialty exam.  Upon passing the subspecialty exam, diplomates will see the waiver reflected in their Physician Folios account.  Diplomates are still required to pay the annual fee.

If a diplomate believes he/she is eligible for the credit, but did not receive notice of the credit waiver, he/she should contact the Board via questions@abpn.com.

## How do I track/submit documentation of my credits if I'm in the C-MOC Program?

Diplomates in the C-MOC Program must attest to completed MOC activities on an annual basis in their ABPN Physician Folios account "Activity Attestation" section.  Diplomates do not need to submit documentation to the Board unless they are audited.  The ABPN Audit Guidelines for Diplomates document lists the documentation needed in the event of an audit.  Diplomates must retain documentation (certification/transcripts) of their completed activities over a 10-year period.

## What is the Annual Fee that I need to pay?

Instead of a single fee at the time of the MOC examination, participants in the C-MOC Program pay an annual fee.  This fee covers maintenance of board certification status, use of a personalized ABPN Physician Folios account with customized MOC tracker, and development and administrative costs of MOC examination.  Each annual fee payment will apply a 10% credit to a single MOC exam. **Annual fee payments are designed to cover one single MOC exam every ten years at no additional cost.**

The current annual fee is $175. Payments are made online in the Folios account 'Annual Fee' section.

The annual fee is non-refundable.

## What happens if I do not pay the annual fees and/or complete the MOC activities?

Diplomates in C-MOC need to satisfy all the MOC requirements per three-year block to maintain their certification status.  A diplomate will be reported as "Certified- Not Meeting MOC Requirements" if he/she does not sign on to his/her ABPN Physician Folios account, pay the annual fee and attest to completed activity requirements by the end of a 3-year block.  A diplomate may change his/her status to "Meeting MOC Requirements" by completing insufficient block activities, current block activities, and payment of all required fees. A diplomate will be reported as "Not Certified" if he/she does not complete 6 years (2 blocks) of MOC requirements.

Insufficient or partial annual fees and MOC activity requirements (CME, Self-Assessment, Patient Safety Activity and PIP) completed prior to a lapse in certification may not be used towards future MOC blocks. Those fees and activities will expire along with the certificate(s).

Once certification lapses, a diplomate may change his/her status back to "Certified- Meeting MOC Requirements" upon successful completion of one block of MOC requirements and passing a MOC examination.

## How does a lifetime certificate holder enter the C-MOC Program?

The ABPN understand that some physicians holding lifetime certificates may wish to complete the requirements and enter the C-MOC Program.  A lifetime certificate holder can participate in C-MOC in one of two ways:

1. Diplomates can apply for and take an MOC examination and be automatically enrolled in C-MOC upon passing the MOC examination.  Lifetime certificate holders do not need to complete MOC requirements prior to sitting for an MOC examination.

   OR

2. Diplomates can elect to enroll in C-MOC, complete one block of MOC activity requirements [90 Category 1 CME, of which 24 need to come from Self-Assessment CME, one Patient Safety Activity and one Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP)Unit], and then pass the MOC exam within three years. These diplomates will be listed as "Meeting MOC Requirements" from the date they enroll in CMOC. To elect into C-MOC, diplomates need to follow the prompts to "Switch to the C-MOC program" in his/her ABPN Physician Folios account's Maintenance of Certification section, under the MOC Guide tab. The C-MOC enrollment fee of $175 will be credited towards the first annual fee payment.  Each annual fee applies a 10% credit to a single MOC exam.

Lifetime certificate holders who voluntarily participate in the MOC program and do not pass the MOC examination will retain their lifetime certificate. Lifetime certificate holders who do not participate in MOC will be reported to the ABMS and on the ABPN website as, 'Certified-not meeting MOC requirements and not required to do so'.

## What happens if I am audited by the ABPN?

The ABPN will randomly audit approximately five percent of the applications submitted for the MOC examination and five percent of the diplomates in the C-MOC Program each year. Diplomates who are audited will receive an email detailing the documentation required as evidence of completion of required MOC activities (CME, Self-Assessment, Patient Safety and PIP activities).

Diplomates with expired or invalidated ABPN certificates will be audited upon re-entry into the ABPN certification process.

Diplomates will be notified of the audit at the beginning of the first year following completion of a three-year CMOC block.

## What happens if I fail a C-MOC program audit?

Diplomates who fail the C-MOC program audit will have their certification status changed to "Certified – Not Meeting MOC Requirements". Diplomates will have the remaining time in their next block to provide their ABPN credentials auditor with the documentation to satisfy the requirements of the audit. If the requirements of the audit are met within this timeframe, the audit will be changed to a PASS status and the certification status will be updated to "Certified-Meeting MOC Requirements". If the requirements of the audit have not been met by the end of the next block (6 years), a diplomate will be reported as "Not Certified".

See the ABPN Diplomate Audit section of our website for more information about audits.