



2026 Specialty Certifying Examination Bulletin



Certification demonstrates to the public that a physician and medical specialist meets nationally recognized standards for education, knowledge, experience, and skills and maintains their certification through continuous learning and practice improvement in order to provide high quality care in a specific medical specialty. Once board certified, OB GYNs will be referred to as a Diplomate of the board and will be able to proudly display the ABOG Board-Certified badge.

This Bulletin, issued in July 2025, represents the official statement of the requirements in effect for the Specialty Certifying Examinations to be given in October, November, and December 2026.

All inquiries and questions can be submitted [here](#).

[Disclaimers](#)

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2026 CERTIFYING EXAMINATION

Introduction



ABOG certification is a two-step process that is completely voluntary. The Certifying Examination is the last step in this process and will evaluate the candidate's approach to, and rationale for, the clinical care of various patient management problems in obstetrics, gynecology, and women's health.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate:

- a level of knowledge that allows them to serve as a consultant to non-obstetrician-gynecologist physicians in their community;
- the ability to provide knowledgeable and clinically capable care to women;
- the capability to practice as [obstetricians and gynecologists](#) independently, to perform major gynecologic surgery, and to perform spontaneous and operative obstetric deliveries safely; and
- the knowledge needed to manage complications and to perform the essential diagnostic procedures required of a consultant in obstetrics, gynecology, and women's health.

Overview of Fees and Deadlines

Deadlines and fees for the Certifying Examination can be located [here](#). Deadlines cannot be extended. Case list and all fees must be submitted on the candidate's ABOG portal prior to midnight Central time on their due date. The system will prevent submission once the deadline has passed. If you fail to submit by the deadline, please contact us [here](#). The application fee must be paid by credit card through the candidate's ABOG portal at the time of application. The examination fee must be paid by credit card through the candidate's ABOG portal at the time of notification of acceptance to the examination.

Application fees and application late fees will not be refunded for any reason. For refunds relating to the examination portion of the fee, please refer to ABOG's [Assessment Fees and Refunds Policy](#).

1. Applications will be accepted beginning March 1, 2026. The application fee must be paid online by credit card only at the time of application. All fees are quoted and payable in US dollars. The application fee for the Certifying Examination will not be refunded. The final day applications will be accepted is April 30, 2026. The completed Hospital Privileges Verification Form that is available to print at the time of application must be uploaded on the candidate's ABOG portal on or before April 30, 2026. If the candidate is in an ACGME-accredited fellowship, this form may be completed by the fellowship director. For non-ACGME-accredited fellowships, including those related to obstetrics and gynecology, this form must be completed by a hospital official.
2. Late fees will apply for applications received after April 14, 2026. A full list of deadlines and fees is shown above.
3. Candidates who will be lactating at the time of the examination or require an accommodation for a disability must notify the ABOG office at the time of application, before April 30, 2026 (see website for more details on requesting [candidate disability accommodations](#) or [lactation accommodations](#)). Candidates who will be lactating at the time of the examination will be scheduled to use one of the lactation rooms on a first come, first served basis.
4. If the application, licensure, and privileges are acceptable after review by ABOG, candidates will be notified by ABOG no later than June 30, 2026, to submit properly formatted case lists electronically and to pay the examination fee. Case lists should not be submitted until the candidate is notified of approval from the Board. ABOG reserves the right to make the final decision concerning the applicant's admission to the Certifying Examination after considering all circumstances affecting the individual situation, including a review of the case list.
5. The case list must be submitted by July 31, 2026, to avoid a late fee. All case lists must be entered online using the ABOG case list program by the deadline. The program will be available for case list entry on their ABOG portal at the start of the collection year. Candidates will not have the option to submit the case list in the Case List Entry System until after the final date of the collection period (June 30). After June 30, candidates will have a task to submit their case list made available on their ABOG portal. Candidates will receive more detailed information in the application approval notification about how to prepare and submit their case lists. For more information, see the [Case List Preparation](#) section.
6. Case lists received between August 1, 2025, and August 31, 2026, will be assessed a late fee. No case lists will be accepted after August 31, 2026.

Eligibility Requirements



1. Qualifying Examination

All candidates must have passed the Qualifying Examination on their most recent attempt prior to applying for the Certifying Examination.

2. Surgical Skills Standard

All candidates who graduated from residency in 2020 or later must, at the time of application, provide documentation of successful completion of either Fundamentals of Laparoscopic Surgery (FLS) or Essentials in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery (EMIGS).

3. Limitation of Eligibility

Physicians must achieve certification within eight (8) years of the completion of their residency training. For information on regaining eligibility please see the policy on Regaining Eligibility for Initial Certification found [here](#). Years spent in an ACGME accredited OB-GYN fellowship training program, or an ACGME-accredited second residency, will not count toward the 8-year limit. Time spent between the completion of residency training and the start of additional ACGME-accredited training will count toward the 8-year limit.

For fellows in an ACGME-accredited OB GYN fellowship or a government fellowship, an additional year of eligibility is added for each subsequent year of training. Fellowship training in non ACGME-accredited OB GYN programs will not extend the 8-year eligibility limit. Fellowships completed prior to 2013 in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery, or prior to 2017 in Gynecologic Oncology, Maternal-Fetal Medicine, or Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, when fellowships were accredited by ABOG, will also qualify for eligibility extension of one year per additional training year.

4. Good Moral and Ethical Character

ABOG requires evidence of a candidate's professional reputation, moral and ethical character, and in-hospital practice privileges from administrative officials of organizations and institutions that know the candidate and their practice. If a candidate is involved in an investigation by a health care organization regarding practice activities or for ethical or moral issues, the individual will not be scheduled for examination, and a decision to approve or disapprove the application will be deferred until either the candidate has been cleared or until ABOG has received sufficient information to make a final decision.

A physician who has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a felony, even if it is not related to patient care, will not be allowed to take the Certifying Examination.

5. Active, Unrestricted Medical License

The candidate must possess at least one active, unrestricted medical license to practice medicine in a state or territory of the United States or a Province of Canada. If the candidate has more than one license, each medical license must not be restricted, suspended, on probation, revoked, nor include conditions of practice. The terms "restricted" and "conditions" include any limitations, terms, or requirements imposed on a physician's license regardless of whether they deal directly with patient care. An educational or institutional license does not meet this requirement unless the candidate is currently in an ACGME-accredited fellowship training program.

Candidates who are currently enrolled in an ACGME-accredited fellowship program do not need to have an independent license to practice medicine. However, if such a license(s) is held, the license(s) must not have disciplinary or non-disciplinary restrictions. A written explanation must be provided at the time of application if a candidate has ever had any action taken against any medical license in any territory, province or state of the United States or Canada, or any foreign country at any time. Such actions include, but are not limited to, admonitions, reprimands, conditions, restrictions, probations, suspension, fines, required coursework, denial of application/renewal, and revocations. These actions must be reported even if they occurred in the past and are no longer active.

ABOG will investigate every candidate's license(s) using various search techniques. A candidate that fails to inform ABOG of any action against their medical license(s) in any state, territory, or foreign nation may be ineligible to take the Certifying Examination for a minimum of three (3) years. The Board reserves the right to determine candidate eligibility to take the Certifying Examination after reviewing all material.

6. Actively Engaged in Unsupervised Clinical Practice

Candidates for the 2026 Certifying Examination must be in unsupervised clinical practice of Obstetrics and Gynecology from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. There is no restriction on the amount of time missed during that year as long as the candidate is able to meet the case list requirements. Practice may include locum tenens work.

Physicians in a non-ACGME-accredited fellowship related to the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology

may apply for the Certifying Examination during their fellowship if they meet all other requirements. Time spent in a teaching or research appointment, or in a fellowship or graduate education program that does not include clinical practice or involve unrestricted privileges to practice as an obstetrician-gynecologist will not fulfill the practice requirement.

7. Unrestricted Hospital Privileges

Candidates must hold unrestricted hospital privileges to practice as an obstetrician-gynecologist in each hospital where they have been responsible for patient care. Candidates are responsible for maintaining unrestricted hospital privileges for at least six (6) months during their case collection period. If a candidate holds hospital privileges in more than one hospital, they can give up privileges voluntarily as long as they still hold unrestricted privileges in another hospital. Privileges that are resigned or dropped in lieu of an investigation or adverse action are not considered to be given up voluntarily and must be reported.

“Unrestricted hospital privileges” means that the physician is a member of the medical staff and has privileges to admit patients and to practice obstetrics and gynecology. Required Ongoing Professional Practice Evaluation (OPPE) or proctoring for new privileges are not considered a restriction for examination purposes. Any Focused Professional Practice Evaluation (FPPE) assigned by a medical staff or staff office that is not the standard for all new providers must be reported at the time of application and will be reviewed.

Restrictions that render a candidate ineligible to take the Certifying Examination are:

- Quality of care, professionalism, or peer review activities which have led to a limitation of privileges or required supervision.
- If the candidate’s privileges are under investigation, suspended, or on probation (for cause), that candidate is ineligible to apply for the Certifying Examination until the investigation is completed, or the suspension or probation is lifted, and full and unrestricted privileges are granted.

Candidates who are enrolled in an ACGME-accredited fellowship in an area of medicine related to Obstetrics and Gynecology are not required to hold hospital privileges. However, if a fellow has such privileges, they must be unrestricted and not under investigation for any reason.

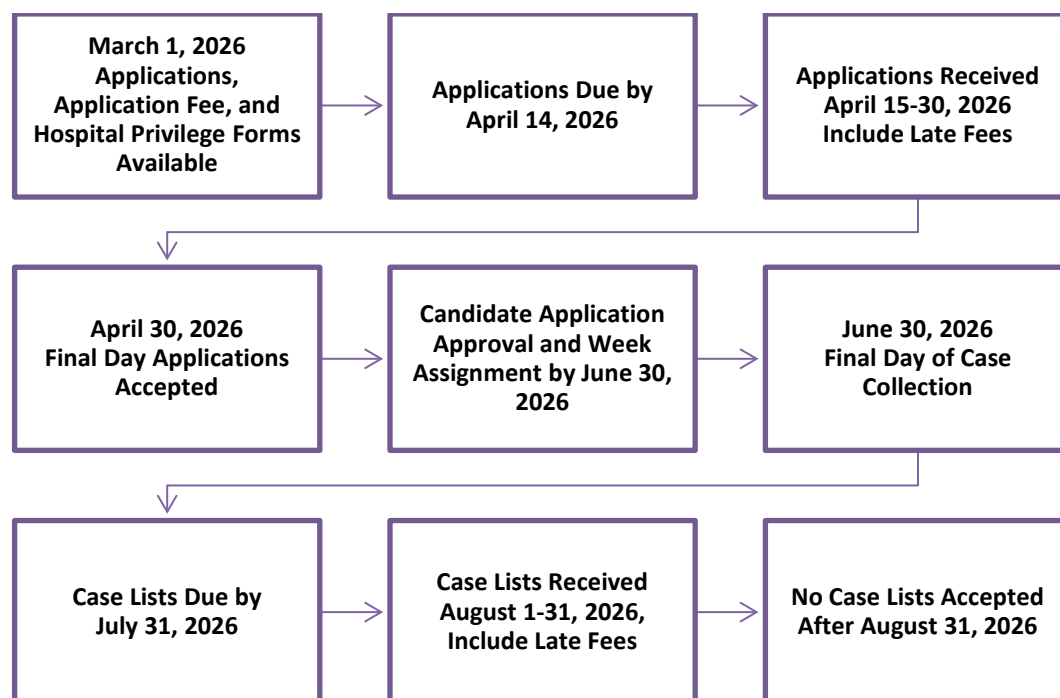
Candidates currently in a fellowship that is not ACGME-accredited, in an ACGME-accredited fellowship not related to Obstetrics and Gynecology, or in a second residency, may collect cases during that training but must have full and unrestricted privileges to practice OB-GYN in the hospital from which they are collecting cases.

Candidates in a Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery fellowship, and those who are unable to get hospital privileges due to their specific type of practice setting, may request an exception to the hospital privilege policy by contacting the ABOG Certification Standards Department [here](#).

8. Terms of Agreement

Candidates must sign a [Terms of Agreement](#) designated as a “task” on their ABOG portal prior to the date of their Certifying Examination. If candidates refuse to sign the agreement, they will not be allowed to take the Certifying Examination.

Application Process



Prior to application approval, all inquiries and correspondence about applications should be addressed with the ABOG Certification Standards Department [here](#). Once a candidate is approved to take the ABOG Certifying Examination, any questions about exam protocols and processes should be directed to the ABOG Assessment Department [here](#). A full list of deadlines and fees are shown above.

Case List

Case List Entry

All case list information for the 2026 Certifying Examination must be entered online. To enter a case, a candidate must access their ABOG portal and click on “Case List Entry.” The Case List Entry System will be available no later than October 2025 to allow for annual enhancements. Common abbreviations that are acceptable are listed [here](#). If a problem is encountered, there is a frequently asked questions (FAQ) button where most questions will be answered. However, if the problem is not resolved, the candidate should call the ABOG Assessment Department or submit an inquiry [here](#).

Case list information can be entered through any device with an internet connection, including smartphones, laptops, tablets, and desktop computers.

Candidates will **not** be asked to enter patient-identifying information in the Case List Entry System (i.e., Hospital, Patient Initial, and Patient ID fields). An auto-generated Case ID will be assigned to each case for HIPAA compliance purposes. Candidates **must** keep track of their own records of patient-identifying information using whatever tracking method they would like, in the event of a random ABOG audit.

The de-identification of patient case lists does not allow the omission of any patients under the candidate’s care which are otherwise required to be reported. Candidates will self-attest that their case

lists are accurate and complete and within the appropriate timeframe. A candidate's case list is subject to audit.

Case List Preparation and Submission

Reasons that a case list may disqualify a candidate from admission to the Certifying Examination include if the case list:

1. fails to provide the required information,
2. includes an insufficient number of patients,
3. is inadequately or incompletely prepared,
4. is not appropriately de-identified, and/or
5. fails to provide sufficient breadth and depth of clinical problems.

Falsification of information in the case list may result in ineligibility to apply for the Certifying Examination for a minimum of three years. The candidate must then meet all requirements in effect at the end of the deferred period. If the falsification is discovered after the candidate has successfully completed the Certifying Examination, the results of the test will be voided, and the candidate's certification will be revoked.

Case List Verification and Audit

A certain percent of candidates' case lists **will** get randomly audited. If audited, the candidate will be notified about instructions and a deadline, via the email associated with their ABOG profile, to upload an affidavit signed by a medical records official or other acceptable designated hospital authority. **An affidavit only needs to be completed if a candidate's list is selected for a random audit.** After submission, candidates should refer to their case list entry system in their ABOG portal for status updates on their case list.

ABOG retains the right to audit a candidate's case list at any time before the release of examination scores. If a candidate's case list is selected for audit, ABOG will withhold the candidate's exam scores until completion of the audit. See more details [here](#).

Patients to be Listed

Case lists must include all patients primarily cared for by the candidate, including those admitted to all hospitals and cared for at all surgical centers where the candidate holds admitting and/or surgical privileges between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026. The case list must demonstrate sufficient number, breadth, and depth of clinical experience. Candidates do not need to list cases involving care provided to men.

Candidates may not list patients for whom they have only provided a consultation with another physician. The patients listed must be only those for whom the candidate has had personal responsibility for professional management and care. In the case of a partnership or group practice, the patients listed should be only those managed by the candidate. If some portion of the care was provided by a partner, that care should be indicated on the case list. If the candidate is back-up for a midwifery group, a midwife delivery may not be listed unless the candidate performed the delivery. If the candidate is faculty for residents, they should include all patients for which they have responsibility even if the resident performed the actual delivery. This includes cesarean deliveries. The case list categories can be found on the ABOG website [here](#).

Candidates may not use cases from supervised practice.

Candidates may not reuse any case or case list from a previous examination.

Candidates must use cases based in a State or territory of the United States or a Province of Canada. Candidates deployed to an international site, for military service, may use cases from military medical facilities.

Candidates may not use senior resident or prior fellowship cases to meet minimum numbers for both the Obstetrics and Gynecology case lists. Residency and fellowship cases earlier than July 1, 2018, may not be used. Candidates who are unable to meet case list requirements may refer [here](#) for more options.

Applicants Ruled Not Admissible

If a decision is made by ABOG that a candidate has not met the requirements for admission to the Certifying Examination, the candidate may appeal the decision by writing to the ABOG Chief of Medical Practice and Innovation [here](#). Such appeals may be forwarded to the appropriate ABOG Committee for reconsideration. If the appeal is successful, no late fees will apply. If the successful decision occurs after the date of the Certifying Examination, the candidate will be scheduled for the next available Certifying Examination in the specialty, and no additional application fee will apply. However, the examination fee must be paid before the deadline.

If the candidate's appeal is not successful, or the candidate does not appeal the inadmissibility decision, the candidate may reapply by submitting a new application, paying the application fee, and meeting the requirements applicable at the time of the reapplication. Documentation that the cause for the initial disapproval has been cleared must be submitted with the application.

Final Approval and Notification of Admission to the Certifying Examination

Candidates who have fulfilled all the requirements and ABOG has determined that they are eligible to take the examination will receive an email notifying them of the day, time, and place to report for their examination. Notification will be sent to the email address associated with the candidate's ABOG profile. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that all contact information is current and accurate on their ABOG portal. The exact day and time of a candidate's examination will be provided by mid-August.

Candidates may NOT request a specific week for their examination unless there is a date conflict beyond the control of the candidate. If candidates have a need to request a specific examination week, [Contact Us](#). Once the request has been received, a task will be made available on the candidate's ABOG portal to submit required supporting documentation. Requests must be received no later than the last day in April of the exam year and should be submitted as soon as the candidate is aware of the need for a specific week. **ABOG reserves the right to deny any such request.**

Certifying Examination Content

Approximately 33% of the questions on the test will be in Obstetrics, 33% in Gynecology, and 33% in Office Practice. The approximate percentage in each domain is shown below.

<u>Obstetrics (33%)</u>	<u>Gynecology (33%)</u>	<u>Office Practice (33%)</u>
Preconception/Prenatal/Antenatal Care (4%)	Preoperative Evaluation (4%)	Well-Woman Preventive Care (10%)
Evaluation/Diagnosis of Antenatal Conditions (8%)	Perioperative Care (3%)	Office Management – Medical Problems (4%)
	Surgical Complications (4%)	
	Postoperative Care (8%)	

Intrapartum Care, Complications, and Obstetrical Procedures (18%) Postpartum Care (3%)	Gynecologic Emergencies (9%) Surgical Procedures (5%)	Office Management – Gynecology (15%) Office Procedures (4%)
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The topics upon which the Certifying Examination is based on are available on the ABOG website: [Certifying Examination Content](#). Within the scope of obstetrics, gynecology, and office practice, candidates may also be assessed in Cross Content.

Administration of the Certifying Examination

Candidates receive correspondence to the email associated with their ABOG profile, regarding date, time, location, and process of examination registration, orientation, and administration. Candidates who are late for registration may not be allowed to sit for the examination. Following registration, the candidates will be provided an orientation. After the orientation, candidates will be escorted to their assigned testing room and will remain there for the duration of the examination.

The Certifying Examination is three hours in length equally divided into the areas of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Office Practice. The examination will be conducted in English. The candidate will be informed of the names of the six examiners—two in Obstetrics, two in Gynecology, and two in Office Practice—who will conduct their examination. If the candidate believes there is a conflict with one or more examiner, the conflict will be investigated. If the decision is made that an actual conflict exists, an alternate examiner will be provided.

Each hour will be divided into two sections of approximately 30 minutes in length. One section will be devoted to questions derived from the candidate's case list, and the other section will consist of structured and/or simulated cases written by ABOG. The structured cases are used to elicit the candidate's responses to specific clinical situations.

Candidates may not take any electronic devices into the examination. This includes, but is not limited to, cellular phones and all devices that can record, including smartwatches and similar devices. If a candidate is found to have an electronic device in an examination room, the test will be halted immediately, and the candidate will receive no grade for the examination. In addition, all fees will be forfeited. A candidate who is lactating at the time of the examination may bring a personal breast pump to the ABOG National Center. Each examiner will score the candidate on all the cases covered within each section, as well as the case list.

Use of the Case List During the Examination

During each hour of the examination, approximately 30 minutes of questions will be developed from those cases submitted by the candidate. Selected cases will be displayed on the computer screen for both the candidate and examiner's reference. Some of the questions will specifically address how the candidate evaluated and managed their actual patients. The examiner will also use the cases to explore the candidate's management of similar patients with different specifications. For example, a candidate might list a 48-year-old woman with an adnexal mass. The candidate might be asked if the management would have been different (and how) if the patient were 18 years old, or 78 years old.

Questions will be displayed which test the ability of the candidate to:

1. develop and diagnose, including the necessary clinical, laboratory, and diagnostic procedures;
2. select and apply proper treatment under elective and emergency conditions;
3. prevent, recognize, and manage complications; and
4. plan and direct follow-up and continuing care.

All case lists will be submitted electronically, and candidates may not bring a copy of their case list to the Certifying Examination for personal reference.

Results and Scoring

The results of the Certifying Examination will be reported online to each candidate no later than six weeks following the Friday of their examination week. We recognize that waiting for up to six weeks for these important results is difficult. Please be assured that during this post-examination period, extensive quality assurance checks take place to ensure test results are fair and accurate. The Many-Facet Rasch Model used in calculating a candidate's score accounts for examiner severity and case difficulty, and that score is determined during these weeks of statistical analysis.

As part of the application process, the candidate will be required to irrevocably agree that the results of the candidate's examination may be made available to the Program Director(s) of any fellowship program(s) in which the candidate may have participated or in which the candidate is currently involved, and/or the American Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) for any and all purposes. Furthermore, the candidate will be required to release and agree to indemnify and hold ABOG and its officers, directors, and employees harmless of and from any and all claims the candidate may have with regard to the effect or impact upon the candidate of the release of the candidate's examination results to the candidate's Program Director(s) or the ACGME and waive any rights the applicant may have, if any, to have the examination results maintained in confidence.

Rescores and Appeals

If at the completion of the Certifying Examination, a candidate believes the test has not been conducted in a fair and unprejudiced manner, a second examination may be requested. The request must be made within 6 hours of the completion of the Certifying Examination and submitted [here](#).

If the request is granted

1. No final grade will be assigned, and all grades will be discarded;
2. The candidate must reapply for the Certifying Examination the next year (i.e., cannot delay beyond the next year) and meet all of the requirements applicable at that time;
3. If the candidate meets the requirements, a second examination will be scheduled at the next regularly scheduled annual Certifying Examinations at no additional charge;
4. The candidate must prepare a new case list for the repeat examination and the case list for the repeat examination may not include any patient listed on the first examination case list;
5. The repeat examination will be conducted by a different team of examiners, who will not be informed that the examination is being conducted as a result of an appeal;
6. Neither the questions nor the candidate's answers on the first examination will be known to or considered by the second group of examiners; and
7. The decision of the examiners conducting the second examination will be used by the Board to determine the results of the candidate's Certifying Examination.

Appeals based on the composition of the Certifying Examination team shall not be considered if the candidate was informed before the Certifying Examination of the identity of each member of the team and did not object to the participation of any member in time for an acceptable substitute to be provided.

Appeals based on the content of the examination, the sufficiency or accuracy of the answers given, or the final grade will not be considered.

Requests for Re-Examination

Candidates who are disapproved for the Certifying Examination, scheduled to take the Certifying Examination but do not do so, as well as candidates who do not pass the examination and who wish to repeat the examination, must complete a new application on the ABOG website and pay a new fee. It is necessary for each applicant to meet the requirements in effect the year the application is submitted. These requirements can be found in the *Bulletin* for the year the application is submitted. The re-applicant must complete the application process before the applicable deadline. Following notification of approval to retake the Certifying Examination, the candidate must submit a new case list and pay the examination fee on or before the established deadlines.