

Remote Specialty Certifying Exam (CE): Candidate Workflow



There are **three sections of important information** covered in this document (Sections 1 – Section 3.5). Please review all three sections. Email exams@abog.org should you have questions prior to the examination.

SECTION 1: Items You Will Need (see items 1 – 4 listed below)

1. Computer system that meets the **minimum system requirements**, which are as follows:
 - Operating System
 - Windows 10 or higher
 - Mac OS X 10.11 or higher
 - Monitor with a minimum screen resolution of 1280 x 720
 - You may **only have one** screen running during the exam. If you have a laptop connected to a monitor, you will be asked to close the laptop during the check-in process.
 - Working speakers and microphone (headset with microphone may be ideal)
 - Bluetooth earbuds, such as Apple AirPods, may experience a lag in audio
 - Webcam
 - The candidate check-in process and exam content will be accessed through Zoom.
 - You will need to download and install the free Zoom [application \(Zoom Client for Meetings\)](#) if it is not already installed. Please create a free Zoom account and download the latest version of the desktop app.
 - You may verify that you have the latest version of the Zoom Desktop Client by opening the application, logging in, and clicking your photo or initials in the upper right corner. From here, select “Check for Updates.”
 - The Zoom link to access your exam will be emailed to you at least a week prior to your exam.
 - You will not need to download or operate any additional online platforms or exam delivery software.
 - A strong internet connection with a speed of at least 40 megabits per second.

Note: Tablet devices or phones may NOT be used to participate in the Certifying Exam.

2. Government-issued ID (may use one of the following):
 - Driver’s license
 - Passport
 - Military ID

- *Marriage certificate or court document is required if the name on the ID is different from ABOG records.*
- 3. Email from ABOG containing the link to the Zoom meeting.

Note: *You will receive an email from ABOG containing the link to your Zoom exam meeting approximately 1 week prior to your exam date.*

- 4. **Printed copy** of your case list without any notes (**no access to digital files is allowed during the exam**).

SECTION 2: Prepare for the Exam (beginning 3 - 4 weeks prior to exam)

- You will receive an email from ABOG with the date and time of your exam no later than four weeks before the exam.

2.1 Prepare Your Computer System (minimum 3 weeks prior)

- Check the computer that you will be using for the exam to ensure that it meets the [minimum system requirements listed in the first section of this document](#).
- You will receive an email from ABOG with a form that you will need to complete. The email will also contain a link to book a “Tech Check” appointment. During this appointment, you will go through all the requirements listed in Section 1.
- Ensure that you have the required peripherals (speakers, microphone, webcam, etc.) and that they are in working order.
 - Make adjustments or purchase desired peripherals. If you meet the minimum requirements listed in Section 1, you do not have to purchase any peripherals.
- Test your internet bandwidth using a site such as <https://fast.com/>. If your internet bandwidth is not consistently 40 megabits per second (mbps), you will need to make adjustments to ensure you meet this minimum. [See these tips to help make adjustments if needed](#):
 - **Tips:** Find another place to take the exam, plug into your router, or consider upgrading to a higher internet speed with your internet provider.
- Additional steps to **optimize your internet connection**:
 - Use a wired internet connection (Ethernet) if one is available.
 - If using wi-fi, position your computer close to the wi-fi access point (or, alternatively, move your wi-fi access point closer to your machine).
 - If testing from home, ensure that other members of your household limit internet activities during the testing window.
 - Reboot your system prior to the start of the exam.
 - Ensure that there are no other applications running on your computer.

2.2 Complete the Following Training Activities (beginning 2 weeks prior)

- You are required to complete the following training activities prior to the exam:
 - Watch 3-part video series (each video is about 2-5 minutes) on your ABOG portal in “My Files”. The video series will be available by **Thursday, September 8**. If you have difficulty accessing the files, please email exams@abog.org
 - 1 - *What You’ll Need to Take the Virtual Specialty CE*
 - 2 - *Timeline for Preparing for the Virtual Specialty CE*
 - 3 - *Exam Day*
 - Watch *Candidate Orientation* on your ABOG portal in “My Files.” This video will be available by **Friday, September 16**.
- Complete a tech check with ABOG as referenced in Section 2.1 above.
 - All candidates will receive a link to schedule a tech check at a time conducive to their schedules.

2.3 Prepare Your Test Environment (beginning 1 week prior)

- Clear the area around your computer and put away any personal items.
- Remove any diplomas or documents that would identify where you trained or are practicing.
- Remove virtual background if you have one within an existing Zoom account. Virtual backgrounds and video effects will not be allowed during the examination.

2.4 Sign the Terms of Agreement (1 week prior)

- The Terms of Agreement for the Certifying Exam will be posted to your ABOG physician portal one week prior to your exam week. You may access this document by logging into your ABOG portal. On your dashboard, you will see a task called “Sign Terms of Agreement.”
- **You must attest to the Terms of Agreement by 6:00 PM CDT the Saturday prior to your examination, or you will not be able to take the exam.**
- If you do not see the document on your portal, please contact ABOG at exams@abog.org

SECTION 3: Exam Day

3.1 Before You Begin

- Reboot your system prior to logging in.
- Make sure your device is plugged directly into a power source.
- Check your Zoom application for any updates and install if Zoom updates are available. (Note: Zoom often issues updates on Sunday nights.)
- Double-check your test environment.

- Verify no diplomas or documents that would identify where you trained or are practicing are visible.
- Ensure all other devices capable of accessing the internet or recording are removed from the room, including your cell phone and any smartwatches. **If you do not have an external webcam, you will use your phone during the exam check-in process, in addition to your computer.** You will remove your phone from the room once the room scan is complete.
- Be certain that the only materials on your desk are an unmarked copy of your case list, clean paper or a small whiteboard (if desired), a writing utensil (if desired), and bottled water or another beverage. If paper and a writing utensil or a whiteboard are used, these will be inspected during the check-in process.

3.2 Checking In for the Exam

- At your specified check-in time, click on the link to access your Zoom meeting room. You should have received this link in the ABOG email sent approximately one week prior to the exam.

***NOTE:** You will be given a specific time for the check-in process. Examiners will begin checking candidates in at the candidate's scheduled appointment time. If you arrive before your scheduled registration time, you will not be admitted early.*

- At your scheduled registration time, an examiner will admit you to the Zoom meeting room. The examiner will join you via video to welcome you to the exam, review your government ID, review possible examiner conflicts, review the case list document, and complete a room scan.
 - You will need to ensure your name is listed on your Zoom window as "Dr. <First Initial> <Last Name>." Your examiner can assist you with this if you are not sure how to make the change.
 - If you do not have an external camera, you will need to log into the meeting on both your phone and your computer. Please use the audio and video on your cell phone and mute the audio on your computer during the scan.
 - During the room scan, you will be asked to point your external webcam or phone around the entirety of the room in which you will be taking the examination. This is to ensure no devices capable of accessing the internet or recording are in the room. A reminder: if you have multiple monitors or a laptop and docking station, the second monitor must be unplugged, and the laptop must be closed.
 - If the examiner has questions about what they see on your camera, you may be asked to move the camera closer to an item for inspection.
 - Be certain that the only application running on your computer is your browser. You may only log into Zoom. If you have any additional open tabs or applications running, you will be asked to close them during the room scan. This includes disabling iMessage and FaceTime if you are using a Mac. You will be asked to open your task manager to demonstrate that there are no other open applications.
 - After the room scan is complete, you will be asked to turn off your phone and take it out of the room. Then be sure the audio on the computer is turned on. For the remainder of the exam, the audio and video must remain on.
 - You will be asked to turn out your pockets.

- You will be asked to show the examiner your case list front and back to ensure that there are no notes.
- If you choose to use paper or a whiteboard for taking notes, these will also be inspected by the examiner.
- There may be a wait of up to 15 minutes between completion of registration and the start of the exam. This ensures sufficient time for check-in, security measures, conflict resolution, and resolution of possible technical issues.
 - While you are waiting, you may review your case list, but you may not take any notes.

3.3 Participating in an Exam Session

- Once approved for testing, you will remain connected to Zoom and in the room until the start of your session. **Please ensure that while you are waiting for the exam to begin, you remain seated** . If you need to use the restroom after you have checked in, please inform your examiner. You may not take anything with you except your beverage when you leave the room. Your camera and audio will remain on, and you may be asked to turn out your pockets or perform another room scan when you return.
- If you are lactating, please email exams@abog.org to request a lactation accommodation. Your examiners will be aware of your accommodation, and you will be given time following your registration to leave the room. You may not take anything with you except your beverage when you leave the room. You must leave your camera and audio on when you leave the room. When you return, you may be asked to turn out your pockets or rescan the room. Please be back in the room no later than 10 minutes prior to the start of your first exam session (either 8:50 AM or 1:35 PM CT.)
- Exams will consist of three one-hour sessions, with a different pair of examiners each hour.
- At the appropriate time, your exam will begin. Your examiners will conduct the exam and share all relevant content with you. If the session is your case list, examiners will share specifics on your screen. If the session is structured cases, an examiner will share the cases with you using “share screen” on Zoom.
- At the completion of each session, you will remain in the Zoom exam room and wait for your next set of examiners to enter for your next session.
- You will have a 10-minute break between each of your exam sessions. During break times, your audio and video will continue to be monitored. **You are required to leave your audio and video feeds on at all times.** You may get up from your computer, use the restroom, and/or get a drink. You may not bring anything back into the room with you other than a beverage, which may be verified by your examiners. Please return to the room at least 5 minutes before your next exam session begins.
- When you return to the room, you may be asked to perform another camera sweep of the room and to empty your pockets.
- At the completion of your final session, you must remain on Zoom until your examiners complete the check-out process and dismisses you. **Do not exit your meeting room until the examiners release you.**
- An examiner will remain in the Zoom exam room at all times.

3.4 Technical Issues

- If you experience technical issues, please immediately **let your examiners know** if you are able.
- Examiners have been told to notify ABOG staff if any candidates experience technical issues.
- If you are disconnected from the exam, please immediately attempt to reconnect. If you are not able to do so, please retrieve your cell phone and contact ABOG IT at 214-871-1619, extension 4, to help you reestablish the connection.
- If you are disconnected for more than 10 minutes or are disconnected multiple times during the same session, you will have to be rescheduled.
- In the event that you are unable to take the exam due to technical issues, ABOG will do its best to reschedule you for later in the week or during another exam week. If that is not possible, you will be able to apply for the exam in 2023 without a fee. Depending on how much of the examination has been completed, you may have to provide new case list sections.

3.5 Contacts

Contact	Title	Contact	When to Contact
Exams Staff		exams@abog.org	Questions before exam day
ABOG IT Staff		214-871-1619, option 4	Any technical issues