

## APPLICANT HANDBOOK 2017

# AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC CONJOINT PAIN MEDICINE EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians  
American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine  
American Osteopathic Board of Neurology & Psychiatry  
American Osteopathic Board of Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine  
American Osteopathic Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Established 2012

### **Affiliated Organizations**

American Osteopathic Association (AOA)

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### What is the Pain Medicine Examination for Certification of Added Qualifications?

The Pain Medicine Examination process for certification of added qualifications is conjointly developed by five participating osteopathic specialty boards. The Conjoint Pain Medicine Examination Committee has representation from each participating specialty board.

The purpose of the AOA Pain Medicine CAQ Examination is to protect the public by identifying board certified osteopathic physicians who have advanced knowledge, skills and abilities in pain medicine.

### Who sits on the Conjoint Pain Medicine Examination Committee (AOCPMEC)?

The AOCPMEC is composed of five distinguished osteopathic specialty board members elected by the AOA Board of Trustees from nominees submitted by the specialty boards. The current members of the Board jointly represent over one hundred years of dedication and practice in the osteopathic profession.

<b>Chair</b> Thomas Jan, DO, FOACPMR Massapequa, NY <b>Specialty: AOBPMR</b>	<b>Member</b> Joan M. Grzybowski, DO Conshohocken, PA <b>Specialty: AOBFP</b>	<b>Member</b> Tim Schoonover, DO, Centerville, OH <b>Specialty: AOBNP</b>
<b>Member</b> Ingrid Brown, DO Dayton, OH <b>Specialty: AOBIM</b>	<b>Member</b> Daniel G. Williams, DO, Indianapolis, IN <b>Specialty: AOBNMM</b>	

### What are the eligibility guidelines for Pain Medicine Certification of Added Qualifications (CAQ)

#### A. Prerequisites:

The requirements include approved training. Applicants must meet the following minimum requirements:

- The applicant must hold primary certification awarded by the AOA upon the recommendation of a participating specialty board.
- The applicant must hold a valid, unrestricted license to practice medicine in a state of the United States; applicants with a restricted, suspended or revoked license in any jurisdiction at the time of application will not be admitted to the examination.
- The applicant must be a current member in good standing in the American Osteopathic Association or the Canadian Osteopathic Association.
  - In the case of lapsed membership, reinstatement requires payment of current dues plus membership fees for the previous year.
- The applicant must conform to the ethical and moral standards as set forth in the [Code of Ethics of the AOA](#).
- The applicant must satisfactorily complete a one (1) year AOA or ACGME-approved fellowship training in pain medicine evidenced by a copy of a pain medicine certificate

- and letter of recommendation from the program director. Eligibility for examination will have duration of six years from the date of completion of the fellowship training.
- CME guidelines if applicable.

## **B. Clinical Practice Pathway** (Expires with the 2018 examination)

**Anyone applying through the clinical pathway must sit for the examination no later than the last offering for 2018. There will be no more clinical pathway applications accepted after the 2018 examination deadline.**

If applying via the clinical practice pathway, the following criteria must be met:

- The applicant must hold primary certification awarded by the AOA upon the recommendation of a participating specialty board.
- The applicant must hold a valid, unrestricted license to practice medicine in a state of the United States; applicants with a restricted, suspended or revoked license in any jurisdiction at the time of application will not be admitted to the examination.
- The applicant must be a current member in good standing in the American Osteopathic Association or the Canadian Osteopathic Association.
  - In the case of lapsed membership, reinstatement requires payment of current dues plus membership fees for the previous year.
- The applicant must conform to the ethical and moral standards as set forth in the [Code of Ethics of the AOA](#).
- Verification of a minimum of 40 hours of approved (category 1A or its allopathic equivalent – live/face-to-face hours. No home study/webinars will be accepted.) AOA continuing medical education (CME) credits in the diagnosis and/or treatment of pain within the 24-months immediately preceding the application deadline date for that examination year. **The Board or committee has discretionary authority to evaluate CME on a case by case basis and is sole and final judge of whether and to what extent the CME satisfies the requirements of the clinical pathway.**
  - a. The applicant shall be responsible for submitting confirmation of the topics covered in the lectures used for CME credits at the time the application is submitted (e.g. syllabus, course outlines, brochures, etc.)
  - b. “Complementary and Alternative Medicine” CME credits will comprise no more than 2 hours of the 40 total and may include training in acupuncture, nutraceuticals and prolotherapy. Any CME credits for other forms of complementary or alternative medicine must be submitted to the Conjoint Examination Committee for approval.
  - c. Up to 5 hours of the 40 total may be in the field of addiction medicine.
  - d. The following is a guideline to assist the applicant in determining if and how many hours are appropriate:
    - i. Any seminar or symposium that specifically addresses pain (the medical or interventional aspects) or osteopathic diagnosis and/or treatment in the title of the seminar should be appropriate in their entirety. This excludes non-accredited lectures that are industry funded and not part of the approved CME’s for that activity.
    - ii. Any seminar that does not specifically address the aforementioned in the title may have applicable hours if the lecture title itself does specify the diagnosis

and/or treatment of pain (medical or interventional) or painful conditions, this includes osteopathic somatic dysfunction.

iii. If a seminar or lecture does not directly specify the aforementioned in the title it may be applicable, however the total applicable hours will be limited to 10 of the total 40 hours at the discretion of the participating board or committee (this does not include and is in addition to the 5 hours allowed for addiction medicine).

- A minimum of three years of clinical practice prior to the date of application with a minimum of 30% of the practice in the direct care of pain medicine patients.
- A minimum of three physicians certified by the AOA or ABMS in their own specialty, who can complete a Pain Medicine Clinical Practice Attestation form which attests to the candidates' knowledge, professionalism and practice of pain medicine. One of the attestations must come from the department chair, medical director or other such supervisory physician if applicable.

**When and where are the Pain Medicine CAQ examinations offered?**

Both certification and osteopathic continuous certification (OCC) examinations are offered in the spring.

<b>2017 Examination Schedule</b>			
<b>Exam Date</b>	<b>Exam Location</b>	<b>Exam(s) Offered</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>
<b>Saturday, May 20, 2017</b>	<b>142 E. Ontario Chicago, Illinois 60611</b>	<b>Certification of Added Qualifications 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Application Deadline: Monday, January 16, 2017 (no penalty)  Final Application Deadline: Monday, January 16, 2017- Monday February 13, 2016 (\$100 penalty)</b>

**How much does it cost to sit for the Pain Medicine CAQ Examinations and withdrawal fees?**

A non-refundable application fee of \$100. The examination fee will be \$1200, which must be submitted with the completed application.

For applications that are withdrawn less than 30-days prior to the examination date, the candidate will receive a \$900 refund, greater than 30-days will receive a \$1200. Fees are subject to change on a yearly basis.

If a candidate registers for an examination but is subsequently unable to take the examination on the designated date, the candidate may apply the application fee to a future administration of the same test. However, the examination registration fee will be automatically forfeited if the applicant does not sit for the examination within three (3) years of the initial registration date.

*(Anyone applying through the clinical pathway must sit for the examination no later than the last offering for 2018. There will be no more clinical pathway applications accepted after the 2018 examination deadline.)* The candidate will also be responsible for paying any difference between the initial examination registration fee and the fee for the year in which the examination is actually taken.

### **How do I register for the Pain Medicine CAQ Examinations?**

To register for the Pain Medicine CAQ Certification or Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) Examination, visit the Pain Medicine website here: <http://www.aoepm.org/>. Be sure to include all requisite accompanying documentation as listed on the online website.

One requirement for examination registration is the submission of five (5) potential board examination questions. Topics will be assigned by a Certifying Board Services (CBS) staff member. Each of these questions will be reviewed by the Examination Development Committee and considered for modification and adoption in future versions of the examination. The creation and submission of test questions is an opportunity to contribute to the ongoing vitality of the examination, while ensuring that questions remain consistent with developing trends in Pain Medicine practice.

Each candidate is eligible to receive one 1b Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit for each of the five (5) test questions submitted. The National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) has developed a thorough, helpful guide to assist test writers in preparing and submitting potential examination questions. To access this guide, please visit: <http://www.oesm.org/IW%20guide%202006.pdf>.

Each submitted question must be tailored to fit one category in a table of specifications developed by the Pain Medicine CAQ Committee. Once you have been approved to sit for the examination, your questions and instructions will be emailed to you.

### **When must I register for the Pain Medicine CAQ Examinations?**

The deadline to register for the 2017 Pain Medicine CAQ Certification or Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) Examinations is Saturday, January 28, 2017. Applications will extend through Monday, November 26, 2016; examination applications submitted during November 28, 2016 through December 26, 2016 period will be subject to a \$100.00 late fee. No applications after Monday, December 26, 2016 will be accepted for the spring examination.

### **What is the format of the Pain Medicine CAQ Examinations?**

The Pain Medicine CAQ Certification Examination is composed entirely of multiple-choice type questions. There will be a total of 225 questions on the examination including 25 pre-test questions. The 25 pre-test questions are “tryout” questions and are not intended to count as “scoreable”. These pre-test questions will be randomly dispersed throughout the exam in no particular order. The examination will cover the broad aspects of pain medicine that specialists practicing in the field are expected to know. The examination will assess the candidate’s knowledge and clinical judgment in aspects of pain medicine required to perform at a high level of competence. The examination will include but will not be restricted to:

The content areas covered and their relative proportions on the exam are as follows:

TABLE OF SPECIFICATION (TOS):

I.	Comprehensive Osteopathic Assessment of Pain	23-27%
II.	Osteopathic Manipulation	3-7%
III.	Therapeutic Measures/Modalities	28-32%
IV.	Regional Pain	20-24%
V.	Diffuse Pain Syndromes	5-9%
VI.	Special Populations	9-13%

A more detailed exam table of specification is available at the following link:

<http://www.aoepm.org/TOS%20-%20PAIN%20MEDICINE%20EXAMINATION%20QUESTION%20CATEGORIES.pdf>

The Pain Medicine CAQ Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) Examination will also be composed entirely of multiple-choice type questions. This examination is in the development stage.

**Does the AOA offer or endorse any study materials to prepare for its board examinations?**

Candidates should prepare for the examination using means they are comfortable and familiar with. Although the AOCPMEC neither provides nor endorses any preparatory guides, study methods or review courses to aid applicants in studying to take the certification or Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) examinations, extensive self-study of Pain Medicine in texts, journals, participation in continuing medical education program and review courses in Pain Medicine can be useful. However, there is, of course, no guarantee that any given preparation will ensure a passing grade on the examination.

**What happens if I fail the Pain Medicine CAQ examination?**

For those candidates applying via the **Training Track (fellowship program)** the period of eligibility will follow the Policies and Procedures of the BOS. Candidates may reapply for the next scheduled examination upon submitting a letter of intent, updated application information and the examination fee of \$1200. The overall CME hours and those specifically in Pain Medicine that are required when you re-apply will be prorated based on the number of years post-fellowship training.

For those **Clinical Practice Pathway** candidates who sit for examination for the first time in 2013, 2014 or 2015 and fail an examination their eligibility to sit for subsequent examinations will expire with the 2017, 2018 and 2019 examinations respectively. Candidates may reapply for the next scheduled examination upon submitting a letter of intent. An updated application and the examination fee of \$1200 plus the CME hours and those specifically in Pain Medicine will be required when you re-apply.

### **What happens after I pass the Pain Medicine CAQ examination?**

Those who passed the examination will receive a Certificate of Added Qualifications in Pain Medicine by their primary Board. All certificates will be time-limited and will be valid for ten (10) years from the date of certification. The diplomate must maintain a valid certification certificate in their primary specialty or subspecialty in order for the certificate of Added Qualifications in Pain Medicine to remain valid. The Pain Medicine Certificate will become invalid the date that the diplomate's primary or subspecialty certificate becomes invalid. The Certificate of Added Qualifications in Pain Medicine will be awarded after the AOA Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists gives final approval of the examination process for each candidate. This approval process will take approximately six months following the notification of successful completion of the examination. The candidate will be responsible for the fee for printing of a duplicate certificate in which the certificate was mailed to an outdated address and notification of the new address was not supplied to the Board.

### **What must I do if I feel that I have been treated unfairly in the examination process?**

If a candidate feels that the actions of the AOCPMEC with regard to any part of the examination constitute unequal application of the Board 'Regulations and Requirements,' unwarranted discrimination, prejudice, unfairness or improper conduct, the candidate has the right to appeal to the AOCPMEC. In order to appeal concerning the examination, a candidate must set forth the basis of his/her appeal on an Appeal Request Form and submit the form to the Examination Proctor. Appeal Request Forms will be provided to all certification/OCC candidates prior to the commencement of the examination. Additional copies of the Appeal Request Form will be available upon request to the Examination Proctor. The appellant must submit the completed Appeal Request Form to the Examination Proctor within two hours after he/she has completed the examination.

All appeals submitted after the two hour deadline for submission of the Appeal Request Form will be denied.

Each appeal submitted on an Appeal Request Form within two hours of completion of the examination will be considered by the AOCPMEC. A majority vote of the Committee will determine whether the AOCPMEC accepts or denies the appeal.

### **How do I keep my AOA Pain Medicine CAQ certification current?**

In order to maintain active certification, physicians must complete a minimum of 120 hours of approved and documented AOA Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits during every three (3) year cycle after their board certification. Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) CME requirements need to be determined for pain medicine.

- Attendance at AOA or ACGME University or hospital-based CME program(s) in Pain Medicine recognized by the AOA CME Activity Report; original documentation from sponsor would be necessary if not clearly defined on Activity Report.

AOA membership and your primary board annual certification are inextricably linked. Both must be current to maintain active board certification. Should the payment of dues lapse or CME credits go unmaintained, the AOA will initiate the process of deactivating the physician's board certification. The certifying board will provide all the diplomates ample opportunity and notice to comply with any requirement deficiencies for maintaining AOA certification.



All Pain Medicine CAQ certificates granted will expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) year after the certificate is issued.

Every ten (10) years, board-certified physicians with a time-limited certificate must pass the relevant OCC (recertification) examination in their specialty or subspecialty. Eligibility for the OCC examination is contingent upon having maintained continuous membership in the AOA and having conformed to the ethical and moral standards as set forth in the [Code of Ethics of the AOA](#). The applicant for OCC must also have accumulated the required CME, categories I or II, to maintain continued diplomate status and must have a valid, unrestricted license to practice medicine in their state(s) of practice. After successfully passing the OCC examination, the physician will be issued a new certificate. This certificate will expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) year after OCC was conferred.

**Any correspondence directed to members of the AOCPMEC or requests for more information about the material contained in this packet may be directed to:**

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