



ABAM MOC Part III Examination Handbook

*Distinguish Yourself:
Become Board Certified in Addiction Medicine*

The American Board of Addiction Medicine
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DISTINGUISH YOURSELF & MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Become board certified in addiction medicine and make a difference in the lives of your patients and their families, and in the health of your community. Your colleagues and others in the health care team will also benefit from your expertise.

The American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) certifies physicians across a range of medical specialties, promoting the training and certification of physicians in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of substance related disorders and related conditions. As an ABAM Diplomate you will be enhancing your career and joining over 3,000 physicians setting the standard for professional excellence.

THE ABAM CERTIFICATION DIPLOMATE HANDBOOK

This handbook informs prospective Diplomates about the policies, procedures, requirements, and rules governing the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. As these may change from time to time and the Board reserves the right to make such change without notice, current information can be found on the ABAM website: www.abam.net.

CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are five eligibility criteria to qualify for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination:

1. PART I: LICENSURE AND PROFESSIONALISM

Physicians must possess a valid medical license, issued by an appropriate and authorized licensing board, to practice medicine in the United States, its territories or Canada. An active and unrestricted medical license must be maintained, even if a physician is out of the country for extended periods of time. Once certified by ABAM, diplomates are required to maintain an unrestricted license. For a detailed outline of licensure requirements for applicants and diplomates, you may request a copy of the ABAM Bylaws.

Physicians who practice exclusively in another country, and who do not have a U.S. or Canadian license must hold a license in that country, must attest and provide documentation from the relevant licensing authority that their license is in good standing without restrictions of any type, as outlined in this handbook.

Exceptions

An exception will be made when a restriction is due to participation in a physician's health monitoring program or other appropriately monitored treatment program for medical, substance use disorders or behavioral illness. In this instance, documentation of at least 18 months of continuous good health and recovery status from a reliable monitoring source must accompany your application. ABAM protects the confidentiality of a physician's health information as required by law.

License Verification

The licenses of all applicants are verified and confirmed by the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB). ABAM may, at its sole discretion, determine whether to investigate an applicant's license and the information provided by the applicant. ABAM has the final determination in accepting or denying a physician's application, or the conferring of diplomate status. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to provide the information requested, and any omissions or errors are the applicant's alone. An application that is incomplete or has incorrect or omitted information can invalidate the application or lead to the loss of Diplomate status. It is also the responsibility of the applying physician to immediately inform ABAM of any action taken by a state medical licensing board within sixty (60) days of such action.

ELIGIBILITY REVIEW AND POLICIES

Final eligibility determinations are made by the ABAM Credentialing Committee, pursuant to the procedures outlined in this handbook, and subject to review by the ABAM Board of Directors. ABAM does not provide a definitive opinion, analysis or preliminary review of the medical education or experience of any Diplomate regarding eligibility.

COMPLETE APPLICATIONS REQUIRED

Please check that your application is complete. The application and payment must be submitted at the same time. Special documentation (change of name, PHP or other monitoring, or request for special accommodations) must be submitted with your application and payment. Partial applications, those without payment or any required special documentation, **will not** be considered by the ABAM Credentialing Committee.

REPEAT EXAMINATION APPLICATION

A physician may take the ABAM MOC Part III Examination up to three (3) times. Physicians who reapply must submit updated information and pay all applicable fees.

DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EXAMINATION

The request to withdraw from the MOC Part III examination must be submitted July 31st by email. Diplomates will receive email notification of the accepted withdrawal request within five (5) business days. There are no exceptions to the July 31 deadline.

ABAM EXAMINATION APPLICATION PROCESS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Complete the application online via the ABAM website at ABAMPartIII@abam.net. Email completed application directly to the ABAM Credentialing Department at ABAMapply@ABAM.net. Please see the instructions contained in the application.

EXAMINATION SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and corresponding ADA regulations, ABAM provides reasonable examination accommodations, modifications, or auxiliary aids/services for physicians. Requesting physicians should submit documented, ADA-covered disabilities and demonstrate their need for such accommodations in order to be on equal footing with Diplomates who do not have such disabilities.

Diplomates with disabilities may request time and a half to complete the examination, or a change in the manner in which the examination is given. Diplomates with impaired sensory or manual skills may request appropriate auxiliary aids or services, such as large font examinations for Diplomates with visual impairments.

If Diplomates require a special accommodation, modification, or auxiliary aid/service for the examination, click on the link for the "ABAM Special Examination Accommodations Form" from the online examination application, complete the form and include it with the required documentation when submitting your examination application to ABAM.

Documentation should:

- Demonstrate the existence of an impairment or disability;
- Address whether the impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities within the meaning of the ADA; and
- Address whether and how the impairment limits your ability to take the examination under standard conditions.

Pending internal review, ABAM will provide such reasonable accommodations, modifications, or auxiliary aids/services, unless doing so would place an undue burden on ABAM (i.e., significant difficulty or expense) or fundamentally alter the measurement of the knowledge or skills the ABAM MOC Part III Examination is intended to assess. Diplomates will be notified via email of ABAM's decision within thirty (30) days of receipt of their paid examination application, Special Examination Accommodations Request Form and required documentation.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Applications submitted for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination must be complete and meet the following criteria prior to consideration or review by the ABAM Credentialing Committee:

- All requested fields on the application must be filled in and complete;
- The fee applicable to the application period must be paid;
- The Candidate Attestation must be agreed to, dated and the include the candidate's typed signature;
- All required special documentation, if applicable, must be provided to ABAM and included with the application (Appendix A –request form for special examination accommodations, legal documentation for name change, and/or health monitoring documentation of good health and/or recovery).

Once applications are confirmed as complete by ABAM, the Diplomate name and state medical license will be submitted to the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) for verification as valid. Although only one active license is required on the application, FSMB will report on all licenses held by the applicant. All licenses must be unrestricted.

APPLICATION AUDITS AND REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The ABAM Credentialing Committee reviews all applications, and may audit an application and may request additional information from Diplomates prior to approving a candidate's eligibility. Diplomates are responsible for having back-up documentation on all claimed FTE and CME, and must meet requested deadlines to furnish additional information if requested. The absence of timely receipt by ABAM of requested information or documentation may cause the application to be denied. ABAM reserves the right to deny or delay approval of applications if any required information is incorrect.

NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATION ACCEPTANCE TO SIT FOR THE EXAMINATION

The earlier an application is submitted for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination, the sooner a Diplomate will be notified as to whether or not their application has been approved by ABAM. Acceptances are normally sent 6-8 weeks after receipt of an application.

EXAMINATION COMMUNICATIONS VIA EMAIL

All ABAM communications with Diplomates applying for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination will be sent via email to the email address provided on the application submitted by the candidate. These communications will include notification of receipt of application, additional documentation requests from the ABAM Credentialing Committee, notification of approval to sit for the examination, scheduling permits and scores. Diplomates are responsible for notifying ABAM immediately of any changes in their email address by email notification to the ABAM Credentialing Department; please contact ABAMcertify@abam.net.

EXAMINATION PERMITS

Diplomates accepted to sit for the MOC Part III Examination will receive an email from ABAM before September 1 with instructions on how to print their permit and electronically retrieve a seat at one of over 400 Prometric Test Centers convenient to them.

SCHEDULING YOUR EXAMINATION

Examination permits will include detailed information on how to schedule your examination via phone or the Prometric Test Center website (www.prometric.com). You will not be able to schedule an examination appointment without your ABAM examination permit (and the scheduling number contained therein). Once you have scheduled your examination appointment, you will receive via email a confirmation notice from Prometric that contains your unique Prometric Confirmation Number. This number will be required to confirm, reschedule or cancel your appointment with the Prometric Test Center.

Examination appointments at Prometric Test Centers are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis and centers fill up quickly. ABAM has only a select number of seats at each location, as there are other Diplomates from other organizations who are also taking their examination at Prometric Test Centers. ABAM is not responsible for the unavailability of Prometric Test Centers.

Diplomates are strongly encouraged to schedule their examination as soon as possible to increase their chances of testing at their preferred location and at their preferred time. Delays in scheduling examinations can result in required travel due to unavailability of appointments at local Prometric Test Centers. Diplomates will be notified regarding scheduling deadlines.

CONFIRM YOUR EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT

During the week prior to the exam, applicants should confirm their examination appointment. You will need to provide your unique Prometric confirmation number.

CHANGE YOUR EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT

Diplomates can reschedule their examination appointment to another Prometric Test Center (subject to seating availability). However, to avoid a Prometric scheduling fee, Diplomates are required to change their examination appointment at least one month prior to the examination.

THE ABAM EXAMINATION

The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) is the testing service provider for the American Board of Addiction Medicine. Founded in 1915, NBME is an independent, not-for-profit organization. Their mission is to protect the health of the public through state-of-the-art assessments of health professionals.

The ABAM MOC Part III Examination is developed by NBME and the ABAM Examination Committee. NBME works closely with the ABAM Examination Committee on item development, test administration and delivery and analysis and scoring. NBME test development staff members edit all items and suggest revisions to improve clarity, grammar, consistency of terminology, and style, and to eliminate technical flaws which are reviewed and finalized for the examination during meetings with the ABAM Examination Committee.

The ABAM MOC Part III Examination is the same rigorous examination as the ABAM Certification Examination. The examination tests cognitive knowledge and problem-solving ability relevant to the field of addiction medicine. Questions include, but are not limited to, diagnosis, management and prevention of addiction and substance use disorders. There are five sections that comprise the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. Each section contains 50 multiple-choice questions, and Diplomates are provided with sixty (60) minutes to complete each section of the examination.

ABAM EXAMINATION BLUEPRINT

When preparing for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination, Diplomates are urged to utilize the ABAM Examination Blueprint to identify addiction medicine areas of strength, and also those content areas of the examination in which they might choose to dedicate further study to become more knowledgeable.

PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

Most physicians use a [variety of resources](#) when preparing for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. While the ABAM Study and Preparation Tips and Resources found on the ABAM website may be helpful for Diplomates, there is no single best preparation method. Preparing for a certification examination is not about memorization of information. Ensure that you understand the material you are studying. Using multiple resources ensures that you understand the generally accepted practices and principles in the prevention and treatment of addiction and substance use disorders.

It is important for Diplomates to note that no one program, textbook, journal, course or resource list can span the entire scope of addiction medicine and/or the content in the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. Nor is it expected that Diplomates for ABAM Board Certification will read, attend or utilize all of the resources available. Diplomates should access and evaluate resources and programs based on their own judgment. There may also be other resources that Diplomates might find useful in preparing for the examination. Some of these resources may be available for download, found at libraries or can be purchased. If Diplomates make the decision to purchase, or register for any program, publication or resource, they should consider resources that not only help them as they prepare for the ABAM examination, but that they will also provide a long-term reference for their professional practice and/or expand their knowledge in the field of addiction medicine.

Please note that ABAM cannot guarantee, warrant or endorse the programs or products of any firm, organization, association, society or person. Nor can ABAM make any claim that Diplomates who employ any of these resources will perform at any predictable level on the certification examination.

THE DAY OF THE EXAMINATION

ARRIVE AT THE TEST CENTER EARLY

Diplomates are strongly encouraged to plan their travel carefully and arrive at least thirty (30) minutes prior to their scheduled appointment time. Prometric Test Centers administer multiple examinations for a number of organizations, and Diplomates may encounter a delay during their registration process. Prometric Test Centers schedule examinations based on the number of available seats and the amount of time allocated for each examination. Therefore, Diplomates arriving and/or registering after their scheduled starting time will not be admitted, will be considered a “no show” and will forfeit their entire examination application fee. Diplomates should make sure that they know how to get to the Prometric Test Center and are aware of any traffic and/or construction issues that could cause travel delays and late arrival.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Diplomates are required to provide the following documentation to the Prometric Test Center to register – and sit – for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination.

Scheduling Permit

A copy of the scheduling permit issued by ABAM.

Government-Issued Photo Identification

Prometric Test Centers have very strict security measures, and one level of security involves the identification of each candidate.

Diplomates must bring at least one form of identification that meets the following requirements:

- Contains your name exactly as you provided it during the examination application process and as it appears on your Prometric Test Center examination appointment confirmation letter. Do not worry about the presentation of any middle name.
- Has a permanently affixed photo of your face.
- Are current (expired IDs will not be accepted).
- Is an original document (photocopies are not accepted).

Acceptable forms of identification are:

- Government-issued driver's license.
- Passport
- Military ID (expect those with chips)
- Permanent resident visa
- Other government-issued identification

Diplomates who do not present acceptable identification will not be allowed to take the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. Employee identification, work badge or university/college identification are not acceptable forms of identification. If you need to change your name as it appears on your certification examination application or on your Prometric Test Center examination appointment confirmation letter, you must contact the ABAM Credentialing Department by email at least thirty (30) days prior to the examination and submit the appropriate documentation requested.

Examination Appointment Confirmation Letter

The Prometric Test Center examination appointment confirmation letter contains important information that will allow the test administrator to locate your record & permit you to take the examination.

STORING PERSONAL BELONGINGS

The Prometric Test Center administrator will show you where to store your personal belongings and/or any items not permitted in the examination room. You must place all personal belongings (purses, wallets, watches, jewelry, cell phone, etc.) in the storage lockers or other secured location provided by the test center. You will be given the key to your locker, which must be returned to the test center staff when you leave. The lockers are very small and are not intended to hold large items. Do not bring anything to the test center unless it is absolutely necessary. Neither test center personnel nor ABAM will be responsible for lost or stolen items.

ESCORT TO THE EXAMINATION ROOM

The Prometric Test Center administrator will escort you to the testing room for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. You will enter your unique CIN number into the computer at your workstation to initiate your examination, and to resume the examination after breaks. Diplomates can visit the Prometric website at www.prometric.com to review the video on "What to Expect on the Test Day."

TAKING THE EXAMINATION

The ABAM MOC Part III Examination is computer-based, and while extensive familiarity with computers is not required, Diplomates should have the basic knowledge associated with using a computer keyboard and mouse. Computer-based testing options include the ability to navigate forward and backward through each examination section, mark items for further review and review any answered, unanswered and/or marked items. On examination day, there will be a brief orientation/tutorial prior to the start of the examination, allowing Diplomates to better familiarize themselves with the computer-based examination process. Fifteen (15) minutes is provided at the beginning of the examination for the optional computer-based tutorial/orientation.

There are five sections that comprise the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. Each section contains 50 multiple-choice questions, and Diplomates are provided with sixty (60) minutes to complete each section of the examination. Items must be reviewed or changed prior to the expiration of time for that particular examination section. Once an examination section is ended by a Diplomate, or the examination has timed out, the candidate cannot return to questions in that section. The computer-based examination contains a clock in the top right corner of the examination screen, showing the time remaining. Completed questions, incomplete questions and marked items are located by clicking the “Review” button at the bottom of the examination screen.

Diplomates are provided with fifteen (15) minutes of break time during the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. Diplomates can take all, part or none of their 15-minutes of break time at the end of any of the sections of the examination. If a candidate makes the decision to not participate in the 15-minute tutorial/orientation, or only takes 10 minutes of the 15 minutes, this time is “banked” as additional break time.

PROMETRIC TEST CENTER REGULATIONS

ABAM MOC Part III Examinations are administered by professional Prometric Test Center Administrators (TCAs) who are responsible for maintaining the integrity and security of the ABAM certification and examination process. All Diplomates taking the ABAM MOC Part III Examination will be monitored. TCAs are required to report to ABAM any irregular, improper or disruptive behavior by any candidate, and TCAs have the authority to discontinue the examination of any candidate and eject the candidate from the Prometric test center.

Irregular, improper or disruptive behavior is any behavior that undermines, disrupts or threatens the integrity or validity of the ABAM examination administration, whether it occurs before, during or after an examination. Examples of irregular or improper behavior includes, but is in no way is limited to, giving or obtaining information or aid, looking at the test material of others, excessive use or misuse of unscheduled breaks, bringing unauthorized items (e.g. watches, cell phones, drinks, notebooks, pagers) into the examination room, failing to comply with time limits or instructions or displaying any other improper behaviors.

Diplomates are required to adhere to the following regulations and policies enforced at all Prometric Test Centers for the ABAM MOC Part III Examination. Diplomates:

- Will be continuously monitored by video, physical walk-throughs and the observation window during the certification examination. All examination and testing sessions are video and audio recorded.
- Must present valid (unexpired) and acceptable identification to be admitted to the Prometric Test Center, and in order to take the examination. The validity and number of identifications required is predetermined by ABAM and administered by the Prometric Test Center Administrator (TCA).
- Are required to sign out on the test center roster each time they leave the examination room. Diplomates must also sign back in and again show their identification to the Prometric TCA in order to be re-admitted to the examination room.
- Are prohibited from communicating, publishing, reproducing, or transmitting any part of the examination, in any form or by any means, verbal or written, for any purpose.
- Cannot talk to other Diplomates or refer to their screens, testing materials, or written notes in the examination room.

- Must not use written notes, published materials, or other testing aids, except those allowed by ABAM.
- May not bring any personal or unauthorized items into the examination room. Such items include, but are not limited to: outerwear, hats, food, drinks, purses, briefcases, notebooks, pagers, watches, cellular telephones, recording devices and photographic equipment. Weapons are not allowed at any Prometric testing center. Diplomates will be asked to empty and turn your pockets inside out prior to every entry into the examination room to confirm that you have no prohibited items.
- Will be scanned with a metal detector wand prior to every entry into the examination room. If Diplomates refuse, they will not be permitted to take the ABAM MOC Part III Examination.
- Are required to return all materials issued to them by the Prometric TCA at the end of your examination.
- Must comply with the ABAM policy regarding no phone/cell phone/computer/laptop use during scheduled breaks in your examination.
- Must conduct themselves in a professional and civil manner at all times when on the premises of the Prometric Test Center. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards the Prometric TCA, or any other staff member of the test center, may result in a formal disciplinary report filed with the ABAM Credentialing Department and/or criminal prosecution by the Prometric Test Center.
- Diplomates (or friends and/or family) not schedule to take the examination are not permitted to wait in the Prometric Test Center.
- Any clothing or jewelry items allowed to be worn in the examination room must remain on the candidate at all times. Removed clothing or jewelry items must be stored in the candidate's locker at the Prometric Test Center.
- Your examination may have either scheduled or unscheduled breaks which are determined by ABAM. The Prometric TCA can inform you what is specifically permitted during these breaks.
- Repeated or lengthy departures from the examination room for unscheduled breaks will be reported to the ABAM Credentialing Department by the Prometric TCA.
- If you need access to an item stored in the test center during a break, such as food or medicine, you must inform the Prometric TCA before you retrieve the item. You are not allowed to access any prohibited item.
- To protect the privacy of all test takers at each Prometric test center, the Prometric TCA can neither confirm nor deny if any particular individual is present or scheduled at the test center.

EXAMINATION SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Diplomates for the ABAM Board Certification Examination will be barred from future examinations, have their participation in the examination terminated, have their examination results invalidated or revoked, have their board certificate withheld or face other appropriate action by the American Board of Addiction Medicine for:

- Unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of any ABAM examination materials, including, but not limited to, examination questions or answers at any time before, during or after the ABAM Board Certification Examination.
- Giving or receiving of aid in the examination, as evidenced either by observation or by statistical analysis of answers of one or more participants in the examination.
- Offering any benefit to any member of the ABAM Board of Directors, ABAM Credentialing Committee, ABAM Examination Committee or any ABAM staff member in return for any right, privilege, information or benefit which is not usually granted by the Board to other similarly situated Diplomates or persons.
- Engaging in irregular behavior in connection with the administration of the examination.

Diplomates should also understand that the Board may or may not require a candidate to retake one or more sections of the board certification examination if presented with sufficient evidence that the security of the examination has been compromised, notwithstanding the absence of any evidence of a candidate's personal involvement in such activities.

CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION RESULTS

Diplomates will receive their scores and individual performance data for the examination no later than February 1, 2016.

ANALYSIS OF EXAMINATION RESULTS

Questions and scoring on the ABAM MOC Part III Examination are subject to close review, standard-setting and relevance testing. Once the 2015 examination is complete and answers by all Diplomates have been received by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), the scoring staff participates in a conference call with the ABAM Examination Committee to determine if all of the examination questions have performed to the highest standard. The ABAM Examination Committee and NBME staff members isolate items that did not perform adequately and determine whether the item should be used in scoring. Once scores are processed, staff from NBME and the ABAM Examination Committee meet for a careful review of the data to set a minimum passing score for the examination.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION ON Diplomates

Any person, organization or institution can request information from ABAM about the certification status of any physician. An authorization for release of this information is a part of the examination application form. The names of ABAM Diplomates are listed on the ABAM website. Upon request, ABAM will confirm whether a physician is certified or not, either verbally or in writing. If you do not wish to have your name and certification status on the website, or for your name to be available publically, please contact ABAMcertify@ABAM.net.

MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION (MOC)

Diplomates must be:

- In year 8 or 10 of their MOC cycle.

- Have a valid and unrestricted medical license.

- Ensure all MOC requirements including the annual MOC fee are complete by December 15, 2015.

- MOC requirements may be completed by logging into the ABAM Diplomat Web Portal <https://portal.abam.net>