

Dear ABAI Diplomates and Certification Candidates,

The ABAI Board of Directors, made up of volunteer allergists and clinical immunologists and our public member, recognizes the challenges the nation and ABAI diplomates are facing during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. We are deeply sympathetic to anyone affected by this pandemic and appreciate the hardship of those directly and indirectly affected. ABAI is proud of its diplomates participating in the front lines of care and taking leading roles in private practices, education, research and professional societies during this crisis. We are committed more than ever to supporting each and every diplomate training programs this year.

**Based upon these findings and the urgency of the moment, the ABAI Board of Directors has approved the following actions effective immediately:**

**Continuing certification:**

- **Extend the expiration date for certificates expiring in 2020 to 12/31/2021. No diplomate will lose their certification this year or next as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.**
- **Extend the deadline for completion of 2020 Continuous Assessment Program (CAP) Block 1 from 7/15/2020 to 1/15/2021 and cancel 2020 CAP Block 2.**
- **Extend the deadline for all individual MOC requirements (parts I, II, III and IV) due in 2020 to 12/31/2021.**
- Extend the 2020 MOC fee deadline to 12/31/2021 allowing combined 2020/2021 fee submission in 2021 without penalty or impact on continuing certification status. Diplomates with a financial need who have already submitted the 2020 fee may request a refund and resubmit in 2021. Send refund requests to [abai@abai.org](mailto:abai@abai.org).
- Update the ABAI COVID-19 web page with links to specialty & national pandemic resources, and a frequently asked questions living document.
- Provide expedited certification status confirmation to credentialing bodies as diplomates adapt in person and telemedicine practices locally and across state lines.
- Explore the inclusion of diplomate COVID-19 leadership and activities for part IV credit
- Suspend all automated email reminders (e.g. CAP participation, MOC fee).

**Initial certification:**

- **ABAI will provide an update on the initial certification exam status no later than 7/31/2020.** ABAI is continuously monitoring the availability, safety and availability of exam administration sites which are currently closed and welcomes feedback from program directors and exam candidates.
- **Give 2020 initial certification exam candidates the option to take the exam in 2021 without need to reapply or additional fees.** ABAI recognizes that some candidates prefer to take the exam this year whereas others may be impacted to the extent that taking the 2021 exam is preferable.

- Give 2020 exam registered candidates electing to take the exam in 2021 the option to receive a full refund with resubmission by 3/31/2021. ABAI recognizes the old and new financial challenges faced by graduating fellows. Send refund requests to [abai@abai.org](mailto:abai@abai.org).
- **Enable a one-time increase from 8 to 10 weeks for maximum time away from training requirement without a formal exception to policy request from program director for 2020 and 2021 graduates.** ABAI will continue to rely on program director evaluations of fellow competencies and will continue to accept case by case requests for exceptions to policy beyond 8-10 weeks away from training.
- Support inclusion of COVID-19 education and clinical activities in fellowship curricula as determined by the ACGME Allergy-Immunology Review Committee and fellowship programs.
- Extend the board eligibility window by one year from 7 to 8 for all allergist-immunologists meeting eligibility requirements for the 2020 ABAI initial certification exam regardless of whether they are registered for the exam. The original start date (typically fellowship graduation year) still applies.
- **Cancel the 2020 Continuous Qualification Exam (CQE) for diplomates in the CAP re-entry pathway.**
- Give 2020 CQE candidates the option to defer paid exam fee to 2021 or receive a full refund with resubmission by 3/31/2021. Send refund requests to [abai@abai.org](mailto:abai@abai.org).

ABAI diplomate and certification candidate safety and well-being are paramount. Your ABAI Board of Directors and office staff are hard at work assessing the impact of COVID-19 on the practicing allergist and clinical immunologist and those in training. I am both proud and humbled by their dedication, compassion and initiative ensuring that diplomates are supported and informed. I am equally proud of our small but mighty ABAI office staff who have seamlessly transitioned to remote operations and continue to provide such highly acclaimed professional services with a personal touch. Please note the revised office hours of 8am to 4pm EST Monday-Friday. **Be aware that it will take some time to reprogram individual portal pages to reflect these changes.**

ABAI would also like to commend our specialty societies and sponsors, the AAAAI, ACAAI and CIS for providing timely and informative specialty specific COVID-19 resources. ABAI will continue to work with specialty society leaders to assist diplomates in their pursuit of keeping up to date and providing the highest quality care to their patients.

**We hope these actions enable diplomates to put themselves, their patients, families and practices above all else in this unprecedented international crisis.** We felt it was important to paint a clear picture of the way ahead in a time of uncertainty. We are in this together and it is crucial that we hear from you about how ABAI can best support you. Please email us at [abai@abai.org](mailto:abai@abai.org) with your suggestions on how ABAI can support you and your practice. ABAI will continuously monitor COVID-19 impact and use your feedback to periodically update programs and requirements.

Thank you for your extraordinary service to our patients and the profession now and always,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael R. Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some ink bleed-through.

Michael R. Nelson, MD, PhD  
President, ABAI