



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Coalition of Board-Certified Emergency Physicians (COBCEP)

OVERVIEW

The Coalition of Board-Certified Emergency Physicians (COBCEP) represents all major Emergency Medicine organizations, advocating for cogent professional standards to enhance emergency physician care. COBCEP's mission is to improve public recognition for the specialized training and content expertise needed to achieve American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) or American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine (AOBEM) certification. COBCEP aims to establish partnerships with stakeholder organizations to reduce content-specific CME requirements, educational courses, or non-Emergency Medicine-based practice guidelines that are needed for either institutional privileges at disease-specific centers of excellence (i.e., trauma or stroke centers) or for state medical licensure which are duplicative and burdensome for ABEM- and AOBEM-certified physicians. By aligning efforts with the ongoing continuing certification process, COBCEP empowers emergency physicians to dedicate more time to patient care while maintaining the highest standards of practice.

KEY INITIATIVES



Continuing Certification Supersedes the Need for Continuing Medical Education for State Medical Licensure or Hospital Credentialing Requirements

A pivotal study led by COBCEP and published in JACEP Open highlights emergency physicians' perspectives on CME requirements, revealing inefficiencies and suggesting actionable improvements. [Access the study here.](#)



Advocacy and Impact

COBCEP collaborates with state medical boards and public health stakeholders to help tailor CME policies, ensuring they address the real needs of emergency medicine professionals and their patient populations.



Short Course Letters

ABEM-Certified physicians can download a COBCEP letter from the [MyABEM Portal](#) explaining why certain short courses are unnecessary. AOBEM-certified physicians can request letters by contacting AOBEM.

Available Letters

- Short Course Waiver (e.g., ACLS)
- Point of Care Testing Waiver (e.g., blood glucose or pregnancy testing)
- Emergency Ultrasound Letter
- Letter refuting merit badges

For more information or if you are interested in speaking personally about COBCEP or its initiatives, please visit [COBCEP's webpage](#) or email COBCEP@abem.org.

Reference Material

COBCEP Mission Statement

COBCEP Joint Policy Statement Against Medical Merit Badges





COBCEP'S MISSION



To advocate for ABEM- and AOBEM-certified physicians by improving public recognition for the specialized training and content expertise needed to achieve this certification.



To establish partnerships with stakeholder organizations to reduce the burden on ABEM- and AOBEM-certified physicians resulting from content-specific CME requirements, educational courses, or non-Emergency Medicine-based practice guidelines that are needed for either institutional privileges at disease-specific centers of excellence (i.e., trauma or stroke centers) or for state medical licensure.

JOINT POLICY STATEMENT AGAINST MEDICAL MERIT BADGES

The American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) and the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine (AOBEM) define the standards for the specialty of Emergency Medicine. Certification by ABEM or AOBEM obviates any additional certifications required for medical staff privileges or disease-specific care center designations, such as that needed for trauma or stroke centers.

Major Emergency Medicine organizations oppose any requirement of additional short courses or topic-specific continuing education for board-certified emergency physicians, who are in good standing with their medical staff, and who are participating in Maintenance of Certification (MOC), Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC), or any future program to ensure continued Board Certification. Our professional organizations provide the best opportunities for continuous professional development in advanced resuscitation, trauma care, stroke care, cardiovascular care, procedural sedation, pediatric care, and airway management. ABEM and AOBEM certify that this knowledge and these skills have been acquired and are maintained through both MOC and OCC.¹

Mandates that were developed before Emergency Medicine was a mature specialty are unnecessary. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) tracks the acquisition of critical competencies during residency training. After completing an Emergency Medicine residency, the physician must take a secure, comprehensive written examination. Once successfully completed, the physician then must pass an Oral Certification Examination that emphasizes the evaluation and treatment of complex clinical conditions.

- The core content for emergency medicine training comprehensively covers stroke care, cardiovascular care, pediatric acute care, advanced resuscitation, airway management, trauma care, procedural sedation, as well as all other areas of emergent care that may be required by patients presenting to an emergency department.
- Initial certification involves both a comprehensive written examination and a rigorous oral examination involving the aforementioned areas.
- MOC and OCC preserve and advance the knowledge and skills in the aforementioned areas.
- Physicians are periodically tested in the previously mentioned areas.



Participation in Maintenance of Certification or Osteopathic Continuous Certification assures medical staff that the emergency physician is meeting and exceeding the educational objectives thought to be derived from merit badge courses.

Organizations who support this policy statement are the following:

- American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM)
- American Academy of Emergency Medicine/Resident and Student Association (AAEM/RSA)
- American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM)
- American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP)
- American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians (ACOEP)
- American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine (AOBEM)
- Association of Academic Chairs of Emergency Medicine (AACEM)
- Council of Emergency Medicine Residency Directors (CORD)
- Emergency Medicine Residents' Association (EMRA)

For physicians who are not board certified in Emergency Medicine, or who do not participate in either Maintenance of Certification or Osteopathic Continuous Certification, the completion of periodic, short courses in focused content areas of Emergency Medicine may be valuable.

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