

AMERICAN BOARD OF MULTIPLE SPECIALTIES IN PODIATRY

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2026 APPEALS PROCESS

Public Description of the Appeals-Handling Process

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Document Owner	Executive Director	Applies To	Applicants, candidates, certificants, appellants

This public document describes the ABMSP appeals-handling process. It is intended to provide applicants, candidates, certificants, and other affected individuals with clear information about how appeals and examination challenges are submitted, reviewed, documented, and resolved. Applicable Candidate Handbooks and ABMSP governing policies may contain additional program-specific submission requirements and timeframes.

1. Purpose and Principles

ABMSP is committed to handling appeals in a constructive, objective, impartial, consistent, and timely manner. Appeals are reviewed on the basis of the applicable certification requirements, established procedures, and the evidence available to ABMSP.

- ABMSP retains responsibility for decisions made at all levels of the appeals-handling process.
- Individuals assigned to decide an appeal will be different from those directly involved in the original decision whenever practicable.
- Submission, investigation, and decision on an appeal will not result in discriminatory or retaliatory action against the appellant.
- Appeal records are maintained in accordance with ABMSP record-retention, confidentiality, and information-security requirements.

2. Matters That May Be Appealed or Challenged

2.1 Eligibility Appeals. Applicants determined to be ineligible for certification or for admission to an assessment process may appeal the eligibility determination. The appeal must identify the basis for the appeal and include any supporting information the applicant wishes ABMSP to consider.

2.2 Examination Challenges. Candidates who believe an examination question, examination procedure, testing condition, or other aspect of an examination may have adversely affected the fairness, validity, reliability, or security of the assessment may submit a written examination challenge.

2.3 Assessment Appeals. Candidates may appeal assessment decisions involving portfolio reviews, case reviews, practical assessments, or other certification assessments when they believe the decision was inconsistent with the applicable certification requirements or assessment procedures.

2.4 Disciplinary Appeals. Individuals who are the subject of a final disciplinary decision may appeal that decision in accordance with applicable ABMSP policies and procedures.

3. How to Submit an Appeal

Appeals and examination challenges must be submitted in writing using the contact information or submission method published by ABMSP or in the applicable Candidate Handbook. The submission should include, as applicable:

- the appellant's name and contact information;
- the certification program and decision or action being challenged;
- the specific basis for the appeal or challenge;
- supporting documentation or evidence the appellant wishes ABMSP to consider; and

- any other information required by the applicable Candidate Handbook or ABMSP policy.

Program-specific filing deadlines and other submission requirements are stated in the applicable Candidate Handbook or other published ABMSP instructions. Appeals submitted outside an applicable deadline may be declined unless ABMSP determines that extraordinary circumstances warrant consideration.

4. Appeals-Handling Process

4.1 Receipt and Acknowledgement. ABMSP will acknowledge receipt of an appeal or examination challenge and will maintain a record of the submission.

4.2 Validation and Classification. ABMSP will determine whether the matter falls within its authority, whether the submission is sufficiently complete for review, and which appeal or challenge process applies. ABMSP may request additional information when needed.

4.3 Assignment and Impartiality Review. The matter will be assigned to an individual or committee authorized by ABMSP. Individuals directly involved in the original decision will not make the appeal decision whenever practicable. Potential conflicts of interest will be addressed before substantive review.

4.4 Review and Investigation. The reviewer(s) will consider the original record, the appellant's submission, applicable certification-scheme requirements, relevant ABMSP policies and procedures, and other information necessary to evaluate the matter objectively. Where useful and appropriate, ABMSP may consider the disposition of prior similar appeals to support consistent treatment.

4.5 Technical or Subject Matter Consultation. For examination challenges or matters requiring specialized expertise, ABMSP may consult its examination development provider, psychometric professionals, subject matter experts, testing vendor, or other qualified individuals. Such consultation supports the review but does not transfer ABMSP's responsibility for the final decision.

4.6 Progress Communication. When an appeal cannot be resolved promptly, ABMSP will provide reasonable progress information to the appellant, including requests for additional information or notice that additional review is required.

4.7 Decision and Formal Notice. ABMSP will document the outcome of the appeal and provide the appellant with written notice of the final determination. The final notice constitutes the formal end of the appeals-handling process unless another level of review is expressly provided by applicable ABMSP policy.

4.8 Corrections and Corrective Action. If an appeal identifies an error, procedural weakness, or other issue requiring correction or corrective action, ABMSP will document and address the issue in accordance with its quality-management and corrective-action processes.

4.9 Tracking and Records. ABMSP will maintain records sufficient to track the appeal, the review performed, actions taken, communications issued, the decision reached, and any correction or corrective action arising from the matter.

5. Possible Outcomes

Depending on the type of appeal and the facts presented, an appeal may result in one or more of the following outcomes:

- the original decision is upheld;
- the original decision is modified or reversed;
- additional information or assessment is required;
- an examination or assessment matter is referred for additional technical or subject matter review;
- a procedural or administrative correction is made; or
- corrective action is initiated when a systemic issue is identified.

6. Confidentiality, Fairness, and Non-Discrimination

Appeals are handled with appropriate regard for confidentiality and privacy. Information will be shared only with individuals who have a legitimate role in the review or as otherwise authorized by ABMSP policy or required by law. The filing of an appeal will not result in discriminatory treatment, retaliation, or other adverse action unrelated to the merits of the matter.

7. Relationship to Other ABMSP Documents

This public description summarizes the ABMSP appeals process. More detailed requirements may appear in the applicable Candidate Handbook, certification scheme, or other ABMSP governing documents. The following areas of the ABMSP Business Policies & Procedures Manual address appeals and examination challenges:

- Section 4.11 - Eligibility Appeals
- Section 5.9 - Examination Challenges
- Section 5.10 - Assessment Appeals
- Section 7.2 - Appeals related to complaint investigations and disciplinary decisions

8. Contact and Access

Current ABMSP contact information, Candidate Handbooks, and other publicly available certification information are available through the ABMSP website. Individuals with questions regarding the appropriate appeal pathway may contact ABMSP for administrative guidance. ABMSP administrative staff may explain the process but will not predetermine or influence the outcome of an appeal.