

HELPFUL HINTS

SAVE TIME!

SAVE MONEY!

REDUCE ANXIETY!

The Ohio Board annually processes thousands of physician applications for licensure. In each case, the Ohio Board conducts a thorough evaluation of basic medical credentials, employment or work history, malpractice history, and any criminal or disciplinary history. This process takes time - anywhere from a few weeks to several months, depending in large part on how quickly the applicant complies with what is requested and the nature of any problems requiring closer scrutiny.

The Board requires verification of your core credentials directly through the Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS). Any concerns regarding that process must be directed to FCVS.

In spite of the fact that there is no guarantee of licensure, some applicants make commitments to start work at a certain time and later find that the commitment cannot be kept. Please remember that the Ohio Board will not expedite one application at the expense of another, nor will it forego any elements of its screening process.

The following suggestions are offered to help those who apply for licensure, as well as those who recruit physicians:

1. Give the Board enough time to do its job. For something as important as a medical license, three months lead time is not unreasonable.
2. Don't make commitments on loans, practice start dates, home purchases, etc., until a license is granted. Not all physicians who apply will receive a license. Don't set yourself or your colleagues up for disappointment or financial setbacks based on assumptions.
3. Make sure all application materials and fees are sent to the Board as quickly as possible, in accordance with the directions set forth in the application. The faster you send it in the sooner your application can be presented to the Board.
4. If there are items on the application about which the Board requires additional information, or if there is any derogatory information that comes to light, the review process may take longer.

CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK REQUIRED FOR INITIAL LICENSURE
PHYSICIANS (MD & DO)
TELEMEDICINE (MD & DO)

Chapters 4731 of the Ohio Revised Code requires all individuals applying for a new license or restoring a license with the State Medical Board of Ohio to submit fingerprints for a criminal records check completed by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

ALL applicants are required to utilize “WebCheck”, Ohio’s electronic fingerprint system, to electronically submit their fingerprints to BCII. The Board will typically receive the results of criminal records check submitted via “WebCheck” with 7 to 10 business days. In addition to the \$22 BCII fee and \$24 FBI fee, the electronic fingerprinting company/agency will charge an additional handling fee to process the fingerprints.

Since the law requires applicants for licensure to submit a criminal records check completed by both BCII and the FBI, applicants **MUST** use the services of a vendor that participates in the “National WebCheck”. The Sheriff’s offices in most 88 Ohio counties participate in the “National WebCheck”. A list of all “Webcheck” vendors, searchable by county, is available online at:

<http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Services/Business/WebCheck>

When locating an electronic fingerprinting site on this web page, please note that you MUST use the services of a vendor that has (BCI and FBI) listed after the vendor’s name. Only these entities participate in “National WebCheck”. The Board does not endorse or recommend any specific electronic fingerprinting company/agency.

You need both the BCII and FBI criminal records check for initial licensure and license restoration. By law, the Board cannot complete the processing of your application until it receives the background check reports from both BCII and FBI.

Steps for “WebCheck”

1. Identify a “BCI and FBI” vendor that participates in the “National WebCheck”.
2. Submit your fee directly to the vendor. **DO NOT SEND YOUR FINGERPRINTS OR FEE TO THE BOARD.**
3. Request that the criminal records check results from both BCII and FBI be sent directly to:

**State Medical Board of Ohio
30 E. Broad St., 3rd Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6127**

- Indicate the reason for fingerprinting as: “Required for licensure per ORC 4731.081.”
- FOR TELEMEDICINE ONLY: “Required for licensure per ORC 4731.296”

Instructions for Individuals Residing Outside Ohio

Individuals residing outside Ohio must contact the Board by email at med.license@med.state.oh.us to request the appropriate forms. The Board will mail the forms needed for your fingerprints to be processed at your local law enforcement agency.

LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

OHIO LAW DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR RECIPROCITY. LICENSURE IN ANOTHER STATE DOES NOT IN ANY WAY ASSURE OR GUARANTEE LICENSURE IN OHIO.

OHIO LAW DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR TEMPORARY OR PROVISIONAL LICENSURE WHILE YOUR REQUEST FOR LICENSURE IS BEING PROCESSED. **PRACTICE PRIOR TO LICENSURE CONSTITUTES THE ILLEGAL PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.**

Education & Training

Graduates of medical schools located in the U.S. or Canada and accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) or American Osteopathic Association (AOA) must:

- Successfully complete one year of graduate medical education (GME), or its equivalent as determined by the Board.

Graduates of all other medical schools must:

- Hold a valid ECFMG certificate unless they have completed a Fifth Pathway program.
- Successfully complete not less than two years of GME through the second-year level of training or have completed a Fifth Pathway program plus 1 year of GME, or its equivalent as determined by the Board.
- Achieve a score of at least 26 in Speaking and 26 in Listening with a total score of 90 on the TOEFL iBT offered by the Educational Testing Service, regardless of citizenship or country of birth. Prior to July 2006, the Test of Spoken English was required with a minimum score of 40 (between 7/95-7/06) or 230 (prior to 7/95).

The following are the only exceptions permitted under Ohio law:

- fulfillment of preliminary education requirements (i.e., completion of two years of undergraduate college work) in the U.S.; or
- possession of a current medical license (including temporary licenses, training certificates, etc.) in the U.S. pursuant to which the holder has actively practiced medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery, including accredited graduate medical education training, for the last five years (must have been actively practicing medicine in the U.S. for at least nine full months during each of the five years) immediately preceding the date of the application; or
- completion of a Fifth Pathway program; or
- passed the Clinical Skills Assessment examination given by ECFMG on or after 7/1/98.

Please be advised that the TOEFL, TWE and ECFMG's English language proficiency test (taken prior to 7/1/98) are tests of English comprehension, not proficiency in spoken English, and thus do not fulfill the TOEFL iBT requirement. To apply for the TOEFL iBT contact the Educational Testing Service directly. Their website is www.ets.org/.

Graduate medical education means:

Internships and residencies accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) or the American Osteopathic Association (AOA); a clinical fellowship conducted at an institution that has an ACGME or AOA accredited residency program in the same or a related field; Canadian internships accredited by the National Joint Committee for Approval of Pre-Registration Physicians Training Program; and Canadian residencies accredited by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada or the College of Family Physicians.

Fifth Pathway Program

To be recognized by the Board as a qualified graduate of a Fifth Pathway program, an applicant shall submit evidence satisfactory to the Ohio Medical Board that he/she has done all of the following:

- studied medicine in a foreign medical school acknowledged by the World Health Organization and verified by a member state of that organization as operating within the state's jurisdiction at the time the applicant studied medicine.
- successfully completed all the formal requirements of the foreign medical school except internship or social service requirements.
- prior to entrance into the Fifth Pathway program, attained on a screening examination acceptable to the Ohio Medical Board a score satisfactory to a medical school accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education.
- successfully completed one academic year of Fifth Pathway training at a hospital affiliated with a medical school accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education.

Acceptable Examination Sequence

Endorsement of Diplomate or Licentiate Status

If other eligibility requirements are met, diplomate status with the National Board of Medical Examiners or the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, or licentiate status with the Medical Council of Canada, may be directly endorsable to Ohio, without further examination requirements.

Endorsement of USMLE or Acceptable Examination Combination

An applicant who has not previously held a license from another state is eligible for consideration if other eligibility requirements are met and the applicant has passed one of the following examination combinations:

(1) Part I of the national board of medical examiners examination or step 1 of the USMLE, part II of the national board of medical examiners examination or step 2 of the USMLE, and part III of the national board of medical examiners examination or step 3 of the USMLE or component 2 of the FLEX. All steps, parts or components must have been administered prior to January 2000. The score achieved on each step, part or component must have equaled or exceeded the figure established by the USMLE program, the national board of medical examiners or the federation as a passing score for that step, part or component, respectively; or

(2) Component 1 of the FLEX and step 3 of the USMLE. The component and step must have been administered prior to January 2000. A performance of seventy-five or above must have been achieved on component 1. The performance achieved on step 3 must have been recognized by the USMLE program as a recommended passing performance; or

(3) USMLE steps 1, 2 and 3 or COMLEX-USA levels 1, 2 and 3.

(a) An applicant shall have passed the USMLE steps 1, 2 and 3 or COMLEX-USA levels 1, 2 and 3 within a ten-year period, and achieved a recognized passing performance by the USMLE program on each step or NBOME on each level. No applicant shall have failed any step or level more than three times.

(b) Any applicant having failed a step or level more than three times shall do the following to be eligible for licensure:

(i) Successfully complete an additional year of graduate medical education as defined in section 4731.091 of the Revised Code. This education shall be in addition to that required by section 4731.14 of the Revised Code. Such education shall be completed subsequent to the final step or level that has been failed more than three times; and

(ii) Retake the testing sequence and otherwise meet the requirements set forth in paragraph (C)(3)(a) of this rule.

(c) Any applicant who has not completed the required steps or levels within the ten-year time period, and not failed any step or level more than three times, shall do the following to be eligible for licensure:

(i) Retake the appropriate steps or levels to bring the testing sequence within the required ten-year time period; and otherwise meet the requirements set forth in paragraph (C)(3)(a) of this rule; or

(ii) Demonstrate good cause, as determined by the board, for not having passed all three steps or levels within the ten year period, and otherwise meet the requirements set forth in paragraph (C)(3)(a) of this rule.

(d) USMLE steps 1, 2 and 3 and COMLEX-USA levels 1, 2 and 3 cannot be combined to fulfill an acceptable testing sequence as required by paragraph (C)(3)(a) of this rule; or

(4) Component 1 and 2 of the FLEX. Both components must have been administered prior to January 2000. The score achieved on each component must have equaled or exceeded the figure established by the FLEX program as a passing score for that component.

Endorsement of Another License

The Board has discretionary authority to endorse licenses issued by another state without further examination, provided that other eligibility requirements are met. In order to be endorsable, the license must be based on an acceptable written examination; must be current and in good standing; and must be full and unlimited.

In addition to the examinations listed above, the following examinations may also be acceptable:

1. A written state medical board of the United States licensing examination other than the FLEX, USMLE or COMLEX-USA administered prior to June 1982 without previous or subsequent FLEX, USMLE or COMLEX-USA failure; or
2. A single three-day FLEX administered prior to June 1985. The FLEX weighted average must be 75 or above for the entire examination as reported by the Federation of State Medical Boards, or must be 72 or above if the examination was taken during the first two years of a state's administration of the FLEX and such score was accepted by that state as a passing score; or
3. A written examination provided by the "National Board of Examiners for Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons" for the administering state.

Two Years of Clinical Inactivity

The Ohio Medical Board may require additional training or examination, or both, of any applicant who for more than two years immediately preceding the date of application has not been engaged in the clinical practice of medicine or osteopathic medicine as an active practitioner.

Good Moral Character

Ohio law requires applicants to demonstrate good moral character. Assessment of character is done through the use of recommendation forms, background verifications and review of information provided through the Additional Questions portion of the Ohio Addendum to Application.

Criminal Background Check

Chapters 4731 of the Ohio Revised Code requires all individuals applying for a new license or restoring a license with the State Medical Board of Ohio to submit fingerprints for a criminal records check completed by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Please click on the link for the full instructions and list of vendors in Ohio who can complete this process.

[Background check instructions.](#)

Telemedicine Certificate

Section 4731.296 of the Ohio Revised Code defines “telemedicine” as “the practice of medicine in this state through the use of any communication, including oral, written, or electronic communication by a physician outside this state.” Telemedicine and teleradiology are both considered the practice of medicine pursuant to Section 4731.34 of the Ohio Revised Code. A person who wishes to practice telemedicine in Ohio must have an Ohio license.

The requirements are essentially the same as if applying for full licensure, with a few exceptions. To be eligible for a telemedicine certificate, the applicant must hold a current, unrestricted license to practice medicine or osteopathic medicine and surgery issued by another state that requires license holders to complete at least fifty hours of continuing medical education every two years. In addition, the applicant’s principle place of practice is located in that state. Please refer to Section 4731.296 of the Ohio Revised Code for all the specific requirements of the telemedicine certificate.

It should be noted that a holder of a telemedicine certificate may not practice medicine **in person** in the state of Ohio without either obtaining a special activity certificate under Section 4731.294 of the Ohio Revised Code, or converting the telemedicine certificate to a full certificate issued under Section 4731.29 of the Ohio Revised Code.

A telemedicine certificate may be converted to a full certificate upon receipt of a written request from the certificate holder. Once the telemedicine certificate is converted, the holder is subject to all requirements and privileges attendant to a full certificate, including continuing education requirements.

If you would like to apply for the telemedicine certificate, you must complete the licensure application in its entirety. You must check the box on page 3 of the “Ohio Addendum,” indicating that you are applying for a telemedicine certificate. Processing for the telemedicine certificate or the full certificate both take approximately 10 to 12 weeks.