

Application Process for Recognition of a Dental Specialty Certifying Board

The application for recognition of a dental specialty certifying board is based on the ADA's *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists*. Recognition is a voluntary process and an applicant certifying board may withdraw its application for recognition at any time prior to the National Commission Board of Commissioners taking action regarding the recognition status. The non-refundable application fee must be submitted with the application for recognition. Applicant certifying boards should contact the National Commission office for the current fee schedule.

The application process is as follows:

- a. An application for recognition is completed by the applicant certifying board and submitted to the National Commission on Recognition of Dental Specialties and Certifying Boards, along with the appropriate documentation and non-refundable application fee. Provided the application is in order, it may take up to twenty (20) months from the date of submission for the Board of Commissioners to make a recognition status determination. If the application is not in order, the start of the twenty (20) month timeframe will be delayed and will not start until the application is considered to be in order.
- b. An initial review of the application for recognition is conducted by the director of the National Commission to determine whether all sections of the application have been completed, including the submission of all required appendices and documentation referenced in the application. Applications that contain PHI/PII will be returned to the applicant for removal of references to PHI/PII. The director of the National Commission only determines if the application for recognition is complete and does not make any decisions regarding the content of the application. It is the expectation that applicants will submit all of the required documentation and not intentionally submit an incomplete or inaccurate application. Applicants that remove documentation from another organizations application and submit it as their documentation will have their application disregarded (See Policy on Integrity). If documentation is found to be missing or inaccurate, the applicant certifying board will be contacted and requested to submit the required missing documentation within **30 days**. Failure to comply with the request for supplemental documentation within the required deadline will result in termination of the application process and the application for recognition will become null and void.
- c. If the application for recognition is determined to contain the required documentation by the director, the National Commission will publish notification in the ADA News and the National Commission's website informing the public that an application for recognition has been received. (See the section on "Recognition of One (1) Certifying Board from a Single Discipline of Practice" below for those instances when a second certifying board in the same discipline submits an application).
- d. If no other certifying board in the same discipline of dentistry contacts the National Commission, the application for recognition is submitted to the Review Committee on Specialty Certifying Board Recognition for review of completeness including analysis of the application's content. All documentation in the application for recognition is confidential until the Review Committee on Specialty Certifying Board Recognition has determined the application is complete.
- e. Based on review by the Review Committee on Specialty Certifying Board Recognition, applications that require supplemental documentation will be inactive until the certifying board submits the requested documentation within **30 days**. If an organization requires an extension, they must contact the National Commission. If the National Commission grants the extension, the extension will be only for an additional **15 days**. Failure to comply with the request for supplemental documentation within the required deadline will result in termination of the application process and the application will become null and void. If an application for recognition becomes null and void and the applicant certifying board wishes to resubmit the application, the applicant certifying board is required to submit a new application for recognition including the full non-refundable application fee.
- f. If the Review Committee on Specialty Certifying Board Recognition makes the determination that the application for recognition is complete, and no further documentation is required to make a determination of recognition, the Review Committee as part of the review process will invite public comment on the applicant certifying boards compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition of National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists* for a sixty (60) day period. The Review Committee will only consider comments that are related to the *Requirements for Recognition*. Comments that, violate the National Commission's Policy on Integrity and/or contains unprofessional remarks or

anecdotal information related to personal experience will be disregarded. (See the Policy on Third Party Comments)

The following organizations will be notified in writing of receipt of the application for recognition and the sixty (60) day public comment period:

- Presidents and Executive Directors of:
 - Constituent Dental Societies
 - Recognized Dental Specialty Organizations
 - Recognized Dental Specialty Certifying Boards
 - American Association of Dental Boards
 - American Dental Education Association
 - Academy of General Dentistry
 - State Boards of Dentistry
 - Deans, Dental Schools
 - Directors, Advanced Dental Education Programs
 - ADA Officers and Board of Trustees
 - Members, ADA House of Delegates
 - Members and Director, ADA Council on Dental Education and Licensure
 - ADA News
- g. The Review Committee on Specialty Certifying Board Recognition **may** request verbal testimony from the applicant certifying board, once the public comment period has closed, to address issues raised during the public comment period.
- h. Following a comprehensive review of the application for recognition, public comments, and verbal testimony of the applicant certifying board (if requested), the Review Committee on Specialty Certifying Board Recognition will make a recommended action to the Board of Commissioners to either grant recognition, postpone action or deny recognition. The recommended action is reviewed by the Board of Commissioners at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- i. Representatives from the applicant certifying board organization are invited to be readily available if needed during that portion of the National Commission meeting when the Board of Commissioners is considering the application for recognition.
- j. The National Commission Board of Commissioners may take action to:
- grant recognition
 - postpone action, pending additional information
 - deny recognition
- k. If the National Commission denies recognition, the certifying board is advised of:
- The reason(s) for the denial (adverse action)
 - The certifying board's right to an appeal of the adverse action (See Policy on Recognition of a Dental Specialty Sponsoring Organization and Dental Specialty Certifying Board)

If the National Commission Board of Commissioners makes the determination to deny recognition, the applicant certifying board **will not** be allowed to submit another application for recognition for a period of six (6) months. The six (6) month waiting period will allow the applicant certifying board ample time to correct any deficiencies and/or weaknesses in the application for recognition. If the applicant certifying board wishes to submit another application for recognition, the organization will need to submit a new application for recognition including the non-refundable application fee. (See Policy on Recognition of a Dental Specialty Sponsoring Organization and Dental Specialty Certifying Board)

If the National Commission Board of Commissioners makes the determination to deny recognition to an applicant certifying board a second time, the organization **will not** be allowed to submit another application for specialty certifying board recognition. (See Policy on Recognition of a Dental Specialty Sponsoring Organization and Dental Specialty Certifying Board)

Recognition of One (1) Certifying Board from a Single Discipline of Practice

In accord with the *Requirements for National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists*, no more than one (1) certification board shall be recognized for the certification of diplomates in a single discipline of practice. A close working relationship between the recognized dental specialty sponsoring organization and the certifying board must be clearly outlined in both organizations policies and is one of the requirements for specialty sponsoring organizations seeking recognition. This relationship must also be clearly identified in the *Bylaws* of the certifying board. In the event that the National Commission receives two (2) or more *bona fide* applications from certifying boards in the same discipline of dentistry, the National Commission will determine which application to act upon by reviewing the recognized specialty sponsoring organization's response to Requirement 1 of the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties*. The application of the certifying board identified by the recognized sponsoring organization will be the application for recognition accepted for evaluation. Any and all additional applications for recognition will be declared null and void. It is not the role of the National Commission to settle and/or become involved in disputes between organizations. If the organizations are unable to come to an agreement over which organization will submit an application for recognition, neither of the organizations will be able to submit an application for recognition and the recognition status of the recognized specialty sponsoring will be in jeopardy.

Examples of a close working relationship may include:

- A statement of sponsorship of the certifying board by a recognized specialty sponsoring organization that meets all of the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties*, with the name and founding date of the sponsoring organization noted.
- Formal policy statements by the sponsoring organization and certifying board recognizing each other.
- Sponsoring organization and certifying board engaging in regular, formal communications.
- Attendance of leadership/liaisons representing the sponsoring organization/certifying board at annual meetings.
- The sponsoring organization's ability to make nominations to the certifying board's board of directors.
- Procedures acknowledging that the sponsoring organization may establish additional qualifications for diplomates who serve on the certifying board.
- Sponsoring organization providing continuing education courses that prepare diplomates for examination of the board as well as review courses as part of the re-credentialing process.
- Collaboration of review and revision of accreditation standards for advanced education programs in the specialty discipline. Although collaboration between the sponsoring organization and the certifying boards is **required**, the certifying board **must** be independent, bearing full responsibility for its program; the evaluation of qualifications and competence of those it certifies as diplomats; and financially independent from the sponsoring organization.

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