



# ABAM Lifetime Certificate

## Frequently Asked Questions & Answers *(updated 1.13.2025)*

Q: When will the American Board of Addiction Medicine offer active ABAM Diplomates the opportunity to apply for an ABAM Lifetime Certificate?

A: When the ABPM practice pathway to addiction medicine certification ends in 2025, ABAM will provide the opportunity to all ABAM Diplomates in good standing\* to apply for an ABAM Lifetime certificate.

Q: When will the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) practice pathway to addiction medicine certification end?

A: The ABPM practice pathway to addiction medicine certification will end with the 2025 application cycle. For specifics regarding board certification, visit [theabpm.org](http://theabpm.org). American Board of Addition Medicine (ABAM) staff are unable to answer any questions regarding ABPM requirements or eligibility.

Q: I have not yet applied through the ABPM practice pathway to addiction medicine certification, and I have maintained my ABAM certification, what are my options for addiction medicine certification going forward?

A: ABAM Diplomates who have maintained their ABAM certification through the ABAM [Transitional Continuous Certification Program](#) (TraCC) have two options:

1. Pursue ABPM addiction medicine certification through the practice pathway application process and taking the exam. Those applying in 2025 can take the exam in 2025, 2026 or 2027. This is the suggested pathway to maintaining addiction medicine certification as the ABPM certification is an American Board of Medical Specialties recognized certification.
2. Maintain active ABAM Diplomate status by paying maintenance fees for the next cycle beginning July 1, 2024, provide current unrestricted state medical license(s) information, and for Time-Limited Diplomates complete 26 addiction medicine *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*, so that they may apply for an ABAM Lifetime Certificate in May 2025.

Q: What is an ABAM Lifetime Certificate?

A: The American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) stopped certifying new applicants in 2015 and will cease all operations on September 1, 2025. Beginning in May 2025, ABAM will offer a Lifetime Certificate to all active Diplomates. As of August 1, 2025, ABAM will no longer monitor ABAM Diplomate Lifetime Certificate holders for their participation in maintenance of certification programs or their compliance with state medical board licensure. ABAM will make no endorsement of Lifetime Certificate holders beyond acknowledgment that as of August 1, 2025, the Certificate holder was an active ABAM Diplomate. Only those Diplomates with no

actions according to the Federation of State Medical Boards as of August 1, 2025, will be considered for Lifetime status.

Q: Does this mean I will now be an ABAM Fellow?

A: An ABAM Lifetime Certificate is not considered a Fellow status designation.

Q: When can I apply for an ABAM Lifetime Certificate?

A: ABAM will open the application process in May 2025 for all active ABAM certificate holders.

Q: What does it mean to be an active (current) ABAM certificate holder?

A: Active ABAM certificate holders are ABAM Diplomates who have annually participated in the [Transitional Continuous Certification Program](#) (TraCC).

Q: How can I verify if I am considered an active ABAM certificate holder?

A: For immediate verification of ABAM board certification, search the “[Find a Physician](#)” database. If your name does not appear in the search, you are not an active ABAM Diplomate. You can also email [abam@abam.net](mailto:abam@abam.net) for verification.

Q: If I have not maintained my ABAM certification, can I be reinstated so that I can apply for an ABAM Lifetime certificate?

A: There are no reinstatement opportunities for ABAM Diplomate status. For addiction medicine certification, we encourage you to apply through the [APBM practice pathway](#).

Q: What are the eligibility requirements to apply for an ABAM Lifetime Certificate beginning in May 2025?

A: The requirements are as follows:

- \*ABAM Diplomate in good standing as of May 1, 2025
  - Up to date on maintenance fees (last renewal cycle will be for a July 1, 2024, start date)
- Completion of application form to include the following:
  - license verification attesting to current and unrestricted state medical license(s)
  - Attestation to agreement of the definition of an ABAM Lifetime Certificate, as outlined above
  - Payment of Lifetime Certificate fee

*\*Additional Information:*

- To qualify for a lifetime certificate, ABAM Diplomates must renew for the 24-25 cycle, meeting all requirements as outlined:
  - Maintenance Fee(s)
    - Not Time-Limited Diplomates - \$150
    - Optional Not Time-Limited Diplomates - \$375
    - Time-Limited Diplomates - \$375

- State Medical License Verification, active with no restrictions
- Time-Limited Diplomates must complete 26 addiction medicine *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* between July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Q: How much will an ABAM Lifetime Certificate cost?

A: The ABAM Lifetime Certificate fee is a \$1,000 one-time fee. There is an additional fee of \$50 (optional) for mailed ABAM Lifetime Certificates (14" x 11" card stock). All Lifetime Certificate holders will receive an emailed PDF (8.5" x 11") certificate at no additional cost.

Q: What will be the deadline to apply for an ABAM Lifetime Certificate?

A: The deadline to apply will be July 31, 2025. As a reminder, the application process will open in May 2025. Reinstatement or extension options will not apply.

Q: How will I distinguish myself as an ABAM Lifetime Certificate holder?

A: Lifetime Diplomates may continue to distinguish themselves as board certified in addiction medicine by using the official designation for ABAM Diplomate Status as "Lifetime Diplomate of the American Board of Addiction Medicine" or "Lifetime DABAM."

Q: Will the ABAM Lifetime Certificate (physical certificate) have an expiration date listed?

A: The ABAM Lifetime physical certificate will not have an expiration date on it. The certificate will indicate initial ABAM certification date, certificate number, holder's name, and list ABAM Lifetime Certificate.

Q: As an ABAM Time-Limited Diplomate or Optional Not Time-Limited Diplomate, I have used the American College of Academic Addiction Medicine (ACAAM) Addiction Medicine Education Portal to obtain CME. Will I still have access?

A: As an ABAM Lifetime Certificate holder, you will have the option to purchase access to ACAAM products beginning July 1, 2025. This includes the Self-Assessment Modules (SAMs).

Q: Will third-party providers such as employers or state medical boards or insurance companies or patients be able to verify my certification status?

A: The *Find a Physician* (verification database) will no longer be available. There will be no Diplomate verification services available, including correspondence with anyone seeking additional information regarding ABAM Lifetime Certificate holders and what requirements were met to receive the certificate.

Q: Will my employer recognize the ABAM Lifetime Certificate the same way that they recognize my current ABAM Certificate?

A: ABAM has no way of anticipating how employers will recognize the ABAM Lifetime Certificate.

Q: Will insurance payors accept the ABAM Lifetime Certificate as equivalent to the current ABAM certificate or the ABPM board certification?

A: ABAM has no way of anticipating how insurance payors will recognize the ABAM Lifetime Certificate. ABPM board certification in addiction medicine represents the highest and most well-recognized addiction medicine board certification in the United States.

Q: I have read all the information above and DO plan to pursue ABPM addiction medicine certification through the practice pathway and would like to also apply for an ABAM Lifetime Certificate, would I be eligible?

A: Yes, you would be eligible. You can follow the same steps outlined below under the next question.

Q: I have read all the information above and plan to apply for a Lifetime Certificate. Can you provide me with a timeline and action items of what I need to do?

A: Take the following actions at the designated times noted below.

1. July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 (for ABAM Time-Limited Diplomates only)
  - a. Complete 26 addiction medicine *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* between July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. This can be done easily by completing 26 SAMs on the [ACAAM Addiction Medicine Education Portal](#). You have access to this portal. Credits are automatically reported to your ABAM profile.
2. April – June 2024  
ABAM Diplomate maintenance notifications will be emailed to all active ABAM Diplomates in late April. You have until June 30, 2024, to renew your certificate. In doing so, your ABAM certificate will be good through June 30, 2025.
  - a. Complete annual renewal form
    - i. Verify state medical licensure, active with no restrictions
    - ii. Attest to having completed or will complete by June 30, 2024, 26 addiction medicine *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* between July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 (ABAM Time-Limited Diplomates Only)
    - iii. Pay annual maintenance fees
3. July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 (Time-Limited Diplomates Only)
  - a. Complete 26 addiction medicine *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* between July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025. This can be done easily by completing 26 SAMs on the [ACAAM Addiction Medicine Education Portal](#). You have access to this portal. Credits are automatically reported to your ABAM profile.
4. May - July 31, 2025  
Active ABAM Diplomates can apply for an ABAM Lifetime Certificate. Invitations will be emailed via the online renewal system, and notification mailed by USPS. Only current active Diplomates will be eligible and have access to the application form.
  - a. Complete the application form
    - i. Time-Limited Diplomates must attest to completion of 26 addiction medicine *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* between July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025, by agreeing to comply with the ABAM Audit Policy.
  - b. Verify state medical licensure, active with no restrictions
  - c. Pay one-time fee: \$1,000

- i. All ABAM Lifetime Certificate holders will receive an 8.5" x 11" PDF of their certificate. If you choose to have a certificate (14" x 11" cardstock) mailed to you, additional (optional) fee of \$50.
5. July 31, 2025  
The ABAM Lifetime Certificate application cycle closes, no reinstatement or extension options available.
6. August 2025
  - a. ABAM staff will process applications, email/mail certificates
  - b. ABAM website updated with a static list of ABAM Lifetime Certificate holders, history of ABAM, and ABAM Lifetime Certificate Statement providing a definition of the certificate as referenced below.

*ABAM Lifetime Certificate Statement (for posting August 2025)*

The American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) stopped certifying new applicants in 2015 and will cease all operations on September 1, 2025. In May 2025, ABAM offered a Lifetime Certificate to all active Diplomates. As of August 1, 2025, ABAM no longer monitors ABAM Diplomate Lifetime Certificate holders for their participation in maintenance of certification programs or their compliance with state medical board licensure. ABAM will make no endorsement of Lifetime Certificate holders beyond acknowledgment that as of August 1, 2025, the Certificate holder was an active ABAM Diplomate. As of August 1, 2025, all Federation of State Medical Boards monitoring of state medical board disciplinary actions ceased with no actions noted for named Lifetime Certificate holders.

7. September 1, 2025  
ABAM doors close

Q: My question(s) remains unanswered, who should I contact?

A: If your question was not addressed above, you can email [dlevreau@acaam.org](mailto:dlevreau@acaam.org) with additional questions. We will add questions/answers to this document as needed.