

# THE AMERICAN BOARD OF ANESTHESIOLOGY, INC.

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## The First Step Toward Board Certification and Maintenance of Certification in Anesthesiology

The American Board of Anesthesiology, Inc. (ABA) establishes criteria by which physicians may be certified and maintain their certification as diplomates of the Board. Clinical competence in anesthesiology, as defined by the ABA, is the initial step toward Board certification in anesthesiology.

The Residency in Clinical Anesthesiology is intended to provide education and experience in the science and practice of medicine related to anesthesiology. During training, the faculty of the residency program instructs and observes the resident to assist in the development of those qualities essential to becoming Board certified.

Because of the nature of anesthesia practice, the ABA diplomate must be able to deal with emergent life-threatening situations independently, promptly and efficiently. The ability to acquire and process information in an independent and timely manner is central to assure individual responsibility for all aspects of anesthesiology care. Adequate physical and sensory faculties, such as eyesight, hearing, speech and coordinated function of the extremities, are essential to the independent performance of the functions of the Board certified anesthesiologist. Freedom from influence of or dependency on chemical substances that impair cognitive, physical, sensory or motor functions also is an essential characteristic of the Board certified anesthesiologist.

### Clinical Competence Committee Report

The Board requires every residency training program to electronically file an Evaluation of Clinical Competence in January and July on behalf of each resident who has spent any portion of the prior six months in clinical anesthesia training in or under the sponsorship of the residency program and its affiliates. The ABA's report form must be completed by selecting either of two grades:

**Satisfactory (S)** Consistently meets reasonable expectations.  
**Unsatisfactory (U)** Often falls short of reasonable expectations.

\*Not Applicable (N/A) Should be used to denote only those categories of core competencies not required during the resident's current rotations.

**Clinical competence evaluation categories include the following:**

### Essential Attributes:

The physician who lacks one or more of the following attributes is not considered qualified to practice anesthesiology safely.

1. Demonstrates high standards of ethical and moral behavior.
2. Demonstrates honesty, integrity, reliability, and responsibility.
3. Learns from experience; knows limits.
4. Reacts to stressful situations in an appropriate manner.
5. Has no documented current abuse of alcohol or illegal use of drugs.
6. Has no cognitive, physical, sensory or motor impairment that precludes acquiring and processing information in an independent and timely manner.
7. Demonstrates respect for the dignity of patients and colleagues, and sensitivity to a diverse patient population.

### Patient Care:

1. Demonstrates patient care that is compassionate, appropriate and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health.
2. Respects patient privacy.

3. Demonstrates appropriate concern for patients and a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities.
4. Is an advocate for quality care.
5. Demonstrates use of a sound background in general medicine in the management of problems relevant to the specialty of anesthesiology.
6. Recognizes the adequacy of preoperative preparation of patients for anesthesia and surgery, and recommends appropriate steps when preparation is inadequate.
7. Selects anesthetic and adjuvant drugs and techniques for rational, appropriate, patient-centered and cost-effective anesthetic management.
8. Recognizes and responds appropriately to significant changes in the anesthetic course.
9. Provides appropriate post-anesthetic care.
10. Provides appropriate consultative support for patients who are critically ill.
11. Evaluates, diagnoses, and selects appropriate therapy for acute and chronic pain disorders.

### **Medical Knowledge:**

1. Possesses an appropriate fund of medical knowledge.
2. Is appropriately self-confident; recognizes gaps in knowledge and expertise.
3. Demonstrates medical knowledge about established and evolving biomedical, clinical, and cognate sciences, as well as the application of this knowledge to patient care.

### **Practice-Based Learning and Improvement:**

1. Demonstrates learning and improvement that involves the investigation and evaluation of care for patients, the appraisal and assimilation of scientific evidence and improvements in patient care.
2. Is committed to practice-based learning and improvement.
3. Possesses business skills important for effective practice management.
4. Is complete, accurate and timely in record keeping.

### **Interpersonal and Communication Skills:**

1. Demonstrates effective interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families and other healthcare professionals.
2. Is adaptable and flexible.
3. Is careful and thorough.

### **Professionalism:**

1. Demonstrates a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities.
2. Adheres to ethical principles.
3. Demonstrates sensitivity to a diverse patient population.

### **Systems-Based Practice:**

1. Demonstrates an understanding of the healthcare system and the ability to effectively call on system resources to provide optimal patient care.
2. Demonstrates an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context and system of health care.

### **Clinical Skills:**

1. General preparation
2. General anesthesia
3. Regional anesthesia and pain management
4. Special procedures

### **Overall Clinical Competence:**

The grade for Overall Clinical Competence can be satisfactory only if the grade for every Essential Attribute is satisfactory. A Board certified physician must be capable of performing independently the entire scope of anesthesiology practice without accommodations or with reasonable accommodation.