

2026 ADMINISTRATION YEAR

Examiner Handbook

ABA Mission and Vision

Our mission is to advance the highest standards of the practice of anesthesiology.

Our vision is to transform certification to shape the future of anesthesiology.

Being a Board-Certified Anesthesiologist

An ABA board-certified anesthesiologist demonstrates effective communication with peers, patients, families, and the broader medical community. Board-certified anesthesiologists are expected to serve as experts in anesthesiology, provide sound advice, and defend their opinions across all aspects of the specialty.

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Examiner Qualifications and Selection

To qualify as a new examiner, applicants must:

- Hold a current ABA certificate in anesthesiology.
- Be certified for the past five years at the time of completing an examiner application.
- Be clinically active in the practice of anesthesiology or recognized anesthesiology subspecialty, on average, at least one day per week during 12 consecutive months over three previous years.
- Examiner nominations are held every even-numbered year. All candidates must meet the above requirements and fill out an application, which includes a BioSketch, personal statement, and contributions to anesthesiology or medicine.

Examiner commitment, if appointed:

- Devote two weeks as an examiner – one week onsite in Raleigh and one week remote to score OSCEs – every year for 15 consecutive years or until the age of 65.
- Remain clinically active for their entire examiner tenure and maintain active participation in the MOCA program, fulfilling all requirements.
- Refrain from participating in any activity that may constitute a conflict of interest (e.g., practice APPLIED exams when a fee is charged, participate in courses solely devoted to preparing candidates to secure ABA certification).

The NEST workgroup, which was formed in 2022, reviews applications, vets candidates, and selects the top 20% of examiner applicants for further review. The Board of Directors appoints the final list of examiner applications each January following the application cycle. New examiners undergo training, observation, and mentorship throughout their initial week.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

ABA volunteers are expected to be role models of professionalism, both within and outside ABA activities. They must provide timely responses, maintain high standards of patient care, and participate in MOCA. Volunteers should understand unconscious bias, encourage constructive feedback, and raise concerns without fear of retaliation. Violations may result in termination of volunteer opportunities. Volunteers must also keep their medical license unrestricted, complete MOCA program components, and remain clinically active.

Examiner Commitment and Promotions

Examiners are expected to serve two weeks each year for 15 consecutive years or until age 65—one week onsite in Raleigh, NC, and one week remotely for OSCE scoring. Examiners who move out of the country may take up to two years off from examining.

Examiner promotions follow a structured path:

- New Examiner: Two years (T0–T2).
- Associate Examiner: Four years (T3–T6), with promotion based on performance and attendance.
- Full Examiner: Reappointed every four years, contingent on performance and attendance.

Annual Examiner Feedback Report

Throughout their service as an ABA APPLIED Examiner, all examiners are randomly observed administering the Standard Oral Exam (SOE) and evaluated by trained auditors. The purpose of the audit process is two-fold: first, it allows the ABA to ensure that all examiners are administering the SOE examination in accordance with the ABA’s scoring processes and protocols; and second, where examiners are found not to be conducting examinations to the ABA’s standards, those examiners can be quickly identified and provided with additional training and support. The purpose of the Examiner Feedback Report is to provide timely and specific feedback about the APPLIED examinations examiners scored during their current term. To find the yearly report, which is posted late each calendar year, log into ABA Go, click “Posted Documents,” and then “Examiner Feedback Report.”

Examiner availability for the next calendar year is available in ABAGo between June and July every year. Each examiner is expected to commit to at least one in-person and one remote OSCE exam week each year.

In-person examiner commitment:

- Travel to Raleigh, NC to examine candidates in our assessment facility, the AIME Center.
- Attend a one-time Examiner Training meeting on Sunday at 2 pm ET and before each exam week, an examiner briefing Sunday, 4:15 pm ET.
- Examiners are required to report to the AIME Center Monday-Thursday, 6:55 am – 3:45 pm ET.

Remote OSCE scorer commitment:

- Three days before the exam, you will be asked to complete a 15-minute online OSCE scoring training module and to review a remote scoring system training manual. You will also have access to station-specific OSCE scenarios.
- Score approximately 12 performances per exam day (approximately 12 minutes per scenario) for a total of about 48 performances per exam week.
- Scoring starts Monday, 7:30 am ET and ends Friday, noon ET.
- Scoring is asynchronous and most examiners find they do not need to take time off work.

Examiners will receive an invitation from CVENT in early August each year with their in-person and remote exam weeks and will be asked to accept or decline the invitation. Examiners may also modify or cancel their registration at any time throughout the year.

Volunteer Leave of Absence Policy

The American Board of Anesthesiology strives to deliver a consistent, high-quality assessment process for the benefit of our candidates, diplomates, and our patient communities. Our volunteers are an important foundation of this process.

In order to promote our assessments process, consistent volunteer participation is necessary. However, we recognize that life events occur, which at times may limit our volunteers' ability to participate in ABA activities. Balancing the need for consistency of volunteer effort with the appropriate flexibility to account for these major life events is an important consideration for the ABA.

We are implementing a Volunteer Leave of Absence Policy to hopefully allow greater clarity around this issue, achieve the balance between consistency/flexibility that is needed by all parties and to promote volunteer engagement and well-being.

Volunteers may be excused from their various responsibilities for up to 1 year out of their term for personal reasons, including but not limited to the following examples:

- Health condition (self or immediate family)
- Birth/adoption of a child
- Military leave
- Divorce

If a volunteer does not feel they will be able to consistently complete their volunteer activities (e.g. question writing, in-person examination, etc.), for these reasons (or similarly related ones), they should alert their committee chair (if applicable) or the ABA staff liaison for the specific area they volunteer in as soon as possible. This is especially important if certain activities (e.g. item development, SOE/OSCE participation) need to be reassigned. Given the various deadlines around ABA exam schedules, prolonged absences by an individual may impair committee activities and limit other potential volunteers' opportunities with the ABA. If a volunteer needs to take additional time or resign from a committee related to a Leave of Absence, they are welcome to reapply for service in the future.

Travel

Flights must be booked at least 21 days in advance of travel per the ABA Travel Policy (see appendix A). Contact Sequel Travel at (800) 786-2738 or aba.travel@sequel-travel.com to book your flight. Examiners may also use the online request form to submit travel online. Just visit the event website and click on the link. Sequel will charge your flights to the ABA. If you do not use Sequel, you will need to keep record of your flight receipts to submit in Concur for reimbursement.

Hotel

Renaissance Raleigh North Hills Hotel
4100 Main at North Hills Street
Raleigh, NC 27609
(919) 571-8773

Reservations are made by the ABA at the Renaissance. Room and tax are covered, but incidentals are the examiner's responsibility. Check-in is at 4 pm. If you arrive earlier than 4 pm and your room is not ready, an Examiner Lounge is available starting at 9 am with snacks and beverages. The hotel will hold your luggage and contact you when your room is ready. If your room is still unavailable after 4 pm, please contact Lizzie Brill so we may begin to expedite your check-in.

Room and tax charges for hotel nights will be billed to the ABA master account, along with housekeeping gratuities. You will need to present a credit card at check-in for incidentals.

Expense Reimbursement Process

Prior to your exam week, the Meeting Planning team will email instructions on how to set up your Concur account as well as login credentials. All examiners must keep track of all travel-related expenses and submit them through Concur for reimbursement. All expenses over \$75 require a receipt. Please submit expenses within 2 weeks of the APPLIED Exam. Reimbursements are processed weekly and once approved, payment will be provided within 2 weeks of the exam ending.

Exam Week Logistics

- **Arrival:** Examiners arrive at Raleigh–Durham International Airport and travel to the Renaissance (4100 Main at North Hills Street, Raleigh, NC 27609) or AIME Center (4208 Six Forks Road, Suite 1500) via Uber, Lyft, or taxi. Sunday’s dress code is business casual.
- **New Examiner Training:** All new examiners are required to participate in a training held at 2:00pm at the AIME Center.
- **Briefing:** The Examiner Briefing is held Sunday at 4:15 pm at the AIME Center.
- **Training:** New Seat A, auditor, and ultrasound training are after the main Examiner Briefing until 6:00pm at the AIME Center.
- **Welcome Reception:** Held at the Renaissance on Sunday at 6:30 pm, followed by dinner for all examiners, NEST members, and their guests.
- **Examiner Reception:** Held at a local restaurant every Tuesday from 5–7pm. Check the Cvent app for more details.
- **Examiner Lounge:** The Hospitality Suite #816 will be open on Sunday from 9 am – 10 pm and Monday – Wednesday from 3–10 pm. It will be stocked with beverages and snacks.
- **Examiner Breakfast:** From 6–6:45 am, Examiners will have breakfast located in the Inner Terrace (2nd floor) of the Renaissance.
- **Daily Shuttles:** There will be a shuttle running daily at 6:30 am and 6:45 am each morning and at 3:45 pm each afternoon.
- **Daily Schedule:**
 - Arrival at AIME Center by 6:55 am and sign in. Please be ready for a quick briefing prior to exams each morning.
 - OSCEs will begin at 7:20 am and conclude at 5:20 pm
 - SOEs will begin at 7:45 am and conclude at 3:25 pm.
 - Lunch will be served at the AIME Center each day from 11:05 am – 12:05 pm.
- **Your Departure Day:**
 - Hotel check out time is 12 pm. Your hotel room and tax, along with housekeeping gratuities, will be charged to the ABA master account. Only incidentals will be charged to your credit card. Please check out of the hotel prior to leaving for the AIME Center.
 - After exams are over, a shuttle will transport examiners to the airport on Thursday. If you plan to take the shuttle to the airport, please check out of the hotel prior to the exams and bring luggage to the AIME Center to store in our luggage room.

Event App and Website

Prior to your arrival in Raleigh, examiners will receive an email from the event planning team with a link to download the CVENT event app. This app includes a list of examiners, breakfast & lunch menus, weekly schedule, things to do in North Hills, reminders, and more. Examiners may also chat with peers on site and ask ABA staff members non-exam related questions.

The event website is another resource that includes information about the hotel, travel agency (Sequel Travel), schedule, and more. To visit the website, just click on the link in your registration confirmation email.

After the exam concludes, all on-site examiners will receive a survey about their time in Raleigh within the CVENT app.

Exam Structure

SOE (Standardized Oral Exam)

Sessions include long and short stems, covering intraoperative management, postoperative care, preoperative evaluation, and additional topics. Examiners may audit others, and conflicts or interruptions are managed according to protocol.

OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination)

Examiners complete online training before the exam, score performances asynchronously, and may access station-specific scenarios. Scoring is flexible, allowing examiners to fit it into their schedules. Some examiners are expected to score the Application of Ultrasound in person during an exam week. Specific training is offered on Sundays after the examiner briefing.

Social Media Guidelines

Examiners are encouraged to share their volunteer experiences on social media, following guidelines to avoid disclosing privileged information. Posts should focus on the value of their work and the ABA's mission.

Per Diem

\$275 per day for onsite examiners; \$175 per day for remote OSCE scoring. Payments are made within 2 weeks after the exam. The service per diem and travel expenses will be combined, and you will receive one payment. If your direct deposit information has changed, please let us know and the event planning team will send you a new form.

MOCA Fee Waiver

After promotion to Associate Examiner and one year of satisfactory service, examiners are eligible for a MOCA fee waiver the following year.

CMEs

Examiners may report Category 2 CME credits to the AMA for its Physician Recognition Award. This is provided based on hours of exam administration and preparation. You will receive an email with the amount of Category 2 CME credits earned and can retain it for any continuing education program recognition. Note that Category 2 CME credits may not be applied toward your MOCA requirements.