COVID-19 Impact on Licensing and Certification

As health professionals are increasingly called upon to address the impact of COVID-19 in their communities and patient populations, state medical and specialty boards have taken measures to ease licensing and certification pressures.

Many states have responded to the COVID-19 crisis by altering licensure requirements, granting Emergency Temporary Licenses, and extending license expiration dates. The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) has summarized these measures: The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) has summarized these measures in a comprehensive chart. As always, the ACS encourages members to continue to check directly with their licensing board for additional COVID-19 updates. In addition, the FSMB has posted a list of states that are expediting licensure for retired and inactive physicians.

Similarly, several specialty boards have responded by canceling meetings and certification exams. The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) has issued a Statement to Designated Institutional Officials Regarding Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The ACS suggests diplomates visit the websites of their individual certifying boards for specific information.

- The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery
- The American Board of Neurological Surgery
- The American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology
- The American Board of Ophthalmology
- The American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery
- The American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery
- The American Board of Plastic Surgery
- The American Board of Surgery
- The American Board of Thoracic Surgery
- The American Board of Urology

American Osteopathic Association (AOA) member boards have also adjusted and have cancelled their meetings and examinations, in some cases. The AOA has created a website listing the status of events, meetings and certifying exams: American Osteopathic Association - Status of Events, Meetings, and Certifying Exams.

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) has postponed the Royal College examinations, provided provisional licensing for residents, extended its deadline for annual dues, and waived MOC Program Requirements for 2020.
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