

**American Osteopathic Conjoint Sports Medicine  
Examination Committee**

**Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ)/Subspecialty  
Certification in Sports Medicine**

**2018 Applicant Handbook for  
Initial Certification and OCC Examinations**

**Participating Organizations**

American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine  
American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians  
American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine  
American Osteopathic Board of Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine  
American Osteopathic Board of Pediatrics  
American Osteopathic Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Established 1992

**Affiliated Organizations**

American Osteopathic Association

Revised November 2017

**AOCSMEC**

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## Introduction

The examination for Subspecialty Certification/Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) in Sports Medicine is developed by the American Osteopathic Conjoint Sports Medicine Examination Committee consisting of participating osteopathic specialty boards and the American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine. A representative from each participating organization serves on the committee.

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This application and examination process is designed to recognize excellence among those who provide care to persons who participate in athletics or exercise programs. The examination evaluates an understanding of the scientific basis of the problems involved in Sports Medicine, the familiarity with the current advances in Sports Medicine, the possession of sound judgment and of a high degree of skill in the diagnostic and therapeutic procedures involved in the practice of Sports Medicine.

## Definition of Sports Medicine

Sports Medicine is a branch of the healing arts profession that utilizes a holistic, comprehensive team approach to the prevention, diagnosis, and adequate management of sports and exercise-related injuries, disorders, dysfunctions and exercise-related disease processes.

The specialty of Sports Medicine consists of the following:

- ) The comprehensive medical management of the athlete which requires an understanding across a broad scope of specializations.
- ) An understanding of performance aids, coaching techniques and training skills.
- ) The science of injury prevention and recognition, advanced rehabilitation techniques and epidemiology.

- J The application of wellness through cardiovascular training of the general public as well as athletes with disability.
- J The application of sports science in improving the health care of athletes.
- J The recognition of the special medical problems of athletes.
- J The application of osteopathic principles to athletes.
- J The term athlete refers to an individual who is engaged in sports, exercise or physical activity at the recreational, competitive, industrial, professional or elite level.

### **Eligibility Guidelines**

The requirements include approved training. Applicants must meet the following minimum requirements:

- J The applicant must hold primary certification awarded by an AOA specialty board.
- J The applicant must hold an active license to practice medicine in a state of the United States. Applicants not holding an active license at the time of application will not be admitted to the examination.
- J The applicant must conform to the ethical and moral standards as set forth in the Code of Ethics of the AOA.
- J The applicant must satisfactorily complete a one (1) year AOA or ACGME-approved fellowship training in sports medicine evidenced by a copy of a sports medicine certificate and letter of recommendation from the program director. Eligibility for examination will have duration of six years from the date of completion of the fellowship training.

NOTE: Sports Medicine fellows may take the exam prior to the completion of their training but must have completed 9 months (sometimes an exception is made for 7 or 8 months due to early offering of exam) of their fellowship program and must submit a program director's report. The fellow will be required to sign a waiver attesting to the fact that exam scores will not be released until he or she has submitted all required training documentation, has successfully completed the fellowship program and has been approved by all involved agencies.

- J Individuals who are more than 3 years out of fellowship must submit AOA CME Activity Reports for documenting completion of required 120 CME hours for the previous three years, including 50 Sports Medicine hours.

### **Exam Date**

Both the certification and Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) examinations will be offered in conjunction with the AOASM Annual Clinical Conference at Renaissance Columbus Downtown Hotel, Columbus, OH on Tuesday, May 1, 2018.

### **Fees and Deadlines**

The examination fee of \$800 is required at the time of application. The initial application deadline is February 9, 2018. A late fee of \$100 will be required for all applications submitted between February 10, 2018 and March 9, 2018.

No application materials will be accepted after March 23, 2018.

Fees may be paid online at [www.aoesm.org](http://www.aoesm.org) or to American Osteopathic Association, AOA Certifying Board Services, 142 E Ontario St, 4th Floor, Chicago, IL 60611-2864.

### **Cancellations**

All cancellations must be made in writing. Exam fees will be refunded if cancellation is received by April 10, 2018 less a \$100 administrative fee.

### **Examination Format**

The initial Sports Medicine Subspecialty Certification/Certification of Added Qualifications examination is composed of 200 multiple-choice type questions.

The Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) Examination contains 100 questions.

### **Examination Subject Areas**

The following is a distribution of subjects on the Sports Medicine Subspecialty Certification and Recertification examinations.

#### **Basic Science – 13- 17%**

- A. Anatomy
- B. Physiology
- C. Pharmacology
- D. Nutrition

#### **Diagnostics – 28-32%**

- A. History
- B. X-Ray & lab
- C. Performance
- D. Consultation

#### **Medical Issues – 8-12%**

- A. Management of medical issues
- B. Chronic diseases
- C. Special Needs athletes

#### **Injury Management/Prevention – 18-22%**

- A. On-site immediate acute care
- B. Post event care
- C. Sports knowledge, sports rules
- D. Protective equipment

#### **Treatment – 23-27%**

- A. Pharmacological
- B. OMT
- C. Rehab modalities (acute and re-injury prevention)
- D. Psychological

## **Study Materials**

Candidates should prepare for the examination using means they are comfortable and familiar with. Although the AOCSMEC neither provides nor endorses any preparatory guides, study methods or review courses to aid applicants in studying to take the certification or Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) examinations, extensive self-study of Sports Medicine in texts; journals; participation in continuing medical education program and review courses in Sports Medicine can be useful. However, there is, of course, no guarantee that any given preparation will ensure a passing grade on the examination.

## **After You Take Your Exam**

Passing candidates will receive exam results in writing within 90 days of taking their exam. No exam results will be given over the phone. Candidates who pass their exams will be forwarded to the AOA Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists which makes the final determination for diplomate status. Once approved, diplomates will receive a certificate from their respective primary specialty board. The date shown on the certificate will reflect the date on which all requirements for accreditation were fulfilled by the diplomate and verified as such by their primary specialty board.

Candidates who do not pass their exam may apply for reexamination at the next available examination administration. You will be required to complete another application and submit payment in the amount of \$800.

## **Subspecialty/CAQ Certification Period**

All Sports Medicine certificates granted after 1994 expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) year after certification was conferred. Lifetime certificates issued prior to 1994 remain valid.

## **Appeals Policy**

The American Osteopathic Conjoint Sports Medicine Examination Committee (AOCSMEC) is committed to assuring that aggrieved candidates for certification have access to an appeal process to address concerns regarding all certification and recertification examinations and other decisions of the AOCSMEC. In accordance with the policies of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), candidates for certification may appeal decisions of the AOCSMEC to the AOA Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists (BOS). Thereafter, where necessary, candidates may appeal the decision of the BOS to the Board of Trustees. Before pursuing an appeal with the AOA, candidates for certification/ recertification from the AOCSMEC, shall first appeal decisions related to any examination to the AOCSMEC as set forth in the following policy.

### **I. Scope of Appeal**

- A. Appealable Issues. Candidates may appeal to the AOCSMEC to raise concerns relative to the examination's administration (i.e., alleged bias/prejudice/unfairness of the exam or of a member of an examination team or failure to follow established examination procedures).
- B. Non-Appealable Issues. The AOCSMEC will not consider appeals based on examination content, sufficiency or accuracy of answers given to examination questions, scoring of the examination, scoring of answers to individual questions, and/or the determination of the minimum passing score.

### **II. Procedure for Appeal**

A. Appeal Request. In order to file an appeal concerning the examination, a candidate must set forth the basis for his/her appeal in writing within two hours after he/she has completed the examination. Appeals must include the following:

- Name, address and email address of examinee
- Date and location of exam
- Details outlining the reason for the appeal
- Examinee signature and date

Submit appeals to the exam proctor or staff member at the exam or to the AOESM, 142 E. Ontario Street, Chicago, IL 60611. Fax: (312) 202-8382. Email: [sportsmedicine@osteopathic.org](mailto:sportsmedicine@osteopathic.org)

B. Late Appeals. All appeals submitted after the two hours following the exam will be denied.

C. Evaluation of Appeal. Each appeal submitted as required will be reviewed by the AOCSMEC. A majority vote of the Committee will determine whether the AOCSMEC accepts or denies the appeal.

A. Notification of Candidates. Candidates will be advised by the AOCSMEC of the decision within 10 working days by certified mail.

### III. Effect of Decision.

#### A. Decision to Accept Appeal.

- i. No Scoring or Recording of Exam. If the Committee accepts an appeal, then the candidate's examination will not be scored and recorded.
- ii. Right to Retake Examination. A candidate whose appeal is accepted shall have the right to a new examination at the next scheduled examination date at no additional application or examination fee. (All other fees incurred are the responsibility of the candidate.) At that time, the examination will be conducted by a different examination team. The candidate's original log may be utilized and the examination will be conducted in accordance with the format for the current examination.
- iii. Failure to Retake Examination. If for any reason the candidate elects NOT to retake the examination at the next scheduled date, his/her appeal shall be considered null and void and the candidate will be required to reapply for the certification/recertification examination and his/her application shall be considered in accordance with the criteria in effect at the time he/she submits the new application. Exceptions (for good cause) to this stipulation will be considered on an individual basis by the Committee.
- iv. Further Appeals.
  1. Current Examination. The candidate whose initial appeal is accepted by the committee shall not have the right to further appeal of the

current examination results, either within the AOCSMEC or to the AOA.

2. Subsequent Examination. The candidate whose initial appeal is accepted shall not have the right to appeal the next scheduled examination to the AOCSMEC under this Policy. However, the candidate shall have the right to appeal to the AOA.

- B. Decision to Deny Appeal. If the initial appeal is denied by the AOCSMEC, the candidate shall have the right to appeal (within 30 days) to the AOA. Candidates interested in appealing to the AOA should contact the Department of Certification, American Osteopathic Association, at 142 East Ontario St., Chicago, IL 60611.

### **Special Accommodations**

The American Osteopathic Conjoint Sports Medicine Examination Committee is committed to a policy of compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations. The AOCSMEC, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Acts (ADA), has adopted the following policy. Physicians who are eligible for examination may submit an application for accommodation of a disability by using an application form approved by the Committee.

### **Definition of Disability**

Under the ADA, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the individual. An individual is not substantially limited in a major life activity if the limitation does not amount to a significant restriction when compared to the abilities of the average person.

### **Policy Statement**

All qualified candidates for board certification who suffer from a disability that, as defined in the ADA, may apply to a certifying board for accommodation of that disability. The AOCSMEC shall have the discretionary authority, subject to review by the BOS Appeals Committee and the AOA Board of Trustees, to determine if an accommodation is appropriate.

### **Procedure for Applying for Accommodation of Disability**

1. Requests for accommodation of a disability must be submitted in writing to the AOCSMEC at least ninety (90) days prior to the examination date. The request must be supported by appropriate documentation of the diagnosis of disability and the need for accommodation, including the evaluation of the candidate by a qualified professional (see documentation requirements below).
2. Requests for accommodation must be complete and submitted on time. The AOCSMEC will not delay scheduled administrations of examinations due to a candidate's failure to submit a complete application.
3. The AOCSMEC must complete its review of requests for accommodation in a timely fashion and advise the candidate within thirty (30) days of its receipt of a request for accommodation: (a) the requested accommodation will be granted, (b) the requested

accommodation will be granted in part; (c) additional information is required; or (d) the requested accommodation will be denied.

4. The AOCSMEC may request additional information, including requiring an applicant to secure a second opinion from an outside expert or submitting the applicant's documentation to an outside expert. The cost of review by an outside expert will be paid by the AOCSMEC.
5. In general, reapplication for special accommodation is not required for each examination administration. However, applicants seeking accommodation of a new disability or a different accommodation of the same disability must submit new applications.

### **Documentation Requirements**

Requirements for accommodation must be supported by appropriate documentation of the disability and the need for the requested accommodation. At a minimum, the application should provide the conjoint committee with the following information and documentation, which is to be prepared and furnished at the applicant's expense:

- ) Identification of the disability
- ) Identification of the requested accommodation(s) for each identified disability
- ) The name and current contact information (address, telephone number, email address) of each professional providing a report(s) in support of the disability and/or requested accommodation
- ) A verification and authorization form signed by the certification candidate
- ) An education and examination history, including the following information:
  - a) the name, location and dates of attendance for all schools the candidate attended from elementary school to the present,
  - b) identify the schools which provided accommodations for the disability in examination settings and the nature of accommodations made for the disability,
  - c) identify standardized tests completed in the course of the candidate's education (e.g., ACT, SAT, MCAT, COMLEX/NBOME);
  - d) for each test identified, candidate to indicate whether he/she received an accommodation for the stated disability and identify the nature of the accommodation;
  - e) if the candidate sought an accommodation that has been denied, please explain the circumstances involved. If the candidate has never received an accommodation, please provide a detailed explanation as part of the neuropsychological evaluation discussed below concerning the reasons no accommodation was given in the past and the reason one is needed now.
- ) For candidates seeking accommodation of a learning disability, a comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation report. The report should be issued by a qualified professional (psychiatrist or licensed psychologist) who regularly practices neuropsychology. The report must be based upon examination of the applicant within the last five years. The report must be written on, or accompanied by a letter written on, the evaluating professional's letterhead. The requisite elements of a comprehensive evaluation are an intelligence test, an assessment of neuropsychological functions, an academic achievement test and psychiatric/psychological history. For candidates seeking accommodations on the basis of attention deficit disorder or hyperactivity disorder, the evaluation must include a behavioral

index. The requirements for the neuropsychosocial report are identified and described in greater detail below.

### **Evaluation of Accommodation Requests**

The AOCSMEC will review requests for accommodation upon receipt of the information identified above. The review process will attempt to determine:

- a) if a candidate is disabled and the nature of a disability
- b) whether the disability interferes with the candidate's ability to take the certifying examinations,
- c) whether the requested accommodation is necessary to allow the candidate to take the examinations,
- d) whether a different accommodation would better serve the purpose of the certifying exam while still allowing the candidate to take the examination.

Answers to these questions may not be clear from the documentation presented. Therefore, the conjoint committee may request an opinion from an outside expert and either send the documentation submitted by the candidate to the expert for review or ask the candidate to be examined by an outside expert. Cost of consultation with an outside expert will be paid by the AOCSMEC.

Based on the review of all documentation, the AOCSMEC may decide to:

- a) grant a request for accommodation,
- b) grant a request for accommodation that is different than the requested accommodation,
- c) deny the request for accommodation. The AOCSMEC will notify the candidate in writing of its decision.

If the AOCSMEC decides to not grant a requested accommodation because a requested accommodation is a fundamental alteration or an undue burden, the Committee shall notify the candidate of any alternative methods of accommodation suggested by the expert which are acceptable to it or, if no such alternatives have been suggested, the AOCSMEC shall inform the candidate and invite the candidate to suggest alternative accommodations.

### **Appeals**

If a request for accommodation has not been granted, a candidate may request that the Committee reconsider its decision or appeal the Committee's decision to the Appeal Committee of the Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists. Any appeal must be submitted to the secretary of the BOS at 142 East Ontario St., Chicago, IL 60611 within sixty (60) days of the date of the AOCSMEC written decision concerning the request for accommodation.

### **Procedures for Examination Administration**

Where possible, examinations for disabled persons will be proctored and will be given on the same day as other examinations. The location of the examination administration will be determined by the Committee on the basis of feasibility of providing necessary services and convenience to the candidate. Where appropriate, to reduce the effect of the candidate's disability on his or her performance on the examination, the following accommodations may be provided:

- a) disabled persons may be tested separately
- b) disabled persons may be given assistance in reading or recording answers

- c) auxiliary aids and services can be offered, but only if they do not fundamentally alter the measurement of skills or knowledge the examination is intended to test and they would not result in an undue burden to the Committee; and/or
- d) time extensions may be granted to accommodate disabled candidates. Other accommodations will be made upon presentation of appropriate information and documentation supporting the requested documentation.

### **Required Elements of the Neuropsychosocial Report**

1. Intelligence Tests: The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised is mandatory. The report may include other estimates of verbal and nonverbal intelligence deemed appropriate by the professional preparing the report, such as Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Raven's Progressive Matrices or Leiter International.
2. Assessment of Neuropsychological Functions, including:
  - a) a complete integrated neuropsychological battery, such as the Halstead-Reitan Neuropsychological Battery or the Luria Nebraska Neuropsychological Battery;
  - b) memory assessments that utilize an age-normed, standardized instrument assessing both verbal and nonverbal memory such as the Wechsler Memory Scale-Revised; and
  - c) assessments of the specific cognitive and perceptual processes affected by the disability. Examples: in cases of auditory-verbal learning disabilities, include specific tests of phonemic processing. In cases of attention deficit disorder, include specific tests of sustained attentional resources, such as the Continuous Performance Test.
3. Academic Achievement Test Results: Standardized, comprehensive academic achievement test, appropriately normed for the candidate's age group, including assessment of spelling, arithmetic and reading comprehension.
4. Psychological/Psychiatric History, including
  - a) standardized psychometric assessment of personality and emotional functioning (MMPI-2 or MCMI-II);
  - b) standard diagnostic interview for presence of current psychiatric disorders; and
  - c) if the candidate has undergone treatment for a psychological or psychiatric condition within the past three years, provide a report, including diagnosis, from the treating mental health professional.

Behavioral Indices (required only for candidates seeking accommodations on the basis of attention deficit disorder or hyperactivity disorder) using standardized psychometric assessments of behavioral indices of attention deficit disorder, such as the Wender Scales or the Achenbach Scale. The professional's report should address all appropriate elements relevant to the request for accommodation of disability. With respect to each element, the report should include the name of each test administered, its date, a description of the candidate's performance in each of the areas of the test battery, a summary of test scores, and a complete diagnostic formulation in standard DSM-IV terminology utilizing all diagnostic axes. Diagnostic formulations should integrate current testing findings with academic and psychiatric histories. Raw test data should be available upon request.

## **Maintaining Your Sports Medicine Certification**

In order to maintain active certification, physicians must complete a minimum of 120 hours of approved and documented AOA Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits during every three (3) year cycle after their board certification. At least fifty (50) of these CME credits must be in approved Sports Medicine courses. CME hours that would count towards this requirement may be obtained from the following:

- ) AOASM-sponsored programs.
- ) AMSSM-sponsored programs.
- ) ACSM Team Physician Course.
- ) AAFP or ACOFP Sports Medicine course.
- ) Presenting Sports Medicine lectures at state or national conferences; a maximum of 3 hours per lecture (for speaking and preparation) will be awarded by the Committee with a maximum total of 9 hours for 3 lectures. Original documentation required would be confirmation from the sponsoring organization or a program schedule with date and location noting you as a speaker along with the lecture title.
- ) Sports Medicine preceptor hours; up to a maximum of 10 hours given by the Committee (1 hour given for every 5 hours recorded on the AOA activity report, up to a maximum of 50 recorded hours). Original documentation from an institution confirming these hours would be necessary, as the Activity Report does not classify preceptor hours by specialty area.
- ) Home study hours in Sports Medicine, including self-testing quizzes, up to a maximum of 5 hours.
- ) Attendance at AOA or ACGME University or hospital-based CME program in Sports Medicine recognized by the AOA CME Activity Report; original documentation from sponsor would be necessary if not clearly defined on Activity Report.

Diplomates who hold a subspecialty certification must maintain their primary board certification. If the member fails to maintain primary certification, the subspecialty certification will no longer be valid. In order to reinstate the primary certificate and the subspecialty certification, the diplomate must take and pass the Primary Board Certification Examination as well as the subspecialty examination. Primary Board Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) must be achieved prior to retaking the subspecialty exam.

The AOCSMEC shall have the power to recommend to the AOA BOS the revocation of the Subspecialty Certification of any diplomate whose certificate was obtained by fraud or misrepresentation, who exploits the certificate, violates the AOA Code of Ethics, or is otherwise disqualified.

## **Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC)**

Each specialty certifying board developed OCC requirements implemented as of Jan. 1, 2013. Diplomates that hold a time-limited certificate are required to participate in the four components of the OCC process in order to maintain your osteopathic board certification.

### COMPONENT 1 - Active Licensure

Requires that physicians who are board-certified by the AOA hold an active license to practice medicine in one of the 50 states. In addition, these physicians are required to adhere to the AOA's Code of Ethics.

#### COMPONENT 2 - Lifelong Learning/Continuing Medical Education

Consistent with your current commitment to lifelong learning, this component requires that all recertifying physicians fulfill a minimum of 120 hours of CME credit during each three-year CME cycle. For Sports Medicine Subspecialty Certification, at least fifty (50) of these CME credits must be in approved Sports Medicine courses. (See the bottom of page 12 for sources for Sports Medicine CME.)

#### COMPONENT 3 - Cognitive Assessment

Every ten (10) years, board-certified physicians with a time-limited certificate must pass the relevant Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) examination. Eligibility for the Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) examination is contingent upon having completed the other 4 components of OCC.

#### COMPONENT 4 - Practice Performance Assessment and Improvement

Diplomates are required to engage in one (1) continuous quality improvement project through comparison of personal practice performance measured against national standards for your medical specialty. Completion of the AOA certification board attestation form will satisfy this requirement. You may find this form here: <https://physicianportal.osteopathic.org/Account/Login>.