

**Date of Last Update:** 1 August 2020

**Topic:** How to Become Board Certified Through the American Board of General Dentistry

**Background:**

- General dentists may seek board certification through the [American Board of General Dentistry](#) (ABGD).
  - Board certification through the ABGD recognizes great knowledge and accomplishment in the complex area of general dentistry.
- To become board certified in general dentistry, the candidate must pass a written and an oral examination.
- There are three different entry points to qualify for application to be considered educationally qualified for the examination process through the ABGD.
  - Successful completion of a 2-year accredited AEGD or GPR
  - Successful completion of a 1-year accredited AEGD or GPR + 600 CDE hours
    - \* CDE will require documentation of minimum hours required in each subject area and 200 hours in participation courses
  - Mastership in the Academy of General Dentistry
- Once determined educationally qualified, the candidate may apply for the written examination. The written examination is offered twice a year and is a 6-hour exam consisting of 300 multiple choice questions.
- Once the candidate has successfully challenged the written examination, the candidate may apply for the oral examination. The oral examination is offered once a year and focuses on case diagnosis and treatment planning. A candidate must pass the oral examination within five years of achieving the board eligible status upon passing the written examination.

**Benefits and Career Opportunities:**

- Board certification through the ABGD is a prestigious recognition of extensive knowledge in comprehensive dental care, validating the dentist's knowledge, skill and experience for diagnosis and delivery of quality patient care.
- There are multiple opportunities in the USPHS where you may apply your new knowledge - e.g. clinical director of a program, participation in credentials and accreditation committees, hospital privileges for advanced care, clinical faculty/education role in academic environments, program director of a GPR/AEGD residency, clinical quality improvement programs
- As a board certified general dentist you can continue in the clinical track while pursuing projects and leadership roles that improve oral health in the community
- Board certified general dentists qualify for the [Comprehensive Dentistry Retention Bonus Rate](#) and the [Board Certified Incentive Pay](#)