



ECFMG[®] CERTIFICATION 2022

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- **Get updates** on ECFMG Certification and related policies and services.
- **Subscribe** to *The ECFMG[®] Reporter* for important updates on ECFMG Certification and entry into graduate medical education in the United States.
- **Complete** the Application for ECFMG Certification.
- **Submit** your Final Medical Diploma and related documents.
- **Apply** for Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) of the United States Medical Licensing Examination[®] (USMLE[®]).
- **Apply** to Pathways for ECFMG Certification for 2022 Match.
- **Access your information.**
- **Confirm your medical school** meets ECFMG eligibility requirements using the *World Directory of Medical School* (World Directory).

INFORMATION BOOKLET

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About the ECFMG Information Booklet and Application Materials

The ECFMG *Information Booklet* contains detailed information on ECFMG's program of certification. The information contained in this booklet pertains only to the ECFMG certification process and related applications and services.

Applicants for examination must use the applicable edition of the *Information Booklet*. The 2022 *Information Booklet* pertains to eligibility periods in 2022. If your eligibility period extends into 2023 and you test in 2023, you must become familiar with and will be subject to the policies and procedures detailed in the 2023 *Information Booklet*. The 2023 *Information Booklet* is expected to be available in August 2022. See the information on eligibility periods under [Applying for Examination](#) in *The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)* section of this booklet.

The [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#) provides information about the USMLE, a three-step examination for medical licensure in the United States. In the event that information about the USMLE in the ECFMG *Information Booklet* differs from the corresponding information in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*, the information in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* controls.

Required Reading

Applicants for examination are required to read and become familiar with the information contained in and referenced in both the ECFMG *Information Booklet* and the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*. The USMLE *Bulletin of Information* is available on the [USMLE website](#). Exam applicants must also carefully read the detailed instructions for the application for examination. Applicants must also review and be familiar with the [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#).

Staying Up-to-Date

Although current at the time of publication, the information contained in the 2022 *Information Booklet* is subject to change. If changes occur, information will be posted on the ECFMG website. **You are responsible for checking the ECFMG website for updates and changes.**

ECFMG provides important updates on ECFMG Certification and entry into graduate medical education in the United States in its newsletter called *The ECFMG® Reporter* and via Facebook and Twitter. ECFMG encourages applicants to subscribe to [The ECFMG® Reporter](#) and follow ECFMG on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Deadlines – Eastern Time

The *Information Booklet* describes deadlines related to exam applications, scheduling, and other services. Unless otherwise indicated, deadlines are calculated using Eastern Time in the United States.

Privacy

Consistent with ECFMG's Privacy Notice, ECFMG may share the information contained in your application, or that otherwise may become available to ECFMG, with any federal, state or local governmental department or agency, with any hospital, training program or any other organization or individual who, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information. This may include reporting determinations of irregular behavior to the USMLE Committee for Individualized Review, Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, U.S. state and international medical licensing authorities, graduate medical education programs, and to any other organization or individual who, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information. For further information regarding ECFMG's data collection and privacy practices, please refer to our [Privacy Notice](#).

Information and Documents You Provide to ECFMG

The information you provide to ECFMG as part of any application or service request will become a part of your permanent ECFMG record, including the information you provide as part of the process of

obtaining a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number. All correspondence with ECFMG, including e-mails, will become a part of your permanent ECFMG record.

All documents submitted to ECFMG as part of the certification process, including supporting documentation, translations, etc., will become part of your permanent ECFMG record and will not be returned to you. Do not send original documents.

Application/Service Request Processing

ECFMG strives to ensure proper processing of applications for ECFMG Certification and examination, other service requests related to ECFMG Certification and examination, and the information contained in such applications and requests. In the unlikely event that an error occurs in the processing of applications, requests, or associated materials, ECFMG will make reasonable efforts to correct the error, if possible, or permit you either to reapply at no additional fee or to receive a refund. These are the exclusive remedies available to applicants for errors in processing applications and other service requests related to ECFMG Certification, examination, and the other programs described in this booklet.

Please note that ECFMG will not provide services of any kind if doing so would be considered violative of any applicable international, federal, state, or local laws or regulations. Additionally, ECFMG may delay or suspend provision of services while investigating whether the services or surrounding circumstances violate such laws, regulations, or ECFMG's policies and procedures.

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Important Notices

This *Information Booklet* reflects information available and requirements in place at the time of publication (August 11, 2021). International medical graduates pursuing ECFMG Certification should monitor the ECFMG and USMLE websites frequently for the most current information.

Requirements for ECFMG Certification for 2022 Match

To be eligible for ECFMG Certification, international medical graduates must satisfy a number of requirements, including the medical science examination requirement, the clinical skills requirement, and the communication skills requirement. Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) are the exams currently administered that satisfy the medical science examination requirement.

Prior to its suspension by the USMLE program in early 2020, the former USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) exam satisfied the clinical skills requirement and the communication skills requirement for ECFMG Certification. In response to the suspension and subsequent discontinuation of Step 2 CS by the USMLE program, ECFMG has offered Pathways to allow international medical graduates to meet the clinical skills requirement and the communication skills requirements for ECFMG Certification. ECFMG first offered the Pathways to international medical graduates participating in the 2021 Match and is continuing and expanding the Pathways for international medical graduates participating in the 2022 Match.

Applicants who apply to a Pathway will be required to meet all requirements for that Pathway, which include attaining a satisfactory score on the Occupational English Test (OET) Medicine. Pathway applicants also must meet all other requirements for ECFMG Certification. For detailed information, visit the [Requirements for ECFMG Certification for 2022 Match](#) section of the ECFMG website. Applicants pursuing ECFMG Certification who plan to participate in future Matches should monitor the ECFMG website for information on future requirements.

Important Note: Applicants who have a passing performance on USMLE Step 2 CS that is valid for ECFMG Certification and/or are certified by ECFMG are ineligible for the Pathways. These individuals do not need to pursue the Pathways to meet the requirements for ECFMG Certification or to participate in the 2022 Match.

Important Information for 2021 Pathway Applicants

International medical graduates who submitted an application for Pathways for ECFMG Certification for the 2021 Match should read the [Important Information for 2021 Pathways Applicants](#) available in the Requirements for ECFMG Certification for 2022 Match section of the ECFMG website. The information will help you determine what steps you may need to take if you wish to participate in the 2022 Match.

All International Medical Graduates Pursuing ECFMG Certification Must Meet Current Requirements

All international medical graduates who were not certified by ECFMG as of April 15, 2021 must meet the current requirements for ECFMG Certification, regardless of what the requirements were at the time they initially applied to ECFMG. This means that ECFMG no longer accepts certain former examinations for the purpose of ECFMG Certification and individuals are no longer exempted from the current requirements for Certification. The following former exams are no longer accepted:

- ECFMG Examination;
- Federation Licensing Examination (FLEX);
- Visa Qualifying Examination (VQE);
- Foreign Medical Graduate Examination in the Medical Sciences (FMGEMS);
- NBME Part I and Part II; and
- ECFMG Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA).

This change does **not** impact international medical graduates who already have been certified by ECFMG based on former exams. The Standard ECFMG Certificates of such individuals remain valid.

Special Notes for 2022 in USMLE *Bulletin of Information*

International medical students/graduates applying for USMLE exams should read the Special Notes for 2022 in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*. Noted policy changes include:

- [Changing Step 1 score reporting from a three-digit numeric score to reporting only pass/fail](#)
- [Reducing the allowable number of exam attempts on each Step from six to four](#)

The USMLE program recommends that applicants routinely monitor the [USMLE Announcements page](#) and the [COVID-19 Resource Center](#) available on the USMLE website.

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ECFMG's on-line services and forms for applicants pursuing ECFMG Certification are available on the ECFMG website.

Use [Interactive Web Applications \(IWA\)](#) to:

- Obtain a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number
- Complete the Application for ECFMG Certification, including the notarized *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186)
- Apply for USMLE
- Access your Certification Statement (Form 183) if your medical school prefers to verify student/graduate status via paper form
- Read about *ECFMG's Provision of Performance Data to Medical Schools* and request to withhold your exam results from your medical school
- Access your USMLE scheduling permit (when available)
- Request to extend a USMLE Step 1/Step 2 CK eligibility period

Use [ECFMG Credentials Upload Tool](#) to:

- Submit your final medical diploma and other related documents to meet the medical education credentials requirements

Use [On-line Applicant Status and Information System \(OASIS\)](#) to:

- Check and update your contact information
- Check the status of your medical education credentials
- Check and make a payment to your ECFMG financial account
- Access your USMLE score report (when available)
- Confirm whether you have submitted an Application for ECFMG Certification and have a valid *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) on file

Use [Forms](#) to:

- Change the [name or date of birth in your ECFMG record](#)
- Change your [USMLE Step 1 or Step 2 CK testing region](#)
- Request an [official USMLE transcript](#)
- Request an official [ECFMG CSA History Chart](#)
- Request a [Step 1 or Step 2 CK score recheck](#)
- [Make a payment](#) to your ECFMG Financial Account

Use [e-newsletter subscriptions](#) page to:

- Subscribe/unsubscribe from e-newsletters
- Change the e-mail address you use to subscribe to e-newsletters

Use mail/courier service:

- To submit paper copies of your final medical diploma and other related documents to meet the medical education credentials requirements, if you cannot use the ECFMG Credentials Upload Tool

Mailing Address:

Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)

Attn: Certification Credentials Services

3624 Market St., 4th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 USA

ECFMG will not accept letters or other deliveries that arrive with postage or other fees due.

Do not send original documents. The photocopy of your credential or related document must be 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in). If the document is larger than 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in), you must send a reduced photocopy that is 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in).

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ECFMG Certification

About ECFMG Certification | [Requirements for ECFMG Certification](#) | [Standard ECFMG Certificate](#)

About ECFMG Certification

The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), through its program of certification, assesses whether international medical graduates are ready to enter residency or fellowship programs in the United States that are accredited by the [Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education \(ACGME\)](#). ACGME requires international medical graduates who enter ACGME-accredited programs to be certified by ECFMG.

ECFMG Certification assures directors of ACGME-accredited residency and fellowship programs, and the people of the United States, that international medical graduates have met minimum standards of eligibility to enter such programs. ECFMG Certification does not, however, guarantee that these graduates will be accepted into programs; the number of applicants each year exceeds the number of available positions.

ECFMG Certification is also one of the eligibility requirements for international medical graduates to take Step 3 of the three-step [USMLE](#). Medical licensing authorities in the United States require that international medical graduates be certified by ECFMG, among other requirements, to obtain an unrestricted license to practice medicine.

ECFMG defines an international medical graduate as a physician who received his/her basic medical degree from a medical school located outside the United States and Canada*. Citizens of the United States who have completed their medical education in schools outside the United States and Canada are considered international medical graduates; non-U.S. citizens who have graduated from medical schools in the United States and Canada are not considered international medical graduates.

* The United States and Canada refer to the geographic locations where citizens are issued passports by the governments of either the United States or Canada.

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ECFMG Certification

[About ECFMG Certification](#) | [Requirements for ECFMG Certification](#) | [Standard ECFMG Certificate](#)

Requirements for ECFMG Certification

To be eligible for certification by ECFMG, international medical graduates must meet the following requirements.

Medical School Requirements

The physician's medical school must meet requirements established by ECFMG. Schools that meet all requirements will be listed in the *World Directory of Medical Schools (World Directory)* with an ECFMG note stating that the school meets eligibility requirements for their students and graduates to apply to ECFMG for ECFMG Certification and examination. The ECFMG note also will include the graduation years for which the school meets these requirements. Since ECFMG is a sponsor of the *World Directory*, the ECFMG note is located on the "Sponsor Notes" tab of the medical school listing. **If there is no ECFMG note on the Sponsor Notes tab of your medical school's listing, you are not eligible to apply to ECFMG for ECFMG Certification and examination.** To confirm that your medical school meets ECFMG's requirements, access the *World Directory* at www.wdoms.org.

Important Note: Beginning in 2024 (previously 2023), individuals will be eligible to apply for ECFMG Certification—the first step in the certification process—and take the required examinations if, at the time of application, their medical school is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME). This requirement will be in addition to the requirement that the school must be listed in the *World Directory* with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements. Further details regarding the 2024 Medical School Accreditation Requirement, including eligibility guidelines, are available on the ECFMG website at www.ecfm.org/accreditation. International medical students and graduates interested in ECFMG Certification should continuously monitor this website section for the latest information.

Application for ECFMG Certification

To be eligible for ECFMG Certification, international medical students/graduates must submit an Application for ECFMG Certification, which confirms their intent to pursue ECFMG Certification and their understanding of the purpose of the certification program. The Application for ECFMG Certification consists of an on-line application and the *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186), available via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). Among other things, the Application for ECFMG Certification requires applicants to confirm their identity, contact information, and graduation from or enrollment in a medical school that is listed in the [World Directory](#) with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements. See [Medical School Requirements](#). See [Application for ECFMG Certification](#).

Examination Requirements

To meet the medical science examination requirement for ECFMG Certification, applicants must pass Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE).

To meet the clinical skills requirement and communication skills requirement for ECFMG Certification, applicants must:

- Complete an ECFMG Pathway, which includes attaining a satisfactory score on the Occupational English Test (OET) Medicine, **OR**
- Have a passing performance on the former Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) component of USMLE that is valid for ECFMG Certification.

ECFMG has established time limits and other rules for completing the examinations required for ECFMG Certification. For detailed information, see [Examinations for ECFMG Certification](#).

Medical Education Credential Requirements

The physician's graduation year must be included in the ECFMG note in the medical school's *World Directory* listing. See [Medical School Requirements](#). International medical graduates must have been awarded credit for at least four credit years (academic years for which credit has been given toward completion of the medical curriculum) by a medical school that is listed in the *World Directory* with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements. There are restrictions on credits transferred to the medical school that awards an applicant's medical degree that can be used to meet this requirement. See [ECFMG Policy on Transfer Credits](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*.

Applicants must document the completion of all requirements for, and receipt of, the **final medical diploma**. See the [Reference Guide for Medical Education Credentials](#) on the ECFMG website for the exact title of the final medical diploma you must have earned (and must provide). ECFMG verifies every applicant's medical school diploma with the appropriate officials of the medical school that issued the diploma and requests that the medical school provide the **final medical school transcript**. Verification by ECFMG with the issuing school may also be required for transcripts that are submitted to document transferred credits. See [Medical Education Credentials](#).

Important Note: Submitting falsified or altered documents may result in a finding of irregular behavior and permanent annotation of your ECFMG record. For more information and potential consequences, see [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#).

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Standard ECFMG Certificate

ECFMG issues the Standard ECFMG Certificate to applicants who meet all of the requirements for certification. International medical graduates must also pay any outstanding charges on their ECFMG financial accounts before their certificates are issued. Standard ECFMG Certificates are issued to applicants approximately two weeks after all of these requirements have been met. The date that the Standard ECFMG Certificate is issued is the date an international medical graduate is considered certified by ECFMG. Currently, ECFMG sends the Standard ECFMG Certificate to the applicant's address of record by Federal Express.

The Standard ECFMG Certificate includes:

- The name of the applicant;
- The certificate number;
- The dates that the examination requirements were met;
- The date that the certificate was issued; and
- The valid through date, if applicable. See *Expiration of the ECFMG Certificate Based on a Pathway* below.

Expiration of the ECFMG Certificate Based on a Pathway

If you met the clinical skills requirement and the communication skills requirement for ECFMG Certification through a Pathway, your ECFMG Certificate will include a valid through date and will be valid for applicants to enter U.S. graduate medical education (GME) in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 academic years. Once applicants successfully complete the first year of ACGME-accredited training, the ECFMG Certificate will no longer be subject to expiration for the purpose of entering GME. Information on how an applicant can permanently validate their ECFMG Certificate will be published on the ECFMG website as soon as it is available.

If applicants do not enter an ACGME-accredited training program in the 2021-2022 or 2022-2023 academic year, their ECFMG Certificate will expire for the purpose of entering GME. If applicants wish to enter a GME program in the future, they will be required to meet the clinical skills requirement and communication skills requirement for ECFMG Certification in place at that time in order to revalidate their ECFMG Certificate.

Confirming ECFMG Certification to Third Parties

ECFMG offers the Certification Verification Service (CVS) to provide primary-source confirmation of the ECFMG certification status of international medical graduates. ECFMG will confirm your certification status when a request is received from a U.S. medical licensing authority, residency program director, hospital, or other organization that, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information. For more information, see *Confirming ECFMG Certification to Third Parties* in [Related ECFMG Services](#).

Your ECFMG Record

USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number | [Your Name](#) | [Changing Your Name](#) | [Contact Information](#)

USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number

Before you can submit an Application for ECFMG Certification or apply to ECFMG for an exam, you must obtain a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number. You can obtain a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number via ECFMG's [on-line services](#).

If you fail to provide your name exactly as it appears on your current, unexpired passport, you will be required to submit acceptable documentation, as described in [Changing Your Name](#) in *Your ECFMG Record*, to change the name in your ECFMG record. If ECFMG determines that the biographic information you submit is inaccurate, not complete, or insufficient to assign a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number to you, your request for the USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number will not be processed.

Once ECFMG informs you of your number, you must include it on all communications, applications, medical education credentials, request forms, and payments that you send to ECFMG.

You will only be assigned one USMLE Identification Number. Your USMLE Identification Number cannot be changed. Obtaining or attempting to obtain a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number after one has been assigned to you may result in a finding of irregular behavior. If you forget or lose your USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, you can obtain it via ECFMG's [on-line services](#) or by [contacting ECFMG](#). To protect the privacy of applicants, ECFMG will not provide USMLE/ECFMG Identification Numbers by telephone.

Important Note: As part of the application processes, you will be asked if you previously submitted an Application for ECFMG Certification and/or an application for examination to ECFMG. You also will be asked if you were previously assigned a USMLE Identification Number. If you were previously assigned a USMLE Identification Number or have submitted a prior application to ECFMG, you must answer “Yes” to the applicable question(s), even if you submitted the prior application under a different name or did not take the exam for which you applied. You must answer “Yes” regardless of whether you submitted an on-line application or a paper application. If you were previously assigned a USMLE Identification Number or have submitted an application to ECFMG but indicate that you were not previously assigned a number or have not applied previously, this may result in a finding of irregular behavior and permanent annotation of your ECFMG record. See [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#).

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Your ECFMG Record

[USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number](#) | Your Name | [Changing Your Name](#) | [Contact Information](#)

Your Name

You must ensure that the name in your ECFMG record matches your name exactly as it appears on your current, unexpired passport. The name in your ECFMG record will appear on your Standard ECFMG Certificate once you have met all requirements for certification. You must use this name consistently in all communications you send to ECFMG, including applications and requests for other services. Failure to use the name in your ECFMG record consistently in all communications with ECFMG may delay exam registration. It may also prevent you from taking an exam for which you are registered and scheduled.

You can check the name in your ECFMG record via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). If the name in your ECFMG record does not match your name exactly as it appears on your passport, you must follow ECFMG's established process to request a **change** of name in your ECFMG record. See [Changing Your Name](#) in *Your ECFMG Record*.

- The name in your ECFMG record will appear on your exam **scheduling permit**. Your name, as it appears on your scheduling permit, must exactly match the name on the form(s) of **identification** you present at the test center. Please review your scheduling permit for details and limited exceptions. See information on required identification under [Taking the Examination](#) in *The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)*.
- If the name on your **scheduling permit** has been misspelled, [contact ECFMG](#) immediately by e-mail, telephone, or fax. Use the contact information for General Inquiries on the Contact ECFMG page of the ECFMG website.
- If you change the name in your ECFMG record while you are registered for an exam, a revised scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. ECFMG will send your revised scheduling permit via e-mail. You must present the revised scheduling permit at the test center on your exam date. Name changes must be received **and processed** by ECFMG no later than seven business days before your testing appointment, or you will not be able to test.
- If you have a valid *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) on file with ECFMG, it will be invalidated when the name in your ECFMG record is changed, and you will be required to complete a new *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) before you may apply for examination.
- If the name on your **medical diploma, transcript, or other credential** does not match **exactly** the name in your **ECFMG record**, you must submit documentation, as described in [Verifying Your Name](#) in *Medical Education Credentials* that **verifies** the name on your medical diploma, transcript, or other credential is (or was) your name.

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Your ECFMG Record

[USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number](#) | [Your Name](#) | Changing Your Name | [Contact Information](#)

Changing Your Name

If the name in your ECFMG record does not match your name exactly as it appears on your current, unexpired passport, you must follow ECFMG's established process to request a **change** of name in your ECFMG record. You will be required to provide a reason for the name change, as well as supporting documentation. Additional information and instructions are provided with the [form](#).

Important Notes: If you change the name in your ECFMG record while you are registered for an exam, a revised scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. ECFMG will send your revised scheduling permit via e-mail. You must present the revised scheduling permit at the test center on your exam date. Name changes must be received **and processed** by ECFMG no later than seven business days before your testing appointment, or you will not be able to test.

If you have a valid *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) on file with ECFMG, it will be invalidated when the name in your ECFMG record is changed, and you will be required to complete a new *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) before you may apply for examination.

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Your ECFMG Record

[USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number](#) | [Your Name](#) | [Changing Your Name](#) | Contact Information

Contact Information

The contact information in your ECFMG record consists of your e-mail address, your address of residence, and your phone number. ECFMG will use your address of residence as your mailing address. Certain ECFMG correspondence, including your Standard ECFMG Certificate, requires a full mailing address.

You should ensure that the contact information in your ECFMG record is current. You can check and update your contact information via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). You cannot submit changes to your contact information to ECFMG by e-mail. ECFMG will not process changes to contact information received from any person other than the applicant.

Changing your e-mail address in your ECFMG record does not update your e-mail address in your e-newsletter subscription(s). You can change your e-newsletter subscription preferences via the [ECFMG website](#).

To protect the privacy of applicants, ECFMG will e-mail applicant-specific information only to the e-mail address in the applicant's ECFMG record. If your e-mail inquiry requires a specific response, you must send your inquiry from the e-mail address in your ECFMG record.

For further information regarding ECFMG's data collection and privacy practices, please refer to our [Privacy Notice](#).

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Your ECFMG Financial Account

You can access your ECFMG financial account via ECFMG's [on-line services](#).

For a list of fees for ECFMG services that applicants encounter most frequently while pursuing ECFMG Certification and entry into U.S. programs of graduate medical education, see the [Fees and Payment](#) section of the ECFMG website. You should also read and become familiar with the information on payment, acceptable methods of payment, refunds, and forfeiture of funds in that section.

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Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior

A. Policies Regarding Irregular Behavior

1. *Irregular behavior* includes all actions or attempted actions on the part of applicants, examinees, potential applicants, others when solicited by an applicant and/or examinee, or any other person that would or could subvert the examination, certification or other processes, programs, or services of ECFMG, including, but not limited to, the ECFMG Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program, ECFMG International Credentials Services (EICS), the Electronic Portfolio of International Credentials (EPIC), and Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) Support Services at ECFMG. Such actions or attempted actions are considered irregular behavior, regardless of when the irregular behavior occurs, and regardless of whether the individual is certified by ECFMG. Examples of irregular behavior include, but are not limited to, submission of any falsified or altered document to ECFMG, whether submitted by the individual or by a third party, such as a medical school, on behalf of the individual; failing to comply with United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) or ECFMG policies, procedures, and/or rules; falsification of information on applications, submissions, or other materials to ECFMG; taking an examination when not eligible to do so, or submission of any falsified or altered ECFMG document to other entities or individuals.

2. The Medical Education Credentials Committee's determination of irregular behavior is sufficient cause for ECFMG to bar an individual from future examinations, to bar an individual from other ECFMG programs and services, to withhold and/or invalidate the results of an examination, to withhold an ECFMG Certificate, to revoke an ECFMG Certificate, or to take other appropriate actions for a specified period of time or permanently. ECFMG may report the Medical Education Credentials Committee's determination of irregular behavior to the USMLE Committee for Individualized Review, Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, U.S. state and international medical licensing authorities, graduate medical education programs, and to any other organization or individual who, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information.

3. If the Medical Education Credentials Committee determines that an individual engaged in irregular behavior, a permanent annotation to that effect will be included in the individual's ECFMG record. This annotation will appear on the ECFMG Certification Verification Service (CVS) and ECFMG Status Reports for the individual. If the individual has an EPIC Portfolio, a permanent annotation will be included on all EPIC Reports with respect to that individual. Additional information explaining the basis for the determination of irregular behavior and the resulting action(s) will accompany every ECFMG Status Report, CVS Report, and EPIC Report, and may also be provided to legitimately-interested entities; this additional information may be provided, regardless of the date of the conduct or activity that comprises the irregular behavior. Notice of the Medical Education Credentials Committee's determination of irregular behavior is periodically reported to the ECFMG Board of Trustees.

B. Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior

1. After receipt of a report or other information suggesting irregular behavior on the part of an individual, ECFMG staff will review the information and will assess whether there is sufficient evidence of irregular behavior. When indicated and feasible, staff will conduct a follow-up investigation to gather additional information.

2. If the individual is an examinee and the review referenced above will not be concluded until after the typical period for the reporting of exam scores, the examinee will be notified that the reporting of the exam scores in question is being delayed.

3. If ECFMG staff finds that there exists a reasonable basis to conclude that an individual may have engaged in irregular behavior, the matter will be referred to the Medical Education Credentials Committee. ECFMG may withhold services from the individual pending a determination from the Medical Education Credentials Committee. If the individual is an examinee, the examinee's exam scores will be withheld, if not already released, and the examinee may not be permitted to sit for subsequent examinations, nor will applications for examination be processed.

4. Using the individual's last known address, the individual will be advised in writing of the nature of the alleged irregular behavior and will be provided with a copy of the *Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior*. If the alleged irregular behavior is related to a shared ECFMG and USMLE policy, the USMLE Program will also be advised of the allegation. The individual will be given an opportunity to provide written explanation and to present other relevant information. Any such written explanation or other relevant information must be received by ECFMG by the deadline set forth in ECFMG's writing to the individual. Submissions received after the deadline will be considered by the Medical Education Credentials Committee at its discretion. The individual may also request the opportunity to appear personally before the Medical Education Credentials Committee, and may be represented by legal counsel, if the individual so wishes. In instances in which the individual appears personally before the Medical Education Credentials Committee, a stenographic or audio recording will be made of that portion of the proceedings during which the individual is in attendance. Any statements made by the individual during a personal appearance before the Medical Education Credentials Committee will be under oath.

5. Individuals who have been charged with irregular behavior who wish to request a deferral of the ECFMG Committee's review of the allegation must (1) submit the request in writing and (2) provide the reason for the request. If ECFMG staff determine that the granting of the request could have a material impact on the individual's opportunity to refute the allegation then staff, at its discretion, can grant the request and defer an ECFMG action for up to six (6) months. Unless the individual can demonstrate compelling circumstances, ECFMG staff should not grant more than two deferral requests. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the individual charged with irregular behavior is ECFMG Certified, a candidate for residency, or practicing medicine, ECFMG staff will only grant the request for deferral if, in its sole discretion, ECFMG believes that public health and safety is not at risk. If the deferral request is granted, ECFMG will notify appropriate institutions and authorities of the individual's pending irregular behavior charge.

6. All pertinent information regarding the irregular behavior, including any explanation or other information that the individual may provide, will be provided to the Medical Education Credentials Committee. The Medical Education Credentials Committee, based on the information available to it, will determine whether the preponderance of the evidence indicates that the individual engaged in irregular behavior. If the Medical Education Credentials Committee determines that the individual engaged in irregular behavior, the Medical Education Credentials Committee will determine what action(s) will be taken as a result of the irregular behavior. ECFMG will notify the individual whether the Medical Education Credentials Committee determined the individual engaged in irregular behavior and of any action(s) taken pursuant thereto.

7. The Medical Education Credentials Committee's determination of irregular behavior and any action(s) taken pursuant thereto (a "decision" of the Medical Education Credentials Committee) may be appealed to the Review Committee for Appeals if the individual has a reasonable basis to believe the Medical Education Credentials Committee did not act in compliance with the Medical Education Credentials Committee Policies and Procedures or that the Medical Education Credentials Committee's decision was clearly contrary to the weight of the evidence before it. The notice of appeal must be received by ECFMG within thirty (30) days of the date on which the notification advising the individual of the Medical Education Credentials Committee's decision was mailed to the individual. The appeal of a decision of the Medical Education Credentials Committee is governed by ECFMG's Rules of Appellate Procedure.

8. Petitions for reconsideration of a decision of the Medical Education Credentials Committee will be reviewed by the Medical Education Credentials Committee only in extraordinary cases. Any such petition must first be considered by ECFMG staff, who, after discussion with the Medical Education Credentials Committee Chair, may deny the request or place it on the agenda for consideration by the full Medical Education Credentials Committee at a regularly scheduled meeting. Absent the submission of newly discovered material evidence not previously available to the petitioner and, therefore, not available to the Medical Education Credentials Committee, petitions for reconsideration typically will be denied.

C. Representative Examples of Irregular Behavior

Representative examples of allegations of irregular behavior and actions taken by the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Providing false information on an application submitted to ECFMG**

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee reviewed an allegation of irregular behavior in connection with an individual who provided false information on an application submitted to ECFMG as part of the certification process. In that application, the individual certified he was a student enrolled in medical school when, in fact, he previously had been dismissed from medical school and, therefore, was no longer a student.

Following review, the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee determined the individual had engaged in irregular behavior and **took action to bar the individual from ECFMG Certification, thereby rendering the individual ineligible to apply for USMLE examinations leading to ECFMG Certification. A permanent annotation was added to the individual's ECFMG record.**

- **Providing false information to ECFMG as part of the ECFMG On-line Authentication Process, which is a prerequisite to submitting an application for examination**

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee reviewed an allegation of irregular behavior in connection with an individual who provided false information to ECFMG as part of the ECFMG On-line Authentication Process, which is used to obtain a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number and is a prerequisite to submitting an application for examination. During the on-line authentication process, the individual certified he had not previously submitted an application for examination to ECFMG when he had not only previously applied for, but had taken examinations.

Following review, the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee determined the individual had engaged in irregular behavior and **took action to bar the individual from ECFMG Certification, thereby rendering the individual ineligible to apply for USMLE examinations leading to ECFMG Certification. A permanent annotation was added to the individual's ECFMG record.**

- **Submitting a fraudulent medical diploma and providing false information on an application submitted to ECFMG**

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee reviewed an allegation of irregular behavior in connection with an individual who submitted a fraudulent medical diploma and provided false information on an application submitted to ECFMG.

Following review, the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee determined the individual had engaged in irregular behavior and **took action to bar the individual from ECFMG Certification, thereby rendering the individual ineligible to apply for USMLE examinations leading to ECFMG Certification. A permanent annotation was added to the individual's ECFMG record.**

- **Submitting a falsified medical school transcript and providing false information to ECFMG**

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee reviewed an allegation of irregular behavior in connection with an authorized medical school official who submitted a fraudulent medical school transcript and provided false information to ECFMG.

Following review, the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee determined the authorized medical school official had engaged in irregular behavior and **determined that ECFMG will not accept any documents signed and/or certified by the medical school official for ECFMG on behalf of the medical school, or any other medical school, for a minimum of five years. A permanent annotation was added to the medical school official's ECFMG record.**

- **Submitting a falsified passport and providing false information on an application submitted to ECFMG**

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee reviewed an allegation of irregular behavior in connection with an individual who submitted a falsified passport and provided false information on an application submitted to ECFMG.

Following review, the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee determined that the individual had engaged in irregular behavior. **A permanent annotation was added to the individual's ECFMG record.**

Application for ECFMG Certification

To be eligible for ECFMG Certification, you must complete an Application for ECFMG Certification, which confirms your intent to pursue ECFMG Certification and your understanding of the purpose of the certification program. The Application for ECFMG Certification consists of an on-line application and the *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) that must be completed and notarized via NotaryCam. You should read the detailed instructions for the application before you begin working on it. Instructions on how to complete Form 186 using NotaryCam are included with the form. You must have your [USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number](#) before you can begin the Application for ECFMG Certification. For the current fee for submitting an Application for ECFMG Certification, see the [Fees](#) page of the ECFMG website.

As part of the Application for ECFMG Certification, you will be asked to confirm the name, date of birth, and gender in your ECFMG record. If this information does not match exactly the information on your current, unexpired passport, you must have the information in your ECFMG record changed to reflect the information as it appears on your passport before you can complete the Application for ECFMG Certification. Instructions for how to correct this information will be provided at the time of application.

If you are a medical school **student**, you will be asked to confirm that you are officially enrolled in a medical school located outside the United States and Canada that is listed in the [World Directory](#) with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements, and that the “Graduation Years” in the ECFMG note in your medical school's *World Directory* listing are listed as “Current.” If you are a medical school **graduate**, you will be asked to confirm that you are a graduate of a medical school located outside the United States and Canada that is listed in the *World Directory* with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements, and that your graduation year is included in the ECFMG note in your school's *World Directory* listing. See [Medical School Requirements](#).

An Application for ECFMG Certification will not be considered complete until ECFMG receives and processes both the on-line part of the application and the notarized Form 186 from NotaryCam. Once your Application for ECFMG Certification, including Form 186, has been accepted by ECFMG, it typically remains valid throughout the certification process. You can use ECFMG's [on-line services](#) to confirm that you have submitted an Application for ECFMG Certification and have a valid Form 186 on file.

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Examinations for ECFMG Certification

Examination Requirements | [Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements](#)

Examination Requirements

To be eligible for ECFMG Certification, you must satisfy the medical science examination requirement, the clinical skills requirement, and the communication skills requirement. ECFMG has established time limits for completing these requirements for ECFMG Certification. See [Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements](#) in *Examinations for ECFMG Certification*.

Passing performance on certain formerly administered examinations can no longer be used to meet these requirements. See *All IMGs Pursuing ECFMG Certification Must Meet Current Requirements* in the [Important Notices](#) section of this booklet.

Medical Science Examination Requirement

To satisfy the medical science examination requirement for ECFMG Certification, you must pass Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE). Refer to the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#) for more information.

Clinical Skills Requirement and Communication Skills Requirement

Prior to its suspension by the USMLE program in early 2020, the former USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) exam was the exam that satisfied the clinical skills requirement and communication skills requirement for ECFMG Certification. In response to the suspension and subsequent discontinuation of Step 2 CS by the USMLE program, ECFMG has offered Pathways to allow international medical graduates to meet the clinical skills requirement and the communication skills requirement for ECFMG Certification. See [Requirements for ECFMG Certification for 2022 Match](#) on the ECFMG website for detailed information. Applicants pursuing ECFMG Certification who plan to participate in future Matches should monitor the ECFMG website for information on future requirements.

To satisfy the clinical skills requirement and the communication skills requirement for ECFMG Certification, you must:

- Complete an ECFMG Pathway, which includes attaining a satisfactory score on the Occupational English Test (OET) Medicine, **OR**
- Have a passing performance on the former Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) component of USMLE that is valid for ECFMG Certification.

Important Note: Applicants who have a passing performance on USMLE Step 2 CS that is valid for ECFMG Certification and/or are certified by ECFMG are ineligible for the Pathways. These individuals do not need to pursue the Pathways to meet the requirements for ECFMG Certification or to participate in the 2022 Match.

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Examinations for ECFMG Certification

[Examination Requirements](#) | Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements

Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements

ECFMG requires that international medical graduates satisfy the examination requirements for ECFMG Certification within a seven-year period. This means that once you pass an exam, you will have seven years to pass the other exam(s) required for ECFMG Certification. This seven-year period begins on the date of the first exam passed and ends **exactly seven years from that date**.

Important Note: Applicants who satisfy the clinical skills requirement and the communication skills requirement through a Pathway are subject to this seven-year requirement. This means that your Pathways application must be accepted within the seven-year period. If your Pathways application is not accepted within the seven-year period and you have a passing Step 1 and/or Step 2 CK score that becomes invalid for ECFMG Certification as a result, you must contact ECFMG to determine whether your invalid passing performance on Step 1 and/or Step 2 CK meets ECFMG's requirements to be extended.

If you do not satisfy all examination requirements within a maximum of seven years, your earliest USMLE passing performance will no longer be valid for ECFMG Certification. **It is your responsibility to track your progress toward meeting the exam requirements for ECFMG Certification. ECFMG will not notify you of upcoming deadlines to meet the seven-year requirement and will not notify you if one (or more) of your passing performances becomes invalid for ECFMG Certification because you failed to meet the seven-year requirement.**

Examples: An international medical graduate passed Step 1 on January 20, 2015 and Step 2 CS on February 20, 2018. He has through January 20, 2022 to take and pass Step 2 CK to satisfy the remaining exam requirements for ECFMG Certification. If he does not take and pass Step 2 CK on or before January 20, 2022, his passing performance on Step 1 would no longer be valid for ECFMG Certification.

An international medical graduate passed Step 1 on November 30, 2014 and Step 2 CK on March 20, 2018. She has through November 30, 2021 to complete a Pathway to satisfy the remaining clinical skills and communication skills requirements for ECFMG Certification. If she does not complete a Pathway on or before November 30, 2021, her passing performance on Step 1 will no longer be valid for ECFMG Certification.

Under this ECFMG requirement, more than one USMLE passing performance can become invalid for ECFMG Certification.

Example: An international medical graduate passed Step 1 on April 1, 2014, and passed Step 2 CS on May 1, 2015. She had through April 1, 2021 (seven years from her Step 1 passing performance) to pass Step 2 CK, satisfying the remaining exam requirements for ECFMG Certification. She did not pass Step 2 CK by April 1, 2021, so her passing performance on Step 1 is no longer valid for ECFMG Certification. Her earliest USMLE passing performance that is valid for ECFMG Certification is now the Step 2 CS passing performance on May 1, 2015. She now has through May 1, 2022 (seven years from her Step 2 CS passing performance) to pass Step 1 and Step 2 CK, satisfying the remaining exam requirements for ECFMG Certification. If she does not pass Step 1 and Step 2 CK by May 1, 2022, her passing performance on Step 2 CS will no longer be valid for ECFMG Certification.

If you have passed a Step but this passing performance is no longer valid for ECFMG Certification, you may request an exception to retake the previously passed exam that is no longer valid. The USMLE program limits to four the total number of times an examinee can take the same Step. See [Reexamination and Reapplication](#) in *The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)*.

Important Notes: Time limits to complete the USMLE for the purpose of U.S. medical licensure are established by state medical licensing authorities and may require completion of all Steps (including Step 3, which is not required for ECFMG Certification) within a certain number of years. Information regarding specific state requirements can be obtained on the [Federation of State Medical Boards website](#).

Applicants who retake a previously passed Step to comply with a time limit should understand the implications of a failing retake performance on their Step 3 eligibility. See *Retaking Previously Passed Steps* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#).

A passing performance that is no longer valid for ECFMG Certification will still appear on a USMLE transcript.

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Eligibility for Examination

Medical School Students | [Medical School Graduates](#) | [Reverification of Eligibility](#)

The eligibility requirements for examination differ depending on whether you are a medical school **student** or a medical school **graduate**.

Medical School Students

To be eligible for Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK), you must be officially enrolled in a medical school located outside the United States and Canada that is listed in the [World Directory](#) with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements, both at the time that you apply for examination and on your test day. In addition, the “Graduation Years” in the ECFMG note in your medical school's *World Directory* listing must be “Current” at the time you apply and on your test day. See [Medical School Requirements](#). An authorized official of your medical school must certify your current enrollment status; instructions will be provided at the time of application for examination.

As soon as you graduate and receive your medical diploma, you must submit a copy of your medical diploma to ECFMG. See [Final Medical Diploma and Transcript](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*.

In addition to being currently enrolled as described above, to be eligible for Step 1 and Step 2 CK, you must have completed at least two years of medical school. This eligibility requirement means that you must have completed the basic medical science component of the medical school curriculum by the beginning of your eligibility period. Although you may apply for and take the examinations after completing the basic medical science component of your medical school curriculum, it is recommended that you complete your core clinical clerkships, including actual patient contact, before taking Step 2 CK.

Important Notes: If your eligibility for an exam changes after you apply but before you take the exam, you are required to inform ECFMG immediately in writing of this change in your status. Such notification must be sent to ECFMG's Applicant Information Services. Use the contact information for General Inquiries on the [Contact ECFMG](#) page of the ECFMG website. Such changes in your eligibility status include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Medical school students who transfer to another medical school after submitting an application for examination must inform ECFMG immediately in writing of this transfer.
- Medical school students who have been dismissed or withdraw(n) from medical school are not eligible for USMLE, even if they are appealing the school's decision to dismiss them or are otherwise contesting their status. Medical school students who have been dismissed or withdraw(n) from medical school must inform ECFMG immediately in writing of their dismissal or withdrawal.
- Medical school students who take a leave of absence should consult with their medical schools about whether they will be considered officially enrolled in medical school during leave. Your medical school may consider a student on leave of absence to be withdrawn from medical school. Medical school students who are not officially enrolled in medical school are not eligible to apply for or take USMLE. Applicants who take a leave of absence after submitting an application for examination to ECFMG must inform ECFMG immediately in writing of this leave.

Failure to inform ECFMG that you may no longer be eligible to take the examination may result in a finding of irregular behavior and permanent annotation of your ECFMG record. See [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#).

If you take a Step for which you are not eligible, results for that exam may not be reported or, if previously reported, may be canceled.

Eligibility for Examination

[Medical School Students](#) | [Medical School Graduates](#) | [Reverification of Eligibility](#)

The eligibility requirements for examination differ depending on whether you are a medical school **student** or a medical school **graduate**.

Medical School Graduates

To be eligible for Step 1 and Step 2 CK, you must be a graduate of a medical school located outside the United States and Canada that is listed in the [World Directory](#) with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements. Your graduation year must be included in the "Graduation Years" listed in the ECFMG note in your medical school's *World Directory* listing. See [Medical School Requirements](#). You must have been awarded credit for at least four credit years (academic years for which credit has been given toward completion of the medical curriculum) by a medical school that is listed in the *World Directory* with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements. An authorized official of your medical school must certify your status as a graduate of the school; instructions will be provided at the time of application.

You must submit a copy of your medical diploma at the time of exam application if your diploma has not been sent to ECFMG previously. The exact degree title of the final medical diploma you must have earned (and must provide) in order to be eligible for ECFMG Certification and the examinations required for Certification is listed in the [Reference Guide for Medical Education Credentials](#) on the ECFMG website. If you have graduated and met all requirements for your medical diploma but your medical diploma has not yet been issued, a letter signed by an authorized official of your medical school must be submitted with your exam application. The letter you submit must be the original document and must be written on your medical school's letterhead. The letter must include the following statement:

This is to confirm that [applicant name] has graduated and completed all requirements to receive the [degree title] degree from [medical school/university name]. The degree will be issued [month and year].

You must then submit a copy of your medical diploma to ECFMG as soon as your diploma is issued. See [Medical Education Credentials](#).

All documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation that meets ECFMG's translation requirements. See [English Translations](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*.

Important Notes: If your eligibility for an exam changes after you apply but before you take the exam, you are required to inform ECFMG immediately in writing of this change in your status. Such notification must be sent to ECFMG's Applicant Information Services. Use the contact information for General Inquiries on the [Contact ECFMG](#) page of the ECFMG website. **Failure to inform ECFMG that you may no longer be eligible to take the examination may result in a finding of irregular behavior and permanent annotation of your ECFMG record. See [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#).**

If you take a Step for which you are not eligible, results for that exam may not be reported or, if previously reported, may be canceled.

If you have already been granted a physician license by a U.S. medical licensing authority based on other licensure examinations, such as the Federation Licensing Examination (FLEX), the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination, NBME certifying examinations, or the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners COMLEX-USA, you may not be eligible to take the USMLE. Please contact ECFMG if you have questions about your eligibility.

Eligibility for Examination

[Medical School Students](#) | [Medical School Graduates](#) | Reverification of Eligibility

Reverification of Eligibility

ECFMG reserves the right to reverify your eligibility for examination at any time during the application and registration process. If your medical school informs ECFMG that your status has changed, and ECFMG determines you are no longer eligible for examination, your registration will be canceled. **If you have failed to inform ECFMG of this change in your status, it may result in a finding of irregular behavior and permanent annotation of your ECFMG record. See [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#).**

For medical school students, ECFMG may reverify your status as a student officially enrolled in medical school. If reverification is requested by ECFMG, ECFMG may cancel your registration or withhold your score report until ECFMG has received reverification of your status directly from the medical school. If your registration is canceled, you may be required to reapply.

For medical school graduates, ECFMG may reverify your medical education credentials with the issuing medical school. If such reverification is requested by ECFMG, you will be registered for examination only after ECFMG has received reverification of your credentials directly from the medical school. If reverification is requested by ECFMG after you have been registered for examination, ECFMG may cancel your registration or withhold your score report until ECFMG has received reverification of your medical education credentials directly from the issuing school. If your registration is canceled, you may be required to reapply.

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The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)

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About USMLE

The USMLE is a three-step examination for medical licensure in the United States. The USMLE provides a common system to evaluate applicants for medical licensure. The USMLE is sponsored by the [Federation of State Medical Boards \(FSMB\)](#) and the [National Board of Medical Examiners \(NBME\)](#). The USMLE is governed by a committee consisting of representatives of FSMB, NBME, ECFMG, and the American public. If you apply for examination, you are **required** to read the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#) for detailed information on the USMLE.

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The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)

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Registration and Test Delivery Entities

Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK)

ECFMG is the organization that registers international medical students/graduates for Step 1 and Step 2 CK. This means that ECFMG processes your exam application and payment, verifies your eligibility, and notifies you of the outcome of your application. The NBME serves as the registration entity for students/graduates of U.S. and Canadian medical school programs accredited by the [Liaison Committee on Medical Education \(LCME\)](#) and U.S. medical schools accredited by the [Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation \(COCA\)](#).

For eligible international medical students/graduates applying for Step 1/Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK), ECFMG forwards registration information to NBME, and NBME issues the exam scheduling permits. ECFMG sends these applicants their scheduling permits via e-mail. Scheduling and test centers for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK are provided by [Prometric](#). Prometric serves as the test delivery entity for all examinees taking Step 1/Step 2 CK. Step 1 and Step 2 CK are delivered at Prometric test centers worldwide.

For all applicants, NBME is responsible for determining the results of USMLE exams and for issuing the score reports. ECFMG sends an e-mail notification to international medical students/graduates when their Step 1 and Step 2 CK score reports are available.

Step 3

The FSMB is the organization that registers all Step 3 applicants. To be eligible for Step 3, international medical graduates must be certified by ECFMG, among other requirements. See *Eligibility for the USMLE* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#). If you have not met all eligibility requirements, your application for Step 3 will not be accepted. For detailed information and application procedures for Step 3, contact the [FSMB](#). Scheduling and test centers for Step 3 are provided by [Prometric](#), which serves as the test delivery entity for all Step 3 examinees. USMLE Step 3 is delivered at Prometric test centers in the United States.

For all applicants, NBME is responsible for determining the results of USMLE exams and for issuing the score reports. FSMB notifies examinees when their Step 3 score reports are available.

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Applying for Examination

Before applying to ECFMG for examination:

- International medical students/graduates must complete an Application for ECFMG Certification, including the notarized *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186). See [Application for ECFMG Certification](#).
- ECFMG must accept the Application for ECFMG Certification, including the notarized Form 186.
- International medical students/graduates must read the applicable editions of the [ECFMG Information Booklet](#) and the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#).

Important Note: Please note that ECFMG will not provide services of any kind if doing so would be considered violative of any applicable international, federal, state, or local laws or regulations. Additionally, ECFMG may delay or suspend provision of services while investigating whether the services or surrounding circumstances violate such laws, regulations, or ECFMG's policies and procedures.

You can apply for USMLE Step 1 and/or Step 2 CK via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). You should read the detailed instructions for the application for examination before you begin working on the application; these resources will help you plan the timing of your application and outline any necessary items (such as official signatures) that require advance planning.

Important Note: You should also consider deadlines imposed by the [National Resident Matching Program \(NRMP\)](#) and graduate medical education (GME) programs. It is solely the responsibility of the applicant to complete the required exams in time to meet deadlines imposed by the NRMP and/or GME programs. Since the number of applicants seeking to complete these exams may exceed the spaces available in time to meet those deadlines, there is no guarantee that sufficient spaces will be available for all applicants to meet deadlines imposed by the NRMP and/or GME programs. ECFMG assumes no liability of any kind if an applicant does not complete the exams in time to have results available to meet NRMP and/or GME program deadlines. See [Examination Results](#) for information on scoring turnaround times.

Exam Fees

For all exams, there is an examination fee. For Step 1 or Step 2 CK, there is an additional international test delivery surcharge, if you choose a testing region other than the United States/Canada. You must pay all applicable fees at the time you apply for examination. For the current exam fees and international test delivery surcharges, see the [Fees](#) page on the ECFMG website.

Eligibility Periods

When you apply for Step 1 or Step 2 CK, you must select an eligibility period during which you would prefer to take the exam. The eligibility period you are assigned will be listed on your scheduling permit. You must take the exam during the eligibility period assigned to you.

If you are unable to take Step 1/Step 2 CK during the eligibility period assigned to you, you may request a one-time, contiguous eligibility period extension via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). Additional information and instructions are provided with the application.

If you do not take Step 1/Step 2 CK during your original or extended eligibility period or if you are unable to extend your eligibility period, you must reapply by submitting a new application and fee(s), if you wish to take the exam.

Testing Locations

Step 1 and Step 2 CK are delivered at Prometric test centers worldwide. Prometric's test centers are grouped into defined testing regions. When you apply for Step 1 or Step 2 CK, you must choose the testing region where you want to take the exam. A [list of Prometric testing regions](#) is available on the ECFMG website.

You can take the exam at any test center in your testing region that offers USMLE, provided there is space available on the date you choose. **The test centers available for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK are subject to change.** To obtain current information on specific test centers, visit the [Prometric website](#) or follow instructions on the scheduling permit for contacting Prometric.

If you are unable to keep your Step 1 or Step 2 CK testing appointment at the test center you select, you can reschedule for a different test center within your testing region, subject to availability. To avoid a rescheduling fee, you must reschedule more than 30 calendar days before your scheduled testing appointment. Refer to your scheduling permit for details.

If you are unable to take Step 1 or Step 2 CK in the testing region you selected, you may request a change to your testing region. Additional information and instructions are provided with the [form](#).

Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations

The USMLE program provides reasonable accommodations for examinees with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you are an individual with such a disability and require test accommodations, visit the [USMLE website](#) before you apply for each Step for information regarding test accommodations, including procedures and documentation requirements.

Requesting Additional Break Time

Examinees with physical or health conditions, such as lactation (to express breast milk) and diabetes (to monitor/treat blood glucose), may apply for additional break time. See the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#) for more information.

Personal Item Exceptions

Unauthorized possession of personal items while you are in the secure areas of the test center is prohibited. Exceptions to this policy may be made in certain limited circumstances. See the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#) for more information.

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Scheduling the Examination

Once ECFMG verifies that you are eligible and your registration is complete, your scheduling permit will be issued. If you apply for more than one exam at the same time, you will be issued separate scheduling permits for each exam. ECFMG will send your scheduling permit to the e-mail address in your ECFMG record. **You will not receive the scheduling permit or notification by postal mail.**

Important Note: For Step 1 and Step 2 CK, if the beginning of your assigned eligibility period is more than six months in the future, your scheduling permit will not be available or sent via e-mail until approximately six months before the beginning of the assigned eligibility period.

The scheduling permit is a very important document; it includes your assigned eligibility period, a description of the form(s) of identification you must bring to the test center on your exam date, and instructions for scheduling your testing appointment. You must bring your scheduling permit to the test center on your exam date. Your name, as it appears on your scheduling permit, must exactly match the name on your form(s) of identification. Please review your scheduling permit for details and limited exceptions. **If you do not bring a copy of your scheduling permit (electronic or paper) and required identification on each day of your exam, you will not be allowed to take the exam.** If you are not allowed to take the exam, you must pay a fee to reschedule your exam. Your rescheduled testing appointment must fall within your assigned eligibility period.

If the name listed on your scheduling permit is not correct, [contact ECFMG](#) immediately by e-mail, telephone, or fax. Use the contact information for General Inquiries on the Contact ECFMG page of the ECFMG website.

If the name in your ECFMG record is changed while you are registered for an exam, a revised scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. ECFMG will send your revised scheduling permit via e-mail. You must bring the revised scheduling permit to the test center. Name changes must be received **and processed** by ECFMG no later than seven business days before your testing appointment, or you will not be able to test. For Step 1 or Step 2 CK, if your eligibility period is extended or your testing region is changed while you are registered, a revised scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. You must bring the revised scheduling permit to the test center.

If you lose your scheduling permit, you can access it via ECFMG's [on-line services](#).

Scheduling

You can schedule your testing appointment as soon as you obtain your exam scheduling permit. Please refer to your scheduling permit for instructions on reviewing available test dates and centers and scheduling a testing appointment. If you do not schedule and take the exam within your eligibility period, you must reapply by submitting a new application and exam fee(s), if you wish to take the exam.

Rescheduling

If you are unable to keep your Step 1 or Step 2 CK testing appointment, you are permitted to reschedule your appointment within your eligibility period. A fee is charged if a change is made during the 30 calendar days before your scheduled testing appointment. A fee schedule is posted on the [USMLE website](#). Refer to your scheduling permit for details on contacting Prometric to change your appointment.

If you cannot take the Step 1 or Step 2 CK exam during your assigned eligibility period, you may request a one-time, contiguous eligibility period extension via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). Additional information and instructions are provided with the application.

If you cannot take the Step 1 or Step 2 CK exam in the testing region you selected, you may request to change your testing region. Additional information and instructions are provided with the [form](#).

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Preparing for Examination

For detailed information on test lengths and formats see *The USMLE: Purpose, Test Format, and Test Lengths* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#). See also *What Do I Need To Do: USMLE Checklist* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.

Practice materials for all Steps are available in the [Practice Materials](#) section of the USMLE website.

The NBME offers web-based self-assessments to help medical students and graduates evaluate their readiness for Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3. For complete information, see [Taking an NBME Self-Assessment](#) on the NBME website.

Practice Sessions for USMLE Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3 are available at Prometric test centers to registered applicants for a fee. These sessions are provided primarily to give examinees the opportunity to become familiar with the Prometric test center environment. For more information, see [USMLE Computer-based Testing Practice Session](#) on the USMLE website.

Important Note: Test preparation courses and materials are available from individuals and companies not associated with the USMLE. It is unlawful for any test preparation service or program to use, disclose, distribute, or solicit content from recent test takers, or to otherwise provide access to questions or answers from actual USMLE exams. If there is evidence that you enrolled in, participated in, or used any test preparation program or service that distributes, provides access to, or uses USMLE content (questions or answers), or provides a forum for others to share such information, your registration and/or testing may be canceled, your scores on the USMLE may be withheld or canceled, and you may be subject to further sanctions. See *Irregular Behavior* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#). ECFMG also regularly reviews allegations of irregular behavior in conjunction with its programs and services. See [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#), which may apply.

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Taking the Examination

For detailed information on arrival times, and procedures upon arrival and throughout the testing day, see *Examination Day and Testing* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#). You should also refer to your scheduling permit for important information.

Important Note: After you start taking an examination, you cannot cancel or reschedule that examination. If you start the examination but do not complete it, the attempt may appear as "incomplete" on your USMLE transcript.

When you arrive at the test center, you must present your **scheduling permit** and the **required identification** as described on your scheduling permit. **If you do not bring a copy of your scheduling permit (electronic or paper) and required identification on each day of your exam, you will not be admitted to the test** and will be required to pay a fee to reschedule your test.

Your name, as it appears on your scheduling permit, must match the name on your form(s) of identification exactly. Please review your scheduling permit for details and limited exceptions. If the name listed on your scheduling permit is not correct, [contact ECFMG](#) immediately by e-mail, telephone, or fax. Use the contact information for General Inquiries on the Contact ECFMG page of the ECFMG website.

If the name in your ECFMG record is changed while you are registered for an exam, a revised scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. ECFMG will send your revised scheduling permit via e-mail. You must bring this revised scheduling permit to the test center. Name changes must be received **and processed** by ECFMG no later than seven business days before your testing appointment, or you will not be able to test. For Step 1 or Step 2 CK, if your eligibility period is extended or your testing region is changed while you are registered, a revised scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. You must bring the revised scheduling permit to the test center.

Required Identification

Your name, as it appears on your scheduling permit, must exactly match the name on your form(s) of identification. Please review your scheduling permit for details and limited exceptions. Since your name on the scheduling permit appears in the Latin alphabet (in "English language letters"), the name on your identification must also appear in the Latin alphabet. The spelling of the name on your scheduling permit must match **exactly** the spelling of the name on the form(s) of identification you present at the test center. If the names do not match as described above, you will not be allowed to take the exam. See [Your Name](#) in *Your ECFMG Record*.

The form of identification you present must be one of the forms of **unexpired**, government-issued identification listed below that contains your **name in the Latin alphabet**, your **signature**, and your recent **photograph**. The following forms of identification are acceptable, only if they meet all of these requirements:

- Passport
- Driver's license with photograph
- National identity card
- Other form of unexpired, government-issued identification

Travel Status

Applicants traveling to the United States to take an exam are responsible for making the necessary travel and accommodation arrangements. If you are neither a U.S. citizen nor a U.S. lawful permanent resident, you are responsible for obtaining required travel documents. These documents may include a visa to enter the United States. The requirements of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. embassies and consulates regarding issuance of visas and travel to and from the United States are subject to change. You should review current requirements before applying for a visa. For additional information, visit the [DHS website](#) and the [U.S. Department of State website](#).

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USMLE Program and Irregular Behavior

The USMLE program defines irregular behavior as including, "any action by applicants, examinees, potential applicants, or others that could compromise the validity, integrity, or security of the USMLE process." Test center staff monitor, in person and via video/audio recording, administration of the USMLE Steps and are required to report any violations of the USMLE or test center rules. You must follow instructions from test center staff throughout the examinations; failure to do so may result in a finding that you have engaged in irregular behavior and permanent annotation of your USMLE transcript. See *Testing Regulations and Rules of Conduct* and *Irregular Behavior* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#). See ECFMG's [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#), which also may apply.

Important Notes: Seeking, providing, and/or obtaining information relating to examination content that may give or attempt to give unfair advantage to anyone who may be taking the examination, which includes postings regarding examination content and/or answers on the Internet, is a violation of the USMLE Rules of Conduct.

Evidence of violation of any test administration rule, including the USMLE Rules of Conduct, will result in actions being taken under *USMLE Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior*. If you are found to have engaged in irregular behavior, your score report and transcripts will include this finding, you may be barred from taking the USMLE in the future, and your score may be canceled.

Anomalous performance and/or unusual testing history may impact your access to the USMLE. If your performance raises concerns about your readiness to test or your motivation to pass, the USMLE program reserves the right to restrict your future access to its examinations and/or to impose conditions upon future access. Do not test if you are not able or not ready on your scheduled test date. Taking a Step examination to familiarize yourself with the examination format, or for any reason other than to pass, is prohibited and may result in restrictions on your future access to the USMLE.

The above-described conduct may also be considered irregular behavior under ECFMG's [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#).

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Examination Results

The USMLE program provides a recommended pass or fail outcome on all Step examinations. For ECFMG Certification, you must obtain at least the USMLE-recommended pass outcome for each required Step. See [Examination Requirements](#) in *Examinations for ECFMG Certification*.

Score Reporting

Results for Step 1 and 2 CK are typically available three to four weeks after your test date. However, a number of factors may delay score reporting. When selecting your test date and inquiring about results, you should allow at least eight weeks to receive notification that your score report is available. For more specific information about potential scoring delays, visit the Announcements section on the home page of the [USMLE website](#).

ECFMG reserves the right to reverify with the medical school the eligibility of medical school students and graduates who are registered for examination. If ECFMG requests reverification of your student/graduate status with your medical school, your score report will be issued only after reverification of your status has been received by ECFMG.

Score reports are issued in electronic format only and can be accessed via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). Once your score report has been issued, ECFMG will send a notification to the e-mail address in your ECFMG record.

Score reports are available for approximately 365 days from the date of e-mail notification. Once the score report is removed from ECFMG's on-line services, your results will be provided to you only in the form of an official USMLE transcript. To obtain a transcript, you will be required to submit a request and pay a fee through the organization that registered you for the examination. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you print and/or save your score report while it is available.

Important Note: ECFMG may provide your medical school with data on your performance on administrations of USMLE Step 1 and Step 2. Data provided include whether you passed or failed the exam administration and your numerical score, if one was reported for your exam administration. Information about *ECFMG's Provision of Performance Data to Medical Schools* and an option for you to withhold your exam results from your medical school are available via ECFMG's [on-line services](#).

See *Score Reporting* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#) for additional information. For up-to-date information on minimum passing scores, examination performance data, and general scoring methodology, please visit the [USMLE website](#).

Score Validity

The USMLE program reserves the right to cancel scores that are at or above the passing level if the USMLE program has a good faith basis for questioning whether they represent a valid measure of knowledge or competence as sampled by the examination. If there are questions related to the validity of your score, your score report may be delayed or withheld pending completion of further review and/or investigation. See *Score Validity* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#).

USMLE Transcripts

To request an official USMLE transcript, you must contact the organization that registered you for the examination. You must contact the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) if you are registered for or have taken Step 3 and/or you want to send your transcript to a U.S. medical licensing authority. In all other cases, you can submit your request for an official USMLE transcript to ECFMG. Additional information and instructions are provided with the [form](#).

If you apply to residency programs through the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS), you may request electronic transmittal of your USMLE transcript to these programs. For additional information, refer to the [ERAS Support Services](#) section of the ECFMG website.

Important Note: If you took the former ECFMG CSA, your USMLE transcript will indicate only that you have CSA examination history. It will not provide any additional information on your attempt(s) on the CSA. To request official copies of your CSA performance history, you must submit your request for an official CSA history chart to ECFMG with the appropriate fee. Additional information and instructions are provided with the [form](#).

Score Rechecks

For all Steps, a highly rigorous process is used to ensure the accuracy of scores, including a parallel scoring method involving independent scoring systems. Therefore, a change in your score or in your pass/fail outcome based on a recheck is an extremely remote possibility. To date, the score recheck process has not resulted in a score change. However, a recheck will be performed if you submit a request and the fee for this service to ECFMG. Additional information and instructions are provided with the [form](#). Your request must be received by ECFMG no later than 90 days after your result was released to you. See *Score Rechecks* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#) for more information.

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Reexamination and Reapplication

USMLE policy generally does not allow applicants to retake a Step if they have already passed that Step. However, there are exceptions for the purpose of complying with a time limit imposed by a U.S. physician licensing authority or another authority recognized by the USMLE program. See 'Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements' below.

If you fail a Step, you must reapply, including payment of the appropriate fee(s), to retake the exam. If you do not take an exam during your assigned eligibility period, you must reapply, including payment of the appropriate fee(s), if you wish to take the exam; **in this event, you may reapply at any time, however, ECFMG cannot begin to process a subsequent application for this exam until at least four weeks after the end of the eligibility period for the exam you did not take.**

Number of Attempts Allowed

The USMLE program limits to four the total number of times an examinee can take the same Step. Examinees who have attempted a Step four or more times, including incomplete attempts, and have not passed are ineligible to apply for **any** Step in the USMLE exam sequence. Attempts at the formerly administered Step 2 CS count toward the limit. All attempts at a Step are counted toward the limit, regardless of when the exams were taken.

For the purpose of U.S. medical licensure, state medical licensing authorities may limit the number of attempts allowed to pass each Step. Information regarding specific state requirements can be obtained on the [Federation of State Medical Boards \(FSMB\) website](#).

Time Between Examination Attempts

The USMLE program has established rules on how quickly you can retake the same Step. You may not take the same examination more than three times within a 12-month period. Your fourth attempt must be at least 12 months after your first attempt at that exam **and** at least six months after your most recent attempt at that exam. This includes incomplete attempts.

Example: An examinee took and failed her first attempt at Step 1 on January 15, 2020, her second attempt at Step 1 on April 15, 2020, and her third attempt at Step 1 on September 15, 2020. In January 2021, the examinee applied for a fourth attempt at Step 1 and wanted the March-April-May eligibility period. The earliest date that was both 12 months after her first attempt on January 15, 2020 and six months after her most recent attempt on September 15, 2020 was March 15, 2021. Since the March-April-May eligibility period began before this date, the earliest eligibility period that the applicant could request was April-May-June.

When you reapply, your eligibility period will be adjusted, if necessary, to comply with these rules. You must read the editions of the ECFMG *Information Booklet* and the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* that pertain to the eligibility period in which you take the exam.

Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements

For the purpose of ECFMG Certification, you must pass the examinations required for ECFMG Certification within a seven-year period. If you do not pass all examinations required for ECFMG Certification within a maximum of seven years, your earliest USMLE passing performance will no longer be valid for ECFMG Certification. See [Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements](#) in *Examinations for ECFMG Certification*.

If you have passed a Step but this passing performance is no longer valid for ECFMG Certification, you may request an exception to retake the previously passed exam that is no longer valid. The USMLE

program's policy on attempt limits may impact an applicant's ability to retake the examination that is no longer valid.

For the purpose of U.S. medical licensure, time limits to complete the USMLE are established by state medical licensing authorities and may require completion of all Steps (including Step 3, which is not required for ECFMG Certification) within a certain number of years from the date the first Step is passed. Information regarding specific state requirements can be obtained on the [FSMB website](#). You may request an exception to retake a previously passed exam to comply with the time limit of a U.S. physician licensing authority. Visit the [USMLE website](#) for more information.

Important Notes: You may only request an exception at the time that you apply for the previously passed exam. Complete requirements and instructions will be provided at the time of exam application. Exceptions to the reexamination requirements are not approved prior to your submitting the exam application.

Applicants who retake a previously passed Step to comply with a time limit should understand the implications of a failing retake performance on their Step 3 eligibility. See *Retaking Previously Passed Steps* in the [USMLE Bulletin of Information](#).

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Medical Education Credential Requirements

To be eligible for ECFMG Certification, you must have been awarded credit for at least four credit years (academic years for which credit has been given toward completion of the medical curriculum) by a medical school that is listed in the *World Directory* with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements. Your graduation year must be included in the ECFMG note in your medical school's *World Directory* listing. See [Medical School Requirements](#). There are restrictions on credits transferred to the medical school that awards your medical degree that can be used to meet ECFMG's medical education credential requirements.

Important Notes: Graduates not eligible for admission to the exams or for ECFMG Certification include, but are not limited to: Graduates with degrees only in stomatology, ayurvedic or homeopathic medicine; graduates awarded only the diploma of Physician-Epidemiologist-Hygienist, Physician-Biochemist, Physician-Cyberneticist, Physician-Biophysicist, Licensed Medical Practitioner, or Assistant Medical Practitioner; and graduates awarded degrees in specialties other than Clinical Medicine (such as in Traditional Chinese Medicine).

Beginning in 2024 (previously 2023), individuals will be eligible to apply for ECFMG Certification—the first step in the certification process—and take the required examinations if, at the time of application, their medical school is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME). This requirement will be in addition to the requirement that the school must be listed in the *World Directory* with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements. Further details regarding the 2024 Medical School Accreditation Requirement, including eligibility guidelines, are available on the ECFMG website at www.ecfm.org/accreditation. International medical students and graduates interested in ECFMG Certification should continuously monitor this website section for the latest information.

International medical graduates must document the completion of all requirements for, and receipt of, the **final medical diploma**. ECFMG verifies every international medical graduate's final medical diploma with the appropriate officials of the medical school that issued the diploma. When ECFMG requests verification of your medical diploma from your medical school, ECFMG will request the medical school to provide your **final medical school transcript**. Verification by ECFMG with the issuing school may also be required for transcripts that are submitted to document transferred credits. An international medical graduate's credentials are not considered complete until ECFMG receives and accepts verification of the final medical diploma, final medical school transcript, and, if required, transfer credit transcript(s) directly from the issuing school(s).

Please do not send original documents, as they will not be returned to you. Please do not send any credentials not required by ECFMG (such as licenses, certificates of full registration, high school diplomas, academic awards, etc.). Submission of unnecessary documents can delay the processing of your exam application.

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ECFMG Policy on Transfer Credits

Transfer credits are credits earned for a course taken at one institution (such as a medical school) that are accepted by a medical school toward meeting its degree requirements. For example, a student attends a medical school for one year and earns credits for 12 courses. The student transfers to another medical school, which accepts the credits for those 12 courses toward meeting its degree requirements. The credits for those 12 courses are then referred to as transfer credits.

If you transferred credits to the medical school that awarded or will award your medical degree, you must disclose and document these credits when you apply to ECFMG for examination, **regardless of when the credits were earned**. See [Credentials for ECFMG Certification](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*. Failure to disclose and document these credits may have a number of negative consequences, including delaying exam registration and certification by ECFMG, and may result in a finding of irregular behavior and permanent annotation of your ECFMG record. See [Policies and Procedures Regarding Irregular Behavior](#).

Additionally, for the purpose of ECFMG Certification, credits that are transferred to the medical school that awarded or will award your medical degree must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- All credits must have been transferred from a medical school that is either:
 - located in the United States or Canada and listed in the *World Directory*, or
 - listed in the *World Directory* with an ECFMG note stating it meets ECFMG eligibility requirements.
- Credits must be for courses that were passed at the medical school at which the course was taken.
- Credits may only be transferred from **one** medical school to the medical school which awards the final degree.

If your transferred credits do not comply with all the criteria listed above, you will not meet the requirements to be registered by ECFMG for examination or the requirements to be certified by ECFMG. If your transferred credits do not meet **all** the criteria listed above, you may request an exception from the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee.

Important Note: The requirement that credits must be transferred from a medical school that meets the criteria above does not apply to credits transferred **only to the pre-medical portion of the curriculum** of the medical school that awarded or will award the medical degree. If you transferred credits to the pre-medical portion of the curriculum at the medical school that awarded or will award your medical degree from an institution that does not meet the criteria listed above, you must provide ECFMG with a letter from the medical school that awarded or will award your medical degree confirming that the credits were transferred to the pre-medical portion of the curriculum only. This letter must be on the letterhead of the medical school and be signed by an authorized official of your medical school. This letter must be submitted in conjunction with the application for examination. Applications received without this letter may be rejected. **This letter is in addition to disclosing and documenting all transferred credits as described above.**

The intent of this policy on transfer credits is to preserve the appropriate education of medical school graduates applying to ECFMG for Certification. The provisions of this policy will be applied by ECFMG in its sole discretion in order to effectuate the intent of this policy.

Important Note: Transfer credits that ECFMG reviewed and deemed to have met requirements for ECFMG Certification prior to August 27, 2019, will remain acceptable, and these applicants will be allowed to proceed with Certification and the examinations leading to Certification. All future transfer activity will be subject to the policy as stated here.

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Credentials for ECFMG Certification

The credentials required for ECFMG Certification are:

- [Final Medical Diploma](#)
- [Final Medical School Transcript](#)
- [Transcript\(s\) to Document Transferred Credits](#), if applicable

All documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official [English translation](#) that meets ECFMG's translation requirements. See [Final Medical Diploma and Transcript](#), [Transcript\(s\) to Document Transferred Credits](#), and [English Translations](#) for complete information on required items.

If you are a medical school graduate when you submit your first exam application, your **diploma and transcript(s) to document transferred credits** (if applicable) must be submitted at the same time as this initial exam application. If you have graduated and met all requirements for your medical diploma but your medical diploma has not yet been issued, a letter completed and signed by an authorized official of your medical school must be submitted at the same time as your exam application. Each medical school has been requested to provide ECFMG with a list of authorized officials. The letter you submit must be completed and signed by an official on this list. The official must provide his/her name, official title, and the institution name. The official must affix the institution's seal to the letter. The letter also must include the following statement:

This is to confirm that [applicant name] has graduated and completed all requirements to receive the [degree title] degree from [medical school/university name]. The degree will be issued [month and year].

You must then submit a copy of your diploma to ECFMG as soon as the diploma is issued.

If you graduated from medical school and do not submit a copy of your medical diploma or a letter from your medical school, as described above, and these documents have not been received previously by ECFMG, your exam application will be rejected.

If you are a medical school student when you submit your first exam application, submit copies of your medical education credentials as soon as you graduate and receive them.

You may not submit the credentials required for ECFMG Certification to ECFMG until you apply for an exam. If you send credentials to ECFMG before you apply for an exam, they will not be processed.

You can submit your credentials via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). Additional information and instructions are provided with the exam application. If your credentials are complete, you are generally not required to resend these documents when you apply for subsequent exams.

When your credentials have been processed, ECFMG will notify you. You can also check the status of your credentials via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). If you have questions or concerns about your credentials, you can [contact ECFMG](#) using the contact information for General Inquiries on the Contact ECFMG page of the ECFMG website.

Medical Education Credentials

[Medical Education Credential Requirements](#) | [ECFMG Policy on Transfer Credits](#) | [Credentials for ECFMG Certification](#) | [Final Medical Diploma and Transcript](#) | [Transcript\(s\) to Document Transferred Credits](#) | [Name on Medical Diploma and Transcript\(s\)](#) | [English Translations](#) | [Verification of Credentials](#)

Final Medical Diploma and Transcript

Final Medical Diploma

ECFMG requires all medical school graduates to submit a copy of their final medical diploma to ECFMG. Do not send an original diploma. You can submit your credentials via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). Additional information and instructions are provided with the exam application.

The exact degree title of the final medical diploma you must have earned (and must provide) in order to be eligible for ECFMG Certification and the examinations required for Certification is listed in the [Reference Guide for Medical Education Credentials](#) on the ECFMG website. The *Reference Guide* lists these medical credential qualifications by medical school and graduation year. Although this *Reference Guide* is based upon information that was current at the time of publication, this information is subject to change.

You must submit the copy of the final medical diploma in the original language, containing the issue date and all of the appropriate signatures of the medical school and/or university officials. Documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation that meets ECFMG's translation requirements. See [English Translations](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*.

Do not submit professional evaluations of your final medical diploma. ECFMG does not accept such evaluations in lieu of your final medical diploma.

If you are submitting the copy of your medical diploma with an exam application, follow the instructions for additional documents in the exam application.

The name on your medical diploma should match **exactly** the name in your ECFMG record. If the name on your diploma does not match the name in your ECFMG record, you must submit documentation that **verifies** the name on your diploma is (or was) your name. See [Name on Medical Diploma and Transcript\(s\)](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*.

Final Medical School Transcript

When ECFMG requests verification of your medical diploma from your medical school, ECFMG will request the medical school to provide your final medical school transcript. If ECFMG is unable to obtain your final medical school transcript directly from your medical school, ECFMG will contact you and provide detailed instructions.

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Transcript(s) to Document Transferred Credits

If you have transferred credits to the medical school that awarded or will award your medical degree, you must document these credits when you apply for examination, regardless of when the credits were earned. You must send to ECFMG a copy of an official transcript issued by the school or institution at which the course was taken. You can submit your credentials via ECFMG's [on-line services](#). Additional information and instructions are provided with the exam application.

You must submit the copy of the transcript in the original language. Documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation that meets ECFMG's translation requirements. See [English Translations](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*.

Do not submit professional evaluations of your transcript. ECFMG does not accept such evaluations in lieu of your transcript.

To submit the transcript to ECFMG, follow the instructions for additional documents in the exam application.

The name on your transcript(s) to document transferred credits should match **exactly** the name in your ECFMG record. If the name on your transcript does not match the name in your ECFMG record, you must submit documentation that **verifies** the name on your transcript is (or was) your name. See [Name on Medical Diploma and Transcript\(s\)](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*.

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Name on Medical Diploma and Transcript(s)

Your name as it appears on **all** credentials sent to ECFMG should be consistent and should match **exactly** the name in your ECFMG record. If the names do not match exactly, you must submit documentation that **verifies** the name on your medical diploma/transcript(s) is (or was) your name. The documentation must show your name exactly as it appears on your medical diploma/transcript(s). See [Your Name](#) in *Your ECFMG Record* and [Verifying Your Name](#).

If the name on your credentials does not match the name in your ECFMG record and you do not submit acceptable documentation that verifies the name on your credentials is (or was) your name, your exam application will be rejected. If your exam application is rejected due to a name discrepancy, ECFMG will contact you to request additional information.

An example of a discrepancy that requires such verification would be if your ECFMG record lists your married name, but your medical diploma/transcript(s) lists your maiden name.

Verifying Your Name

If the name in your ECFMG record does not match **exactly** your name as listed on your medical diploma, transcript, or other credential, you must **verify** that the name on these documents is (or was) your name. To verify your name, submit to ECFMG a copy of one of the documents listed below that verifies the name on your medical diploma, transcript, or other credential. The name in your ECFMG record will not be changed if you are verifying your name.

For the purpose of verifying your name, examples of the document(s) you may submit include:

- Expired Passport (including the pages with your photograph and the expiration date)
- Birth Certificate
- Marriage Certificate/License (if name discrepancy is due to name change after marriage)
- Official Court Order/Name Change Documentation
- Official Immigration Document, including
 - U.S. Resident Alien Card
 - U.S. Naturalization Certificate
 - Permanent Residence Card
- Driver's License

If additional documentation is required for the purposes of verifying your name, and you cannot provide one of the documents listed above, ECFMG will consider accepting a letter from an authorized official of your medical school that verifies that the name on your medical diploma, transcript, or other credential is (or was) your name. If you choose to submit a letter from your medical school to verify the name on your credential, the letter must be completed and signed by an authorized official of your medical school. Each medical school has been requested to provide ECFMG with a list of authorized officials. The letter you submit must be completed and signed by an official on this list. The official must provide his/her name, official title, and the institution name. The official must also affix the institution's seal to the letter. The letter must be on letterhead and must include the following statement:

This certifies that the names [name on document] and [name in ECFMG record] belong to one and the same person.

See additional important information on documents below.

Important Information on Documents for Changing or Verifying Your Name

- Attestations are **not** acceptable as documentation to change or verify your name.
- Please do not submit an original document; a copy of the document is sufficient.
- All documents submitted to change or verify your name that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation that meets ECFMG's translation requirements. See [English Translations](#) in *Medical Education Credentials*.
- All documents submitted to change or verify your name, including translations, will become a part of your permanent ECFMG record and will not be returned to you.

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English Translations

Any document submitted to ECFMG that is not in English must be accompanied by an English translation that meets ECFMG's translation requirements.

ECFMG strongly encourages you to obtain translations from its recommended translation service. Translations from this service meet ECFMG's requirements and will not be rejected due to translation errors. See the [Translation Service](#) page in the Resources section of the ECFMG website.

Translations from other services may not meet ECFMG's requirements. If you obtain a translation from another service, the translation must:

- be a word-for-word translation of the original language document. An abstract or summary translation of the document is not acceptable.
- be prepared from the original document or a photocopy of the original document. ECFMG will not accept a translation prepared from a transcription (transcribed version) of the document.
- be prepared by a government official (for example, a Consular Officer), medical school official (for example, a Dean or Registrar), or a professional translation service.
- bear the signature and title of the government or medical school official or representative of the translation service and, if there is one, the seal of the government official, medical school, or translation service.
- appear on letterhead. If the translation service is a private company, the letterhead must identify the company as a translation service.
- **include a certification statement from the translator stating the following: I [insert name of translator] certify that the word-for-word translation is correct.**

An English language certificate issued by the medical school that is not a word-for-word English language version of the degree, transcript, or other document in the original language is not acceptable as a translation. English translations that do not meet the requirements above will not be accepted. Examples of unacceptable translations include, but are not limited to:

- translations prepared by a notary who is not a government or medical school official or representative of a professional translation service,
- a translation that was not signed by the translator or official or representative of the translation service,
- a translation that is not a word-for-word translation of the original language document, and
- a translation that does not contain the certification statement from the translator.

Additionally, applicants are not permitted to translate their own documents.

Documents submitted to ECFMG as part of the exam application and certification processes, including translations, will not be returned.

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Medical Education Credentials

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Verification of Credentials

ECFMG verifies every international medical graduate's final medical diploma with the appropriate officials of the medical school that issued the diploma. At the same time, ECFMG requests the medical school to provide the final medical school transcript. Transcripts to document transferred credits are also subject to verification by ECFMG with the issuing school. You will not fulfill the ECFMG medical education credential requirements until verification of your final medical diploma, final medical school transcript, and, if required, transfer credit transcript(s) is received directly from the issuing school(s) and accepted by ECFMG.

ECFMG will notify you when your diploma has been sent to your medical school for verification. As part of the verification process, ECFMG also may provide the medical school with other documents, including a copy of your identification form, to aid in identification. ECFMG will follow up with your medical school if the requested verification is not received in a timely manner. ECFMG will notify you after receiving and evaluating the verification from your medical school. You can check the status of your medical education credentials on-line via ECFMG's [on-line services](#)

ECFMG reserves the right to reverify with the medical school the eligibility of medical school graduates who apply for examination. This may include reverification of the graduate's medical education credentials with the issuing medical school. If such reverification is requested, the graduate will be registered for examination only after ECFMG has received reverification directly from the medical school. If reverification is requested after the graduate has been registered for examination, ECFMG may cancel the graduate's registration or withhold the graduate's score report until ECFMG has received reverification directly from the issuing school. If your registration is canceled, you may be required to reapply.

Important Notes: Applicants are responsible for any fees associated with the verification of the final medical diploma, final medical school transcript, and transcript(s) to document transferred credits. If your medical school charges a fee for the verification of your diploma and/or transcript, ECFMG will advise you to contact your medical school directly regarding the fee and the method of payment.

If the final medical school transcript provided by your medical school is not in English or if an acceptable English translation is not provided by the medical school, ECFMG will have the transcript translated into English by an independent translation service. ECFMG will charge your ECFMG financial account for the translation, and will subsequently notify you of the charge. ECFMG will not notify you before sending the document for translation. For information on the translation fee and how to make a payment to your ECFMG financial account, see [Fees and Payment](#) in the Resources section of the ECFMG website.

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Confirming ECFMG Certification to Third Parties

ECFMG's Certification Verification Service (CVS) provides primary-source confirmation of the ECFMG certification status of international medical graduates. The Joint Commission, the organization that evaluates and accredits U.S. health care organizations and programs, has determined that direct verification with ECFMG of a physician's certification status satisfies The Joint Commission's requirement for primary-source verification of medical school completion for graduates of international medical schools. ECFMG will confirm your certification status when a request is received from a U.S. medical licensing authority, residency program, hospital, or other organization that, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information. For status reports sent to medical licensing authorities, the request can also be made by you. Requesting organizations must normally secure and retain your signed authorization to obtain certification information.

For more information, visit www.ecfm.org/cvs.

Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS®) Support Services

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requires that international medical graduates who wish to enter ACGME-accredited graduate medical education programs in the United States be certified by ECFMG. ECFMG Certification does not, however, guarantee that an international medical graduate will be accepted into a graduate medical education program. The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) established the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) to allow medical students and graduates to apply electronically for residency positions in accredited U.S. programs of graduate medical education. Most U.S. graduate medical education programs participate in ERAS. If you apply to participating programs, you must submit your residency application using ERAS.

ECFMG serves as the designated Dean's office for students and graduates of international medical schools, assisting these individuals with the ERAS application process for first- and second-year (PGY-1 and PGY-2) residency positions.

For detailed, up-to-date information on ERAS Support Services at ECFMG, visit www.ecfm.org/eras.

J-1 Visa Sponsorship

Foreign national physicians who seek entry into U.S. programs of graduate medical education or training must obtain an appropriate visa that permits clinical training activities. One visa commonly used by foreign national physicians is the J-1, a temporary nonimmigrant visa reserved for participants in the Exchange Visitor Program. As a public diplomacy initiative of the U.S. Department of State, the Exchange Visitor Program was established to enhance international educational and cultural exchange between the people of the United States and other nations.

The U.S. Department of State has designated ECFMG as the visa sponsor for all exchange visitor (J-1) physicians who participate in clinical training programs. ECFMG sponsorship is also available for physicians' eligible dependents. ECFMG does not sponsor physicians for other U.S. visa types.

For detailed, up-to-date information on J-1 visa sponsorship by ECFMG, visit www.ecfm.org/evsp.

ECFMG Certificate Holders Office

The ECFMG Certificate Holders Office (ECHOSM) provides career planning resources for physicians pursuing ECFMG Certification and graduate medical education (GME) in the United States.

For more information, visit www.ecfm.org/echo.