



American Board  
of Medical Specialties

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**The American Board of Medical Specialties:  
Draft Standards for Continuing Certification – Call for Comments  
Delayed Until April 2021 due to COVID-19**

The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) had been prepared to release the Draft Standards for Continuing Certification – Call for Comments (Call for Comments) in early December, in accordance with the timeframes established in the [Continuing Board Certification: Vision for the Future Commission's \(Commission\) final report](#). However, the recent surge in new Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases, which has placed additional burden on the already stressed health care system, has prompted ABMS to postpone the opening of the public comment period. After consulting external and internal stakeholders, ABMS has decided to move the opening of the Call for Comments to April 2021, pending the status of the COVID-19 surge and the hospital caseload at that time.

Since its first appearance in the United States, COVID-19 has placed an enormous strain on the country's health care delivery system. Physicians, health care team members, hospitals and health systems, along with first responders have been on the front lines battling this pandemic, risking their own health to care for their patients and communities. Patient advocacy and public health organizations have also been challenged by the pandemic, as the need for care and the resources necessary to battle the virus have taxed an already fragile support system.

ABMS recognizes that the Draft Standards for Continuing Certification are important to many stakeholders. Postponement of the Call for Comments, however, will better allow for meaningful public commentary by and engagement with key stakeholders, most notably those who are currently focused on battling COVID-19. Detailed information regarding how to share feedback will be included in the updated Call for Comments opening date communications. In addition, sufficient time will be provided during the Call for Comments to ensure a wide range of stakeholders are able to participate in this process. Meanwhile, ABMS and its Member Boards are continuing to move forward in their work to address the recommended program changes and enhancements identified in the Commission's final report.

The ABMS Community remains deeply grateful for the service of health care team members and providers and continues to hope that all remain safe as they care for patients, families and communities suffering during this pandemic. ABMS will continue to monitor the trajectory of the COVID-19 surge, consult stakeholders, and provide updated information on the opening of the Call for Comments as it becomes available.