

Frequently Asked Questions

Physician Assistant Licensure Process

Disclaimer: Any and all statements herein should not be construed as official policy or positions of the Georgia Composite Medical Board (GCMB). The information is merely provided on our web page by Board staff for general guidance to the citizens of Georgia and users of our website. No individual staff member is authorized to provide a binding opinion or statement for the full Board. Nothing herein should be construed as legal advice or as a legal opinion for any particular situation. Refer to the Rules and Laws of the Georgia Composite Medical Board and consult an attorney of your choice for clarification.

It is RECOMMENDED that you DO NOT ACCEPT an offer of employment until you have obtained a supervising physician and received a license.

1. How do I apply for a physician assistant license?

ONLINE: The quickest and easiest way to apply for this type of license is to submit your application online by visiting our website at www.medicalboard.georgia.gov and click the [Apply, Renew, Reinstatement or Manage License](#) link. You will be required to REGISTER first before you can apply for this license.

PAPER APPLICATION: If you prefer to apply by paper application, you may visit our website at www.medicalboard.georgia.gov and click the [For Professionals](#) link. A request for an application may also be requested in writing by submitting the following information: your legal name and mailing address, or by contacting the Board directly at (404) 656-3913 or 3914.

2. How long does it take to obtain a Physician Assistant License?

The normal processing time for a physician assistant license, depending on timeliness of primary source documentation and other required information, is **4-6 weeks**. Once your application is complete, your file will be sent to quality assurance and reviewed within 5-10 business days and an initial licensure determination will be made. You will be notified in writing of the initial determination and the next scheduled Medical Board meeting date when your application will be considered.

3. I have a job offer and need a Physician Assistant license immediately. What should I do if my application is not considered complete by the 5-business day deadline to go to the next Board meeting?

Under these circumstances the Board encourages you to check with your primary source verifiers, (e.g., school transcripts, references, post-graduate training program, test scores, and out-of-state licensure verification), to make sure they send your information directly to the Medical Board in a timely fashion. **The Board does not issue licenses without a completed application.** The Board highly recommends that **YOU DO NOT ACCEPT** an offer of employment in Georgia **UNTIL** you have met all the necessary requirements for licensure and have been **notified** in writing of your approval for a Physician Assistant license.

4. What does “primary source verification” mean?

The Medical Board verifies all applicant information as “primary source” verification. This means that we must receive the information **DIRECTLY** from the issuing source. (e.g., School transcripts must come directly from your school. We will not accept a non-certified copy).

5. What is a temporary permit?

Pursuant to Rule 360-5-.03(e), a temporary permit may be issued at the discretion of the Medical Board to any applicant who has otherwise met the requirements for Board licensure and who has either applied to take the next available examination or has already taken the examination and is awaiting the results thereof.

Applicants may check the box on the application to request temporary licensure. Even though you have filed an application with the Board, a temporary permit **will not be** issued until all administrative screening processes have been completed, and it is determined that further review by the Board is not needed. Applicants who have been granted licensure in another state(s) will not be eligible for temporary licensure.

A temporary permit shall have the force and effect of a permanent license. The permit shall expire upon the issuance of a permanent license by the Board or upon notification of the applicant’s failure to achieve a satisfactory examination score.

6. What is the cost for a temporary permit?

There is no charge for a temporary permit.

7. **What job duties may I perform under a temporary permit?**
The Physician Assistant job duties, while working with a temporary permit, are limited to those duties contained in the Board approved "Basic Job Description." Temporary permit holders may not perform duties beyond the scope of this basic job description. Georgia does not issue locum tenens licenses or other limited temporary licenses.
8. **I have a temporary permit, but I did not pass my required examination. What should I do?**
Applicants who hold a temporary permit but do not pass the required examination (NCCAA or NCCPA Examination) **must stop practicing immediately upon notification of a failing score.** You must immediately surrender your temporary permit to the Georgia Composite Medical Board. Board rules provide that you may be issued only one (1) temporary permit. Therefore, you may not practice until you provide the Board with proof of a passing score on your required examination.
9. **May I apply for a temporary Physician Assistant permit if I will be coming to Georgia for a couple of weeks, or a month?**
NO. Georgia **does not** issue locum tenens licenses or other limited, temporary license for physicians or physician assistants. A temporary permit may only be issued after an applicant has met all requirements established by the state of Georgia for permanent licensure. You must apply for a permanent Georgia Physician Assistant license if you wish to practice in Georgia.
10. **I work as a Physician Assistant in a state or county facility, does this exempt me from the application and/or renewal fees?**
YES: Employees working at state institutions or state hospitals or any other state run program are fee exempt. Physician Assistant employees of county operated health clinics or hospitals or any other county operated health care program are also fee exempt. However, state and county employees must meet all other eligibility requirements for licensure and must receive a Physician Assistant license. If you switch jobs and move into the private sector, you will be required to pay fees like all other private sector applicants.
11. **Is there a fee required if I decide to switch jobs, or change/add a supervising physician? If so, what forms are required?**
YES: There is a **\$75.00** fee. If you switch jobs, you may go online and log into your account to complete and submit the Add/Change Application. You may also download the form from our website, www.medicalboard.georgia.gov
12. **Is my Basic Job Description considered a part of my permanent record with my supervising physician?**
YES: The supervising and alternative supervising physician shall at all times maintain this information on file, to be readily available for inspection, and as documentation from the Board, evidencing current approval for utilization of the Physician Assistant and a copy of the applicable approved job description.
13. **I plan to switch jobs. Is it a requirement to seek prior approval from the Medical Board?**
YES: Any licensed physician assistant is required to make an application in writing or online and receive approval **PRIOR TO** switching jobs or changing a supervising physician.
14. **Is it true my Physician Assistant license is only valid for the job I am seeking or currently hold?**
YES: Your Physician Assistant license is only valid for your **current** job. When a physician applies to supervise a Physician Assistant that has been previously certified by the Board, the Board may issue a written notice of temporary approval; provided, however, that the Physician Assistant duties shall be limited to those contained in the Basic Job Description. Since you are either changing, or adding a supervising physician, there will be a \$75.00 fee required when you submit your application. **If you switch jobs and fail to notify us of this change, you would be practicing as a physician assistant without a license, which may subject you to a potential fine and/or disciplinary action by the Medical Board.** Therefore, it is imperative that you notify the Medical Board **prior** to any job change or any change or additions to your supervising physician(s).
15. **May I apply for a Medicaid or Medicare provider number with a temporary Georgia Physician Assistant permit?**
NO: It is the Medical Board's understanding that both the Medicaid and Medicare programs **DO NOT ACCEPT** temporary permits for billing purposes. You must have your permanent Georgia Physician Assistant license **BEFORE** you apply for your provider number.
16. **I am scheduled to complete my training program in June of next year, when should I apply for my Georgia Physician Assistant license?**
Applications for a Physician Assistant license remain active for **one year only.** Therefore, you should not apply for a license with the Board until you have satisfactorily completed all of your required training.

17. **I received my education outside of the United States. May I apply for a Physician Assistant license if I went to an international school?**
NO: Georgia law requires satisfactory completion of a Physician Assistant training program that has been approved by the Board. The Board has not approved a Physician Assistant training program outside of the United States. A current list of Board approved Physician Assistant training programs will be made available to an applicant upon request. You may also access the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) website at www.aapa.org
18. **Does an application for a Georgia Medical license have an expiration date?**
YES: Applications for a Georgia Physician Assistant license remain active for **one-year only**. If you applied for a Georgia Physician Assistant license and were not issued a permanent license within 12 months, you must reapply by submitting a new application, with your most current information, in addition to an application fee. Upon receipt and review of your application, we will notify you of any documentation previously provided which is acceptable. All other information, such as letters of reference and a current resume **MUST BE** resubmitted. We will not simply reactivate your old application.
19. **I have decided not to move to Georgia and I want to withdraw my application. What should I do? Is my application fee refundable?**
If you decide during the application process that you would like to withdraw your application, it is necessary for you to put this request **in writing**, sign and date the request and provide a brief explanation as to why you would like to withdraw your application. Fees paid to the Georgia Medical Board are **non-refundable** whether or not a license is issued, an application is withdrawn or the application is denied.
20. **Does Georgia make a distinction between a Physician Anesthesia Assistant and a Physician Assistant for primary care when issuing a Physician Assistant License?**
YES: The Georgia Medical Board has different requirements for a Physician Assistant for Primary Care and a Physician Anesthesia Assistant. The major differences are in training, the type of professional examination taken as well as a very different job description and responsibilities. Please read the *Physician Assistant Act* for detailed information as well as the rules of the *Georgia Composite Medical Board* for Physician Assistants.
21. **May a Board licensee practice in Georgia using a Physician Assistant license from another state?**
NO: The only exception that allows out-of-state licensed Physician Assistants to practice in Georgia is when the U.S. military employs the individual, or other federal installation such as a veterans' hospital, or an Indian reservation. Physician Assistants who work for the federal government, as such, may not practice outside the employing federal facility without first obtaining a Georgia Physician Assistant license.
22. **Are Physician Assistants in Georgia required to obtain continuing education? How do you verify if I have fulfilled my continuing education obligation?**
YES: Physician Assistants are required to complete twenty hours per year of continuing education units (or, 40 hours over the two year validation period of the license). At the time of renewal, proof of continuing education IS NOT required unless you are randomly audited. If audited, you must provide to a representative of the Board, proof of completing your continuing education requirements. Failure to provide proof of continuing education completion may lead to possible action by the Medical Board.
23. **How do I report a change of address?**
You may visit our website at www.medicalboard.georgia.gov, log into your account and update your address online. You may also send an e-mail to medbd@dch.ga.gov. Please be sure to include your full name, title, license number, your old address and the new address. It is very important to specify if the address change is for your **mailing/practice address OR both**. Also remember that the mailing address you provide will be the address listed on our website for the public to view **UNLESS** you provide a practice location address.