

Frequently Asked Questions Physician Licensure Application Process

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It is RECOMMENDED that YOU DO NOT ACCEPT an offer to practice medicine in Georgia UNTIL you have been notified in writing from the Board your license has been issued.

1. How do I apply for a physician 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.

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

The normal processing time for a physician license, depending on timeliness of primary source documentation and other required information, is 6-8 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. Does an application for a Georgia Medical license have an expiration date?

YES: Applications for a Georgia Medical license remain active for **one year only**. If you applied for a Georgia Medical 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.

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. Please refer to the application instructions for additional information on what primary source documentation is acceptable by the applicant.

5. What does board certified mean?

Board certified means that a physician has taken and passed an oral and written exam given by a certifying specialty board in their field of expertise or specialty.

6. Does Georgia make a distinction between being a Medical Doctor (M.D.) and being a Doctor of Osteopathy (D.O.) when issuing a Georgia Medical License?

MD's and DO's are classified as “physicians” in Georgia. The Medical Board makes no distinction between the two and both are issued the same type of medical license. However, for statistical information and because other state and federal agencies as well as professional organizations often seek information “only on MD's” or “only on DO's,” we do keep this information in our database.

7. What is a temporary license?

A temporary Medical License is allowed under Georgia law, and is issued at the discretion of the Executive Director, with the approval of the Board Chairperson. Such licenses shall have the force and effect of a permanent license until the next Board meeting, when such temporary licenses become void by Georgia law. Even though you have filed an application with the Board, a temporary license will not be issued until all administrative screening processes have been completed. Application specialist will notify an applicant once eligible to apply for a temporary license.

8. How much does a temporary license cost?

When you become eligible for a Temporary license, you will be notified in writing. You must submit a request in writing for a temporary license and include a check/money order for **\$150.00** made payable to the Georgia Composite Medical Board. It is further recommended that **YOU DO NOT ACCEPT** an offer of employment in Georgia **UNTIL** you have met all the necessary requirements for licensure and been issued a license.

9. May I apply for a temporary Georgia Medical License if I will be coming to Georgia to work on a temporary basis only?

NO. Georgia does not issue locum tenens licenses or other limited, temporary medical licenses. A temporary license 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 Medical License if you wish to practice medicine in Georgia.

10. What is the difference in the training required by US versus International programs?

Graduates of medical schools in the US or Canada are required to complete one year of training accredited by the ACGME, AOA, COA, RCPSC, or CFPC. **International Medical School** graduates and **Fifth Pathway** applicants who graduate from medical school **on or before July 1, 1985** must complete **one (1) year** of post-graduate/residency training in the US in a program approved by the ACGME, AMA or the RCPSC.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: On Friday, February 5, 2010, the members of the Georgia Composite Medical Board voted to use the list titled *Medical Schools Recognized by the Medical Board of California* as its official reference for approval of medical schools located outside the United States and Canada. Graduates of the schools contained in this list are required to complete one (1) year of post graduate training in a program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).

Graduates attending schools **not listed** in the *Medical Schools Recognized by the Medical Board of California* must complete three (3) years of post graduate training in a program accredited by the ACGME. The list can be viewed online at: <http://www.mbc.ca.gov/applicant/schools.html>

11. I have a job offer and need a medical 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 medical license.

12. May I apply for a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) number with a temporary Georgia Medical License?

Please contact the DEA at 1-888-219-7898 or 1-800-882-9539. For additional information, you may want to visit the DEA web page at: <http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/>.

13. May I apply for a Medicaid or Medicare provider number with a temporary Georgia Medical License?

NO, the Medicaid and Medicare programs **DO NOT ACCEPT** temporary Georgia Medical Licenses for billing purposes. You must have your permanent Georgia Medical License **BEFORE** you apply for your provider number.

14. I am scheduled to complete my residency-training program in June of next year. When should I apply for my Georgia Medical License?

Applications for a Georgia Medical License remain active for **one year** only. Therefore, you should not apply for a medical license with the Georgia Medical Board until three (3) or four (4) months prior to completing your post-graduate training if you attended a medical school in the United States or Canada. International medical school graduates whose schools are not listed in the Medical Schools Recognized by the Medical Board of California must complete 3 years of post-graduate training in a program accredited by the ACGME. Therefore, international medical school graduates should not apply until their 32nd month of training (2 years and 8 months).

15. May I place my Georgia Medical License “on hold” or in an “inactive status”?

YES, you may request an application to have your active medical license placed on an inactive status. By doing so, you will receive all correspondence from the Medical Board and you will not receive a renewal notice while on inactive status (lapsed licensees are not contacted once the license has lapsed.)

- 16. What is the fee to place my license on inactive status?**
There is a **one-time fee of \$200.00** to place your license in “inactive” status. Carefully consider your decision to place your license on inactive status because should you want to place your license on active status again, **you will have to apply for reinstatement of your license and pay a fee of \$300.00. The application process can take six (6) to eight (8) weeks to reinstate your license to active status;** therefore, you may find it easier to pay the renewal fee every two years than to go through the application process to reinstate your inactive status.
- 17. 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 and sign and date the request and give 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.
- 18. May a physician who is licensed in another state practice in Georgia using a license from another state?**
ONLY under the unique circumstances where a doctor who is licensed and is in good standing in another state and who is employed by a federal installation, such as a veterans' hospital, an Indian reservation or military base. Such a doctor may not practice elsewhere in the state of Georgia without first obtaining a Georgia Medical License.
- 19. Are doctors in Georgia required to obtain Continuing Medical Education (CME's) every year?**
Physicians are required to complete twenty hours per year of Continuing Medical Education Units or, 40 hours over the two year validation period of the license.
- 20. How do you know they are fulfilling the continuing education obligation?**
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.
- 21. How do I find out about career opportunities in rural Georgia?**
For information concerning practice opportunities in rural Georgia, please visit www.dch.ga.gov
- 22. How do I find out about minority health concerns in Georgia?**
For information concerning minority health issues in Georgia, please please visit www.dch.ga.gov
- 23. How do I register for USMLE Step 3?**
For information on how to register for USMLE Step 3, contact the Federation of State Medical Boards at www.FSMB.org or by phone at 817-868-4000.
- 24. 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.