



New Mexico Medical Board
2055 S. Pacheco Street, Building 400
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505-476-7220
Fax: 505-476-7233

Bill Richardson
Governor

Steven Weiner, MD
Chair

TO ALL APPLICANTS

Thank you for requesting an application for a license to practice medicine in New Mexico. We look forward to working with you to process your application.

A license to practice medicine in New Mexico is a privilege, not a right. The statutory mandate of the New Mexico Medical Board is to protect the health and safety of the citizens of the state, and the members of the Medical Board take their responsibilities very seriously. Upon completion, your application will be reviewed for quality assurance and reviewed by the medical and executive directors of the board. You may be required to come to the Board office in Santa Fe for an interview as part of the application process. *Please do not assume that licensure is a mere formality or that the granting of a license is automatic.*

PLEASE DO NOT: close your practice and move your family to New Mexico, enroll your children in school, begin construction of a new home, execute contracts with prospective practice partners, schedule patients, or begin practicing until you have received a license.

We will make every effort to complete the application process as quickly as possible but occasionally we encounter unanticipated questions or difficulties that may cause delay or even denial. We will not begin working on your application until we have received a completed NM Statewide application and all required fees. Please understand that much of the supporting documentation for your application has to be obtained from third parties, which can add time to the licensing process. In addition some applications, such as those with a history of disciplinary action, require in-depth investigation that may take extra time and require your cooperation.

One sure way to make certain that your application is processed as efficiently as possible is to read the directions carefully, and call or email the Board office if you have any questions. Our staff will be happy to assist you in any way we can.

Again, thank you for your application. *We look forward to working with you to make this process as rapid and painless as possible!*

A. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL APPLICANTS

I. EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for licensure by examination must have attained a passing score of at least 75 on each required exam. An applicant may attempt to successfully complete any part of a board-approved examination **six times**, as long as the entire examination is successfully completed within **seven years** from the date the first step of the examination is passed. MD/PhD candidates must successfully complete the entire examination within ten years from the date the first step of the examination is passed.

- **Board Approved Examinations** (for more specific information see Part 3 of rules):
 1. All three “steps” of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE).
 2. Two “components” of the Federation Licensing Examination (FLEX).
 3. All three “parts” of the National Board of Medical Examiners examination (NBME).
 4. Any of the above listed in (1), (2) or (3) in an approved “hybrid” combination, per Board rule 16.10.3.8 NMAC.
 5. The Board will accept the results of State Board examinations if taken and passed **before December 1973** (one of the national licensing examinations is required after that date).
 6. Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination (MCCQE).
 7. International medical graduates must have passed the ECFMG exam plus one of the approved combinations listed in Board rule 16.10.3.8 NMAC.

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE BY EXAM

- **Education Requirements:** All applicants must have graduated and received a diploma from a New Mexico Board approved school, or present proof of completion of a program substantially equivalent to an United States medical school as determined by an international education credential evaluation service approved by the Board.
- **Postgraduate Training Requirements:** All applicants for a license must have satisfactorily completed twenty-four (24) months of postgraduate medical education in a program approved by the Board. The ACGME *Graduate Medical Education Directory* and the *Directory of Residency Programs of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada* are the official lists approved by the Board.
- **Examination Requirements:** All applicants for licensure by examination must have successfully passed one of the examination or combination of examinations listed above.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE BY ENDORSEMENT

Applicants who meet **ALL** of the following requirements may apply for licensure by endorsement, which means the Board does not require primary source verification of medical education, transcripts, postgraduate training and examination history:

1. Hold an unrestricted license in another state and be free of disciplinary history, license restrictions, or pending investigations in all states where they hold a license;
2. Graduated from an approved medical school or hold current ECFMG certification;
3. Hold current certification from a medical specialty board recognized by ABMS; and
4. Has been a licensed physician in the United States or Canada and has practiced medicine (not including postgraduate training) in the United States or Canada immediately preceding the application for at least three years.

A complete copy of the rules may be downloaded from the website at www.nmmb.state.nm.us. Part 2 of the rules addresses licensure requirements in detail, and Part 3 addresses examinations approved by the Board.

B. SELECT AN APPLICATION METHOD

You may choose from three methods to obtain licensure in New Mexico. Step-by-step instructions for each option are included in this instruction material. All methods begin with the Statewide Application for licensing, approved by the NM Medical Society and the NM Hospitals & Health Systems Association.

Option One: Apply directly to the NM Medical Board

The third choice is the traditional application process, which requires **you** to request required documentation verifying your professional recommendations, licenses, work history and hospital and healthcare affiliations, medical education, post-graduate training, and examination history from the source and have it sent directly to the Board office from the source. If you choose this method you will need to follow essentially the same process next time you apply for a license in another state. In addition, when you begin practicing in New Mexico you may still need to go through HSC for credentialing purposes.

Option Two: Use HSC to gather your required source documents

If you are getting ready to start practice in New Mexico we suggest you apply through the NM Hospital Services Corporation Credentials Verification Organization (HSC). They will not only provide nearly all of the required documents for your license application, but they will also have the information available to process your application for privileges at most New Mexico hospitals and credentialing for all health plans in the state. It's "one stop" credentialing to help you start practice as soon as possible and is endorsed by the New Mexico Medical Society.

Option Three: Using FCVS to gather your required source documents (not to be used if qualifying by endorsement)

If you think that you may apply for licenses in several states over the coming years, completion of the application packet by using the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS) to supply core documents (verification of medical education, PGT and exam history) may save you time and money by requiring only one set of source documents for your education and training. **You must still complete the Statewide MD Application and submit it to the NMMB with the applicable fee.** FCVS requires a one-time submission of education and training documents directly to a depository maintained by FSMB. Once an applicant satisfies FCVS criteria, those documents that do not change over time need not be reproduced when you apply for a license in another jurisdiction (e.g., transcripts, postgraduate training records, exam scores). Again the idea is to expedite the application process and eliminate the duplication of education and training documents each time you seek licensure in another state. Not all jurisdictions accept FCVS documents, but most states do and some actually require its use. You may obtain additional information or an application to apply for a FCVS Profile by calling 1-888-ASKFCVS (275-3287) or checking their website at www.fsmb.org, then the link to the Credential Verification Service.

Regardless of what application method you use, we urge you to retain a copy of your application.

C. CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECK

Beginning in July 2007, the NM Medical Board began requiring that all applicants for initial licensure **submit fingerprints** and other information necessary for a state and national criminal background check, at their cost. Like other state medical boards around the country, the NM Medical Board will conduct criminal background checks in order to fulfill its statutory mandate to protect the health and safety of the NM public. The applicant is responsible for any costs associated with obtaining fingerprints.

Will the criminal background check slow down my license application?

An application for initial licensure will not be considered complete until the required fingerprint cards and forms have been received in the board office. However, completed applications will be processed pending the outcome of the background check, and licenses may be granted while the screening is still pending. If the background check reveals a felony or a violation of the Medical Practice Act the licensee will be notified and the Board will determine if the applicant is eligible for licensure or if disciplinary action will be taken against the licensee.

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

- 1) Two completed fingerprint cards must be submitted. The following boxes on the fingerprint cards MUST be completed: Signature of person being fingerprinted/Name /AKA (if applicable) /DOB /CTZ /SEX /RACE /HGT /WGT /EYES /HAIR /PLACE OF BIRTH
- 2) You must also submit one completed Fingerprint Certification Form, one completed and notarized Authorization for Release of Information Form, and a Background Check Processing Fee of \$36.00. This fee may be paid with a check, money order or credit card, and may be combined with your license application fee.
- 3) Applications that do not include each of these items will not be processed. Fingerprint cards that are incomplete will be sent back to the applicant and the application will not be processed.
- 4) You must have your fingerprints taken by a qualified individual. Qualified individuals include a public law enforcement official or other agency staff trained by the NM Department of Public Safety (DPS) or equivalent state agency. Public law enforcement agencies include the Department of Public Safety, county sheriff, as well as state, municipal, campus, military and tribal police. In some locations it may be possible to find other agencies with staff trained to take fingerprints, including some local school districts. Some agencies may charge a fee to take fingerprints. The applicant is responsible to pay the fee to the fingerprinting agency.
- 5) Fingerprint cards that do not meet Department of Public Safety and FBI standards will be returned to the applicant. Board staff and fingerprint scanning technology will be able to make an initial determination regarding acceptable quality before the cards are sent for processing, which will help keep turn-around times as short as possible.

Fingerprint cards cannot be downloaded from the Board's web site. Blank fingerprint cards will be sent to you upon receipt of your application and applicable application fee.