

CAREER RESOURCE

Board certification and continuing certification

An educational explainer of how psychiatry board certification and its maintenance work through the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN). Requirements change; verify current ABPN policy.

Educational example only. This is not legal, medical, or compliance advice, and it is not a ready-to-use legal document. Requirements vary by state, payer, and setting. Adapt anything like this to your own situation and have it reviewed by qualified legal and compliance counsel licensed in your jurisdiction before using it in a practice. You are responsible for compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, including HIPAA. shrinkiatry publishes professional commentary and education, not legal or medical advice.

Current as of July 7, 2026. Laws, payer rules, and billing codes change. Confirm the current requirements for your jurisdiction and setting before you rely on anything here.

Initial certification

After completing an ACGME-accredited psychiatry residency, physicians become eligible to sit the ABPN certification examination in psychiatry. Passing it makes you board certified.

Continuing certification

- ABPN certification is time-limited and maintained through a continuing certification program (formerly called maintenance of certification)
- Components generally include holding an active license, ongoing continuing medical education, self-assessment or improvement activities, and an assessment of knowledge
- ABPN has offered an article-based pathway as an alternative to a single long recertification exam; confirm which options are current

Subspecialties

Subspecialty certificates, such as child and adolescent or addiction psychiatry, are earned after accredited fellowship training and are maintained on their own cycle.

Verify

Certification rules evolve. Confirm the current requirements, timelines, and pathways directly with the ABPN before making decisions.

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