



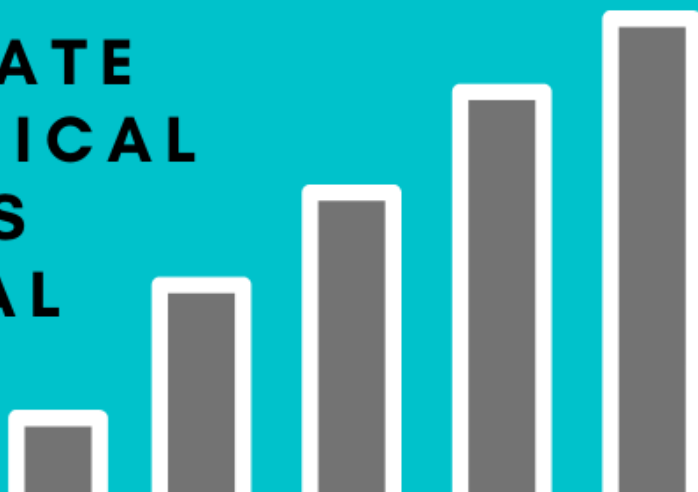
MEDICALDIGEST

Spring 2020

www.albme.org

The Board of Medical Examiners approved 1,482 new applicants for licensure in 2019, a 7.7% increase over 2018. In 2019, the Board also issued 135 new Physician Assistant licenses and approved 2,460 collaborative practices.

ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



A. Applicants Certified to the Medical Licensure Commission

1. Certificates of Qualification issued	1,482
a. Full MD	1,084
b. Full DO	169
i. Full MD/DO applicants accepting Non-Disciplinary Citation with Administrative Charge	54
c. Limited	202
d. Retired Senior Volunteer	1
e. Special Purpose	26

B. Certificate of Qualification Renewals

1. Limited COQ renewal	391
2. Retired Senior Volunteer COQ renewal	4

C. Interstate Medical Licensure Compact

1. Letters of qualification issued to other states	46
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2. Letters of qualification denied / withdrawn 9

D. Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate

1. New Certificates Issued 1,174
2. Expired Certificates Reissued 322
3. Certificates Renewed..... 12,554

E. Pain Management Services

1. New Registrations Issued 63
 a. Initial Location..... 37
 b. Additional Location 26
2. Expired Registrations Reissued 7
3. Registrations Renewed 542
 a. Initial Location..... 450
 b. Additional Location 92

F. Physician Assistants

1. New Physician Assistant licenses issued 135
2. Expired Physician Assistant licenses reissued 12
3. Physician assistant licenses renewed..... 955
4. Physician assistants registered to physicians (New) 308
5. Total PA/Physician registrations 874
6. Physician assistants granted temporary license..... 15
7. Temporary physician assistant license converted to full license 15
8. Anesthesiologist assistant licenses issued 1
9. Anesthesiologist assistant licenses renewed 22
10. Anesthesiologist assistants granted temporary license 0
11. Temporary anesthesiologist assistant licenses converted to full license 0
12. Anesthesiologist assistants registered to physicians (New) 1
13. Total AA/Physician registrations 21
14. New PA Qualified Alabama Controlled Substances Certificates issued 49
15. Expired PA Qualified Alabama Controlled Substances Certificates reissued 4
16. PA Qualified Alabama Controlled Substances Certificates renewed 157
17. New PA Limited Purpose Special Permits issued 40
18. Expired PA Limited Purpose Special Permits reissued 2
19. PA Limited Purpose Special Permits renewed 109

G. Advanced Practice Nurses (CRNP / CNM)

1. Collaboration Registrations issued 2,460
2. New APN Qualified Alabama Controlled Substances Certificates issued..... 337
3. Expired APN Qualified Alabama Controlled Substances Certificates reissued 37
4. APN Qualified Alabama Controlled Substances Certificates renewed..... 860
5. New APN Limited Purpose Special Permits issued..... 210
6. Expired APN Limited Purpose Special Permits reissued 16
7. APN Limited Purpose Special Permits renewed..... 555
8. Collaborative practice educational site visits..... 8
9. Collaborative practice compliance seminars 7
 a. Full seminar..... 1
 b. Condensed group seminar 6

H. Enforcement Issues

1. Enforcement issues from prior years 9
 a. Issues resolved without formal investigation 8
 b. Issues referred for formal investigation/Resolved..... 1
2. Formal investigations pending from prior years 127
 a. Investigations resolved..... 95
 b. Investigations pending resolution 32
3. Enforcement issues 2019 327
 Prescribing related..... 65
 a. Issues resolved without formal investigation 51
 b. Issues referred for formal investigation/Resolved..... 90

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c. Issues referred for formal investigation/Pending	166
d. Issues referred for other resolution	20
4. All formal investigations pending resolution (2019 and prior)	198

I. Disciplinary / Confidential Actions

1. ACSC / QACSC surrender / revocation / restriction / reinstatement	6
2. ACSC restriction terminated	1
3. Certificate of Qualification denied	0
4. Certificate of Qualification surrendered	7
5. Letters of Concern	81
Prescribing related	13
6. Interviews conducted	41
7. Voluntary Agreements entered into	10
Prescribing related	4
8. Voluntary Agreements terminated	0
9. Voluntary Restriction on Certificate of Qualification entered into	2
10. Voluntary Restriction terminated	0
11. Licensees' files flagged	4
12. ABME Physician Monitoring Program – Licensees currently monitored	130
13. ABME Physician Monitoring Program – Licensees monitored since 1990	1,620
14. Non-disciplinary Board Orders	28
a. Continuing Medical Education	25
Prescribing related	12
b. Evaluation	3
15. Cases sent for expert review	11
16. Administrative Complaints filed with the Medical Licensure Commission	18
17. Administrative Complaints with Petition for Summary Suspension of Medical License filed with the Medical Licensure Commission	11
a. Revocation	2
b. Probation	3
c. Pending	6
18. Notice to Contest Reinstatement Filed with the Medical Licensure Commission	1
19. Administrative fines (ABME and MLC)	35
20. Administrative costs (ABME and MLC)	10



Notice: No Form/Payment Required to Change CRNP/CNM Work Hours

When a Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner's or Certified Nurse Midwife's work hours change, it is not necessary to fill out a Commencement of Collaborative Practice application or pay a fee. You can simply contact Marshika Watkins or Linda Stripling to make a change in the hours.

Additionally, collaborative practice agreements are no longer renewed. Only new collaborative agreements are required to be registered using a Collaborative Practice Commencement Form and paying the \$200 fee. The collaborating physician or the CRNP/CNM is responsible for notifying the Board when a collaborative practice has terminated.



Board Opinion-Ultrasound Guided Egg Retrieval Requires Registration for Office Based Surgery

In January 2020, the Board considered the question, "Should a physician who is performing ultrasound guided egg retrieval with minimal sedation be required to register for office-based surgery," and issued the opinion that a physician performing office-based ultrasound guided egg retrieval should register as a provider of office based surgery.

For further information, please see our web page concerning office based surgery at www.albme.org or contact Ms. Pat Ward at (334) 242-4116.



Former General Counsel Shaner Retires

Patricia Emfinger Shaner, J.D., became a part of the legal staff of the Board of Medical Examiners in September 1986. In 1999, at the request and recommendation of the General Counsel to the Board, Wendell R. Morgan, J.D., Ms. Shaner was appointed to the position, and Mr. Morgan then served as Associate General Counsel until his retirement from the Board. On December 31, 2019, after a long and distinguished legal career, Ms. Shaner retired from the Office of the General Counsel.

Ms. Shaner is a 1979 graduate of the Cumberland School of Law, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama, and served as an Associate Editor of the Cumberland Law Review.

DEA Alert – Scam Targeting DEA Registrants



The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has provided the following advisory information:

“The United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is aware that registrants are receiving telephone calls and emails by criminals identifying themselves as DEA employees or other law enforcement personnel. The criminals mask

their telephone number on caller ID by showing the DEA Registration Support 800 number.

Please be aware that a DEA employee would not contact a registrant and demand money or threaten to suspend a registrant’s DEA registration.

If you are contacted by a person purporting to work for DEA and seeking money or threatening to

suspend your DEA registration, submit the information on the DEA Diversion Control Division website www.DEADiversion.usdoj.gov and select the link for “Extortion Scam Online Reporting.”

For more information, contact your local DEA Field Office, which may be found at <https://apps.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/contactDea/spring/fullSearch>.

You may also contact the Registration Service Center: 1-800-882-9539 or DEA.Registration.Help@usdoj.gov.

The Alabama Board of Medical Examiners has been informed that the criminals have also posed as Board Investigators or other staff in attempts to extort physicians. The Board and Medical Licensure Commission do not send demand letters or threaten licensees with arrest, nor do they have the authority to issue or influence arrest warrants.



Board waives CME audit for 2020 credits, allows additional time to meet CME requirement

On April 16, the Board voted to waive the annual continuing medical education audit that would normally be conducted in the calendar year 2021 for CME credits obtained in calendar year 2020 and to offer physicians, Physician Assistants, and Anesthesiologist Assistants the option to obtain 50 CME credits spanning calendar years 2020 and 2021.

Licensee Portal provides online services

The Board and Commission online Licensee Portal for licensees and registrants features:

- Change demographic information
- Print license/ACSC certificates
- Print renewal receipts
- Terminate PA/AA registration agreements and CRNP/CNM collaborations
- Pay administrative fines

Additional online features will be added as they are developed.

See the “Enter Licensee Portal” tab above “Quick Links” at www.albme.org.

CME Retirement Waiver

Author: Patrick O'Neill, M.D.



Rules of the Board address retired physicians who are not engaged in the practice of medicine and who, nevertheless, want to maintain a current license. Those physicians can be excused from the annual minimum continuing medical education requirement by submitting an application for a "Continuing Medical Education Exemption Due

to Retirement". The waiver includes a statement from the physician, attesting that he or she is retired and no longer practices medicine in any form, including the treatment of or prescribing to family, friends, in-laws, or others.

The Board rule states that "an application for a waiver due to retirement shall be deemed a request for a voluntary restriction on the physician's certificate of qualification and license to practice medicine." This restriction prohibits the physician from engaging in the practice of medicine in any form, including prescribing of any medications, while the waiver is in effect. Such a license is identified as "active with restriction due to retirement."

The restriction is non-disciplinary, is not reported to the National Practitioner Data Bank, and is not published in the Medical Digest. However, the restriction is a matter of public record and is available to any person or organization requesting verification of/information

about a physician's license.

This waiver can only be granted when a physician does not practice in any form. The physician must voluntarily surrender his/her current Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate.

If a physician classified as retired decides to change his/her status and reenter the active practice of medicine in any form, whether reopening an office or only working half a day a week in a charity clinic, it is necessary for the physician to submit a request to remove the waiver status, along with documentation of having complied with the annual continuing medical education requirement.

If a physician applies for removal of the waiver status after having been out of clinical practice for longer than two years, the physician may be subject to Board rules concerning reentry into practice, which may require the physician to complete a reentry plan prior to or concurrently with the return to the active practice of medicine.



Medicare Bonus Payments and Physician Shortage Areas

If you are a physician providing Medicare services to patients in a Geographic Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), you are eligible for a 10 percent Medicare bonus payment for your professional services. Psychiatrists are also eligible when providing services in a Geographic Mental Health HPSA.

In addition to bonus payments, HPSAs also open the door to many federal grants and for medical school loan repayments and scholarship opportunities available through the National Health Service Corps. Many of these programs are available to physicians, nurses, and certain other health professionals.

Geographic HPSAs are primarily determined by the ratio of primary care and mental health physician work hours to the population of the area. **This ratio is based on information that you enter on your medical license renewal. Therefore, it is vital for this information to be accurate and complete.**

For more information about the HPSA designation process, call the Alabama Office of Primary Care and Rural Health at (334) 206-3807 or visit <https://bhw.hrsa.gov/shortage-designation/hpsas>.

Management of Medical Records – AMA Opinion



The American Medical Association Code of Medical Ethics Opinion 3.3.1 addresses the responsible management of medical records.

It states:

Medical records serve important patient interests for present health care and future needs, as well as insurance, employment, and other purposes. In keeping with the professional responsibility to safeguard the confidentiality of patients' personal information, physicians have an ethical obligation to manage medical records appropriately.

This obligation encompasses not only managing the records of current patients, but also retaining old records against possible future need, and providing copies or transferring records to a third party as requested by the patient or the patient's authorized representative when the physician leaves a practice, sells his or her practice, retires, or dies.

To manage medical records responsibly, physicians (or the individual responsible for the practice's medical records) should:

(a) Ensure that the practice or institution has and enforces clear policy prohibiting access to patients' medical records by unauthorized staff.

(b) Use medical considerations to determine how long to keep records, retaining information that another physician seeing the patient for the first time could reasonably be expected to need or want to know unless otherwise required by law, including:

1. Immunization records, which should be kept indefinitely
2. Records of significant health events or conditions and interventions that could be expected to have a bearing on the patient's future health care needs, such as records of chemotherapy

(c) Make the medical record available:

1. As requested or authorized by the patient (or the patient's authorized representative)
2. To the succeeding physician or other authorized person when the physician discontinues his or her practice (whether through departure, sale of the practice, retirement, or death)
3. As otherwise required by law

(d) Never refuse to transfer the record on request by the patient or the patient's authorized representative, for any reason.

(e) Charge a reasonable fee (if any) for the cost of transferring the record.

(f) Appropriately store records not transferred to the patient's current physician.

(g) Notify the patient about how to access the stored record and for how long the record will be available.

(h) Ensure that records that are to be discarded are destroyed to protect confidentiality.

Link: <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/ethics/management-medical-records>

Report of Public Actions of the Medical Licensure Commission and Board of Medical Examiners

Mission: The Alabama Board of Medical Examiners and the Medical Licensure Commission are charged with protecting the health and safety of the citizens of the state of Alabama.

BME - January 2020

- Effective Jan. 24, the application for certificate of qualification to practice medicine in Alabama of Tanyatorm Ghanjanasak, DO, was denied.

- On Jan. 15, the Board accepted the voluntary surrender of the Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate of David Rick Brown, MD, lic. no. MD.10423, Birmingham AL.

- On Jan. 15, the Board placed on indefinite probation the Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate of Edith H. McCreddie, MD, lic. no. MD.23369, Mobile AL.

MLC - January 2020

- Effective Jan. 30, the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Thomas D. Nielsen, MD, lic. no. MD.26107, Mountain Brook AL, is reinstated to full, unrestricted status.

- Effective Jan. 30, the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Patrick E. Ifediba, MD, lic. no. MD.19014, Birmingham AL, is revoked.

- Effective Jan. 15, the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Willie James Chester, Jr., DO, lic. no. DO.138, Wetumpka AL, is reinstated with probation.

- On Jan. 15, the Commission affirmed the Board's denial of the application for reinstatement of Joseph Ngui Mwau Ndolo, MD, lic. no. 21199, Fairhope AL.

- Effective Jan. 15, the Commission granted the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Craig C. Oliver, DO, lic. no. DO.2104, with conditions.

- On Jan. 6, the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Karen S. G. Moore, MD, lic. no. MD.25444, Tuscaloosa AL, was temporarily suspending pending a hearing.

BME - February 2020

- Effective Feb. 20, the Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate of Lawrence T. Williams, DO, lic. no. DO.100, Montgomery AL, is reinstated to full, unrestricted status.

- Effective Feb. 19, the certificate of qualification and license to practice medicine in Alabama of Neelesh A. Tipnis, MD, lic. no. MD.36368, is voluntarily surrendered.

- On Feb. 13, the Board issued a Consent Order assessing an administrative fine against Paul R. Brown, PA, lic. no. PA.1297, Perrysburg OH.

MLC - February 2020

- On Feb. 14, the Commission issued an Order suspending the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Richard L. Snellgrove, MD, lic. no. MD.16922, pending completion of continuing medical education, after which time the license will be reinstated on indefinite probationary status, and restricting Dr. Snellgrove from hereafter prescribing any controlled substances in Alabama.

BME - March 2020

- Effective Mar. 25, the Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate of Gary Lee Howard, MD, lic. no. MD.13355, Hoover AL, is placed on probation with conditions.

- Effective Mar. 24, the Alabama Controlled Substances Certificate of Willie J. Chester, Jr., DO, lic. no. DO.138, Pike Road, AL, is reinstated to full, unrestricted status.

MLC - March 2020

- Effective Mar. 23, the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Francene A. Gayle, MD, lic. no. MD.25786, Huntsville AL, is revoked.

- On Mar. 12, the Commission entered an Order revoking the license to practice medicine in Alabama of John J. Di Blasi, DO, lic. no. DO.1696, Coleman FL.

- Effective Mar. 12, the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Richard A. Klimas, MD, lic. no. MD.12803, Huntsville, AL, is reinstated to full, unrestricted status.

- On Mar. 12, the Commission entered an Order placing on probation the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Karen S. G. Moore, MD, lic. no. MD.25444, Tuscaloosa AL.

- On Mar. 12, the Commission entered an Order placing on probation and suspending for the length of the probation the license to practice medicine in Alabama of Sherri L. Studstill, MD, lic. no. MD.33412, Phenix City AL.

- On Mar. 4, the Commission entered an Order lifting with restrictions the temporary suspension of the license to practice medicine in Alabama of George E. S. Hipp, MD, lic. no. MD.28785



Alabama State Board of Medical Examiners

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Upcoming BME Meeting Dates

May 20 • June 17 • July 15 • Aug. 19

The public portion of each meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. CT (unless otherwise indicated) in the Dixon-Parker Building at 848 Washington Avenue in Montgomery, AL.

Meeting agendas and a full list of meeting dates and times can be found online at www.albme.org.

Upcoming MLC Meeting Dates

May 27 • June 24 • July 23 • Aug. 26

Meetings are held in the Dixon-Parker Building at 848 Washington Avenue in Montgomery, AL.

Have questions or need assistance?

Alabama Board of Medical Examiners (334) 242-4116

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About MedicalDigest...

MedicalDigest is the official publication of the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners and Medical Licensure Commission. It is published four times per year.

Past issues are archived and available on the Board's website at www.albme.org and listed as *Newsletter and Report*.

Questions? Please contact the Board of Medical Examiners at (334) 242-4116.

The Board welcomes the following new employees to the Collaborative Practice department:

Amanda Hargrove, CRNP – Nurse Consultant
Suzanne Lazenby, RN – Nurse Consultant
Marshika Watkins – Administrative Assistant