



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

TREATING OUR FAMILY AND YOURS

HANDBOOK OF THE

COUNCIL ON CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

Division of Continuing Medical Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

The *Handbook of the Council on Continuing Medical Education* is a procedure manual for use by the AOA Council on Continuing Medical Education (CCME) and other AOA officers. It includes a description of the Council's purpose, function, structure, operation procedures, and pertinent information.

II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- A. The Council on CME, formerly called the Committee on CME, was established in January 1973 for the purpose of directing the continuing medical education program of the AOA. The CCME coordinates the activities for continuing educational programs, recommends CME policy to the Bureau of Osteopathic Education, establishes guidelines for the evaluation of CME programs, and approves Category 1 CME Sponsors.
- B. Responsibilities and Function of the Council are:
1. Acts as a consulting and guiding Council for the AOA Division of Continuing Medical Education and for all osteopathic institutions.
 2. Considers requests for reduction or waiver of CME requirements based on individual mitigating circumstances.
 - c. Review formal education programs to determine if the programs qualify for credit within AOA guidelines, and deny CME credits at its discretion.
 4. Review applications by CME sponsors for accreditation or reaccreditation, approves or denies the applications, and notifies each applicant of the disposition of the application in a timely manner. Organizations receiving denials of accreditation may request reconsideration by the CCME at its next meeting or may appeal to the Bureau of Osteopathic Education.
 5. Review the results of the document surveys and evaluation processes of accredited CME sponsors. CME sponsors must maintain their accreditation through successful participation in the survey and evaluation process of the AOA accreditation program for Category 1 CME sponsors.
 6. Review "CME Activity Report" of osteopathic physicians who fail to meet their CME requirements at the end of each 3-year cycle.
 7. Meetings of the CCME shall be held at times determined by the Council Chairman and the Secretary and not in association with other conventions or meetings. CCME meetings are held in conjunction with the "cluster meetings."

8. Members of the Council will be mailed a draft copy of the minutes of the Council after each meeting.
9. Make recommendations on policy items to the Bureau of Osteopathic Education and through that body to the Board of Trustees and, where appropriate, to the House of Delegates.
10. All agenda items must be submitted in writing to the Department of Education Division of CME at least thirty (30) days in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting.
11. Provides for on site consultation within the accreditation program for CME sponsors. The purpose of these visits will be consultative in purpose to assist CME sponsors to achieve improved compliance with AOA CME accreditation requirements, and to enhance the sponsors' abilities to provide quality CME programs for osteopathic physicians. The costs of such consultation shall be borne by the CME sponsor.

III. COUNCIL STRUCTURE

- A. Appointment of representative and at-large members to the CCME will be staggered and limited to no more than three consecutive three-year terms for nine (9) years cumulative. Membership and chairperson appointments would be limited to a maximum of nine consecutive years and six years respectively in any one bureau, council or committee. Students and intern/residents may serve a one (1) year term.
 1. Qualification of the Members
 - a. All osteopathic physicians on the CME Council must be members of the AOA in good standing, and shall conform to its constitution, bylaws and code of ethics.
 - b. No members of the AOA Board of Trustees shall simultaneously hold a position on the CCME.
- B. The CCME shall consist of eleven (11) members.
 1. House of Delegates Nominee:
 - a. One (1) position, three (3) year term.
 - b. Experience in and commitment to excellence in continuing medical education.
 - c. AOA member, osteopathic physician.
 - d. Appointment by AOA President.

2. Uniformed Services:
 - a. One (1) position, three (3) year term.
 - b. Experience in and commitment to excellence in continuing medical education.
 - c. AOA member, osteopathic physician.
 - d. Appointment by AOA President, following consultation with AMOPS.

3. Emerging States Nominee:
 - a. One (1) position, three (3) year term.
 - b. Experience in and commitment to excellence in continuing medical education.
 - c. AOA member, osteopathic physician from a small state.
 - d. Appointment by AOA President.

4. AOSED Nominee:
 - a. One (1) position, three (3) year term.
 - b. Experience in and commitment to excellence in continuing medical education.
 - c. Appointment by AOA President

5. AACOM Nominee:
 - a. One (1) position, three (3) year term.
 - b. Member of the administration or faculty of a COM.
 - c. Experience in and commitment to excellence in continuing medical education
 - d. Appointment by AOA President.

6. AODME Nominee:
 - a. One (1) position, three (3) year term.
 - b. AOA member, osteopathic physician or Ph.D.
 - c. Must currently be in position as a medical educator in an AOA-accredited teaching institution.
 - d. Experience in and commitment to excellence in continuing medical education.
 - e. Appointment by AOA President.

7. Practice Affiliate Representatives (2):
 - a. Two (2) positions, staggered three (3) year terms,
 - b. Practice affiliate appointments, process to be determined.
 - c. AOA members, osteopathic physicians.
 - d. Experience in and commitment to excellence in continuing medical education.
 - e. May not be from the same practice affiliate.

- f. Appointment by AOA President.
- 8. Member-At-Large:
 - a. One (1) position, three (3) year term.
 - b. Representative of members-at-large.
 - c. Experience in and commitment to excellence in continuing medical education.
 - d. Appointment by AOA President.
- 9. Student
 - a. One (1) position, one (1) year term.
 - b. Must be enrolled in an osteopathic college.
 - c. Appointed by AOA President.
- 10. Interns/Residents, Bureau
 - a. One (1) position, one (1) year term.
 - b. Must be enrolled in an osteopathic internship/residency program
 - c. Appointed by AOA President.

C. Appointment of Officers and Term of Office

- 1. The Chair shall be appointed by the AOA President from the membership of the Council for a two (2) year term.
- 2. The Vice-Chairman shall be appointed annually by the AOA President from the membership of the Council.
- 3. Other members shall be appointed by the AOA President for three-year terms which shall be staggered.
- 4. All appointments shall be approved by the AOA Board of Trustees.
- 5. Duties of the Officers
 - a. Chairman
 - i. The Chairman of CCME shall preside at all meetings, appoint subcommittees, and act as ex officio member of the subcommittees. The Chairman currently serves as an advisor to the Bureau of Osteopathic Education.

- ii. All reports, resolutions, and recommendations of the CCME shall be presented by the Chairman to the Bureau of Osteopathic Education and the AOA Board of Trustees.
 - iii. The Chairman shall determine the dates of the CME meetings in consultation with the Secretary of the Council and with the executive office, prior to annual and mid-year meetings of the Board of Trustees. Meetings shall be held in a cost-effective manner and in conjunction with the “cluster meetings.”
 - iv. When deemed appropriate, the Chairman shall ask the Secretary to provide pertinent material to the members and request a mail vote.
- b. Vice-Chair
- i. The Vice-Chairman shall assume the duties of the chair in the absence or incapacity of the chairman.
 - ii. The AOA President shall select the Vice-Chairman from within the membership of the CCME.
 - iii. The Vice-Chairman shall assist the Chairman in carrying out the functions and duties of the CCME.
- c. Secretary
- i. The Secretary shall be a staff member of the Department of Education who is responsible for the administration of the CCME and its associated programs.
 - ii. The Secretary shall act as the correspondent for the chairman in response to questions or interpretation of the CME program.
 - iii. The Secretary shall coordinate the CME Council agenda:
 - (a) Make meeting arrangements through AOA executive office.
 - (b) Prepare meeting agendas.
 - (c) Develop correspondence and official reports to reflect CCME action.

- iv. The Secretary shall administer the schedule of the on-site surveys in accordance with the accreditation status determined by the CCME.
- v. The Secretary shall recommend the annual budget for the CCME in accordance with AOA policy.
- vi. The Secretary shall review the Handbook of the Council on Continuing Medical Education every three years.
- vii. The Secretary shall make available within three months all new and revised documents that have been approved by the AOA Board of Trustees.

D. Administrative Committee

1. The Administrative Committee is a standing subcommittee of the CCME composed of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and one other member of the CCME appointed annually by the chairman. The Secretary is a non-voting member who, in concert with the chairman, is responsible for the preparation of the agenda and reports to the full CCME.
2. Its function is to review and take final action on special consideration requests for category type and number of hours of CME credit awarded to an approved program or to an individual osteopathic physician.
3. The Administrative Committee shall also perform other necessary duties of the CCME between the regularly scheduled meetings.
4. The Administrative Committee shall also review policy items and basic documents prior to submission to the full CCME.
5. The Secretary shall be a non-voting member who shall supervise the preparation of the agenda and minutes of the meetings written minutes of actions and recommendations shall be submitted to the full council. The Secretary, in discussion with the recording secretary, shall notify the appropriate parties of actions taken on all items.
6. The Administrative Committee will ordinarily conduct its meetings by telephone conference or other electronic means, or in conjunction with a scheduled meeting of the full CCME. In all votes, the majority shall prevail. In the event that a mail ballot is required, items considered for action shall be sent to each member of the Administrative Committee who shall note his/her vote on the ballot and return it to the AOA Department of Education within 5 days of receipt. Members may also be asked to reply by phone and confirm their oral vote by completing the ballot as noted above.

7. The Administrative Committee may refer consideration of an agenda item to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the full Council.
8. All osteopathic physicians and all organizations and institutions participating in the AOA CME program have the right to appeal any decision made by the Administrative Committee.
9. The party who has brought a matter before the Administrative Committee may ask for the full Council to reconsider an action of the Administrative Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the full Council.

E. BOE, Appeals Process, BOE Representative(s)

1. The Bureau of Osteopathic Education (BOE) is a component of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Department of Educational Affairs. The BOE acts to make policy recommendations to the Board of Trustees in the areas of continuing medical education, postdoctoral training and international osteopathic education. (See Appendix A)
2. The BOE maintains an appeal process for review of actions of the COPT and the CCME
 - a. Two CME experts as members of the BOE
 - b. Each should have at least 3 years previous experience in:
 - i. CCME Membership
 - ii. Category 1 specialty planning committee member or experience in actively planning AOA CME programs or
 - iii. Category 1 CME Sponsors who provide quality CME programs
 - c. One member shall serve as the CME policy expert on the BOE Appeals Committee

IV. COUNCIL PROCEDURES

A. General

1. The CCME shall convene as a joint meeting.
2. The CCME shall, in all its deliberations requiring parliamentary procedure, operate according to Robert's Rule of Order newly revised.
3. During its meeting, the CCME shall take action by vote on all motions and resolutions presented.
4. A simple majority of the CCME shall constitute a quorum and be sufficient to consider any motion and/or resolution.
5. All resolutions regarding CME policies shall be posted on WWW.OSTEOPATHIC.ORG for sixty days for public comment following each meeting.
6. Final approval of the Board of Trustees final action will be updated and posted on the AOA website.

B. Agenda Preparation

1. All agenda items received are reviewed by the Secretary and approved by the Chairman for placement on the agenda for the next scheduled meeting.
2. Members shall be sent an advance copy of the agenda for review approximately two weeks prior to the CCME meeting. This advance agenda shall contain minutes, reports, policy items, and issues requiring advance review as determined by the chairman.

V. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Procedures for Appeals of the AOA Council on Continuing Medical Education

I. Bureau of Osteopathic Education and the Appeal Process

The Bureau of Osteopathic Education (BOE) is a component of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Department of Educational Affairs. The BOE receives reports and recommendations from its constituent councils: the Council on Continuing Medical Education (CCME) and the Council on Postdoctoral Training (COPT)¹. The Bureau acts to make policy recommendations to the Board of Trustees in the areas of continuing medical education, postdoctoral training and international osteopathic education. Additionally, through its operations, the BOE is responsible for assuring the AOA Board of Trustees, the osteopathic medical community and the public that its actions and the actions of its constituent councils and committees are in compliance with the policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the AOA and BOE.

The BOE maintains an appeal process for review of actions of the COPT and the CCME.² The appeal process is supervised by a standing Appeal Committee that is appointed each year pursuant to the procedures set forth below and in the *Handbook of the Bureau of Osteopathic Education (Handbook)*. Except as otherwise provided in this document, the BOE Appeal Committee shall be the first level for appeal from actions of the COPT and its subordinated councils and the CCME. Decisions of the BOE and its Appeal Committee may be appealed to the AOA Board of Trustees.

II. Meetings of the Appeal Committee

The Appeal Committee may hold meetings in conjunction with regularly scheduled BOE meetings. Additionally, where appropriate, the Appeal Committee Chair may call special meetings of the Committee with seven (7) days prior written notice of the time and date of such meetings to all Committee members. All program, OPTI and Specialty College appeal requests must occur within 60 days of appeal submission. Special meetings may take place telephonically or by other means of electronic communications. However, no meeting of the Appeal Committee may convene without three (3) members or alternate members present.

III. Membership in the Appeal Committee

Membership of the Appeal Committee shall be determined as described in the *Handbook*. The Appeal Committee shall be comprised of three (3) members of the BOE, elected by the entire BOE membership at the first meeting of the BOE after the AOA's annual meeting. One member of the BOE Appeal Committee will be a CME expert with at least three years experience from previous membership on the CCME or the Category 1 Sponsor planning committee. Members shall serve three (3) year staggered terms, with one

¹ The COPT includes two subordinated councils: the Program and Trainee Review Council (PTRC) and the Council on Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institutions (COPTI).² Where appropriate, appellants from decisions of the CCME may be required to appeal actions of the CCME to the CCME Review Panel before appealing to the BOE Appeal Committee.

² Where appropriate, appellants from decisions of the CCME may be required to appeal actions of the CCME to the CCME Review Panel before appealing to the BOE Appeal Committee.

(1) new member elected each year. Terms must be consistent with dates of appointment to the BOE. In the event that an Appeal Committee member cannot complete a three-year term, a replacement member shall be elected to complete the remainder of that individual's term.

In addition, three (3) BOE members shall be elected to serve as alternate members of the Appeal Committee. Alternates will be elected for staggered three (3) year terms, with one (1) new alternate member elected each year. Terms must be consistent with dates of appointment to the BOE. In the event that an alternate member of the Appeal Committee cannot complete the three-year term, a replacement member shall be elected to complete the remainder of that individual's term.

No member or alternate member of the Appeal Committee may hear or vote on an appeal when that member has previously acted on the appellant's case, or has any interest in or relationship to an appellant (e.g., works in the same institution). Where appropriate, members of the Appeal Committee may recuse themselves from hearing any appeal. An appellant may indicate their concerns about possible conflict(s) of interest with member(s) of the Appeal Committee.

IV. Appeal Requests

A. Who May Appeal

1. Any individual member, or an approved or accredited educational institution, may appeal any decision of the constituent committees of the BOE.
2. Specialty affiliates may appeal to the Appeal Committee, but must do so within thirty (30) days of receipt of the constituent council or committee decision. Thereafter, the Appeal Committee shall hear the appeal at a regular meeting or special meeting within sixty (60) days of appeal submission.
3. Constituent committees, councils, and/or bureaus of the AOA shall not initiate, or be granted, an appeal, but may request an appeal to the AOA Board of Trustees.

B. Scope of Appeal. The Appeal Committee has jurisdiction to consider appeals based on allegations of unequal application of regulations, requirements or standards; unwarranted discrimination; prejudice; unfairness; or improper conduct of all or any part of the action taken by the council or committee.

Appeals based on intern or resident contracts are not heard by the Bureau of Osteopathic Education, but shall be directed by the Committee to the AOA Board.

C. Initiation of Appeal. Appellants shall initiate the appeal process by submitting written requests for appeals to the Chair of the BOE. The request for appeal shall include a summary of the factual background surrounding the matter and the alleged basis for the appeal. Where possible, the request should be supported by documentation that either supports the appellant's position or provides information regarding facts or circumstances that the constituent council or committee did not give due consideration.

- D. Filing an Appeal Request. Appeal requests shall be filed with the Appeal Committee Chair and sent care of the following address: Secretary, Bureau of Osteopathic Education, American Osteopathic Association, 142 E. Ontario Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Appeal requests may also be submitted by email or other electronic communication by first contacting the Secretary for the appropriate address.

During the appeal process it is important that the Appeal Committee be notified of any change in address so that the procedure is not delayed because communications are not received in a timely fashion.

Following receipt of an appeal request, AOA staff shall review the request and documentation to confirm that the appeal meets the requirements set forth above and is within the Appeal Committee's jurisdiction. Appellants shall be notified by certified mail whether a request for appeal has been granted and provided information as to the anticipated date, time and location for the appeal hearing. If an appeal is granted, staff shall also notify the Secretary of the constituent council or committee and any other parties concerned with the decision.

- E. Effect of Appeal/Stay of Underlying Decision. Upon receipt of a request for an appeal, the underlying action ordered by the constituent council or committee shall be stayed. The Chair of the Appeal Committee shall review appeal petitions within one month of receipt to determine if the stay is necessary or appropriate. The parties shall be notified if the Chair decides to remove the stay. Appellants or appellees may submit written materials to the Chair in support of or opposition to a stay.
- F. Requests for Reconsideration. In addition to an appeal, specialty affiliates may seek reconsideration from the constituent committee. To request reconsideration, within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notice of action, the individual, institution or specialty affiliate seeking reconsideration shall submit a formal written request to the chair of the relevant council or committee and the BOE Chair. Requests for reconsideration shall be based on facts or information not known by the affiliate at the time the council or committee acted. The basis for the request for reconsideration must be stated in the request. Reconsideration is a discretionary action and not a right. Following receipt of a request for reconsideration, a constituent council or committee may choose not to consider a request for reconsideration. Decisions to grant or deny reconsideration cannot be appealed to the appeal committee.

V. Appeal Fees

All educational programs, specialty colleges and OPTIs must submit a \$2,500 appeal fee with the formal written appeal request. Appeal fees do not apply to individual requests from students or physicians, including trainees. Should the BOE Appeal Committee overturn a decision from one of the Education Councils, half the application fee (\$1,250) would be returned to the appellant, whether the decision was fully or partially overturned.

VI. Appeal Presentation and Protocol

- A. **Written Submissions.** After an appeal is granted, parties involved in the appeal may submit written materials in support of or opposition to the appeal. The written submissions should be submitted no later than ten (14) days before the appeal hearing date in order to ensure that the Committee has an opportunity to review the materials. The materials should include copies of appropriate documentation and be limited to the specific issues involved in the appeal. Personal narratives, without supporting documentation, are discouraged.

At the request of the Appeal Committee or a Council whose decision is involved in an appeal, a constituent committee may participate in the appeal process by submitting written documentation, attending the appeal hearing to respond to questions of the Appeal Committee or, with the consent of the Appeal Committee chair, making an oral presentation at the appeal hearing.

Third-party presentations concerning the appeal, either orally or in writing, will be accepted in appropriate circumstances. The other parties to the appeal will be advised of the third party submission.

The materials submitted by the parties should be limited to information and documentation available to the constituent council or committee. If new material is submitted by the parties, the Appeal Committee shall refer the appeal to the constituent council or committee as a request for reconsideration.

- B. **Format for Appeal Hearing.** The Chair of the Appeal Committee shall determine the protocol for the appeal based on the facts and circumstances present. Appeal hearings will generally conform to the following guidelines:

Approximately forty (40) minutes is allocated for the appeal:

- Five (5) minutes for the constituent council or committee to state its position
- Ten (10) minutes for the appellant's presentation
- Five (5) minutes for a presentation from the opposing party
- Ten (10) minutes for questions from members of the Appeal Committee
- Five (5) minutes for the opposing party's final statement
- Five (5) minutes for the appellant's final statement

- C. **Alternate Appeal Formats.** Appellants are strongly encouraged to appear in person to present at appeal hearings. However, at the request of an appellant, an appeal may be heard telephonically or reviewed solely on the basis of materials submitted in writing. A request for a presentation by telephone or an appeal based solely on documents should be made no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled hearing date.

- D. **Representation by Counsel.** An appellant may be represented by legal counsel. However, even when represented by legal counsel, an appellant must answer questions raised by the Appeal Committee during the question and answer portion of the hearing. If the appellant intends to have legal counsel present, the Appeal Committee must be notified of the name and address of counsel at least fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing. Expenses incurred in connection with the appeal

shall be borne by the parties to the appeal and shall not be the responsibility of the Appeal Committee or the AOA.

- G. Following the hearing, the Appeal Committee will conduct deliberations in Executive Session. All proceedings of the hearing are held in confidence.

VII. Adjudication by the Appeal Committee

The Appeal Committee takes action on all appeals heard and may decide upon any of the following outcomes:

- **Deny** – Actions of the constituent committee or council are upheld.
- **Approve** – Actions of the constituent committee or council are overturned.
- **Request Additional Information** – The Committee determines that it needs additional information to decide the appeal and requests that the parties provide additional information.
- **Defer** – The appeal is remanded back to the constituent committee or council for further review. The constituent committee or council is advised to submit any new recommendations or information for the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Appeal Committee.

Deliberations of any appeal and all materials reviewed are held in confidence, in accordance with the policies of the AOA and the Bureau of Osteopathic Education.

Appellants should note that an appeal request will not automatically extend the time of program approval or OPTI accreditation. While an appeal will temporarily stay the action recommended by a council, the appeal committee has the authority to maintain the original action date of the council decision as part of its decision.

VIII. Formal Notification of Appeal Action

Within twenty-one (21) days of the hearing, the Secretary of the Appeal Committee shall notify all parties to an appeal of the action taken. All actions shall be communicated to the appellant by means of certified mail and shall indicate that parties have the right to appeal the Committee's decision to the AOA Board of Trustees within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notice by submitting a formal request for appeal to the Executive Director, American Osteopathic Association, 142 E. Ontario Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60611. The notice shall also indicate that if an action is not appealed within the thirty (30) day limit, the action of the Bureau of Osteopathic Education Appeal Committee is final.

APPENDIX B: AOA Membership Requirement Division of Continuing Medical Education

Those members who are not granted a waiver or reduction at the end of a three year CME cycle by the Council will be required to follow the procedures as outlined below:

Those members who have not met Continuing Medical Education requirements, at the end of a three-year CME cycle on December 31, shall be dropped from AOA membership by the Membership Department on the following May 31. In order to renew his or her membership, they shall be required to make application in the usual manner.

CME Requirement Policy for the End of the 3 Year CME Cycle

Based on the current policy, beginning with the current CME cycle ending **Dec. 31, 2012**, AOA members will have **five months** to fulfill their CME requirements. Previously, members were allowed 17 months following the close of a cycle to fulfill the CME requirement and maintain their AOA membership and AOA board certification.

APPENDIX C: American Osteopathic Association Guidelines for Reviewing and Evaluating Osteopathic Physicians Deficient in CME Credit at the end of a Three Year Cycle

INTRODUCTION

The resolution adopted by the Board of Trustees in July 2010 outlines the procedures to be followed for any member who is not granted a reduction or waiver by the Council. (See Appendix B)

GENERAL POLICIES ON NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW

Any AOA member not granted a reduction by the Council will be notified that his/her name is being reported to the Membership Committee in April of the current year. He/She may then begin to apply the current year credits to his/her record to complete the previous requirement. As indicated in the Board resolution, any credits applied to the previous record may not be applied to the current requirement.

Osteopathic physicians who are deficient in CME credits may acquire additional hours in the current year to fulfill their previous AOA CME requirement. If these credits are obtained by May 31, of the current year, their membership status will not be in jeopardy. After May 31, of the current year, they will be suspended from Membership. Upon completion of that requirement and payment of current dues, their membership will be reinstated.

WAIVER/REDUCTION POLICY APPLICABLE TO ALL OSTEOPATHIC PHYSICIANS

The Council on CME will grant no reduction without due cause unless policy advises otherwise.

REDUCTION POLICY APPLICABLE TO OSTEOPATHIC PHYSICIANS IN THE MILITARY

The AOA Policy related to osteopathic physicians in the military is that five credits per year or up to 15 of the 30-AOA Category 1-A credit requirement per three-year cycle may be reduced. This reduction is available only to those physicians on active duty who have accumulated a total of 120 credits of CME and who request said reduction from the Council on CME.

The AOA has reductions for the CME requirement for all AOA members impacted by significant military operations.