



RECERTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Standard Operating Procedures

DIRECTIVES: Oversees the ABFDE recertification program. The Committee is responsible for assessing and recording recertification points from Diplomates' annual update submissions, issuing annual Notice of Points Award (NOPA) forms reflecting current point status toward Diplomates' recertification, and notifying the Board of Directors of a Diplomate's success or failure at achieving recertification.

1. Annual Update Process

- 1.1 In June, Diplomates receive notice from the Corporate Office that annual dues are payable and annual update forms are to be completed and sent to the appropriate Recertification Manager by August 15 of the current year.
 - 1.1.1 Diplomates send a completed ABFDE Recertification Annual Update Submission Form, which lists the Diplomate's continuing education activities for the preceding year and the number of points claimed, along with documentation of proof that the activities were performed, to their Recertification Manager. Activities eligible for points are those completed from July 1 of the preceding year through June 30 of the current year.
 - 1.1.2 Approved activities, the number of obtainable points for each activity, and the supporting documentation needed are outlined on the ABFDE Annual Update Points Scoring Table, which can be found on the ABFDE website in the Recertification section.
 - 1.1.3 The deadline for annual update submission is August 15 of the current year, but a 60-day grace period follows for administrative activity between the Diplomate and his or her Recertification Manager. Absent extenuating circumstances, points that were not requested for the current update period are forfeited if the annual update is not properly documented and received by the Recertification Manager prior to the end of the grace period. If extenuating circumstances exist preventing a Diplomate from submitting the proper documentation before the end of the grace period, the Diplomate may petition the Board of Directors, within the grace period, for additional time. The decision of the Board of Directors whether the points will be awarded is final.

- 1.2 The Recertification Manager reviews the activities listed on the Annual Update Submission Form and awards points where appropriate. Points earned are recorded on a Notice of Points Awarded (NOPA) for each Diplomat.
 - 1.2.1 A NOPA is a spreadsheet that is updated every year with points accrued for each year of the five-year recertification period. The document is used to notify Diplomates of their progress toward the 40-point minimum. When a new recertification period starts, a new NOPA spreadsheet is created.
- 1.3 The Recertification Manager forwards the completed NOPA to the Diplomat as notification of points earned.

2. Recertification Process

- 2.1 In January, the Administrative Office mails a letter and recertification application to Diplomates eligible for recertification and forwards a copy to the appropriate Recertification Manager.
 - 2.1.1 The Diplomat submits the completed application to his/her Recertification Manager by the deadline of March 30 of the current year.
 - 2.1.2 The Recertification Manager evaluates the application and NOPA to ensure the Diplomat has met the minimum 40-point requirement for the current five-year recertification period and is actively participating in case examinations or other duties related to forensic document examination.
 - 2.1.3 The Recertification Manager also ensures the Diplomat is current on annual dues.
- 2.2 If the Diplomat has met all recertification requirements, the Recertification Manager requests the Administrative Office mail the Diplomat's new membership card and Certificate of Recertification.
 - 2.2.1 The Certificate of Recertification will be valid from July of the current year through July five years in the future.
 - 2.2.2 The Diplomat's Certification date will not change.
 - 2.2.3 A copy of the membership card and the Certificate of Recertification is stored in the Diplomat's file maintained by the Recertification Manager.
 - 2.2.4 A congratulatory letter is sent to the Diplomat, notifying the Diplomat that their new membership card and Certificate of Recertification should arrive shortly.

- 2.3 The Recertification Manager notifies the Recertification Chairperson of the Diplomat's recertification status. The Chairperson reports this information at the annual Board Meeting.

3. New Diplomates

- 3.1 Once a Candidate has passed certification testing and been approved by the Board of Directors' vote, the Secretary will notify the Recertification Manager responsible for maintaining the Diplomat's file.
- 3.2 The Secretary sends the new Diplomat a letter of congratulations, which introduces the Recertification Manager to the new Diplomat and explains the recertification process.

4. File Maintenance

- 4.1 Recertification documents are stored on the ABFDE's Google drive. A folder for each current Diplomat is located on the Google drive, accessible to the Recertification Committee only.
- 4.2 Diplomat folders should include copies of the following: current Certificate of Recertification or membership card, current completed recertification application, annual submission forms and associated documentation, NOPAs sent to the Diplomat, and documentation of significant communication with the Diplomat.
- 4.3 Recertification records for previous recertification periods or former Diplomates may be moved to the ABFDE Archives folder on the Google drive. This folder is only accessible by the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Corporate Office.
- 4.4 Recertification Managers do not maintain their own recertification files or those of their supervisors, trainees, or co-workers. The Recertification Chairperson should reassign these files to another Recertification Manager.

5. File Audits

- 5.1 The Executive Board will audit a representative sampling of the Diplomat files maintained by the Recertification Committee on an annual basis. The Recertification Committee Chairperson will determine which files will be reviewed.

6. Recertification Manager Responsibilities

- 6.1 Keep track of recertification files and status for each Diplomat in the assigned group.

- 6.2 Provide notifications for deadlines, particularly if a Diplomate is in danger of forfeiting points or if the recertification period is close to an end and the Diplomate has not yet met the minimum 40-point requirement. Send the notification early enough to give the Diplomate time to comply. Notification of any delinquency should be made by phone and by email or letter to the Diplomate's last known address.
- 6.3 Process annual submission forms when received. Using the Points Scoring Table for reference, assign points for activities with supporting documentation in accordance with the Annual Update Points Scoring Table.
- 6.4 Enter the points earned and point total in the Diplomate's NOPA and send a copy to the Diplomate.
 - 6.4.1 If the Diplomate has not earned points for the year or did not send their annual submission form before the extended deadline (60 days after the August 15th deadline), the NOPA should still be sent to the Diplomate, with a zero total for the year.
- 6.5 Once the Diplomate fulfills requirements for recertification, a new NOPA is created for the upcoming five-year recertification period. The Recertification Manager may use an older NOPA document as a template for the new one but should ensure the previous NOPA is saved first, dates are changed on the new NOPA to reflect the upcoming dates, and that the correct contact information is listed at the bottom.
- 6.6 When a Diplomate is at the end of a recertification period, they are required to send a completed Application for Recertification by March 30. Send a reminder of this deadline, if necessary.
- 6.7 Review recertification applications. To meet recertification requirements, the Diplomate must meet the minimum 40-point requirement for the current five-year recertification period and be actively participating in forensic document case examinations, directly supervising a Forensic Document Examiner, or training Forensic Document Examiners.
- 6.8 Contact the Treasurer to ensure the Diplomate is current on dues.
- 6.9 Notify the Corporate Office when a Diplomate has earned recertification and request the new membership card and Certificate of Recertification be mailed to the Diplomate. Send a congratulatory letter or email to the Diplomate and let them know that their new membership card and Certificate of Recertification should arrive shortly.
- 6.10 Ensure the following copies are available as PDFs in the Diplomate's folder on the ABFDE Google drive: the current NOPA; all annual submission forms for the

current recertification period; the current membership card and/or Certificate of Recertification; current completed recertification application; and any significant correspondence with Diplomates in the current recertification period. Older documents can be stored in the Diplomate's folder or, preferably, moved to the "To Archive" folder.

- 6.11 Notify the Recertification Committee Chair of Diplomate's success or failure to achieve recertification.

7. Recertification Chair Responsibilities

- 7.1 Support Recertification Managers by answering recertification questions and helping resolve problems.
- 7.2 Provide orientation to new Recertification Managers and direct them to this SOP and Rules and Procedures Guide (RPG) for information on their responsibilities.
- 7.3 Ensure access to recertification files only for current Recertification Committee members and temporary access to the Executive Committee (EC) of the Board for audits.
- 7.4 Provide EC with access to Diplomates' files for annual review, which occurs at the Board of Director's meeting. The Chair chooses five Diplomate folders from each of the four groups, A-F, G-L, M-R, S-Z. Folders should be chosen randomly but also ensuring coverage across Diplomates so that the same folders are not reviewed every year. Folders that had previously been reviewed by one EC member should be assigned to a different EC member, if possible.
- 7.5 Conduct an annual review of Committee documents and records to ensure they are complete, secure, and organized.
- 7.6 Upload templates for the NOPA and correspondence letters/emails to the Recertification folder on the ABFDE's Google drive. Ensure the NOPA templates used by the Recertification Managers are up to date with the current scoring table.
- 7.7 Ensure any confidential documents and records are destroyed as required by the RPG.
- 7.8 Provide the Board with the following at the annual Board of Director's meeting: the number of active Diplomates, list of new Diplomates who are just beginning the recertification process, status of active members eligible for recertification, and a summary of the annual review of Committee documents.
- 7.9 When revisions to this document are made, send the revised version to the Secretary.