

**CPME 209a**  
**SPECIALTY BOARD ELIGIBILITY APPLICATION**  
**REQUIREMENTS**  
**COUNCIL ON PODIATRIC MEDICAL EDUCATION**  
**May 2025**

**BOARDS SEEKING INITIAL RECOGNITION**

The Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME) considers applications for recognition of new boards and also specialty boards that have had recognition denied or withdrawn. Because the CPME must be confident that a board has the authority, means, and resources to adequately support a specialty certification in podiatry, the following eligibility requirements have been established for boards applying for initial recognition or re-recognition. These requirements must be satisfied in order that an application for recognition may be considered.

The board applying for recognition has the burden of proving that it meets all eligibility requirements and that it can achieve compliance with the CPME recognition standards and requirements for specialty boards. The Specialty Board Recognition Committee (SBRC) and the CPME have the responsibility of ensuring that a board applying for initial recognition or re-recognition carries this burden of proof.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND PROCESS**

- Boards seeking initial recognition by the CPME must first complete and submit an eligibility requirements application electronically to the CPME office.
  - The CPME will not consider an applicant's request for recognition unless all eligibility requirements have been addressed to the satisfaction of the SBRC.
  - In addressing the eligibility requirements, the applicant must respond to each eligibility requirement and include any supplementary documentation that the board believes is necessary to support its responses.
  - The CPME encourages applicant boards to contact CPME staff early in the developmental stages of the board in order that full assistance in understanding the CPME's eligibility requirements may be provided.
- CPME staff will review the eligibility application and determine if the application is complete. If the application is incomplete, additional information will be requested with a specified due date.
- Following staff review, the eligibility application will be forwarded to the SBRC chair who will determine if the application is complete, and then it will be forwarded to the SBRC. Following feedback from the SBRC, the SBRC chair will determine if the

application is ready for dissemination to the community of interest.

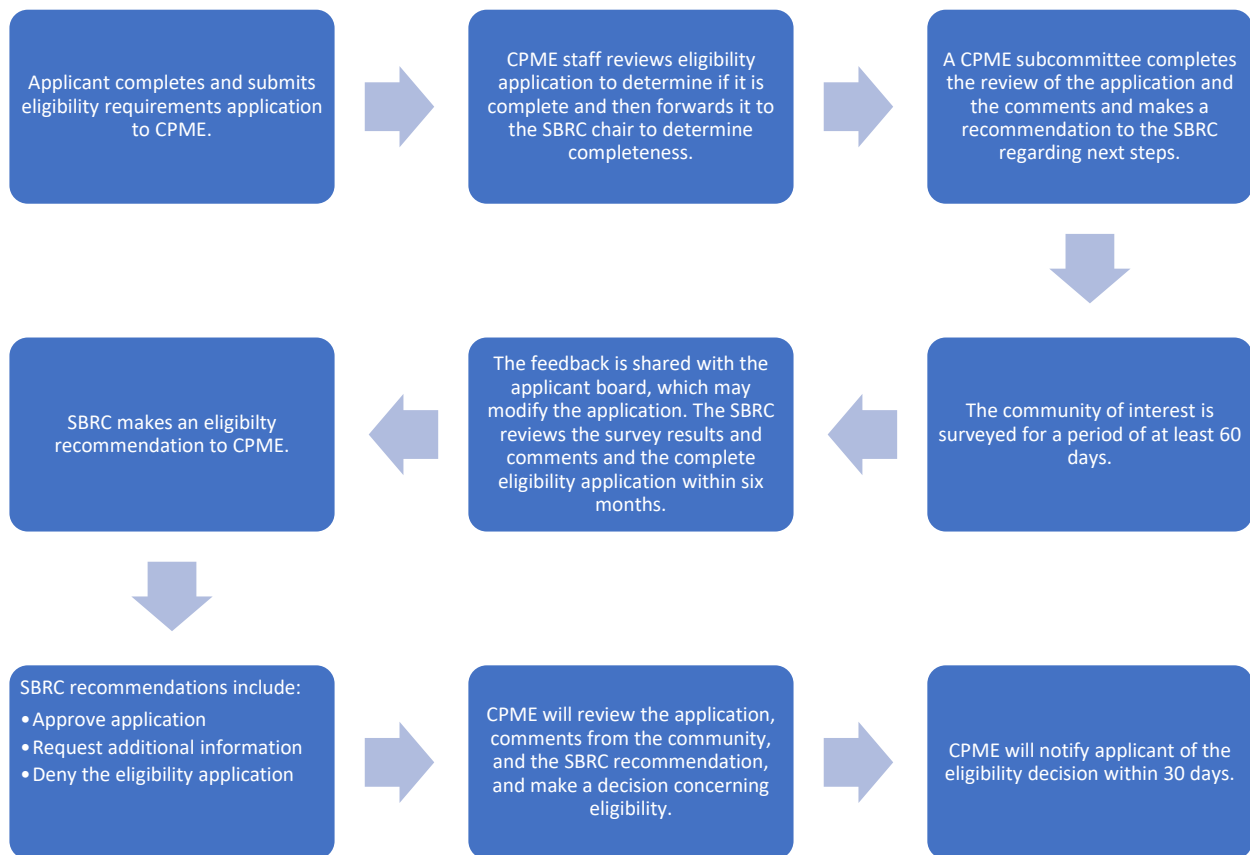
- The community of interest will be surveyed for a period of at least 60 days following the submission of a complete eligibility application to gather feedback. This feedback will be forwarded to the applicant board so that it may modify the application.
- The SBRC will review the survey comments and the complete eligibility application within six (6) months.
- The SBRC will make a recommendation to the CPME. The CPME will review the eligibility application, the comments from the community of interest, and the recommendation of the SBRC to make an approval decision.
- The applicant board will be notified within 30 days of the CPME's decision.

SBRC recommendations and CPME decisions include:

- a. Approve the eligibility application, allowing the board to proceed with submitting an application for recognition.
- b. Determine that additional information is needed. If an eligibility application remains incomplete for greater than six (6) months, the eligibility application will expire and must be resubmitted.
- c. Deny the eligibility application based on a determination that the application does not satisfactorily address all requirements.

Denial of an eligibility application is not an appealable action.

Flow chart example of the eligibility application process.



## REQUIREMENTS FOR RECOGNITION OF A NEW SPECIALTY BOARD

In order for an applicant board to become recognized as a podiatry specialty, it must meet the standards and requirements in CPME 220. **See CPME 220 for more information and specific requirements for meeting each standard. Provide all pertinent documentation related to each requirement and ensure that information is labeled by requirement.**

### JUSTIFICATION OF NEED (Standard 1)

- Define precisely the scope and breadth of the specialty, including all aspects of clinical and nonclinical practice encompassed within the specialty area. (Standard 1.1.)
- Certify podiatric physicians in an area that will enhance and promote the health and welfare of the public and for which the public is unable to determine for itself whether practitioners have achieved certain specific qualifications, abilities, and skill. (Standard 1.2.)
- Certify podiatric physicians in an area that is characterized by distinct biological, sociological, environmental, psychological, and physiological approaches to prevention,

diagnosis, treatment, and research. (Standard 1.3.)

- Award certification in a field of professional service that requires a body of knowledge and skills based upon advanced study and extended clinical experience. Evidence shall exist that podiatric physicians are devoting their professional commitment and endeavor to that specific specialty. (Standard 1.4.)
- Demonstrate that its certification process is widely accepted in the United States. (Standard 1.5.)

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR INITIAL RECOGNITION AS A SPECIALTY BOARD (Standards 2 and 3)**

- Applicant boards seeking initial recognition shall be represented by a sponsoring organization whose membership is reflective of the proposed specialty. (Standard 2.1.)
- An organization must be in existence for a minimum of three years before bringing forth a proposal to seek recognition as a specialty board and must submit valid evidence that the specialty area:
  - a. contributes to new knowledge in the field;
  - b. actively contributes to professional education;
  - c. actively contributes to the research needs of the profession; and
  - d. demonstrates the specialty services would not be satisfactorily met except for the contributions of the specialty applicant. (Standard 2.2)
- The sponsoring organization shall establish the applicant board as an independent entity whose sole purpose is certification. (Standard 2.3.)
- The applicant board seeking recognition by the CPME must require advanced knowledge and skills that:
  - a. are separate and distinct from a currently recognized specialty;
  - b. cannot be accommodated through minimal modifications of a current specialty board;
  - c. directly benefit some aspect of clinical patient care; and
  - d. demonstrate the special knowledge and skills required for practice of the specialty to protect the health and welfare of the public. (Standard 2.4.)
- The applicant board shall contribute to the development of postgraduate educational programs associated with a new specialty. (Standard 2.5.)
- Each special area of podiatric medical practice shall be characterized by the recognition of only one specialty board. (Standard 2.6.)
- Certification shall be within the scope of the applicant board. (Standard 2.7.)
- The applicant board shall establish a process for allowing the certification (without examination) of individuals who have been involved in the development of the special

area of podiatric medical practice, i.e., the “founders.” These individuals shall not have longer than one year to apply for certification. (Standard 3.1.)