

Qualifications and Requirements for Certification

I. GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS:

- A. Applicants must be persons of good moral character, high integrity, good repute, and must possess high ethical and professional standards.
- B. Applicants must possess a DDS, DMD or equivalent dental degree from an accredited institution

II. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- A. Applicants must have:

- 1. Attended a minimum of four (4) annual meetings of a national forensic/forensic dental organization. No more than one annual meeting can be claimed per year. Additional meetings attended can be claimed for extra point accumulation as described below.

- 2. Participated in a minimum of two annual programs of a national forensic/forensic dental organization approved by the ABFO Examination and Certification (C&E) Committee. The participation may include presentation of papers, acting as a moderator, panelist on the program, or activities as a chairman or member of a committee of the odontology section. Evidence of these achievements must be documented in a form acceptable to the C&E Committee.

- 3. Applicants must be currently active and formally affiliated with a medical/legal agency such as a medical examiner/coroner's office, law enforcement agency, insurance agency, federal dental service or mass disaster team for a minimum period of two (2) years.

- 4. Applicants must have observed a minimum of five (5) complete medico-legal autopsies attested to by the pathologist in charge.

- 5. Applicants must perform a minimum of twenty-five (25) legitimate forensic dental cases up until June 1, 2012. At that time this number will increase to thirty (30), because of the new bitemark requirement. On June 1, 2014 the minimum number of cases will increase to thirty-five (35), because of the new age estimation requirement

- a) A minimum of twenty (20) human identification cases, fifteen (15) of which have resulted in positive dental identification. The applicant must have personally resected, or surgically exposed, the jaws in at least five (5) cases, and personally taken the post-mortem radiographs in at least ten (10) of the cases. ABFO Identification. The

ABFO Dental Identification Workshop may count for up to five (5) identifications. (Further details are in the [*ABFO Workshops Section*](#)).

b) Jaw exposures/resections or facial dissection performed in conjunction with a multiple fatality incident (i.e. DMORT, state or military ID team deployment) may qualify toward this requirement only if the required procedures were under the supervision of an ABFO Diplomate and/or the Medical Examiner/Coroner (ME) in charge and are confirmed in writing by this individual. Multiple Fatality Incident (MFI) cases may **not** be included to fulfill the human identification or postmortem radiographic case requirements listed above.

Note: Applicants whose Medical Examiner/Coroner's facility discourages jaw resections or completes jaw resections using non-dental personnel, should either personally seek permission to complete the required number of resections on appropriate cases, or request mentorship in another jurisdiction/facility where he/she might meet this requirement.

c) Dental Age Estimation (DAE) cases

1. A Candidate shall have been the primary investigator in five (5) DAE cases.
 - a. At least one case of the five cases shall have been a case involving:
 - i. a child (under age 12 years)
 - ii. an adolescent or sub-adult (12- 19 years)
 - iii. an adult (>19 years). The remaining two cases can be from any of the age groups.
2. A minimum of one (1) of the five (5) cases shall be from the candidate's own casework.
3. A minimum of one (1) of the five (5) cases shall be from the ABFO Age Estimation Workshop or from the ABFO Age Estimation Repository. **
4. DAE cases from ABFO Age Estimation Workshops (or other approved workshops) may be submitted toward the requirement.
 - a. No more than three (3) DAE cases from ABFO Workshops (or other approved workshops) shall be considered as counting toward the five (5) required DAE cases.
 - b. Only one workshop case from each of the age groups listed in 1.a. shall be considered.
 - c. The candidate must show proof that the case(s) submitted from workshops were completed to the satisfaction of the workshop faculty.
5. The Age Estimation Committee shall establish and develop a repository of DAE cases. Cases from this repository may be provided to qualified candidates who request them.

- a. The request for repository cases may not be made until after the candidate has completed one (1) DAE case originating from the candidate's own casework.
- b. Repository cases must be completed on time and to the satisfaction of the Age Estimation Committee to be considered toward certification application.
- c. A maximum of two (2) repository cases may be used to meet the minimum case experience requirement in DAE.
- d. A repository case may not be considered as a case from the candidate's own casework.

(Further details are in the [ABFO Workshops Section](#))

****This new dental age estimation requirement will go into effect in February 2017.**

d) A minimum of two (2) bitemark cases in which the pattern(s) was determined to be a bitemark(s) of human origin compared to the dentition of the biter must be included. In at least one (1) of these bitemark cases, the applicant must be the primary investigator of the bitemark and have performed the documentation of the dental evidence. The ABFO Bitemark Workshop may count toward one (1) of the required bitemark cases, but cannot be claimed as a case in which the candidate is to be the primary investigator. (Further details are in the [ABFO Workshops Section](#)). An additional five (5) bitemark cases must be submitted, including at least one (1) case developed by the ABFO's Bitemark and Patterned Injury Committee that includes multiple potential biters. The other four (4) of these additional five (5) cases may be either cases provided by the ABFO to the candidate or other cases in which the candidate was involved. The additional five (5) bite mark cases must be submitted in their entirety with complete documentation (write-ups and copies of all comparative material such as photographs, dental models, overlays, or other materials as applicable to the case). These cases should demonstrate the applicant's knowledge, methodology, and capabilities in bitemark analysis. All submitted materials become the property of the ABFO and will not be returned. Cases provided to the potential applicants by the ABFO remain the property of the ABFO. None of these materials shall be shared with any other persons. Except for the preparation of reports to the ABFO these materials must not be duplicated, or published in any form. The materials provided to potential applicants must be returned with the case report(s). In the event the applicant decides to forego application to the ABFO the materials must be immediately returned to the ABFO.

e) The remaining three (3) cases can be human identification, bitemark analysis, malpractice/personal injury, human abuse, peer review or age estimation cases.

f) The applicant must have provided sworn testimony in court or through sworn deposition in two (2) identification, bitemark or civil litigation cases involving forensic odontology. The applicant must provide copies of the transcripts. The ABFO Civil

Litigation Workshop may count towards one (1) case of sworn testimony. (Further details are in the [ABFO Workshops Section](#)).

*Note: All claimed forensic cases must be submitted on the **ABFO Summary of Forensic Cases** form with all appropriate columns completed. The ABFO C&E Committee determines the acceptability of each case. Candidates are encouraged to submit cases in excess of the minimum number of thirty-five (35) in the event some cases are rejected by the C&E committee.*

B. One (1) identification, one (1) dental age estimation and one (1) bitemark case in which the applicant was the primary investigator must be ***electronically*** submitted with complete documentation including forensic dental reports, copies of all comparative material (i.e. photographs, radiographs and other appropriate work products applicable to the case). ***The stone study models used in the bitemark cases must also be submitted.*** These should be significant and challenging cases that best demonstrate the applicant's knowledge, methodology and capabilities. ***Cases undertaken as part of ABFO Workshops or the ABFO Test Cases are not acceptable for these three submissions.*** All submitted materials become the property of the ABFO and will not be returned. This requirement shall be subject to waiver by the ABFO only under unusual circumstances such as litigation in progress or military restrictions.

C. Applicants must present additional evidence of forensic dental activity. The activities are calculated on the basis of a point system. A minimum of three hundred fifty (350) points is required. Activities and accomplishments in fulfillment of section A or B cannot be reclaimed for point credits in this section. It is the responsibility of each applicant to submit documentation of all accomplishments claimed for point credit. The acceptability and ultimate assignment of points will be at the discretion of the C&E Committee. It is advisable that the candidate submit at least enough material to accumulate three hundred fifty (350) points, as follows:

1. Twenty (20) points for each authentic forensic dental case in excess of the twenty-five (25) obligatory cases. The maximum number of cases that will be considered for point credit in this area is five (5), for a maximum of one hundred (100) points.

2. Twenty (20) points per additional court deposition or testimony. Transcripts must accompany the application. The maximum number of transcripts that will be considered for extra point credit in this category is five (5), for a maximum of one hundred (100) points.

3. One (1) point per hour for attendance at a formal, institutional, elective or continuing education course in forensic dentistry; or a formal scientific session at an annual meeting of a nationally recognized forensic science organization. These points are accrued in addition to the mandatory four (4) meetings. Certificates or other verification of course attendance must be submitted. A maximum of one hundred (100) points can be claimed in this area.

4. Twenty-five (25) points for presenting an original lecture or laboratory demonstration at a formal session of a recognized forensic science organization, dental

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association meeting, or institutional course in forensic dentistry. Abstracts, course brochures or other verification are to be supplied to the C&E Committee for point credit. A maximum of one hundred (100) points can be claimed in this area.

5. Up to fifty (50) points for the acceptance or publication as principal author of a forensic dental article in a refereed scientific journal, electronic journal posting or textbook, with a reprint or copy sent to the C&E Committee. The determination of the point count will be made by the C&E Committee based upon the nature and content of the article and the journal in which it was published. A maximum of twenty-five (25) points will be awarded for a second article or for an article in which the candidate served as a collaborating author, both of which must be accepted or published in a refereed journal or textbook.

6. Twenty (20) points per year for a formal affiliation with a recognized medical/legal agency beyond the mandatory two (2) years. An affidavit from the authorized agent must be included. A maximum of sixty (60) points may be claimed in this category.

7. Forty (40) points maximum for the organization of, or participation in an MFI training exercise or event, mass disaster team membership or symposium. The points are to be divided as follows: twenty-five (25) points for organizing and directing the exercise; one (1) point per hour for attending the exercise, (up to a maximum of fifteen (15) points).

8. Twenty-five (25) points for being the chairperson of an odontology committee, or ten (10) points for serving on an odontology committee of a recognized forensic organization or similar committee of a local, state or federal dental organization acceptable to the C&E Committee. Maximum point count of one hundred (100).

The application, documentation and appropriate fees must reach the Chair of the ABFO Certification and Examination Committee on or before June 1st to be considered for the subsequent examination cycle.

Registrar of the ABFO:

The American Board of Forensic Odontology, Inc.
c/o Certification and Examination Committee
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