

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 (2) annual programs of a national forensic/forensic dental organization approved by the ABFO Certification and Examination (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 of the organization. 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 in writing by the pathologist in charge.

5. Applicants must have performed a minimum of thirty-two (32) legitimate forensic dental cases which are specified below. A grid document to list these cases is in a separate document (summary of 32 forensic cases).

6. Sworn Testimony:

- a) 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. A successful ABFO Workshop in Civil Litigation may serve as one testimony.
- b) The applicant must provide copies of the court transcripts.

7. Dental ID Cases:

- 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 ABFO Dental Identification Workshop may count for up to five (5) identifications if full credit from the workshop is awarded. (Further details are in the [ABFO Workshops Section](#)).
- b. 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.

8. Dental Age Estimation (DAE) cases:

- a) Candidate must have been the primary investigator in five (5) DAE cases.
- b) The five cases must include at least one case from each of the three categories below:
 - 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.
- c) A minimum of one (1) of the five (5) cases must be from the candidate's own casework.
- d) **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. ****
- e) DAE cases from ABFO Age Estimation Workshops (or other approved workshops) may be submitted toward the requirement.
 1. 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.
 2. Only one workshop case from each of the age groups listed above shall be considered.
 3. The candidate must show proof that the case(s) submitted from workshops were completed to the satisfaction of the workshop faculty.

- f) 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.
- 1) 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.
 - 2) Repository cases must be completed on time and to the satisfaction of the Age Estimation Committee to be considered toward certification application.
 - 3) A maximum of two (2) repository cases may be used to meet the minimum case experience requirement in DAE.
 - 4) A repository case may not be substituted as a case from the candidate's own casework.
- (Further details are in the [ABFO Workshops Section](#))

9. Bitemark Cases:

Persons applying for ABFO board certification must provide evidence that they have completed four (4) current or historical bitemark cases in which a minimum of one pattern or patterned injury was analyzed and determined to be a human bitemark with sufficient evidentiary value for comparison. For these four (4) cases each bitemark with sufficient evidentiary value was compared to the questioned dentition of a minimum of one (1) person of interest. One of those four (4) cases must have been an ABFO bitemark repository case that includes analysis of the pattern(s) and comparisons to the questioned dentitions of multiple persons of interest. Having taken and passed an ABFO Bitemark Workshop fulfills the requirements for having completed two (2) bitemark cases and fulfills the bitemark repository case requirement.

10. The remaining three (3) of the thirty-five (35) cases: may be human identification, bitemark analysis, malpractice/personal injury, human abuse, peer review or age estimation cases.

*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.***

American Board of Forensic Odontology, Inc
Diplomates Reference Manual
Section III: Policies, Procedures, Guidelines & Standards

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 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.

*American Board of Forensic Odontology, Inc
Diplomates Reference Manual
Section III: Policies, Procedures, Guidelines & Standards*

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).

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.

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.