



*Devoted to Facial Cosmetic Surgery*

**2026 EXAMINATION**

**CANDIDATE APPLICATION BOOKLET**

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

## **Page #**

### **SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**

**3**

**General Letter to Applicant  
Exam Dates and Deadlines  
ABFCS History and Background  
About the ABFCS  
Code of Ethics  
Responsibilities of Diplomates**

### **SECTION 2 CURRENT CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**9**

**Certification/Application Requirements  
Credential Committee/Board of Trustees  
Examination Fees and Payment Link  
Postponement Policy/Exam Results/Recertification**

### **SECTION 3 APPLICATION CHECKLISTS**

**20**

### **SECTION 4 SURGICAL LOG REQUIREMENTS**

**23**

### **SECTION 5 GENERAL CONTENT OUTLINE FOR WRITTEN EXAMINATION**

**27**

**AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**

**2026 EXAMINATION**

**CANDIDATE APPLICATION BOOKLET**

## **SECTION 1**

# **INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**

**THE MATERIALS CONTAINED IN THIS BOOKLET  
AND THE CANDIDATE APPLICATION  
HAVE BEEN PREPARED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE  
2026 EXAMINATION OF  
THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY, INC. (ABFCS)**

Dear Doctor:

The enclosed information is being furnished in response to your inquiry. It is acknowledged that all applicants have already completed residency by an approved Board. The American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery examinations will test only facial cosmetic surgery knowledge.

*We ask that you read all the information contained in this booklet carefully prior to completing your Candidate Application.* All of the required documentation must be submitted with your application and must be received in the ABFCS Central Office on or before **the stated deadline below**. All aspects of the application process, including formal application, photos, operative notes, letters of recommendation and all required documentation **shall be submitted in electronic format**. Applications received after that date or applications which are incomplete will be considered for the next Examination. All applications and accompanying materials submitted to the ABFCS become the property of the ABFCS and **WILL NOT BE RETURNED. ALL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS WILL BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO WITHOUT EXCEPTION.**

Please see the details regarding the testing session for the 2026 Written and Oral Exam dates and application deadline.

**Application Deadline: January 31, 2026**

Examination:	Written Examination
Date:	Saturday, May 16, 2026
Location:	Pearson VUE Testing Center (various locations)

Examination:	Oral Examination
Date:	Saturday September 19, 2026
Location:	Virtual via Zoom

The American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery (AACS) conducts an Annual Review Course each year. You may contact the AACS at (312) 981-6760 or via e-mail at [info@cosmeticsurgery.org](mailto:info@cosmeticsurgery.org) for further details regarding the Annual Review Course. Attendance at the Annual Review Course is not mandatory. The ABFCS does not provide any study material suggestions.



Michael W. Brady, J.D.  
Executive Director

## **HISTORY AND BACKGROUND**

The American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery focuses on certifying safe facial cosmetic surgeons. Cosmetic surgery has experienced exponential growth in recent decades, attracting many skilled surgeons to become experts in the field. But not all providers can be trusted. Did you know that, beyond state medical licensure, the government does not regulate what medical procedures a doctor or surgeon can perform? This means that any doctor can market themselves as a facial cosmetic surgeon.

To find vetted facial cosmetic surgeons, patients must look to trusted medical boards to enforce training and safety standards. The American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery (ABFCS) was formed in 2015, born out of this growing need.

From 1979-2013, the American Board of Cosmetic Surgery (ABCS) certified facial cosmetic surgeons as sub-specialists of cosmetic surgery. When the ABCS consolidated its certification to the single area of “cosmetic surgery” — which included procedures for the breast, body, and face — a need arose for a medical board devoted to the art of facial aesthetics. The American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery was established in its current form in 2015, offering a clear path to board certification for superior cosmetic surgeons looking to specialize in facial aesthetics.

Our surgeons dedicate time to mastering facial cosmetic procedures. While cosmetic procedures can be legally performed by any licensed physician, we hold our facial cosmetic surgeons to a much higher standard. Most residency programs require very few, if any, facial cosmetic surgery procedures, but board-certified facial cosmetic surgeons have gone a step further, dedicating time after residency training to becoming fluent in the deep nuances of facial cosmetic procedures. ABFCS surgeons have either undergone fellowship training in order to refine their skills or proven abundant expertise through their past years of experience, excellent patient results, and notable contributions to the field.

Board-certified facial cosmetic surgeons are facial aesthetic experts. Other boards certify reconstructive as well as cosmetic facial surgeons. We certify only facial cosmetic surgeons so that patients can rest assured of their surgeon’s training, proven artistry, safe practice, and experience in facial aesthetic procedures.

## **ABOUT THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**

We are a medical board focused on certifying facial cosmetic specialists.

The American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgeons (ABFCS) tests and certifies facial cosmetic surgeons in aesthetic procedures for the head, face, and neck. Our mission is to help patients safely achieve attractive results by identifying highly trained facial surgeons who uphold the highest standards of patient safety and practice with meticulous surgical artistry.

## **WHY DOES ABFCS CERTIFICATION MATTER?**

Facial Cosmetic surgery has experienced exponential growth in recent decades, attracting many skilled surgeons to the field — but not all providers can be trusted. Because the government does not regulate what medical procedures a doctor or surgeon can perform, any doctor can legally market themselves as a facial cosmetic surgeon.

When you choose a provider for a cosmetic facial procedure, the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery badge signifies that you will be in the hands of a specialist who has devoted a significant portion of their training and practice to the nuances of facial aesthetics.

## **OUR SURGEONS MEET THE HIGHEST BENCHMARKS FOR FACIAL COSMETICS**

We certify facial cosmetic surgeons exclusively in facial aesthetics and take pride in this distinction. Board-certified facial cosmetic surgeons are specially trained in the full range of sought-after facial surgery procedures, including blepharoplasty (eyelid lift), rhytidectomy (facelift), and rhinoplasty (nose reshaping), providing stunning results throughout the face and neck.

Our diplomates are also trained in non-surgical methodologies, and many offer a full range of non- and minimally invasive procedures for the face and neck, including injectable neurotoxins and dermal fillers. Choosing an ABFCS-certified cosmetic surgeon for these non-surgical procedures will help ensure you receive medically sound treatment with the anatomical knowledge, aesthetic sense, and precision of a surgeon.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

The mission of the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery (ABFCS) is to help patients identify the most qualified, safe surgeon for their facial cosmetic procedure. As such, all board-certified facial cosmetic surgeons pledge themselves to maintain an ethical practice by following our Code of Ethics.

### **The Code of Ethics for Board-Certified Facial Cosmetic Surgeons**

**WHEREAS**, the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery (ABFCS) is a surgical certifying board organized to examine physicians in the area of facial cosmetic surgery; and

**WHEREAS**, the ABFCS is a surgical certifying board organized to promote the safe practice of facial cosmetic surgery;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the ABFCS has established the following policy:

#### **As a Diplomate of the ABFCS, I pledge myself to...**

1. Strive for excellence in all aspects of my medical practice.
2. Maintain the highest standard of personal conduct.
3. Provide patient care impartially; provide no special privilege to any individual patient based on the patient's race, color, creed, sexual orientation, national origin or handicap.
4. Abide by the highest ethical standards in activities designed to attract patients to my practice.
5. Maintain the confidentiality of privileged information entrusted or known to me by virtue of my role as a facial cosmetic surgeon within the constraints of the law.
6. Promote and encourage the highest level of medical ethics in providing competent medical service with compassion and respect for human dignity.
7. Continue to study, apply, and advance scientific knowledge, make relevant information available to patients, colleagues and the public, obtain consultation, and use the talents of other health professionals when the best interests of a patient so indicate.
8. Use only legal and ethical means in the provision of care to my patients and strive to expose those physicians deficient in character or competence, or who engage in fraud or deception.
9. Recognize and discharge my responsibility and that of the medical profession to uphold the laws and regulations relating to the practice of facial cosmetic surgery.
10. Use every opportunity to improve public understanding of the role of the Facial Cosmetic Surgeon.
11. Cooperate in every reasonable and proper way with other physicians and work with them in activities contributing to the advancement of quality patient care.
12. Accept no personal compensation from any party that would influence or require special consideration in the provision of care for any patient.
13. Maintain loyalty to the goals and objectives of the ABFCS as stated in the By-Laws.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIPLOMATES**

Becoming a Diplomate of the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery is a significant professional achievement and honor. Diplomates must strive to represent the high ethical and moral standards of the ABFCS and to support the Board activities for the advancement of the sub-specialty of Facial Cosmetic Surgery. Diplomates agree to adhere to the ABFCS and American Medical Association (AMA) guidelines regarding the ethical practice of Facial Cosmetic Surgery, including advertising and representations to the public and to always practice the highest standard of patient care and safety.

### **As an applicant/diplomate and as a condition of continued membership in good standing:**

1. Current Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Certification must be maintained.
2. Must affirmatively state and prove valid hospital operating room privileges in current good standing. If the applicant/diplomate does not have current hospital operating room privileges and performs all surgical procedures in an outpatient facility, the facility must be currently accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC), Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), American Association of Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities, Inc. (AAAASF), Surgical Review Corporation (SRC), Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP), MEDICARE or similar accrediting body approved by the state medical board having jurisdiction where the applicant/diplomate performs surgery.
3. The annual sustaining dues for the fiscal year shall be determined by the Board of Trustees of the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery. The annual sustaining dues are established by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis and are billed on or about February of each year. **FAILURE TO PAY MAY RESULT IN THE TERMINATION OF DIPLOMATE'S CERTIFICATION.**



**AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**

**2026 EXAMINATION**

**CANDIDATE APPLICATION BOOKLET**

**SECTION 2**

**CURRENT CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**  
**Certification Requirements**  
(Effective for exam year 2026)

**I. Facial Board Certification Process – Routes of Application**

A. Applicants may apply for certification by The American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery.

There are **three** routes of application. These are via:

1. The Fellowship Route (if currently or previously in an approved AACS fellowship (Category 2) (See II., below);
2. A Petition for the Fellowship Equivalence (if fellowship not an approved and official AACS fellowship), (Category 2) (see III., below); or
3. The Experience Route, (Category 3) (See IV., below).

In the application for certification, applicant must specify whether applying by the fellowship route (if currently or previously in an approved AACS fellowship), by petitioning for fellowship equivalence, or by the experience route.

Once the application has been processed by the Application Review Committee, the applicant will be notified of their eligibility to take the written and oral examination.

B. **All** candidates must meet the following criteria:

1. Applicant must complete and submit in electronic format a current application, furnished in MSWord or PDF format, obtained from the ABFCS Administrative Office. The document must be finalized and saved and sent electronically in PDF form, electronically signed by the applicant.
2. Applicant must affirmatively state and prove valid hospital operating room privileges in current good standing. If the applicant does not have current hospital operating room privileges and performs all surgical procedures in an outpatient facility, the facility must be currently accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC), Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities, Inc. (AAAASF), MEDICARE or similar accrediting body approved by the state medical board having jurisdiction where the applicant performs surgery. The only exception to this requirement is the performance of all procedures under local anesthesia or oral sedation only. These exceptions will be reviewed by a separate credentialing committee on a case-by-case basis.
3. Applicant will submit four (4) letters of recommendation, including but not limited to, letters from: (a) the chairperson of his/her residency program, if available, or from the department chief of his/her current hospital facility; (b) his/her cosmetic surgery fellowship director, if applicable, or verification of completion of fellowship; (c) a Diplomate of the ABFCS; and (d) a fourth actively practicing physician.

4. Applicant will submit proof of a current valid and unrestricted license (MD, DO, DDS, or DMD) allowing the active and authorized practice of facial cosmetic surgery in the state in which they practice. A valid and unrestricted state license in good standing is required in all jurisdictions where the applicant practices or maintains a medical, osteopathic, or dental license. Applicants must submit an explanation of any current or past disciplinary action by any state medical, osteopathic, or dental society. DDS and DMD applicants performing facial cosmetic surgery must have completed a 4-year Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Residency.
5. Applicant will submit current copy of his/her curriculum vitae, certified by applicant as true and correct as of the date submitted.
6. Applicant will affirm that he or she has no history of, nor are actions currently pending regarding any felony, crimes, convictions, or substance abuse.
7. Applicant will furnish proof of Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification unless the accredited surgical center or hospital where the applicant performs surgery has waived that requirement, in which case the applicant must provide documentation of that waiver.
8. Applicant must submit proof of at least 100 Category 1 CME credits in Facial cosmetic surgery. These may be earned in one of the following ways:
  - a. Completion of a cosmetic surgery fellowship in the area of Facial Cosmetic Surgery in a program approved by the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery satisfies this requirement provided the fellowship is completed within three (3) years of the application date;
  - b. Completion of an Aesthetic, Oculoplastic, Facial Plastic or Cosmetic Dermatologic Surgery fellowship that is deemed equivalent in breadth, length, and scope to an AACS fellowship may also provide CME credits and qualify the applicant via the fellowship route if completed within three (3) years of the date of application and if the petition for equivalence is accepted by the committee. (See III., below);
  - c. In the event an Applicant applies for the examination more than three (3) years after completing his/her approved AACS fellowship training or fellowship training that has been “deemed equivalent”, the applicant must show proof of 100 CME Category 1 credits in Facial Cosmetic Surgery during the five (5) year time period prior to the date of the Applicant’s examination application.
9. Applicant will provide a Physician Profile, ordered by the applicant from the American Medical Association (AMA), the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) or the Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS). Please note it may take as long as 30 days to receive this form from the AMA, the AOA, or the FCVS.
10. Applicant will submit two (2) current passport type photographs.
11. Applicant must furnish proof of prior Board Certification by:

a. One of the following boards recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialists, the Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists of the American Osteopathic Association (BOS), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) or The American Board of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery in any of the following Specialties:

- 1) Dermatology
- 2) Ophthalmology
- 3) Otolaryngology
- 4) Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
- 5) The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS)
- 6) General Surgery or other surgical subspecialty approved by the Credentialing Committee (only with one-year qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship, or after petitioning for fellowship equivalence, or after petitioning via the experience route)

(The above boards collectively will be referred to hereinafter as the “approved boards”).

12. Applicant will submit operative case logs as specified in sections II (D) & (E), III (A)(3) and IV (B)(3) & (4) below based on the category of their application.

13. Applicant will submit typed operative reports, with clearly labeled before and after photographs of publication quality in the case numbers specified in sections below based on the category of their application.

14. Applicant will successfully complete a written examination covering all general knowledge of facial cosmetic surgery. The ABFCS will accept applications for the written component of the Annual Examination from:

a. American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery (AACS) fellows who have successfully completed or are in the process of completing an approved AACS Facial Cosmetic Surgery Fellowship Program or a qualifying AACS General Cosmetic Surgery Fellowship.

b. Applicants who have met Category II or III requirements and have been notified thereof by the Credentialing Committee.

15. Applicant must successfully complete an oral examination in the area of Facial Cosmetic Surgery. The written and oral components must be successfully completed within three years of each other.

16. Application fee of \$500.00

## **II. Training Requirements and Eligibility for the AACS Approved Fellowship Route**

A. A candidate may be eligible for Facial Cosmetic Surgery certification via the Fellowship Route based upon the following:

1. Initial certification by an approved board;
2. Postgraduate surgical training in accordance with the following training summary:

### **FELLOWSHIP TRAINING SUMMARY**

APPROVED BOARDS	TRAINING	AREA ELIGIBLE
Dermatology	One-year AACS facial cosmetic surgery fellowship or qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship*.	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Ophthalmology	One-year AACS facial cosmetic surgery fellowship or qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship*.	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Otolaryngology	One-year AACS facial cosmetic surgery fellowship or qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship*.	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Oral/Maxillofacial Surgery	One-year AACS facial cosmetic surgery fellowship or qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship*.	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Plastic Surgery	One-year AACS facial cosmetic surgery fellowship or qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship*.	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
General Surgery	One-year AACS facial cosmetic surgery fellowship or qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship*.	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Other surgical subspecialty	One-year AACS facial cosmetic surgery fellowship or qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship*.	Facial Cosmetic Surgery

\* A qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship as determined by the AACS is a general cosmetic surgery fellowship that satisfies the minimum number of facial surgical cases as defined by the AACS (125 cases of sufficient diversity, breadth, and complexity).

3. The Fellowship Program must be approved by:

The American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery (AACS). A list of approved programs may be obtained from the AACS.

**Telephone: 312-981-6760**

**E-Mail: [info@cosmeticsurgery.org](mailto:info@cosmeticsurgery.org)**

**Website: [www.cosmeticsurgery.org](http://www.cosmeticsurgery.org)**

B. Cosmetic Surgery Fellows in a qualified AACS cosmetic surgery fellowship who are board certified by one of the “approved boards” by the ABFCS. (I.B.11.a., above) may apply and sit for the oral and written components of the ABFCS examination during their fellowship training provided they will not receive their examination results, whether pass or fail, until they have successfully completed their qualified AACS Fellowship training program.

C. Cosmetic Surgery Fellows in a qualified AACS cosmetic fellowship who have not obtained their “approved board” certification or who are board eligible by one of the “approved boards” at the time they sit for the oral and written components of the ABFCS examination will not receive their examination results, whether pass or fail, until such time as they have successfully completed and received their Primary Approved Board Certification. The candidate must obtain their Primary Approved Board certification within three (3) years following the date of their ABFCS certifying examination. A candidate who does not obtain their Primary Approved Board certification within three (3) years following the date of their ABFCS examination would have to re-apply and re-take the ABFCS certifying examination in order to become ABFCS board certified.

D. Documented case logs as either surgeon, assistant surgeon or co-surgeon of at least 125 major facial cosmetic surgery procedures comprising a sufficient breadth, complexity and diversity as determined by the Credentialing Committee.

E. If less than 125 major Facial procedures were documented during the fellowship, the applicant must document an additional 50 major facial cosmetic surgery procedures as primary surgeon, post fellowship, comprising a sufficient breadth, complexity and diversity as determined by the Credentialing Committee.

### **III. Non AACS Fellowship Route: Pre-Application for Fellowship Equivalence**

#### **A. Applicant must furnish:**

1. Initial certification by an approved board;
2. Recommendation letter from fellowship director attesting to dates and training in Facial Cosmetic Surgery or, alternatively, a certificate of completion of the Non AACS Fellowship obtained at the time of completion of fellowship training identifying training in the area of Facial Cosmetic Surgery.
3. Surgical operative logs during fellowship training.  
Facial Cosmetic training must meet minimal guidelines for training fellowship as set forth in GUIDELINES FOR CLINICAL FELLOWSHIP TRAINING IN COSMETIC SURGERY by the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery and must be of sufficient breadth, complexity and diversity as determined by the Credentialing Committee.
4. Applicant must submit typed operative reports, with clearly labeled publication quality before and after photographs of 50 cases in consecutive order of the cases described in III(A)(3). Operative reports must illustrate a depth and breadth of cosmetic cases in the area of Facial Cosmetic Surgery.
5. A processing and review fee of \$450.00

B. Upon review by the ABFCS Fellowship and Board Review Committee and affirmative majority vote of the Board of Trustees, candidates that meet these criteria will receive written notification of equivalency of training to that of an AACS approved Facial Cosmetic fellowship program and will then be eligible to pursue ABFCS certification (See V, below). Potential candidates that are denied equivalency of training by the Board of Trustees, in its sole and absolute discretion, will receive written notification.

#### **IV. Pre-application for the Experience Route: Training, Experience and Eligibility Requirements**

A. The ABFCS recognizes additional education and experience only in the area that is consistent with the candidate's initial approved board certification. Therefore, general surgeons, and other surgical subspecialists whose training is not facially based are NOT eligible for certification via the experience route.

B. Applicant must furnish:

1. Initial certification by an approved board.
2. Proof of at least 100 CME Category1 credits in Facial Cosmetic Surgery over the five-year period prior to the date of the candidate's examination application.
3. Applicant must submit typed case logs documenting a minimum of 200 major facial cosmetic surgical procedures as primary surgeon in a three-year period. Procedures must be of sufficient breadth, complexity and diversity as determined by the ABFCS Fellowship and Board Review Committee.
4. Applicant must submit typed operative reports, documenting 100 major facial cosmetic surgery procedures, 50 of said procedures to include clearly labeled publication quality before and after photographs performed over the 3-year period prior to the date of the examination application. The procedures submitted must come from the 200 procedures described in IV (A)(3) above. There may be one or more surgical procedures in each operative report. The operative reports must illustrate the depth and breadth of procedures in the area of Facial Cosmetic Surgery.

C. Upon review by the ABFCS Fellowship and Board Review Committee and affirmative majority vote of the Board of Trustees, candidates that meet these criteria will receive written notification of equivalency of training of that of an AACS approved Facial Cosmetic fellowship program and will then be eligible to pursue ABFCS certification (See V, below). Potential candidates that are denied equivalency of training by the Board of Trustees, in its sole and absolute discretion, will receive written notification.

#### **V. Tier 2: Notification for Category 2 and 3 pre-applications.**

Once approved via the Category 2 or 3 application, the candidate will be eligible to receive all directions and documentation of requirements of the ABFCS examination application and will be subject to all of the then current examination fees. The candidate will also be held to the same due process as those of the approved AACS fellowship training. The candidate will be notified in writing and will be eligible to be considered for the written and oral Board Certification examination and will be subject to the then applied fees.



## **VI. Credentialing Committee**

A. A Credentialing Committee, alternately referred to as the ABFCS Fellowship and Board Review Committee, established by the President of the Board, shall review all applications and recommend and approve qualified candidates who satisfy the foregoing certification requirements for examination. The entire Credentialing Committee will review any application a committee member determines does not meet the board's stated requirements of professional standards. The Credentialing Committee will submit their recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees, in its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to reject inadequate applications.

B. Upon the act of the Board of Trustees, in its sole and absolute discretion, a successful applicant who meets all credential requirements and successfully passes the oral and written components of the examination shall be granted membership status and issued a certificate of membership. The certificate shall at all times remain the property of the ABFCS and neither the certificate nor the ABFCS membership shall be considered the property rights of the member. The certificate and ABFCS membership shall be valid until membership is revoked or otherwise terminated in accordance with the by-laws, provided, however, under no circumstances shall the term of the certificate or ABFCS membership exceed ten (10) years. In the event that membership status is revoked or is not renewed, the certificate shall be returned to the Corporation by the holder. If a certificate is not returned promptly after termination of membership, the Corporation may initiate legal action to recover the certificate. The former member shall be obligated to reimburse the Corporation for all reasonable expenses, including reasonable attorney fees incurred by the Corporation in connection with such action.

C. The Board of Trustees shall have the power to deny membership or to revoke a member's membership in its sole and absolute discretion. The decision of the Board of Trustees shall be final.

D. Certificates of membership are not transferable or assignable.

E. The Board of Trustees shall establish initial and annual membership fees and application fees. All Diplomates of the ABFCS shall pay annual membership fees (sustaining fees) which are mandatory. Those Diplomates who have not paid the mandatory sustaining dues within forty-five (45) days of the date they were billed shall be assessed a late fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00). Those Diplomates who fail to pay their mandatory sustaining fees shall have their names submitted to the Board of Trustees for sanctions, including, but not limited to, "status of Diplomate not in good standing for failure to pay mandatory dues" or "revocation of Diplomate status for failure to pay mandatory dues" as the Trustees deem fit.

F. Candidates who successfully pass the Oral and Written Board Examination given in the fall and become Board Certified in Facial Cosmetic Surgery must pay annual sustaining membership fees as Diplomates the next calendar year.

## **VII. Recertification**

The candidate successfully completing the Board Examination will be awarded a certificate which will be valid for ten (10) years. Diplomates of the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery must be re-examined every ten (10) years to maintain certification.

## **VIII. Application Process and Procedures**

Prospective applicants, who believe that they fulfill the eligibility requirements, must complete the application in its entirety and must include all requested documentation. The completed application and application fee shall be submitted to the Central Office IN AN ELECTRONIC FORMAT by the application deadline. Applications that are incomplete by the deadline or received after the deadline will not be considered. All applications and accompanying materials submitted to the ABFCS become the property of the ABFCS and will not be returned or copied.

### **Examination Fees and Information**

Application Fee: \$500.00  
(non-refundable and payable to start the application process)

Petition for Equivalency Application Fee: \$450.00  
(non-refundable and payable to start equivalency process)

Oral Examination Fee: \$1,500.00  
(payable upon approval of application)

Written Examination Fee: \$1,500.00  
(payable upon approval of application)

Prometric Written Examination Fee: \$152.00  
(payable upon approval of application)

Please visit the ABFCS website payment portal at: [www.ambrdfcs.org](http://www.ambrdfcs.org) to complete the payment process.

## **Application Process and Procedures**

To begin the application process, use the payment link above to pay the non-refundable \$500.00 Application Fee. ABFCS central office staff will send you a login for you to access the online application portal on our website and start the document submission process.

Communication with the ABFCS will be via email. It is imperative that you monitor your email for communications from the ABFCS throughout the process. It is your responsibility to inform the ABFCS if any of your contact information or address changes.

Completed application and non-refundable application fee shall be submitted to the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery Central Office by the application deadline. Applications that are incomplete by the deadline or received after the deadline will be considered for the next Examination. All applications and accompanying materials submitted to the ABFCS become the property of the ABFCS and will not be returned to the applicant in any form.

## **Postponement Policy**

The written and oral components must be successfully completed within three (3) years of each other. Applicants must take the examination within two (2) years of application approval including application year, however, said Applicant shall only be allowed one (1) attempt of the written exam per calendar year. Failure to do so will result in the forfeiture of all examination fees and submittal of new application if a candidate decides to move forward after two (2) years.

## **Exam Results**

Exam results will be released to Candidates approximately 10-12 weeks after each exam. Results will be in writing from the ABFCS-on-ABFCS stationery. The ABFCS does not provide individual scores or percentages, just pass or fail information for each of the exams.

The ABFCS reserves the right to withhold examination results if any application documentation is found to be incomplete or expired. This includes your AACS issued fellowship completion certificate. Certificate is issued after research and article are approved.

## **Recertification**

The candidate successfully completing the ABFCS board examinations will be awarded a certificate which will be valid for ten (10) years. Diplomates of the American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery must be re-examined every ten (10) years to maintain certification. Diplomates must complete all Recertification requirements. Failure to submit all requirements will result in a surgeon's removal from the ABFCS. The recertification exam is now computer based so it can be completed easily in your home or office.

**AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**

**2026 EXAMINATION**

**CANDIDATE APPLICATION BOOKLET**

**SECTION 3**

**APPLICATION CHECKLISTS**

# ABFCS

## US - CANADA/INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATE APPLICATION CHECKLIST 2026

### **General Requirements**

- ☐ Signed Application
- ☐ Applicant Photo (Two Passport Type Photographs)
- ☐ Copy of current M.D., D.O., D.D.S, or D.M.D. License (International Applicant must provide documentation of International Equivalent)
- ☐ Proof of Valid ACLS at time of Application (Copy of Valid Card required if Available in Your Country of Practice – May not apply to International Applicant)
- ☐ Affidavit Regarding the Numbers of Years in Practice (US – Canada Applicant and International Applicant)
- ☐ Affidavit Regarding Clear and Unrestricted Licensure (US - Canada Applicant - Does not apply to applicant with a MD)
- ☐ Initial Board Certification by an approved board (Please Provide Affidavit if Unavailable in Your Country of Practice)
- ☐ Verification of Hospital Operating Room Privileges \_\_\_\_\_ OR, Approved Accredited Facility (See Credentialing Requirements) OR Note, if all procedures under local anesthesia or oral sedation only (Requires Special Review)
- ☐ Letters of Reference (4 Required)
  - ☐ Chairperson of Residency OR Dept. Chief of Current Hospital Facility
  - ☐ ABFCS Diplomate
  - ☐ Director of Cosmetic Surgery Fellowship (mandatory if applicable)
  - ☐ (1 or 2) Practicing Physician
- ☐ AMA, AOA, or FCVS Physician Profile Ordered by Applicant
- ☐ Copy of Core Certification from ABMS/AOA/RCPS/ABOMS or equivalent International Training Certification
- ☐ Copy of Curriculum Vitae

# **Routes to Certification**

## **AACS Certified Fellowship Route**

- ☐ Verification of Satisfactory Completion of Facial (or Approved General) Cosmetic Fellowship from AACS
- ☐ Case log from Fellowship verifying completion of a minimum of 125 Facial Cosmetic Procedures. Indicate Number of Years and type of Fellowship (Facial or Approved General)
- ☐ If Fellowship case log showing applicant as surgeon, assistant surgeon or co-surgeon is less than 125 Major Facial procedures were documented then the applicant must document an additional 50 major Facial Cosmetic Surgery procedures as primary surgeon/post fellowship
- ☐ Proof of a minimum of 100 Category 1 CME credits in Facial Cosmetic Surgery (Required only if Fellowship Program was completed more than 3 years prior to the date of the application (see Credentialing Requirements))

## **Non – AACS Certified Fellowship Route (Two Tier Process)**

### **Tier One**

- ☐ \$450.00 Non-Refundable Petition for Equivalency Fee in addition to \$500.00 Application Fee
- ☐ Recommendation letter from Fellowship Director attesting to dates and training in Facial Cosmetic Surgery or certification of the non AACS Fellowship; & Documented Surgical Log
- ☐ Surgical Operative Logs during fellowship training. Facial Cosmetic training must meet minimal guidelines set forth in AACS GUIDELINES FOR CLINICAL FELLOWSHIP TRAINING IN FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY

### **Non – AACS Certified Fellowship Route**

#### **Tier Two (Assuming Tier One Approved)**

- ☐ 50 Operative Reports of Major Facial Cosmetic Surgery cases with publication quality before and after photographs. Photographs must be numbered and correlate with the Operative Reports.
- ☐ Proof of a minimum of 100 Category 1 CME credits in Facial Cosmetic Surgery (Required only if Fellowship Program was completed more than 3 years prior to the date of the application (see Credentialing Requirements))

## **Experience Route**

- ☐ Proof of a minimum of 100 Category 1 CME credits in Cosmetic Surgery (see Surgical Log Guidelines)
- ☐ Case Log Documenting a minimum of 200 Major Facial Cosmetic Procedures (see Surgical Log Guidelines)
- ☐ Typed Operative Reports documenting 100 Major Facial Cosmetic Surgery procedures, 50 of said procedures to include before and after photographs (**Photocopies are NOT ACCEPTABLE**) performed over the 3-year period prior to the date of the examination application. Photographs must be numbered and correlate with the Operative Reports. The procedures submitted must come from the 200 procedures described in III (A)(3). (See Surgical Log Guidelines)

**AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**

**2026 EXAMINATION**

**CANDIDATE APPLICATION BOOKLET**

**SECTION 4**

**SURGICAL LOG REQUIREMENTS**

**AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**  
**GUIDELINES FOR**  
**SURGICAL LOG REQUIREMENTS**

(i) The following surgical procedures qualify for inclusion on operative logs. The logs must be detailed enough so that the credentials committee can determine that the procedure meets the requirements set forth on page 2 hereof.

- Ablative Chemical peeling (into papillary dermis) and of same size requirement as dermabrasion
- Canthoplasty/pexy
- Chin implants
- Dermabrasion of the face for extensive scars or wrinkles (must be at least the size of one entire cosmetic unit such as lips and chin, cheek, forehead, periorbital)
- Direct brow lift (bilateral counts as one procedure)
- Face Lifts of all types
- Fat grafting to face (counts as one procedure)
- Forehead/Brow lift (all types)
- Genioplasty
- Hair lift
- Hair transplantation grafting
- Hair restoration flaps
- Laser resurfacing with same size requirements as dermabrasion
- Liposuction of the face and/or neck (counts as one procedure)
- Lower blepharoplasty (bilateral counts as one procedure)
- Malar implants of the face
- Mandibular Osteotomy
- Maxillary Osteotomy
- Midface lift
- Nasal dorsal augmentation by implantation or grafting not done as part of a rhinoplasty
- Neck Lift (platysmaplasty) when not in conjunction with face lift, with or without liposuction after platysmaplasty
- Otoplasty (bilateral counts as one procedure)
- Rhinoplasty with or without grafting
- Scalp reductions or extensions
- Soft tissue augmentation (noncutaneous) with human collagen, fat or alloplastic material (all areas of the face of one patient equal one procedure)
- Subperiosteal malar lift or SOFF lift **NOT** done at the time of a traditional face lift
- Upper eyelid cosmetic ptosis repair as a separate procedure
- Upper blepharoplasty (bilateral counts as one procedure)
- Varicose vein surgery (injection sclerotherapy, microstripping, SF or SP junction ligation)



(ii) The following procedures **DO NOT QUALIFY** for inclusion on the operative logs:

- Bone grafting as a part of osteotomies or rhinoplasty
- Botox injections, GFX or radio frequency ablation
- Cosmetic tattooing of any area
- Dental implants
- Ear lobe split repairs
- Excisions of lesions with or without plastic repairs
- Facial fractures
- Microdermabrasion
- Pigmented lesion, tattoo, laser treatment
- Repairs or reconstruction of trauma
- Scar revision by dermabrasion, laser, or chemical peeling
- Sclerotherapy of cutaneous ectasias
- Septoplasty
- Skin flaps or skin grafts to reconstruct skin lesion removal
- Superficial chemical peeling with glycolic, salicylic, trichloroacetic acids
- Thread Lifts
- Vascular lesion laser treatment or hair removal
- Zyderm or Zyplast injections, or injections of other fillers

(iii) **SURGICAL LOG REQUIREMENTS**

a) The *typewritten* surgical log must meet the following criteria before the credentials committee will consider it:

COLUMN 1 (Procedure number in consecutive order)	COLUMN 2 (Date of procedure)	COLUMN 3 (Medical Patient # Per HIPPA or Patient Initials)	COLUMN 4 (Type of procedure)
--	---------------------------------	--	---------------------------------

b) The surgical log should be tallied on a separate page:

COLUMN 1 Type of procedure (e.g. hair transplantation) (upper blepharoplasty)	COLUMN 2 Total number of cases (e.g. 10 cases) (24 cases)
--	--

**NOTE:** Grand total for Column 2 should equal the required number of cases.

**(iv) OPERATIVE REPORTS**

Operative reports must be typewritten in narrative form, similar to those completed for hospital reports, and must be signed by the primary surgeon. The front page of the report must contain a list of all procedures performed. Only those procedures listed on the front page will be counted by the committee. The reports must list any and all co-surgeons and assistant surgeons. The reports will show pre and post operative diagnoses and the indication for surgery. The narrative description must be sufficiently detailed such that a physician not fully familiar with the procedure will understand what was done. Important items such as estimated blood loss should be included in the report. Liposuction procedures must list the amount of fluid infused into the tissue, the total volume of aspirate, the total volume of the infranatant fluid and the mg/kg dosage of lidocaine.

Clearly labeled publication quality before and after photographs shall be submitted in electronic format. Before and after high resolution color photographs that demonstrate satisfactory results are to be standardized as to viewing angle, including uniform professional background, uniform and constant proper illumination consistent with before and after photographs. Failure to adequately meet these standards would be cause for rejection of the application. Pictures must clearly demonstrate treated area(s). For example, an abdominal liposuction should include a lateral view and liposuction of the lateral thighs should include an anterior or posterior view. All pictures should be labeled with ‘**BEFORE**’ or ‘**AFTER**’ labels.

**(v) CASE LOG REQUIREMENTS**

The committee will evaluate each candidate’s case log based on the depth and breadth of the cases submitted. **Candidates with extremely narrow practice scopes will not be approved.**

**AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL COSMETIC SURGERY**

**2026 EXAMINATION**

**CANDIDATE APPLICATION BOOKLET**

**SECTION 5**

**GENERAL CONTENT OUTLINE FOR  
WRITTEN EXAMINATION**

# ABFCS Written Examination Content Outline

The following is a general content outline for the 2026 ABFCS Written Examination scheduled on Saturday, May 16, 2026, at Pearson VUE Testing Centers of your choice in the United States, Canada locations, or other international locations.

## TOPIC APPROXIMATE PERCENTAGE OF WRITTEN TEST ITEMS

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| <b>I. Liposuction</b>                    | <b>3.2%</b>      |
| A. Instrumentation/Modalities            |                  |
| B. Anesthesia                            |                  |
| C. Anatomic Considerations               |                  |
| <br><b>II. Facial</b>                    | <br><b>46.4%</b> |
| A. Soft Tissue                           |                  |
| B. Implants                              |                  |
| C. Liposuction                           |                  |
| D. Rhinoplasty                           |                  |
| E. Otoplasty                             |                  |
| F. Face and Neck Lift                    |                  |
| G. Forehead/Brow Lift                    |                  |
| H. Blepharoplasty                        |                  |
| I. Lips                                  |                  |
| J. Midface                               |                  |
| K. Orthognathic                          |                  |
| L. Genioplasty                           |                  |
| <br><b>III. Dermatology</b>              | <br><b>24%</b>   |
| A. Resurfacing                           |                  |
| B. Laser/Light/Radiofrequency Treatments |                  |
| C. Scar Management                       |                  |
| D. Soft Tissue                           |                  |
| E. Hair Restoration                      |                  |
| <br><b>IV. Patient Safety</b>            | <br><b>12%</b>   |
| A. Airway/Oxygenation/Ventilation        |                  |
| B. ACLS                                  |                  |
| C. Medical Emergencies                   |                  |
| D. Surgical Emergencies                  |                  |
| E. OR/Environment Safety                 |                  |
| F. Ethics/Communication                  |                  |
| G. Patient Evaluation/Perioperative Care |                  |

- V. Surgical Principles 14.4%**
- A. Anatomy
  - B. Physiology
  - C. Aesthetic Analysis
  - D. Pharmacology
  - E. Complications

**Please note approximately 30% of the ABFCS written items will be at the recall of facts/recognition level; 40% of the questions will be at the application level; and about 30% of the items will be at the problem solving/synthesis/evaluation level.**

**This is furnished as a study guide and identifies the topics with which you should be familiar. The written examination consists of one (1) session with a maximum time of four and one-half (4 & 1/2) hours.**