



# AMERICAN BOARD OF SPINE SURGERY

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Dear Applicant;

Enclosed is the current application for Part I Written Examination by the American Board of Spine Surgery.

Please note the following information, as it is very important to the processing of your application in a timely and effective manner. Your application must be accompanied by the items cited on the enclosed application checklist, with the exception of the letters of recommendation, which the authors may send to the ABSS office directly.

The purpose of letters of recommendation is to provide the Board with references from contemporary colleagues who can speak about the nature of the candidate's practice in the year that the examination is taken. These are not intended to be character references but to give an account of the nature of the practice that is being carried out by the candidate at the moment.

The bylaws require that such letters be written by "the director of the residency program, the director of the spine fellowship program, the Chief of Surgery or equivalent at a hospital where the applicant holds staff privileges, or other person in a position of authority who is familiar with your work and is knowledgeable and qualified to evaluate and comment on the applicant's performance."

A letter from the director of your residency or spine fellowship is appropriate if you completed your training program within the past year or two. However, if you are more than one or two years removed from your spine fellowship or training program, we usually ask that an orthopedic or neurosurgical colleague who is knowledgeable about the practice of the candidate should be the first reference. It should be someone who works in the same hospital and is preferably a doctor who refers patients to you or works on them with you.

The second letter should be from the physician in a position of authority as described above, or it would be appropriate to submit a letter from another colleague who works alongside you regularly, such as an anesthesiologist or an invasive radiologist. These are the people who can write references about the consistent quality of your work.

If you have any questions about the application itself or its supporting materials, or about the application or examination processes, please contact Mimi Eckert at the ABSS Executive Office.

Good luck and we look forward to having you as a Diplomate of ABSS.

Sincerely,

Credentials Committee