

January 31, 2023

April D. Armstrong, MD
President
American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery

Dear Dr. Armstrong:

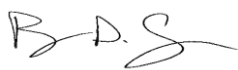
On behalf of the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons (AAHKS) we write today to express support for candidates for this year's Part II examination seeking a reasonable accommodation due to the inability to travel at the scheduled test dates in July. This includes pregnant and newly postpartum candidates. For these women and others with compelling temporary travel restrictions, deferring the exam for a full year seems unreasonable in light of other options. A delay in board certification can have major implications for new surgeons in terms of hospital credentialing, contract negotiations, access to employment opportunities, career promotion, salary, partnership, and financial compensation.

As ABOS's Guiding Principles state, "change and adaptability are vital" to orthopaedics and with the continued increase of women entering our specialty, your commitment to "working proactively to define the future of the lifelong ABOS Board Certification process" should include flexibility in exam scheduling and/or providing virtual options. Such flexibility with Part II exams has been successfully demonstrated by ABOS in response to the recent pandemic.

As an organization that states it is working to develop "programs to encourage diversity ... particularly with respect to race and gender", we urge you to review your examination policy when your board meets next week so that surgeons are not disadvantaged unreasonably due to pregnancy or other compelling circumstances.

Other surgical and nonsurgical specialties administer oral examinations virtually or on multiple dates throughout the year rather than being restricted to one week per year. In addition, please consider flexibility in the case collection window to provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with a temporary medical situation. Thank you for your consideration and action on this issue.

Sincerely,



Bryan D. Springer, MD
President



Rina Jain, MD, FRCS
Chair, Women in Arthroplasty (WIA) Committee

CC: David F. Martin, MD, ABOS Executive Director
Kevin L. Garvin, MD, Chair, ABOS Oral Examination Committee
Charles L. Nelson, MD, ABOS Board
Michael J. Zarski, JD, Executive Director