

**Joint Statement from AACOM, AOA, COCA and NBOME:  
Support of COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE and COCA's Temporary Modification of Graduation  
Standards for the DO Class of 2021**

June 5, 2020

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), American Osteopathic Association (AOA), Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) and the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) have been working together on numerous challenges presented by the COVID-19 crisis. One such challenge is balancing the importance of appropriate testing and assessment for evaluation of students with the safety of testing and travel to testing centers, including the COMLEX-USA examination series that is administered by NBOME.

Today our organizations stand together in support of [COCA's decision](#) to provide deans of accredited COMs the discretion to allow students who would otherwise be scheduled to be in the 2021 graduating class the option to graduate and receive the DO degree without having passed the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE clinical skills examination, provided they have met all other graduation requirements and have been endorsed by the faculty.

COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE will still need to be completed for full licensure and is considered a necessary and ongoing requirement for the licensure of osteopathic physicians in all 50 states. This announcement does not affect COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE, although the availability of testing opportunities for this exam is being monitored very closely.

This decision helps to address some of the undue burdens placed upon our osteopathic medical students and ensures a pathway to graduation. It allows additional flexibility for students as to testing when it best meets their needs and personal circumstances given the pandemic.

AACOM, AOA, COCA, and NBOME remain committed to the valid, standardized measurement of clinical skills for licensure as part of our profession's commitment to our patients' safety and protection and the quality of healthcare overall, while acknowledging and preserving the interests and needs of our osteopathic medical students.

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AACOM, AOA, COCA and NBOME are committed to serving our profession, collaboratively, but also individually through the distinct and specific services each of our organizations provides. To better understand how we work together, each organization's unique contributions and roles are defined below.

### **About AACOM**

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) was founded in 1898 to lend support and assistance to the nation's osteopathic medical schools, and to serve as a unifying voice for osteopathic medical education. The organization represents the administration, faculty and students of all osteopathic medical colleges in the United States and is actively involved in all areas of osteopathic medical education, including graduate medical education. Visit **AACOM.org** for more information, or **ChooseDO.org** for information about applying to osteopathic medical school.

### **About AOA**

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) represents nearly 151,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students; promotes public health; encourages scientific research; serves as the primary certifying body (specialty board certification) for DOs. To learn more about DOs and the osteopathic philosophy of medicine, visit **DoctorsThatDO.org**.

### **About COCA**

The AOA Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the accreditor of colleges of osteopathic medicine. COCA accreditation signifies that a college has met or exceeded the Commission's standards for educational quality. COCA is a division of the AOA, but operates independently to serve its role of accrediting colleges of osteopathic medicine

### **About NBOME**

The National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) is an independent, nongovernmental, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to protect the public by providing the means to assess competencies for osteopathic medicine and related health care professions. The NBOME develops and administers a number of osteopathically distinct examinations, most notably the COMLEX-USA (Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States), which is accepted for medical licensure in all 50 of the United States and other licensing jurisdictions. Visit **NBOME.org** for more information.