

Requirements for  
International Medical Graduates at UCDHS

**I. Foreign Nationals – Graduate of International Medical Schools**  
(Not a US Citizen, Permanent Residents, Refugee or Asylee)

- A. Visa – A clinical J-1 visa is required for admission to UCDHS residency and fellowship training programs. The visa can only be sponsored by ECFMG, which requires passage of USMLE Steps 1 and 2. Applicants on a J-1 with a waiver from the Department of State (DOS) can only be accepted into our programs on an EAD or clinical J1 visa. Once a J-1 physician receives a U.S. Department of State waiver recommendation, he/she is no longer eligible for an extension of ECFMG J-1 sponsorship for any training activity. J-1 physicians who are considering fellowship options while simultaneously pursuing waiver employment opportunities must understand that an approved waiver recommendation cannot be withdrawn should a fellowship be received. ECFMG has no authority to make exceptions to multiple-year programs. Sponsorship extensions for waiver recipients to prepare to sit for an American Board of Medical Specialties (ABNS) member board exam are permitted. Such extensions carry no training authorization.

**NOTE:** UCDHS follows the AAMC guidelines regarding H1-B sponsorship and does not support the H-1B visa for international medical graduates (IMG) for clinical training. In addition, UCDHS does not accept H1-B visa transfers. Specific exceptions, outlined in Section III apply to acceptance of an H-1B visa.

- B. ECFMG Certificate – International Medical Graduates (IMG) must have a current, valid ECFMG certificate in order to be eligible for postgraduate training. To obtain an ECFMG certificate, IMG must meet the following examination and medical education credential requirements.
1. Pass Step 1 and Step 2 of USMLE. Step 2 exam has two separate administered components, the Clinical Knowledge (CK) component and the Clinical Skills (CS) component;
  2. California law (2184) states that passing scores (on each Step) of the written examinations shall be valid for a period of 10 years from the month of the examination. Upon expiration of the 10-year period, the applicants may be required to re-take the expired examination if not enrolled in a training program.
  3. Pass the English exam; and,
  4. Meet all educational requirements as specified by ECFMG.
- C. IMGs must submit a current “Postgraduate Training Authorization Letter (PTAL) from the Medical Board of California (MBC) when submitting an application for postgraduate training. Applicants will not be considered without this document.

**II. U.S. Citizen, Permanent Resident, Refugee or Asylee – Graduate of International Medical Schools.**

- A. Permanent resident, refugee or asylee must provide proof of resident alien status and have the legal right to work in the United States.
- B. ECFMG Certificate – IMG must provide a copy of a current, valid ECFMG certificate regardless of citizenship.
- C. All applicants who attend international medical schools must furnish a current/final PTAL from the Medical Board of California (MBC) when submitting an application for postgraduate training. Applications will not be considered nor interviews granted without this document.
- D. IMG with pending applications for permanent residency will sometimes qualify for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). A copy of the current permit must be submitted along with a copy of the receipt for filing the I-485 (Application to Change Status to Permanent Resident).

**III. Foreign Nationals – Graduates of U.S. Medical Schools**

- A. Non-U.S. citizens, who graduate from a U.S. medical school, sponsored by an F-1 student visa, are not required to meet ECFMG requirements.
- B. Non-U.S. citizens, who graduate from a U.S. medical school are not considered IMG and therefore can be sponsored by an H-1B visa.
- C. The F-1 student visa is not permitted for postgraduate training at UCDHS and must be converted to a one-year Employment Authorization Document (EAD) before the start of training. This permit will cover the resident while waiting for the issuance of the H-1B visa.
- D. Financial responsibility for the cost of the H-1B visa falls on the accepting Department.

**IV. Graduates of Canadian Medical Schools**

- A. Effective July 1, 2009, Graduates of Canadian medical schools, will be required to obtain a clinical J-1 visa for admission to UCDHS residency and fellowship training programs which will be sponsored by ECFMG.

**NOTE:** Either USMLE or MCCQE (Canadian equivalent of USMLE) will allow a graduate of a Canadian medical school to be licensed in California.

- B. ECFMG certificate and English exam are **not** required.
- C. Graduates of Canadian medical schools are not required to obtain a PTAL.

V. **Requirements for IMG Licensure in California – Foreign Nationals or U.S. Citizens**

- A. The Medical Board accepts 17 exam combinations for licensure and 5 exam combinations for postgraduate training. Reference Section 1328 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations.
- B. Two years of approved postgraduate training in any state in the U.S. qualifies an IMG for licensure in California.
- C. Graduates of Fifth Pathway Programs are not required to obtain a PTAL.

VI. **References**

- A. Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)  
P.O. Box 828262  
Philadelphia, PA 19182-8262  
Telephone: (215) 823-2121  
FAX: (215) 386-9766  
<http://www.ecfm.org/>
- B. Medical Board of California (MBC)  
Division of Licensing and Applications  
2025 Evergreen Street, Suite 1200  
Sacramento, CA 95815  
Telephone: (916) 263-2382  
<http://www.medbd.ca.gov/>