



FORENSIC SPECIALTIES ACCREDITATION BOARD, Inc.

723 N. Weber Street, Suite 103, Colorado Springs, CO 80903

access · recognize · monitor

President

Emily J. Will, MA, D-BFDE

Vice President

Ann W. Bunch, PhD, D-ABFA

Secretary

Demi Garvin, PharmD, F-ABFT

Treasurer

Bethany Fax, MPA, D-ABMDI

Immediate Past-President

Bruce A. Goldberger, PhD, F-ABFT

Directors

Peter Alexander, PhD, D-IBFES

Donna C. Boyd, PhD, D-ABFA

Paula C. Brumit, DDS, D-ABFO

Mark T. Goff, BA, D-ABFDE

Lawrence Quarino, PhD, D-ABC

Marina Stajic, PhD, F-ABFT

Peter R. Valentin, MSFS, D-ABC

Elizabeth Ziolkowski, MS, D-ABC

Public Directors

James M. Adcock, PhD

Karin Athanas, MFS

Stephanie Domitrovich, PhD, JD

David N. Khey, PhD

Kenneth E. Melson, JD

April 8, 2021

Dear CAB President,

As the President of the Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board (FSAB) I am writing to update your organization regarding the FSAB activities and to invite questions or feedback that you might have for the FSAB. Please share this letter with your Conformity Assessment Body (CAB).

For the past five years the FSAB has been working diligently to align itself with the Standards and Policies and Procedures set forth by the International Standards Organization (ISO). We did this in order to offer our CABs a stronger and more universally acknowledged level of accreditation.

After performing gap analyses comparing our then current Standards and Policies and Procedures with those of the ISO, we learned that we were already on target in many areas, but lacking in other areas. We have rewritten our Standards to align with ISO/OEC 17024 (Conformity assessment - General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies), and these are now the standards that CABs must follow to apply for FSAB accreditation/reaccreditation. In addition, we have rewritten the FSAB Policies and Procedures to align with ISO / IEC 17011 (Conformity Assessment - Requirements For Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies). In 2017 the FSAB invited CABs to send representatives to a day-long workshop with an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) representative explaining the process and answering questions.

We realize that these changes have created work for the CABs as they have for the FSAB. Just as you have to perform gap analyses and make changes, we must as well. FSAB's job was further complicated because in 2017 ISO published an update to 17011 that required another round of gap analysis and harmonizing.

At this time, the new Standards for Accreditation/Reaccreditation have been published, and the new documents and accreditation/reaccreditation application are available on the FSAB website. The FSAB instituted a several-year transition period, during which reaccrediting CABs could use either the old or new standards and application. All activities in 2021 and going forward are based on the new documents. In addition, each CAB will receive the *Agreement on Terms and Conditions for FSAB Accreditation* which is a contract outlining the responsibilities of each CAB and the FSAB during the accreditation/reaccreditation process. The contract is required by the new ISO terms and must be signed before the accreditation/reaccreditation process may begin.

The ISO does not certify organizations as having met their standards, although ISO/IEC 17050-1:2004 does allow an organization to "self-declare" that it has met specific ISO standards. FSAB is now engaged in internal auditing and will eventually have an external audit to be certain that it can self-declare. If there are any challenges to our self-declaration we should be prepared to meet them.

The FSAB website has been revamped in the last 2 years and includes many resources that a CAB may need. The FSAB president and secretary are also available to assist you.

The FSAB will also be conducting “outreach” activities, including a confidential survey that will give CABs an opportunity to provide feedback.

Looking back at where the FSAB started more than twenty years ago, it is clear to me that the CABS and the FSAB have made great strides towards excellence in certification and accreditation respectively. This is progress that we can all be proud of. As volunteer organizations, this progress represents personal and collective commitment by individuals who value excellence in the forensic sciences. The judicial system should see the FSAB as a great asset, and part of the FSAB’s outreach going forward will be to make the FSAB more of a “household name” in the judicial system.

We look forward to working with your certification board in the coming years and welcome your questions and comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily J. Will". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Emily J. Will
President, FSAB