

12. MODIFICATION OF ACCREDITATION STATUS

PURPOSE

This procedure addresses accreditation modifications, including, suspension or withdrawal of a Conformity Assessment Body's (CAB) accreditation, the extension and/or reduction of the CAB's scope of accreditation, and provisional accreditation. This procedure shall be used when (a) such action is requested by the CAB or (b) the FSAB determines that a serious nonconformity exists that cannot be brought into conformity.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to all FSAB-accredited CABs.

ACTIONS

1. SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION

- a. The FSAB shall suspend or withdraw accreditation when an accredited CAB fails to meet the requirements of accreditation, to include, but not limited to:

- failure to abide by the rules for accreditation
- submitting false or misleading information to the FSAB
- making any misrepresentation of fact in the application for reaccreditation
- failure to file an annual report
- failure to pay fees

- b. Suspension of accreditation

If the FSAB observes external to an ARC process that a CAB may not comply with the FSAB Standards, the President shall notify the CAB of the nonconformity to initiate remediation with a timeline. The President shall appoint an ad hoc committee to investigate the nonconformity. If the committee confirms the existence of a nonconformity, the Committee Chair shall report its findings to the President. Should remediation efforts fail within the specified timeline, the CAB may request an extension of the timeline, which may be granted at the FSAB's discretion. If remediation is unsuccessful, accreditation shall be suspended. Suspension shall be approved according to the Bylaws. The CAB shall have 90 days from the date of notification to terminate the suspension by conforming to the FSAB Standards.

If suspended, the CAB shall be listed as suspended on the FSAB website.

- c. Withdrawal of accreditation

If the CAB remains in nonconformity after the expiration of 90 days, the President shall recommend to the Board that the CAB's accreditation status be withdrawn. Withdrawal of accreditation shall be approved following the Bylaws. The CAB must reapply for FSAB accreditation to become accredited. The CAB shall be deleted from the list of accredited CABs on the FSAB website.

2. REDUCTION/EXTENSION OF SCOPE OF ACCREDITATION

a. Reduction of scope of accreditation

If a CAB's scope of accreditation includes specified specialties in which it no longer intends to certify individuals, the FSAB shall reduce the scope of accreditation by a Board vote following the Bylaws. Any specialty not being tested by the CAB during its certification process is not considered part of its scope of accreditation and shall not be listed on the FSAB website.

- The FSAB shall issue a new accreditation certificate to the CAB reflecting the change in scope.

b. Extension of scope of accreditation

If a CAB desires to expand its accredited certification program to include new forensic specialties that are not within its current scope of accreditation, upon application by the CAB, the FSAB shall assess the certification program regarding the new specialty to determine that the process of certification for that specialty meets the requirements of accreditation. If so, the FSAB shall extend the scope of accreditation by a Board vote following the Bylaws.

- The FSAB shall issue a new accreditation certificate to the CAB reflecting the approved change in scope.

3. PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION

In the event that a CAB fails to meet the standards for accreditation attributable to reasonable exigent circumstances, such as a national pandemic, natural disasters, significant or sweeping changes in the FSAB Standards, it may apply for provisional accreditation.

- a. The applying CAB must make a written application for provisional accreditation and convey it to the ARC Chair. The ARC shall make a recommendation to the Board on whether to grant the request. The Board must decide whether there is a reasonable possibility that the applying CAB can achieve full accreditation within 12 months.
- b. In addition to the feasibility that the CAB shall meet all accreditation standards, the Board must determine that granting provisional accreditation shall not affect the overall quality of the CAB's certification process. If granted, the provisional status of the accreditation shall be reflected on the FSAB website, and must be reflected on the CAB's website as well as other relevant documents.
- c. If provisional accreditation is granted by the Board, the President shall extend the duration of the respective ARC for another year. The ARC shall continue to monitor the progress of the CAB. An on-site visit shall be conducted during the transition between provisional accreditation and full accreditation, regardless of any previous on-site visit. Additional on-site visits may be in-person or virtual depending on the need.

- d. The applying CAB may request conversion to full accreditation prior to the end of the 12-month provisional accreditation. Such requests must be made in writing by the CAB and be accompanied by documentation that the deficiencies have been addressed and brought into conformity. The original ARC shall make a recommendation to the Board as to full accreditation. The Board shall then determine the accreditation status at a specially convened Board meeting. If the CAB does not fully meet the accreditation standards by the end of the 12-month period, accreditation shall be denied.
- e. The status of full accreditation granted after a period of provisional accreditation shall be awarded for five years from the annual meeting at which the provisional accreditation was granted.