

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY STATEMENT Arkansas PASSE

Policy Name & Number	Date Effective
Pain Management Physicians AR PASSE-AD-1638	09/01/2026
Policy Type	
ADMINISTRATIVE	

Administrative Policy Statements contain supplemental information regarding standard benefit administration and coverage details. Administrative Policy Statements do not guarantee an authorization or payment of services. The Member's plan contract (e.g., Evidence of Coverage, Member Handbook) contains specific terms and conditions, including limitations, exclusions, benefit maximums, eligibility, and other relevant conditions of coverage. Except as otherwise required by law, if there is a conflict between the Administrative Policy Statement and the plan contract and/or provider agreement, then the plan contract and/or provider agreement will be the controlling document. Reasonable discretion may be used in interpreting and applying this Policy Statement to services provided in a particular case, and the policy may be modified at any time. Policy Statements may be superseded by federal and state laws and regulations, as applicable. In the case of a discrepancy between the Policy Statement's effective date and any applicable legal or regulatory requirement, the law or regulation will govern.

Coverage for mental health and substance use disorder (MH/SUD) benefits are provided at the same level as coverage for medical and surgical (M/S) benefits, as required by the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA). MH/SUD benefits are not subject to limits or requirements that are more restrictive than those that apply to M/S benefits.

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A. Subject

Pain Management Physicians

B. Background

Physicians who have obtained additional education/certification to practice in the field of pain medicine are able to help members manage and treat pain.

C. Definitions

- **American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)** – An organization of medical specialty boards with shared goals and standards related to the certification of medical specialists, including initial specialty and subspecialty certification, as well as maintenance of certification throughout the physician's career.
- **American Board of Pain Medicine (ABPM)** – An organization that administers a psychometrically-developed and practice-related examination in the field of Pain Medicine to qualified candidates. Physicians who have successfully completed the ABPM credentialing process and examination will be issued certificates as specialists in the field of Pain Medicine and designated as Diplomates of the American Board of Pain Medicine.
- **American Osteopathic Association (AOA)** – An organization of osteopathic specialty boards with shared goals and standards related to the certification of osteopathic specialties. Certification includes primary certification, certification of special or added qualifications and osteopathic continuous certification.
- **Pain Management** – The medical discipline concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of the entire range of painful disorders.

D. Policy

- I. All the following criteria must be met for physicians to achieve successful credentialing as pain management specialists:
 - A. Successful completion of residency in a pertinent residency program such as
 - neurology
 - neurosurgery
 - physical medicine and rehabilitation
 - anesthesiology
 - B. Board certification in 1 of the above specialties, as recognized by ABMS, AOA, or ABPM.
 - C. Successful completion of fellowship training in pain medicine or anesthesiology certification in pain management.
 - D. Additional board certification in Pain Management by 1 of the following pathways is preferred:
 1. American Board of Anesthesiology, subspecialty in Pain Medicine
 2. American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, subspecialty in Pain Medicine
 3. American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, subspecialty in Pain Medicine
 4. American Osteopathic Board of Anesthesiology, certification of added qualifications in Pain Management

5. American Osteopathic Board of Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine, certification of added qualifications in Pain Management
 6. American Osteopathic Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, certification of added qualifications in Pain Management
 7. American Board of Pain Medicine (not an ABMS or AOA specialty)
- II. Physicians board certified in 1 of the above specialties, but without additional pain management fellowship training or certification (anesthesia route), will not be credentialed in pain management.
- III. Primary care physicians and specialists other than those listed above will not be credentialed as pain management physicians. Physicians who receive additional training in pain management and intend to have a non-interventional pain management practice will not be credentialed or listed as pain management physicians but will be privileged to perform pain management as part of general medical practice depending on current level of training and experience.
- IV. All physicians who do not meet requirements I.A-I.C will be reviewed by the credentialing committee for further consideration.

E. Conditions of Coverage

NA

F. Related Policies/Rules

NA

G. Review/Revision History

DATE		ACTION
Date Issued	6/17/2026	New policy. Approved at Committee.
Date Revised		
Date Effective	09/01/2026	
Date Archived		

H. References

1. *ABMS Guide to Medical Specialties*. American Board of Medical Specialties; 2026. Accessed April 2, 2026. www.abms.org
2. Certification Examination in Pain Medicine. 2026 Bulletin of Information. American Board of Pain Medicine. Accessed April 2, 2026. www.abpm.org
3. Specialties and Subspecialties. American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Board Certification. Accessed April 2, 2026. www.certification.osteopathic.org