

1. **USMLE/ECFMG Application-** The first step in the process is submitting an application for the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) to the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG). At this time, you would submit a copy of your medical school diploma and final medical school transcript, which ECFMG will verify, with your school. Please read instructions in the application carefully. You can apply to take the Step 1 and/or Step 2 CK Exams in this application. The examination fee for each exam in the eligibility periods ending in 2010 is \$740. Applicants must download the *ECFMG Certification Information Booklet* and the *USMLE Bulletin of Information* at www.ecfmg.org and follow the procedures described in the booklet.
2. **USMLE Exams** - Once ECFMG determines you are eligible to take the exams; they will forward your registration information to the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME). NBME will send you your Step 1 or Step 2 CK scheduling permit. Once you have this permit, you can schedule the test through Prometric, Inc (www.prometric.com) who provides scheduling and test centers for the USMLE. There are multiple test centers in California. The testing day for Step 1 lasts about eight hours. The testing day for Step 2 CK lasts about nine hours. A brief summary of the content of the tests can be found in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.
3. **Step 2 CS Application and Exam-** The Step 2 Clinical Skills Exam is a one-day exam that mirrors a physician's typical workday in a clinic. The exam is focused on evaluating your ability to gather and interpret clinical patient data, your spoken English language proficiency and appropriate interpersonal skills. You will examine eleven or twelve "standardized patients" which are people trained to portray real patients. The Step 2 CS exam is administered in Philadelphia, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston. The cost for the exam for 2010 is \$1,295 and you must also cover the cost of travel and accommodations. The Step 2 CS application is submitted through ECFMG. See www.ecfmg.org for application form.
4. **ECFMG Certificate Granted-** After successfully passing all exams, ECFMG grants you a certificate. You are then able to apply to Graduate Medical Education Programs or "medical residencies" as they are commonly known. If applying in California, you will need a "Status Letter" from the Medical Board of California.

Postgraduate Training Authorization Letter (PTAL) – Formerly know, as the California Status Letter, must be obtained through the Medical Board of California in order to apply for residency programs in the state of California. Applicant must first determine if their medical school is in the approved list posted on the board's website. As long as the school is not on the disapproved list, participants are still able to apply for the PTAL. If the school is not found on either list you must contact the board directly. The fee for application in 2010 is \$493.00. The letter can only be obtained once you have passed USMLE Steps 1 and Step 2 CK, and have satisfied all other application requirements.

5. **ERAS application and NRMP application-** The Electronic Residency Application Service was developed by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) to transmit residency applications, letters of recommendation, Dean's letters, transcripts and other supporting documents to residency program directors via the internet. ERAS is available to foreign medical graduates through ECFMG. Go to www.ecfmg.org/eras for more information. The fee for ERAS in 2010 is \$65 for the first 10 residency program applications, more for additional programs. There is also a fee of \$90 to ECFMG and a \$60 fee for your USMLE transcripts.

The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) is a service that matches medical graduates with residency programs. They take your "rank choices" and match them with the "rank choices" of residency programs. The fee for 2009-2010 is \$50. You can find more information at www.nrmp.org.

6. **Graduate Medical Education Program (Residency)-** Programs are generally three years, longer for some specialties. **USMLE Step 3** – Most states require completion of a portion of the Graduate Medical Education Program prior to taking the USMLE Step 3. California does not have this requirement, however most medical students take the test while in their Graduate Medical Education Program. You can find more information at the Federation of State Medical Boards. See www.fsmb.org
7. **Medical Board of California-** Once you complete two years of your Graduate Medical Education Program, you can apply for a medical license with the Medical Board of California. For more information go to www.mbc.ca.gov.

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