



How to Become an IAOM Certified Orofacial Myologist (COM®)

This document provides an overall outline of the IAOM Certification process. Detailed instructional handouts are provided on the IAOM website and member only section. These can be accessed once you have officially enrolled in the certification program.

Q: What is a Certified Orofacial Myologist (COM®)?

A: *COM® denotes a mastery level in the treatment of orofacial myofunctional disorders and is meant to be awarded after accomplished clinical experience for what the IAOM has set forth.*

The Process to become a Certified Orofacial Myologist (COM®):

Step 1: 28-hour Orofacial Myofunctional Therapy Course Completion

- Complete a 28-hour Orofacial Myofunctional Therapy Course. This must be from one course resulting in a minimum of 28-hours and not several courses totaling 28-hours.

Step 2: Join IAOM as an Active Member

- The IAOM Active Member Application is available on the www.iaom.com website at: [IAOM New Member Application](#). You will be required to submit the following with your application for membership:
 - Verification that your educational background is in one of the following: Dental or Dental Specialist (DDS/DMD), Medical Physician (MD/DO), Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH), Dental Therapist (DT), Dental Nurse or Oral Health Therapist, Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Physical Therapist (PT) or Occupational Therapist (OT).
 - Verification of your Certificate of Completion from the 28-hour minimum Orofacial Myofunctional Therapy Course.
 - Active Membership Dues are \$225.00 at the Regular Rate or \$200.00 for the Early Bird Rate. A promo code will be given to you as you fill out the application for the early bird discount should you join later in the membership year/cycle.

***Note:** *Member dues are all on the same membership year cycle no matter when joining through March of the following year.*

Step 3: Implementation in a Clinical Setting

- Begin implementing what you have learned by developing a caseload! You will need experience in the assessment and treatment of orofacial myofunctional disorders *prior* to starting the certification process. It will be required that you have taken at least 2 patients *aged 4 years or older* through a *complete* program before seeking certification. It is expected that, while you are working to reach this milestone, you have other patients in various stages on your caseload (i.e., 2 single patients do not provide enough experience to successfully reach COM® status). To reiterate, each case study should be centered on a patient who is 4 years or older that has completed an entire orofacial myofunctional program (i.e., from initial assessment through a maintenance program which demonstrates/shows habituation.) Case Studies must be cases started no further back than 2 years prior to submitting to the BOE. The candidate is expected to complete case studies *independently*, and not under the wings of an experienced COM® or other clinician so that the *candidate's* knowledge and skills can be properly assessed for certification. Further, the candidate is responsible for taking all their own measurements (i.e. baseline, follow-up, etc.) and photos. These measurements/photos should *not* be from the dentist, orthodontist, parent, another clinician, etc. Clinicians working solely via telehealth at this time will not be able to fully meet the requirements of the case studies (e.g. take good quality pre- and post- pictures, physical measurements, etc. that must be taken by the candidate, and other aspects that are only gained through in-person sessions) or to fully prepare for what is required in the onsite evaluation. We respect the right of clinicians to choose telehealth as their sole platform for therapy during this pandemic and remind those clinicians that they have up to 5 years from the time they finished their IAOM Certification Track Course to start the certification process by applying for certification through application and the submission of two case studies. This must be submitted by the 5-year mark of having completed the initial 28-hour IAOM Certification Track Course.
- We encourage all IAOM Active Members to join and participate in the IAOM Mentoring Committee for monthly mentorship. Here you can engage in peer-to-peer on seeing examples of case studies, treatment and have questions answered. If you have any direct questions for the Mentoring Committee, please email them at mentoring@iaom.com.

Step 4: Enrollment in the Certification Program + Case Studies

- Apply to enroll in the COM® Certification ~ **Your IAOM Membership dues must be current** and that of **Active Member**.
 - ***Note:** *You will not receive the Case Study Guidelines of what is required until you officially enroll in the Certification Program.*
 - Complete the 4-page application found via the IAOM website at [Certification Application](#). Email the completed application, a copy of your professional license, and a copy of your Certificate of Completion from your minimum of 28-hour Orofacial Myofunctional Therapy Course. This must be submitted as **one PDF** to the Executive Director at info@iaom.com.
 - The Executive Director will invoice you (to the email you provided on your original certification application and member profile email) for the \$225.00 certification application fee.
 - Once you receive your enrollment of certification from the Executive Director, you will have 5-years to submit your two completed case studies
 - Submit your two case studies within 5-years of your initial enrollment into the IAOM Certification Program. Your two case studies will be reviewed by the Board of Examiner Co-Chairs (BOE). Once **both** cases studies are passed (typically evaluated within 4 weeks of submission); proceed to Step 5, the written proficiency examination.

Step 5: Written Proficiency Examination

- Complete the written proficiency examination. The candidate has 6 months to complete the objective (multi-choice), diagrams, and essay portions. If both portions are passed with an 80% or higher score, proceed to Step 6, the On-Site visit. If the candidate does not pass the written exam, they must restart the process, starting with payment of the \$225.00 and taking a new written proficiency examination.

Step 6: On-Site Evaluation in front of an IAOM appointed Board of Examiner

- Note that the Candidate has **2 years from the time notified of passing the written proficiency examination to complete the On-Site visit with an assigned BOE Examiner**. The On-Site can be completed "on location", with travel expenses paid by the candidate, **OR** remotely via Secure Video Telehealth (provided by the IAOM0, with either option requiring the candidate to be in-person with their patients. The candidate should prepare up to 3 hours of recorded sessions, in the event extenuating circumstances preclude the patient from making their scheduled appointment for the onsite.
- Prior to the steps below, *carefully review procedures for the On-Site visit* to ensure you have an adequate caseload to demonstrate the required knowledge and skills. This information is on the IAOM website, member password protected section.

- Submit completed “On-Site Proficiency Query” form to BOE@iaom.com at least 4 months prior to your On-site due date. This form asks you about your practice and clinical processes, including a habit elimination program.
- Once the Query is approved, the On-Site can be scheduled. The On-site process is to be completed, in its entirety, within 90 days of the Query approval.
- Payment of On-Site fees is: \$600 for the Secure Video option or \$350 plus expenses for the Examiner on-location option. Contact the Executive Director at info@iaom.com for invoice/payment. Payment must be received prior to the On-Site visit.
- If Board of Examiner on-location/in-person option is chosen, make arrangements with the On-Site examiner to reimburse expenses incurred for traveling to your location. This includes transportation, lodging, and meals at the expense of the certification track candidate.
- For the remote on-site option, visits must be conducted in real time with all patients’ sessions, except for new patient assessments, via telehealth using Secure Video. Secure Video platform is provided by the IAOM organization to use for your On-Site evaluation. The new patient assessment portion of the On-Site must still be completed in-person. Candidates are allowed to use family members for the in-person assessment.
- Hold the On-Site visit per all guidelines in the document, Instructions: COM® Candidate On-Site, available on the IAOM website, member password protected section.
- The BOE Chairs will notify the candidate of On-Site results after receipt of the Examiner’s scoring. Successful completion of the On-Site visit will result in certification as an IAOM Certified Orofacial Myologist (COM®)!
- Every IAOM Certified Orofacial Myologist (COM®) is required to obtain 20 hours of related continuing education every two years to maintain COM® status starting after the year after obtaining their COM®.

~PLEASE NOTE: The IAOM BOE is “closed” the last 2 weeks of December and the week of July 4th. You are welcome to send emails to BOE@iaom.com, to submit case studies, proficiency written examination, On-Site queries, and any additional certification requirements during these times; however, responses will be deferred due to these holiday breaks.