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COA Report

California Orthopaedic Association

January 7, 2022

Orthopaedic Colleagues

It's Time To Pay Your 2022 COA Membership Dues

COA

Membership dues remain the same – no increase for any membership category.

4 WAYS TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

- **ONLINE:** Visit www.coa.org/members
- **PHONE:** 916-454-9884
- **FAX COMPLETED FORM TO:** 916-454-9882
- **MAIL:** Return the [invoice](#) with a check to:
1246 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
Make checks payable to: California Orthopaedic Association
To Join: <https://coa.org/members/join-coa/>

What has COA done for YOU ...

- **Sponsored legislation – AB 356 – that was signed into law** requiring the Radiologic Health Branch to issue a 12-month temporary fluoroscopy certificate to allow surgeons moving to California to use fluoroscopy in surgery while they are waiting to take the state-mandated fluoroscopy certification test.
- **Achieved a 25% increase in the Medical-Legal Fee Schedule effective April 1, 2021.** The Fee Schedule was also streamlined to avoid billing disputes.
- **Established a Shared Savings Program with Blue Shield.** Surgeons can share 50/50 with Blue Shield on the savings achieved on services for the entire episode of care.
- **Made available to members data from the AMGA showing the value of Work RVUs – nationally and in the Western Region which includes California.** COA provided data sheets for 7 orthopaedic subspecialties showing the trend for the last 5 years.
- **ABOS/MOC Process** - Organized over 600 Fellows in California and in 13 other states calling for changes to the ABOS Maintenance of Certification (MOC) process. Now orthopaedic surgeons have choices in their Board recertification process.
- Clarified that a **surgical assistant**, under the supervision of the surgeon, may reposition the patient/equipment when the fluoroscopy equipment is/is not energized.
- Include **CME credits** at our Annual Meeting that meet the ABOS MOC Self-Assessment Examination (SAE) testing requirements and the Radiologic Health Branch radiation safety educational requirements.
- Include **QME credits** at our Annual Meeting that meet the DWC QME requirements.
- Present an Annual Meeting that contains **Practical** and **Actionable** information to make your practice more EFFICIENT.
- Set-up COA member discounts for: **OrthoEvidence** **Standalone E-Prescribing platform - Veradigm**

Make sure your dues are paid, so you/your practice manager routinely receive COA communications.

COA staff is only a phone call/email away! If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at (916) 454-9884 or admin@coa.org. [Check COA's webpage for additional information on COA's legislative/regulatory activity.](#)

Thanks for your support of the Association.

News from the Medical Board of California

MBC

**Is your Medical License Up for Renewal?
If so, this is important information for you.**

Everyone is accustomed to the Medical Board sending you a notice when it's time to renew your medical license.

What's new this year is that the MBC notice is coming with a survey attempting to collect demographic and practice information on all physicians licensed in California. The Medical Board is working with researchers at UC San Francisco to collect the information. Your responses will be kept confidential.

While the survey asks many interesting questions, it can also be very time-consuming if not impossible for some physicians to complete.

COA wants our members to be aware, that completing the survey is optional and not a condition of licensure renewal.

This is disclosed in the preamble to the survey, but it is in a very small font that could easily be overlooked.

Thank you to Terrie Sepulveda of Corona Temecula Orthopaedic Associates for bringing this issue to our attention.

Medical-Legal News

COA continues to monitor the implementation of the 2021 Medical-Legal Fee Schedule.

William Tappin, JD has made us aware of a problem with QMEs/AMEs being reimbursed for the additional time spent during the evaluation when an interpreter is required. When an interpreter is needed, you are allowed to append Modifier -93 which increases the reimbursement for the evaluation by 10%.

Mr. Tappin is advising his clients to read carefully the requirements of Modifier -93. Modifier -93 requires that the QME/AME include in their report **"a description of the circumstances and the increased time required for the examination as a result"** of using an interpreter. He indicates that many evaluators fail to include this statement in their report. Without this statement, payors refuse to pay the additional 10%.

To remedy this problem, Mr. Tappin suggests adding the below language to the beginning of your report when billing for an interpreter.

"This examination was conducted with the assistance of interpreter _____, certification number _____. The use of an interpreter increased the amount of time needed to complete a comprehensive examination by at a minimum of fifteen (15) percent. This report qualifies for a 10% augmentation pursuant to Title 8 California Code of Regulations 9795 modifier 93."

COA thanks Mr. Tappin for making us aware of this implementation issue.

For more information, contact Mr. Tappin – email: btappin@tappinlaw.com Phone: 626-836-5000

Orthopaedic Surgeon Looking for a Position in Southern California

Posted 12/29/21

I am seeking a position as an Orthopedic Sports Medicine Physician. As a native of Southern California, I have a strong interest in returning to this region to start my career.

I am currently a sports medicine fellow at Rush University Medical Center and will complete my training in August 2022. I

will be Board Eligible with the goal of obtaining both the Orthopedic Surgery Board Certification and the Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine through the ABOS.

My residency program has provided rigorous training at two different level-one trauma centers and a VA Medical Center. Our clinical experience is markedly high volume with good exposure to complex clinical and surgical situations. My residency has provided excellent training in the care of patients in both general orthopedics and sports medicine. My fellowship will provide more specialized training in shoulder, knee, and hip surgery. I look forward to an opportunity to speak or meet with you at your earliest convenience.

Please feel free to call me at 818-421-9862.

CV: <http://www.coa.org/docs/Sivasundaram%2CLakshmananCV.pdf>

State COVID Booster Mandate

California State Department of Public Health

Dec. 22, 2021, the State Public Health Officer issued a health order mandating that all health care workers who are currently eligible for booster doses (see below) receive their booster dose no later than Feb. 1, 2022.

COVID-19 Vaccine	Primary vaccination series	When to get the vaccine booster dose	Which vaccine booster dose to receive
Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech	1st and 2nd doses	Booster dose 6 mos after 2nd dose	Any of the COVID-19 vaccines authorized in the United States may be used for the booster dose, but either Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech are preferred.
Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen	1st dose	Booster dose 2 mos after 1st dose	Any of the COVID-19 vaccines authorized in the United States may be used for the booster dose, but either Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech are preferred.
World Health Organization (WHO) emergency use listing COVID-19 vaccine	All recommended doses	Booster dose 6 mos after getting all recommended doses	Single booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine
A mix and match series composed of any combination of FDA-approved, FDA-authorized, or WHO-EUL COVID-19 vaccines	All recommended doses	Booster dose 6 mos after getting all recommended doses	Single booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine

Orthopedics Is No Longer the Highest-Paid Specialty: 19 Insights on Compensation, Net Worth & More

Becker's Spine Review

Orthopedic surgeons are no longer the highest-paid medical specialty in the U.S., with plastic surgeons on average taking home a larger salary each year, according to *Medscape's* "Physician Compensation Report 2021." Here are nineteen insights on orthopedic surgeon compensation, incentive bonuses, net worth and more, drawn from five recent reports.

[READ MORE](#)

COA Report

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