



COMMISSION ON OSTEOPATHIC COLLEGE ACCREDITATION

March 26, 2020

Subject: Guidance for Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) regarding early graduation related to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation Executive Committee (COCA EC) held a special meeting by telephone conference on March 25, 2020 to discuss the circumstances under which a COM due to the COVID-19 pandemic could offer early graduation to certain medical students in their fourth year to increase the healthcare workforce.

Following its review and discussion, the COCA EC voted to approve an option for Deans of Accredited COMs to allow fourth year medical students early graduation, provided that the fourth year medical students:

1. have satisfactorily completed their COM's requirements for graduation; and
2. have been recommended for graduation by the faculty, or faculty association, or other approved body (Element 1.6: Degree-Granting Body).

The COCA EC recognizes that individual COM leadership is in the best position to determine whether students are qualified for graduation and to make accommodations for their student body and, therefore, leaves the important decisions to individual COMs.

COMs that opt to offer early graduation in response to the Coronavirus outbreak need to document the steps taken by the COM that must include:

- The reason for the decision
- The steps taken to ensure students satisfactorily met graduation requirements
- Documentation of the faculty, or faculty association, or other approved body approving early graduation

The above documentation must be reported to the COCA (at predoc@osteopathic.org) by the end of the quarter/semester.

The COCA EC encourages COMs to seek consultation from COCA staff if the COM has questions about whether the steps taken are consistent with COCA requirements and standards.

If you have specific questions related to your COM, please contact the COCA staff directly at predoc@osteopathic.org or by calling (312) 202-8124.