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American Academy of Family Physicians  
Foundation



## THE FORMER CORPORATE SEAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

The former seal of the AAFP was developed in the 1950s, and served as the official mark of the organization until 2007. It was designed to be used only by the national organization and its chapters. Although replaced in 2007 by a new seal, its usage is still controlled by the AAFP Commission on Membership and Member Services. It is trademarked and may not be altered in any way. It signifies endorsement by or affiliation with the Academy and cannot be used in any way by anyone to represent the specialty of family practice, individual members, clinics, or practices.

### Meaning of the Seal

The *circle* which forms the basis for the seal stands for “eternity and unity.”

The *laurel* which appears on the left side symbolizes “honor, valor, and victory.”

The *oak leaves* on the right signify “divine knowledge.”

The *axe or mace* has several meanings. Originally, the mace was a weapon of offense, capable of breaking through the strongest armor. Hence, it represents “strength.” In Greek, it stands for “light – the symbol of the sun – the power of light over darkness.” In Egyptian, the axe signifies “clever one” and “the cleaver of the way.”

The *staff encircled by the serpent* is a symbol given to the Greek God Apollo and his son, Aesculapius, the mythological founder of human medicine, to signify “healing” and “the renewing power of life.” It is the traditional symbol of medicine. In U.S. culture, the Caduceus (a double-winged staff) is often confused with the above symbol. The Caduceus is the insignia of the military medical corps.