



Board of Behavioral Sciences
NEW CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) REGULATIONS
FAQS FOR LICENSEES

I. WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING MADE BY THE NEW CONTINUING EDUCATION REGULATIONS?

There are two primary changes to the Board’s continuing education (CE) program that will affect licensees, as follows:

- Acceptable providers of CE courses
- The types of CE courses that are acceptable

These changes will be phased in starting July 1, 2015, and are described in greater detail below.

II. WHY ARE THESE CHANGES NECESSARY?

Changes Regarding CE Providers

The new regulations designate approval agencies recognized by the Board to approve CE providers, courses, and instructors. These approval agencies have extensive experience and expertise administering and approving CE programs. The board has the authority to revoke the approval agencies’ board recognition if they fail to ensure that their providers meet BBS requirements.

Changes Regarding CE Courses

Previously, the only CE course content requirement was that courses simply be related to “direct or indirect patient care.” This opened the door for courses offered that contain unproven, unethical, irrelevant or discriminatory content. The new regulations require courses offered to be based on a methodological, theoretical, research or practice knowledge base, be reviewed by the approval agency, and meet a number of other requirements to help ensure course quality. The Board will have the authority to audit coursework and providers, as well as investigate and take action, if warranted.

III. HOW WILL THE NEW REGULATIONS ABOUT CE COURSES AFFECT LICENSEES?

Effective July 1, 2015, licensees may gain ALL of their required CE units through self-study (previously limited to one-half of the total hours), if the self-study course is offered by an acceptable CE provider. Activities such as reading a book or article at home cannot be credited if not earned through one of the acceptable CE providers.

IV. DO THE NEW REGULATIONS CHANGE THE SPECIFIC COURSES I AM REQUIRED TO COMPLETE, SUCH AS LAW AND ETHICS?

No, the mandatory CE course requirements will not change. For complete requirements, please refer to the *LMFT, LCSW, and LPCC CE and License Renewal Information Brochure* or the *LEP CE and License Renewal Information Brochure* at www.bbs.ca.gov.

V. WHAT ARE THE NEWLY ALLOWED METHODS OF EARNING CE HOURS?

Effective July 1, 2015, licensees will be able to earn CE hours by performing the following:

- 1) Attendance at Board Enforcement Case Review Training. A licensee who attends a Board enforcement case review training may be awarded up to six (6) hours of CE in the renewal cycle during which the case review training was attended. The hours earned may only be used to satisfy the Law and Ethics CE requirement.
- 2) Serving as a Subject Matter Expert for Enforcement Case Review. A licensee who acts as a Board subject matter expert (SME) for an enforcement case review may be awarded six (6) hours of CE in the renewal cycle during which the enforcement case review was performed. The hours earned may only be used to satisfy the law and ethics CE requirement.
- 3) Participation in Examination Development Workshops. A licensee who participates in a Board examination development workshop may be awarded six (6) hours of CE in the renewal cycle during which the examination development workshop was attended. The hours earned may only be used to satisfy the Law and Ethics CE requirement.
- 4) Participation in a Professional Organization's Law and Ethics Committee. A licensee who participates in a professional organization's law and ethics review committee may be awarded up to six (6) hours of CE in the renewal cycle during which the participation occurred. The CE earned may only be used to satisfy the law and ethics CE requirement.

VI. HOW WILL THE NEW REGULATIONS ABOUT CE PROVIDERS AFFECT LICENSEES?

Effective July 1, 2015, licensees must take CE courses from one of the following:

- 1) A board-recognized approval agency
- 2) A provider who has been approved or registered by a board recognized approval agency
- 3) A regionally accredited or state-approved postsecondary institution
- 4) A provider with a Board-issued CE provider number that is current and valid
NOTE: The Board is discontinuing its approval of CE providers. Providers with a valid Board-issued number may offer qualified CE courses only until the provider number expires. Effective July 1, 2015, these provider numbers will not be renewable. By June 30, 2017, all Board-issued CE provider numbers will have been cancelled.

Currently, licensees must take CE (CE) courses from either a regionally accredited or state-approved postsecondary institution, or a provider with a Board-issued CE provider number that is current and valid.

VII. WHO ARE THE BOARD-RECOGNIZED APPROVAL AGENCIES OR ORGANIZATIONS THAT I CAN TAKE MY CE FROM?

The following are Board recognized approval agencies:

- 1) **National Association of Social Workers (NASW)**
- 2) **Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)**
- 3) **National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)**
- 4) **National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)**
- 5) **American Psychological Association (APA)**
- 6) **California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT)**

The following organizations are recognized by the Board as CE providers:

- 1) American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)
- 2) American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy-California Division (AAMFT-CA)
- 3) California Association for Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (CALPCC)
- 4) California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT)
- 5) National Association of Social Workers-California Chapter (NASW-CA)
- 6) California Society for Clinical Social Work (CSCSW)
- 7) California Association of School Psychologists (CASP)
- 8) California Psychological Association (CPA)
- 9) California Counseling Association (CCA)
- 10) American Counseling Association (ACA)

VIII. HOW MANY HOURS OF CE CAN I EARN THROUGH ON-LINE COURSES?

You may obtain all 36 hours of CE from on-line courses.

IX. MAY I EARN CE HOURS FOR TEACHING A CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSE?

Yes, if a licensee teaches a course, the licensee may claim credit for the course once during a single renewal period, receiving the same amount of hours of CE credit as a licensee who attended the course. A licensee may not claim the same course more than once during a single renewal period.

X. WHAT IS A CE HOUR AND HOW ARE THEY DETERMINED?

Continuing education coursework hours are defined as follows:

- One (1) hour of instruction is equal to one (1) hour of CE credit.
- One (1) academic quarter unit is equal to 10 hours of CE credit.
- One (1) academic semester unit is equal to 15 hours of CE credit.

XI. DO I MAIL MY CERTIFICATES OR TRANSCRIPTS TO THE BOARD ONCE I COMPLETE MY CE?

No, please save the certificates for your records. A licensee must maintain records of course completion for a period of at least two (2) years from the date of license renewal for which the course was completed.

The only time you need to mail copies of CE certificates to the Board is if the Board requests them for a random CE audit. The Board will send you a letter requesting them at that time.

XII. WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT COMPLETE THE CE BY MY LICENSE EXPIRATION DATE?

If you do not complete the CE by your license expiration date, you may renew inactive or wait to renew until you have completed the CE hours.

Waiting to renew your license until you have completed the CE hours may result in your license expiring and becoming delinquent. Licensees with an inactive or delinquent status must cease practice until such time as they complete the required number of CE hours.

XIII. MAY I REQUEST AN EXTENSION ON MY RENEWAL IF I HAVE NOT COMPLETED THE REQUIRED HOURS?

No, there is no provision in the law to allow for an extension on a license renewal. The only options available are to renew as inactive or become delinquent until the CE hours are complete. Please be advised that you cannot practice with an inactive or delinquent license.

XIV. MAY I PETITION THE BOARD FOR APPROVAL OF A CE COURSE THAT WAS NOT TAKEN FROM A BOARD RECOGNIZED APPROVAL AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION?

No, licensees cannot petition the Board to have a course approved if the course was taken from an entity that is not recognized by the Board as a CE provider or approved by a Board-recognized approval agency.

XV. MAY I COUNT CE HOURS COMPLETED OUTSIDE OF MY RENEWAL PERIOD?

No, CE hours must be completed within your current renewal period.

XVI. WHAT IS A CE EXCEPTION?

A CE exception allows the Board, under specific circumstances, to waive a licensee’s CE requirement during one (1) renewal period. The licensee must request the exception in advance of his/her renewal date. Exceptions are considered under the following circumstances and when the appropriate documentation is provided.

- For at least one (1) year during the licensee’s previous license renewal period the licensee was absent from California.
- For at least one (1) year during the licensee’s previous renewal period the licensee resided in another country.
- For at least one (1) year during the licensee's previous license renewal period, the licensee or an immediate family member, including a domestic partner, where the licensee is the primary caregiver for that family member, had a physical or mental disability or medical condition as defined in Section 12926 of the Government Code. The physical or mental disability or medical condition must be verified by a licensed physician or psychologist with expertise in the area of the physical or mental disability or medical condition. Verification of the physical or mental disability or medical condition must be submitted by the licensee on a form entitled *Request for Continuing Education Exception–Verification of Disability or Medical Condition*.

XVII. WHO DO I NOTIFY IF I FEEL THERE WAS A PROBLEM WITH A CE COURSE OR COURSE INSTRUCTOR?

If you feel that there was a problem with your CE course or course instructor, you should first contact the provider of the course to resolve the matter. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, promptly send a written complaint to the Board.