

**Continuing Education (CE) Requirements**  
**for Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Dialysis Technicians, Community**  
**Health Workers and Medication Aides in Ohio**

***What is Continuing Education (CE)?***

CE means a learning activity that builds upon a prelicensure or precertification education program and enables a licensee or certificate holder to acquire or improve knowledge or skills that promote professional or technical development to enhance the licensee's or certificate holder's contribution to quality health care and pursuit of professional career goals.

***Is CE required in Ohio?***

All individuals renewing, reactivating or reinstating a license or certificate must complete required CE.

***Am I required to obtain CE in specific areas?***

All licensee and certificate holders are required to complete one (1) contact hour of Category A for renewal. This contact hour is directly related to the Ohio Nurse Practice Act and the rules of the Ohio Board of Nursing. Effective February 1, 2009, to qualify as Category A, the CE must be approved by an Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN) Approver, or offered by an OBN approved provider unit headquartered in the state of Ohio.

**Registered Nurse (RN) and Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)**

Each person licensed as an RN or LPN in Ohio must complete twenty-four (24) contact hours of CE, as defined above, during each licensure period to renew a license. A nurse who has been licensed by endorsement for less than or equal to one (1) year must complete twelve (12) contact hours. At least one (1) of the required contact hours must be Category A.

The RN licensure period is from September 1 of odd numbered years through August 31 of the following odd numbered year. The LPN licensure period is from September 1 of even numbered years through August 31 of the following even numbered year.

**Certificate of Authority**

Each advanced practice nurse who obtains continuing nursing education in the nurse's area of practice for the purpose of obtaining or maintaining a national certification may use those hours to satisfy the continuing education requirements if the continuing education activity is acceptable to the Board (see question below "*How do I know if a particular educational activity is acceptable to the Board as recognized CE?*")

**Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)**

A CNS who is not certified by a national nursing certifying organization shall obtain twelve (12) additional contact hours in the nurse's area of practice or in relevant programs from other health care disciplines.

**Certificate to Prescribe (CTP)**

Each person authorized to prescribe must complete additional CE in advanced pharmacology. Twelve (12) contact hours are required if the CTP has been held for a full renewal period or six (6) contact hours if the CTP has been held for less than a full renewal period.

### Ohio Certified Dialysis Technician (OCDT)

An OCDT must complete fifteen (15) contact hours of CE to renew a certificate. Ten (10) contact hours must be directly related to dialysis care, and one (1) contact hour must be Category A.

### Community Health Worker (CHW)

A certified CHW must complete fifteen (15) contact hours of CE to renew a certificate. One (1) contact hour must be directly related to establishing and maintaining professional boundaries, and one (1) contact hour must be Category A.

### Certified Medication Aide (MA-C)

A MA-C must complete fifteen (15) contact hours of CE to renew a certificate. Ten (10) contact hours must be related to medications or medication administration consistent with the function of the MA-C, one (1) contact hour must be directly related to establishing and maintaining professional boundaries and one (1) contact hour must be Category A.

### ***What if I was recently licensed or certified in Ohio for the first time?***

A nurse (who received a first license by examination in Ohio), OCDT and CHW are not required to obtain CE for their first renewal.

### ***How does the Board know I met the CE requirement?***

Licensee and certificate holders are required to indicate whether they have met the CE requirement during the time of renewal (on the renewal application). Individuals are not required to send documentation of their contact hours with their renewal application.

Evidence of CE is required when reactivating or reinstating an inactive or lapsed license or certificate, or upon receipt of a "CE Audit" letter. In addition, when reactivating or reinstating a license or certificate, CE requirements may vary.

### ***What is an audit?***

The Board may conduct a random audit of any licensee or certificate holder to determine compliance with CE requirements. The time period for which you are being audited will be stated in the "CE Audit" letter. If audited, an individual will be asked to send photocopies of CE certificates or school transcripts to the Board.

### ***What is a "waiver"?***

A "waiver" is a one-time opportunity to opt out of the CE requirements for one (1) renewal period for nurses, OCDTs and CHWs. A waiver can be requested at the time of renewal (on the renewal application), and cannot be rescinded. The waiver is not available for reactivating an inactive license/ OCDT certificate or reinstating a lapsed license/OCDT certificate. Also, a non-certified CNS may not use a waiver to satisfy the requirement of the additional twelve (12) contact hours.

### ***How do I know if a particular educational activity is acceptable to the Board as recognized CE?***

Any of the following options may be used by a licensee or certificate holder to satisfy the CE requirements:

- A CE activity that has been approved by an OBN Approver or by a board or agency regulating the licensee or certificate holder in another jurisdiction. An OBN Approver is an organization that has been authorized by the Board to approve continuing education activities offered by a provider or to approve a Provider Unit. An acceptable CE certificate will include a statement with one of the OBN Approver's name and numbers listed below.

OBN Approvers are:

- Licensed Practical Nurse Association of Ohio (OBN-002-92)
  - Northwest State Community College, Division of Nursing (OBN-008-92)
  - Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (OBN-010-93)
  - Ohio Department of Mental Health (OBN-003-92)
  - Ohio League for Nursing (OBN-006-92)
  - Ohio Nurses Association (OBN-001-91)
  - Omnicare Great Lakes Region, Division of Education (OBN-009-93)
  - UC Health (OBN-007-92)
  - University of Cincinnati, College of Nursing (OBN-011-93)
  - UVMC – Education and Development (OBN-005-92);
- A CE activity that has been approved or provided by a nationally recognized accreditation system of continuing education approval. Examples include the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), and the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET);
  - A successfully completed course provided by an accredited educational institution for which academic credit is awarded;
  - An independent study - a self-paced learning activity which includes both a mechanism for evaluation of learning and feedback to the learner;
  - Interprofessional CE – a planned, organized learning experience designed for a target audience made up of members of two or more separate professions;
  - A CE activity that has been approved by an agency that regulates a health care profession or discipline in Ohio or another jurisdiction. Examples include the State Medical Board of Ohio, Ohio State Board of Pharmacy, State Board of Psychology and the Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage & Family Therapist Board.

The following activities DO NOT MEET the CE requirement in Ohio:

- basic life support or cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
- repetition of any educational activity with identical content and objectives within a single reporting period;
- agency specific orientation or in-service program;
- self-directed independent study activities, such as reading of texts or journal articles that have not been approved for CE;
- participation in clinical practice or research that is not part of a CE activity;
- a personal development activity;
- professional meetings or conventions except for those portions designated as a CE activity;

- community service or volunteer practice;
- Board-ordered CE;
- membership in a professional nursing organization.

***I am taking college courses. Can I use that to meet my CE requirement?***

Academic credit received for successful completion of a course taken through an accredited educational institution may be used to meet the CE requirement. Academic credit translates into contact hours as follows:

- 1 credit hour in a quarter system = ten (10) contact hours
- 1 credit hour in a trimester system = twelve (12) contact hours
- 1 credit hour in a semester system = fifteen (15) contact hours

***Can I obtain my CE by mail or on the Internet?***

Independent studies may be taken through mail order courses or the Internet. There is no limit to the number of contact hours obtained through independent study.

***What records should I keep and how long should I keep them?***

Documentation of completion of a CE activity should be supplied by the provider of that activity. If audited, you will be required to send photocopies of documents (i.e. certificate) that contain all of the following information:

- name;
- title of the program;
- date of program completion;
- name of the provider;
- number of contact hours;
- OBN Approver number or the name of the authorized provider or the name of the approval body.

For academic credit, a school transcript or grade report should include the licensee or certificate holder's name, the name of the school, the dates attended and credit hours awarded. The transcript can be unofficial. A licensee or certificate holder is responsible for keeping track of CE records. CE documents must be maintained for a period of 6 years.

***Reminder - What is CE?***

CE means a learning activity that builds upon a prelicensure or precertification education program and enables a licensee or certificate holder to acquire or improve knowledge or skills that promote professional or technical development to enhance the individual's contribution to quality health care and pursuit of professional career goals.

**CONTACTING THE BOARD**

For questions about CE requirements, please contact the CE Unit at (614) 466-1949, or at [ce@nursing.ohio.gov](mailto:ce@nursing.ohio.gov)