

265 CMR 5.00: CONTINUING EDUCATION

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5.01: Continuing Education Requirements

(1) Licensed hearing instrument specialists are required, as a condition of license renewal, to complete a minimum of 20 contact hours of continuing education activities per continuing education period. (For lapsed, expired, suspended, revoked or surrendered licenses, *see* 265 CMR 3.02: *Procedures for Renewal of a License and Renewal of a Lapsed/Expired License* and 3.03: *Procedures for Reinstatement of a License which has been Revoked, Suspended, Surrendered or Placed on Probation*). A minimum of ten of the total required 20 hours must be obtained through Board-recognized continuing education programs. The remaining ten hours may be obtained through Board approved continuing education activities as set forth in 265 CMR 5.01(2)

(2) Board-approved Continuing Education Activities.

(a) Published books, chapters of published books and/or articles in refereed journals related to the science or practice of the dispensing of hearing instruments or the science of hearing aids, authored by the licensee, may be submitted for not more than ten of the total 20 contact hours of continuing education activities required per continuing education period. A maximum of three hours may be credited per book chapter or article.

(b) Instructors of courses, workshops, or seminars may be credited one contact hour for each continuing education hour of the activity taught by the instructor, up to a maximum of ten of the required 20 hours of continuing education activity required per continuing education period.

(c) Any one academic course related to the contemporary practice of dispensing hearing instruments or the science of hearing aids may be submitted for not more than ten of the 20 required hours of continuing education activity required per continuing education period.

(d) Independent studies related to the science or practice of the dispensing of hearing instruments or the science of hearing aids approved by the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Massachusetts Hearing Society or the Massachusetts Speech, Language and Hearing Association may be submitted for not more than ten of the 20 required hours of continuing education activity required per continuing education period.

(3) Only those continuing education activities which are completed during the required continuing education period (24 months prior to each renewal date) will be acceptable as qualifying continuing education activities for that period.

(4) All continuing education activities other than Board approved continuing education programs set forth in 265 CMR 5.02 are subject to approval by the Board.

5.02: Verification/Approval of Registrant's Continuing Education Activities

(1) At the time of license renewal, each registrant is required to submit to the Board a signed statement on a form provided by the Board attesting under the pains and penalty of perjury to

satisfaction of the continuing education requirements.

(2) For each continuing education contact hour earned by participation in a continuing education program, a registrant must be able to provide documentation of the following:

- (a) the title of the program or course;
- (b) the number of hours spent in the program or course;
- (c) the name of the Board-recognized entity or the academic institution that sponsored the program or course; and
- (d) the date(s) and location that the program or course was given.

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(3) For each continuing education activity hour earned from publication of books, chapters of books and/or articles in refereed journals, a registrant must be able to provide documentation of the following information:

- (a) the title of the book, chapter or article and, in the case of a chapter or article, the title of the book or name of the journal in which it appears;
- (b) the date of publication; and
- (c) the names of any co-authors.

The Board may require the licensee to provide a copy of the book, chapter or article submitted in fulfillment of continuing education activity requirements.

(4) For each continuing education activity hour earned by the teaching of courses, workshops or seminars or participation in an independent study, the registrant must be able to document the following information:

- (a) the title of the course or independent study;
- (b) date(s) the course or independent study was presented or participated in;
- (c) institution or sponsoring agency; and
- (d) the number of hours the registrant spent teaching or participating in the independent study.

(5) The Board may review and/or randomly audit the documentation of any registrant's continuing education requirements and may request the documentation described in 265 CMR 5.02(1) through (4) for two prior licensure renewal/continuing education periods. The Board shall determine whether the activity/program documentation submitted meets all criteria for continuing education as specified in 265 CMR 5.00.

(6) Continuing education activities which do not meet the requirements of 265 CMR 5.00 may be rejected in part or in whole by the Board.

(7) Any incomplete or inaccurate documentation of continuing education may be rejected in part or in whole by the Board.

(8) The Board may determine requirements to be fulfilled in order to allow a registrant who has not met the continuing education requirement to renew his or her license.

(9) Failure to complete or provide required documentation of completion of continuing education requirements may result in non-renewal of a license or disciplinary action.

5.03: Verification/Approval of Provider Continuing Education Programs and Activities

(1) For a program to be eligible for approval for continuing education hours, the course content shall directly relate to the practice of fitting and dispensing hearing aids and the educational objectives shall exceed a basic level of knowledge as it relates to fitting and dispensing hearing aids. The course work shall include the following subjects:

- (a) procedures in the selection and fitting of hearing aids;
- (b) pre and post fitting management of clients;
- (c) instrument circuitry and acoustic performance data;
- (d) ear mold design and modification contributing to improved client performance;
- (e) audiometric equipment or testing techniques which demonstrate an improved ability to identify and evaluate hearing loss;

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- (f) auditory rehabilitation;
  - (g) ethics;
  - (h) federal and state statutes, regulations and rules;
  - (i) assistive listening devices; and
  - (j) business-related courses (maximum four credits in this subject per continuing education period).
- (2) Course work meeting the requirements of 265 CMR 5.03(1) and endorsed or sponsored by the following organizations shall be deemed approved for continuing education hours:
- (a) International Hearing Society;
  - (b) National Institute of Hearing Instrument Studies;

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- (c) American Academy of Audiology;
- (d) Academy of Dispensing Audiologists;
- (e) American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery;
- (f) Massachusetts Hearing Society;
- (g) Massachusetts Speech and Hearing Association; or
- (h) American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

(3) The Board may approve other continuing education course work that complies with 265 CMR 5.03(1) if the organization providing the course work submits to the Board the following information 90 days prior to commencement of the course:

- (a) name, date, and location of continuing education course work;
- (b) detailed description of the course content;
- (c) description of the educational objectives;
- (d) description of each instructor's education, training, and experience background; and
- (e) continuing education hours offered for completing the course.

The provider shall report any change in the course content or instructor to the Board prior to commencement of the course.

(4) The Board shall revoke the approval of any continuing education course work for failure of the provider to comply with the provisions of 265 CMR 5.00.

5.04: Waivers of Continuing Education Requirements

(1) The Board may waive the continuing education requirement for any registrant who, for reasons of health, disability, out of state military service, or undue hardship, cannot meet the requirements.

(2) An application for a waiver shall be submitted to the Board in writing, and may be submitted electronically.

(3) Waivers of continuing education requirements shall be effective for no more than one license renewal period.

(4) After expiration of a waiver, a registrant may apply for up to two more consecutive waivers.

(5) If a temporary waiver is granted, the registrant shall comply with all continuing education requirements for all subsequent renewal periods, after such time that the waiver expires unless a subsequent waiver is granted.

5.05: Appeals on Continuing Education Matters

Any individual who wishes to appeal the decision of the Board regarding continuing education matters must submit a letter of appeal to the Board within 21 days of the receipt of the Board's decision. The applicant must supply the Board with any requested additional data and may be asked to appear before the Board. The Board reserves the right, upon request of registrant, to allow the applicant to practice dispensing hearing instruments during the Board's appeals process.

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REGULATORY AUTHORITY

265 CMR 5.00: M.G.L. c. 112, §§ 197 and 199.