

# THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



## Department of Agricultural Resources

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### PACE (Pesticide Applicator Continuing Education) [(333 CMR 10.08(3) (f)]

#### GUIDANCE

**IMPORTANT:** The training you are providing must contribute directly to the professional competence (growth and skills) of the applicator or dealer as a pesticide user. Also, current regulations require that training programs be received no later than seven (7) business days prior to any training, however, it behooves those who request approval of training to send us the completed application with as much lead time as practical such as 14-21 business days in advance. Many sponsors have been accommodated on more than one occasion over the years. This will not continue as it creates conflicts to the entire process. Programs received less than 7 days will automatically be denied and credit cannot be approved after the fact.

**Very Important:** If you have publication deadlines for the purpose of announcing approval of credits/contact hours, you must plan ahead and send the PACE application as early as possible.

1. Complete the PACE "application". Note: Before filling out the application, feel free to reproduce several copies for future training programs or if you plan on scheduling training on an annual basis, complete the application without date and location, reproduce, and then you can date and complete location for future years without redoing the application.
2. After you complete the applications, it **MUST BE RECEIVED** by the Department **AT A MINIMUM SEVEN (7) BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR** to the day of the offered training. Note: **You are encouraged to send as early as you can** especially if you need approval prior to sending out your own publications concerning approval of the training. Applications arriving late or less than complete will be returned and approval may not be given. Note: The Department needs time to review, approve, and mail back the formal approval attendance form.
3. Training may be presented an unlimited number of times provided that there are no major changes in content, outline, contact hours, and or trainer's. Note: An e-mail citing date, time, and location will suffice. If there are major changes to program, **complete a new application is required**.
4. A minimum of one (1) Contact Hour is required for any training program. One Contact Hour is equal to 50 minutes. **NOTE: You request the number of contact hours/credits.**
5. Please follow directions carefully and include all required information.

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6. The attached application can be reproduced for additional training programs or downloaded by accessing Web Page [http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/licensing/pace/docs/pace\\_application.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/licensing/pace/docs/pace_application.pdf)
7. Be sure to attach a copy of the evaluation form you will use to obtain feedback from those who attend training program. **Do not send back the sample evaluation(s) provided to you at the end of the "application".**
8. Once you receive the approval certificate, you or an authorized representative prints and sign their names to the original. Thereafter, you can make copies of the approval certificate to distribute ONLY to those who ATTEND THE ENTIRE APPROVED offered training. Those individuals who receive this form should be reminded to keep it in a safe place. Note: I recommend that all providers encourage those individuals who receive an approved attendance form to maintain their own file in addition to what their employers might do for them on their behalf.
9. Sponsors or authorized training sponsor representative (s) will be required to insure that the certificate of attendance of the individual who attended the training print and sign their name as well as record their pesticide certification or license number on the approval certificate to be valid. **In other words, any certificate of approval received by the Department not completely filled out will be invalid.**
10. Sponsors or authorized training sponsor representative (s) must sign or initial each certificate in order for it to be valid. Any certificate without original signatory markings will be considered void. **It is suggested that you check each attendance form distributed after the training to be sure the form has been completed by attendee and then initial or stamp these forms in colored ink to validate attendance.**
11. Sponsors or authorized training sponsor representative (s) should if feasible to check a positive Identification such as a driver license of any person who attended the training that desire validation of the certificate of approval only after the training has taken place.
12. **Sponsors must submit after the training to the Department an original sign-in list for each approved training.** This list should be sent via email to [Trevor.battle@state.ma.us](mailto:Trevor.battle@state.ma.us)

Pesticide Applicator Continuing Education (PACE)  
FAQ

Contact: Trevor Battle, PACE Coordinator [-Trevor.Battle@state.ma.us](mailto:Trevor.Battle@state.ma.us) - 617.626.1775

**What is Pesticide Applicator Continuing Education or PACE?**

Pesticide Applicator Continuing Education (PACE) is the process by which you expand your professional knowledge, making you a better applicator that is more valuable to your employer, the public, and the environment. The Division of Crop and Pest Services in the Department of Agricultural Resources require that you complete a minimum number of continuing education contact hours or credits within a three-year certification period.

**Why do you need continuing education?**

There are several reasons that the Division of Crop and Pest Services considers so important that it requires continuing education in order for you to maintain and retain your pesticide certification and/or license:

- Most professions/occupations have continuing education requirements, and in this, the pest management.
- Periodic training keeps you current with developments in your particular industry, from new pests to different pesticides.
- More training makes you a more knowledgeable, efficient and safer users of pesticides.

The public has confidence in pest management applicators as professionals, because they know that besides being tested and certified by the state, you are also required to obtain continuing education credits/contact hours. Pesticide Applicator Continuing Education (PACE) is based upon fundamental principles such as review of current knowledge and learning new technology. The justification for Pesticide Applicator Continuing Education (PACE) is that applicators of pesticides must continuously demonstrate a competency for handling potentially hazardous materials. Because of emerging pest development, emerging application technologies, and new pesticide products, such a Pesticide Applicator Continuing Education (PACE) allows for the applicator to be take advantage of educational opportunities approved by the Division of Crop and Pest Services in the Department of Agricultural Resources.

**Do Pesticide Inspectors audit approved programs?**

Yes, Division of Crop and Pest Services staff especially enforcement staff that monitor a number of programs and reserves the right to attend any approved training **free of charge and without prior notice as a condition of approval.**

**How many credits or contact hours do I need to maintain a pesticide certification or license?**

As a user of pesticides, you can never get too much continuing education. The more sessions you attend, the more professional knowledge of the subject matter you gain, helping you do your job better, safer, and more efficiently. There are, however, minimum numbers of contact hours each type of applicator needs to accumulate within a three-year recertification period.

License / Certification Type	Minimum Contact Hours
Applicator (Core) License	6
Commercial Certification	12

Private Certification	12
Dealer License	3

**What is a contact hour?**

One Contact Hour is equal to 50 consecutive minutes of training.

**What qualifies as “acceptable continuing education?”**

The purpose of continuing education is to insure that PACE builds upon the existing base of knowledge that each pesticide applicator gains through the current licensure process. Ultimately, continuing education must ensure the responsible and informed practice of pesticide use in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. To this end, certain components [333 CMR 10.08(3) (f)] must be met by all continuing education providers as follows:

***Training should have the following core elements:***

Objectives	<p>It should be a planned educational activity.</p> <p>It should contribute directly to the professional competence (growth and skills) of the applicator or dealer as a pesticide user.</p> <p>It should be pertinent to the use of pesticides.</p> <p>It should be open to the public.</p>
Content	<p>It should be planned programs/topics that "build upon the professional applicator's educational and practical know-how".</p> <p>It should enhance and further address specific pesticide applicator's training needs.</p> <p>It should focus on appropriate subject matter as outlined in the regulations such as new state and federal pesticide regulations, IPM, Label comprehension etc.</p> <p>It should be "real world" in content and should focus on pesticide use and handling.</p> <p>It should disseminate and review new research that leads to both immediate and future pesticide use application.</p>
Training Methods	<p>It should incorporate principles of adult education in the design of program.</p>
Evaluation	<p>It should include applicator participation (feedback).</p> <p>It should be open to all.</p> <p>It should take place in an appropriate physical facility conducive to learning.</p>
Verification	<p>It should provide standard attendance "form" for purpose of verification.</p>

**What is not “acceptable continuing education?”**

**Training should not be the following:**

<b>Should not be Promotional</b>	Training should not be focused on or reflect an employer's goals or service commitments, goals or operating procedures.  Training should not promote a manufacturer's product line.
<b>Should not be a Review</b>	Training should not be a "review" of previously learned materials or skills. Remember, it is supposed to be enhanced professional education.
<b>Should not be a Social Event</b>	Training should not take place at, or in combination with, social events.

**What do the pesticide regulations require for continuing education?**

<b>Recertification Period</b>	The time period that credentialed applicators are given to obtain a specified amount of training is three (3) years.
<b>Contact Hours</b>	The term "Credits" has been changed to "contact hours". The training time necessary to earn contact hours has been standardized. <i>Fifty consecutive minutes (50)</i> of training equals "one contact hour". One (1) continuing education credit unit (CEU) equals ten (10) contact hours and one (1) semester hour equals fifteen (15) contact hours.

<b>Contact Hours</b>	The term "Credits" has been changed to "contact hours". The training time necessary to earn contact hours has been standardized. <i>Fifty consecutive minutes (50)</i> of training equals "one contact hour". One (1) continuing education credit unit (CEU) equals ten (10) contact hours and one (1) semester hour equals fifteen (15) contact hours.	
<b>Recertification for Everyone</b>	All licensed and certified individuals, including applicators and dealers must accumulate contact hours. The number of contact hours required for each license or certification in each 3-year cycle is as follows:	
	<b>Credential Type</b>	<b>Number of Contact Hours</b>
	Commercial Certification	12 (per category)
	Commercial Applicator License(Core)	6
	Private Certification	12 (per category)
	Dealer License	3
<b>Assigning Contact Hours</b>	The provider of training, assign "contact hours" and designate the applicable licensure type/category.	
<b>No Retraining Application</b>	Continuing Education training programs may be presented an unlimited number of times without re-submission of a Retraining Application provided there are no major changes in content, outline, contact hours, or trainers.	

Advance Notice	The Department must receive a Retraining Application at a minimum seven (7) days before a training program. However, it is requested that the application be submitted earlier in order to permit proper review and response.
Subject Matter	Training subject matter must include a comprehensive description including but not limited to, "learner objectives".
Evaluation	Training content and presentations will be evaluated by participants. These evaluations provide feedback to you and need not be return to the Department.

**How Do I Obtain Contact Hours?**

Contact hours or pesticide credits can be obtained by attending approved training programs. A list of approve training programs is listed on this webpage.

[http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/licensing/pace/pace\\_courses.htm](http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/licensing/pace/pace_courses.htm)

**What about web based or on-line training? What is the policy?**

The Department recognizes challenges that COVID-19 has posed relative to attending trainings and receiving Continuing Education Units (“CEU”). In response to these challenges many training providers have moved to offering trainings through a computer based/online/virtual platform.

Therefore, the Department has adjusted its policy on how these trainings are provided. Additionally, the Department recognizes that it will be difficult for an applicator to meet the Department’s policy of allowing only half of ones CEUs to be obtained by this type of training.

The Department has defined trainings as listed below:

- **On Demand Trainings:** Trainings that the applicator can take at any time but does not have any live interaction.
- **Live Stream Trainings:** Live one- time training with live interaction. (virtual meetings, virtual company trainings)
- **Virtual Classroom Trainings:** Multiple individuals in the same room at the same time watching a Live Stream/On Demand Training.
- **Traditional Classroom Training:** Training that is provided in person.

Going forward and until otherwise notified, **an individual may obtain all their CEUs in an online/computer based/virtual format *however, no more than half an individuals’ credits for any one license/category can be obtained through an On-Demand Training***. The CEUs issued will indicate the type of training it falls under so that the applicator may keep track of the type of trainings they are taking. The Department feels this will allow flexibility to obtain CEUs while also ensuring the participation/attendance of the applicator.

NOTE: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires you to spend a MINIMUM OF 50 MINUTES on each course or module in order to receive one (1) contact hour or (1) credit. You must pass a post-test or exam with at least 70 % correct for ‘On-Demand’ trainings.

***How far in advance do I need to send the PACE application for review and approval?***

Current regulations require that training programs be received no later than seven (7) business days prior to any training, however, it behooves those who request approval of training to send us the completed application with as much lead time as practical such as 14-21 business days in advance. Many sponsors have been accommodated on more than one occasion over the years. This will not continue as it creates conflicts to the entire process. Programs received less than 7 business days will automatically be denied and credit cannot be approved after the fact.

***What should I do with the approval certificate or form I receive at the approved PACE program?***

Retain your certificates in a file that you've compiled with the documents pertaining to your pesticide certification and license. Keep this file in a safe place, but one that is easily accessible by you. You might even consider keeping extra copies in another location too. It is very important to save the certificate you receive since this is your proof that you attended an approved PACE program. Note: ***DO NOT SEND THIS FORM TO MA Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), ONLY WHEN YOU RECEIVE A FORMAL AUDIT NOTICE***

***Do I need to fill out the approval certificate or form I receive at the approved PACE program?***

Yes, the certificate of attendance will be having an authorized individual printed and signed name. Also, you who attended the approved program must print their name and sign the Certificate of attendance to be valid and satisfy pesticide credit audit. Finally, you need to be sure you obtain the certificate of attendance no matter what type of attendance system is being used by the provider or sponsor of the approved PACE program.

***I saw a course offered in another state that looked interesting. Can this course be credited toward the contact hours I need?***

Yes, but only if the program has been pre-approved by the Division of Crop and Pest Services in the MA Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) **AND/OR** the program is an approved program of the pesticide regulatory authority in the states of NY, CT, ME, NH, RI, and/or VT. (Note: *Your approval certificate verifying your attendance must be on the official letterhead of the states listed above to be valid.*)

***If I'm audited, is there an expiration date on the validity of the contact hours I've earned?***

Yes. The contact hours you submit as part of the audit process must have been earned during the current certification or license period, i.e., within the last three years of the anniversary of the issue of your original pesticide credential.

***I'm unable to locate any training opportunities and I've been recently audited. I don't want to lose my pesticide certification or license? I don't want to retake the state examination. What can I do?***

First of all, don't panic. You have a couple of options:

- Check the approved list available on this webpage
- Contact the person who sells you pesticides or the Secretary of an association you are a member and see if they have planned any training programs coming up for you to participate.
- Check on-line or web-based approved programs in the listing available on this webpage

[http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/licensing/pace/pace\\_courses.htm](http://www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides/licensing/pace/pace_courses.htm)

*Is there a list of the certification categories or code designation in Massachusetts?*

**MA Codes**

Code	License Type	Description of Code
24	Private	Dairy/Livestock
25	Private	Tree Fruit
26	Private	Greenhouse
27	Private	Small Fruit
28	Private	Poultry
29	Private	Nursery
30	Private	Cranberry
31	Private	Vegetables
32	Private	Sod
33	Commercial	Custom Ag Plants & Animals
34	Commercial	Aerial
35	Commercial	Forest
36	Commercial	Shade Trees & Ornamentals
37	Commercial	Turf
38	Commercial	Seed Treatment
39	Commercial	Aquatic
40	Commercial	Right of Way



Code	License Type	Description of Code
41	Commercial	General Pest Control (PCOs) +
42	Commercial	Fumigation
43	Commercial	Termite
44	Commercial	Vertebrate *
45	Commercial	Site Sanitation
46	Commercial	General Public Health
47	Commercial	Mosquito & Biting Fly
48	Commercial	Regulatory
49	Commercial	Demonstration & Research
50	Commercial	Food Processing
52	Commercial	Wood Preservative
54	Commercial	Tributyltin oxide (TBT)
55	Commercial	Meta-Sodium (Sewer Line Root Control)

**+Note: Category 41 INCLUDES rats and mice**

**\*Note: Category 44 EXCLUDES rats and mice.** This category is primarily need to use restricted use pesticides for bird control.