

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 20-195cc(b), each professional counselor applying for license renewal is required to furnish evidence of having participated in continuing education programs. In order to implement this provision, it was necessary to adopt regulations.

A copy of the regulations governing continuing education for professional counselors is attached. The regulations contain specific information regarding qualifying continuing education activities, record retention and waiver provisions. As a licensed professional counselor, you must comply with all of the laws and regulations governing your profession. Please note the following:

- Each licensee applying for license renewal shall complete a minimum of fifteen contact hours of qualifying continuing education during the one-year period for which a license has been renewed.
- Each licensee applying for license renewal will be asked to attest that the licensee satisfies the continuing education requirements. Certificates of completion should not be mailed to the Department unless a licensee is specifically directed to do so. The regulations contain specific information concerning retention of certificates of completion.
- A licensee whose license is due to expire on or before April 30, 2004 is exempt from continuing education requirements until such licensee's next registration period.
- A licensee who is applying for license renewal for the first time is exempt from continuing education requirements until such licensee's next registration period.

Should you have any questions regarding continuing education or license renewal, or wish to request a waiver of the continuing education requirements, please contact the Office of Practitioner Licensing and Certification at (860) 509-7603.

State of Connecticut
Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies
Sections 20-195cc-1 to 20-195cc-7

Continuing Education for Professional Counselors

Sec. 20-195cc-1. Definitions. For the purposes of sections 20-195cc-1 to 20-195cc-7, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies:

- (1) "Active practice" means the treatment in Connecticut of one or more patients by a licensee during any given registration period;
- (2) "Certificate of completion" means a document issued to a participant by a provider which certifies that the participant has successfully completed a continuing education activity;
- (3) "Contact hour" means a minimum of fifty minutes of continuing education activity;
- (4) "Department" means the Department of Public Health;
- (5) "Face-to-face instruction" means in-person, live instruction which a participant physically attends, either individually or as a part of a group of participants;
- (6) "Home study program" means continuing education activities, clearly related to maintaining skills necessary for the safe and competent practice of professional counseling that require the successful completion of a proficiency examination and are sponsored, endorsed or approved by the National Board of Certified Counselors, the American Counseling Association, the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, the National Association of Social Workers, the Association of Social Work Boards, the American Psychological Association, or their affiliates, a regionally accredited academic institution, the Connecticut Department of Education or the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services;
- (7) "Licensee" means a professional counselor licensed pursuant to section 20-195cc of the Connecticut General Statutes;
- (8) "License renewal due date" means the last day of the month of the licensee's date of birth;
- (9) "Participant" means a licensee who successfully completes a continuing education activity;
- (10) "Provider" means the individual educator or sponsoring organization conducting a continuing education activity; and
- (11) "Registration period" means the one-year period for which a license has been renewed in accordance with section 19a-88 of the Connecticut General Statutes and is current and valid.

Sec. 20-195cc-2. Number of contact hours required.

- (a) Each licensee applying for license renewal shall have completed a minimum of fifteen contact hours of qualifying continuing education during the preceding registration period.
- (b) Continuing education contact hours completed in one registration period shall not carry over to a subsequent registration period.
- (c) Each licensee applying for license renewal shall sign a statement attesting that he satisfies the continuing education requirements specified in section 20-195cc-1 to section 20-195cc-7, inclusive of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

Sec. 20-195cc-3. Basic requirements for qualifying continuing education activities.

- (a) Qualifying continuing education activities are the following:
 - (1) courses offered or approved by the National Board of Certified Counselors, the American Counseling Association, the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, the National Association of Social Workers, the Association of Social Work Boards, the American Psychological Association, or their affiliates, or the Connecticut Department of Education or the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services;
 - (2) graduate coursework in or related to the discipline of professional counseling offered by a regionally accredited academic institution, either audited or by credit; or
 - (3) programs in or related to the discipline of professional counseling sponsored or approved by a regionally accredited academic institution, provided the coursework is clearly related to maintaining skills necessary for the safe and competent practice of professional counseling.
- (b) Continuing education activities shall meet the following requirements:
 - (1) the activity involves face-to-face instruction or a home study program;
 - (2) the provider implements a mechanism to monitor and document physical attendance at such instruction or to verify licensee completion in the case of a home study program;

- (3) the provider retains written records for a period of three years from the participant's actual successful completion of the activity, including but not limited to: content description; instructor; date of activity; location of activity; list of participants; participant's evaluation of instruction presented and number of contact hours; and
- (4) the provider issues a certificate of completion after the participant's successful completion of the activity. Such certificate shall include the participant's name, provider's name, title or subject area of the activity, date and location of attendance and number of contact hours completed.
- (c) Subject matter for qualifying continuing education activities shall reflect the scope of practice authorized under Chapter 383c of the Connecticut General Statutes.
- (d) Activities which do not qualify for award of contact hours include: professional organizational business meetings; speeches delivered at luncheons or banquets; reading of books, articles, or professional journals; correspondence courses and other mechanisms of self instruction, except when used as a component of a home study program; and audio-visual materials, except when the latter is used as a component of a qualifying continuing education activity identified in subsections (a) and (b) of this section. Home study programs may include distance learning and Internet-based educational programs.

Sec. 20-195cc-4. Award of contact hours.

- (a) Continuing education contact hours shall be awarded as follows:
 - (1) Courses, institutes, seminars, programs, clinics, conferences and teleconferences: one contact hour for each hour of attendance;
 - (2) first presentation by licensee of an original paper, essay or formal lecture in professional counseling to a recognized group of fellow professionals at a scientific meeting: five contact hours; and
 - (3) original paper published by licensee in a professional journal that accepts papers only on the basis of independent review by experts: six contact hours for the first publication of the material; and
- (b) Graduate level coursework shall be credited at one contact hour for each hour of attendance. Audited courses shall have hours of attendance documented.
- (c) Twelve contact hours shall be the maximum continuing education hours granted for any one day's participation in the activities specified in subsection (a) of this section.
- (d) Continuing education activities that provide content related to organizational structure, marketing and similar topics relating to business management, shall be limited to not more than three contact hours in any one registration period.
- (e) The licensee shall successfully complete a continuing education activity for award of any continuing education contact hours.

Sec. 20-195cc-5. Record retention by licensees.

- (a) Each licensee shall obtain a certificate of completion from the provider of continuing education activities. Certificates of completion shall be retained by the licensee for a minimum of three years following the license renewal due date for which the activity satisfies license renewal requirements.
- (b) The department may inspect such licensee records as it deems necessary. Certificates of completion shall be submitted by the licensee to the department only upon the department's request. The licensee shall submit such records to the department within 45 days of the department's request.
- (c) A licensee who fails to comply with the continuing education requirements of sections 20-195cc-1 to 20-195cc-7, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies may be subject to disciplinary action, pursuant to section 20-195ee of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Sec. 20-195cc-6. Exemptions from and waiver of the continuing education requirements.

- (a) A waiver of the continuing education requirements may be extended to a licensee who is not engaged in active practice during a given registration period provided he submits, prior to the expiration of the registration period, a notarized application on a form provided by the department. The application shall contain a statement that the licensee shall not engage in active practice until the licensee has shown proof of completion of the requirements specified in sections 20-195cc-1 to 20-195cc-7, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
- (b) The department may, in individual cases involving a medical disability or illness, grant waivers of the minimum continuing education requirements or extensions of time within which to fulfill the same. The application for waiver or time extension shall be accompanied by a verifying document signed by a licensed physician. Waivers of the minimum continuing education requirements or extensions of time may be granted by the department for a period not to exceed one (1) calendar year. If the medical disability or illness, upon which a waiver or time extension has been granted continues beyond the period of the waiver or extension, the licensee shall reapply for the waiver or extension.

- (c) A licensee whose license is due to expire within twelve months of the effective date of sections 20-195cc-1 to 20-195cc-7, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, shall be exempt from continuing education requirements until such licensee's next registration period.
- (d) A licensee applying for license renewal for the first time is exempt from continuing education requirements.

Sec. 20-195cc-7. Requirements for return to active practice following waiver of the continuing education requirements. Reinstatement of lapsed licenses.

- (a) A licensee who has received a waiver pursuant to subsection (a) of section 20-195cc-6 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall successfully complete seven contact hours of qualifying continuing education prior to returning to active practice, which shall be applied to the continuing education requirements for the current registration period.
- (b) Any licensee whose license has been void and applies to the Department for reinstatement shall be required to submit certificates of completion documenting successful completion of qualifying continuing education as follows:
 - (1) if the license has been void for two years or less, a minimum of fifteen contact hours of qualifying continuing education during the one year period immediately preceding application for reinstatement; or
 - (2) if the license has been void for more than two years, a minimum of thirty contact hours of qualifying continuing education during the two year period immediately preceding application for reinstatement.

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