

Continuing Education for Psychologists

For their biennial license renewal, all licensed psychologists must complete at least 40 hours of board-approved continuing education. The only exception is for those who obtained their initial licensure during the current biennium. The 40 hours of CE must be completed by the final renewal date of September 30, 2013. [See section the governing statute at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/statutes/Stat0455.pdf> or Psy 4.02, Administrative Code, which can be found at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/psy/psy004.pdf> .

Frequently Asked Questions about CE Hours

What kind of experiences can I count as CE hours? According to Psy 4.02(2) you can count:

- (a) “continuing education programs and courses” provided by an organization approved by the *American Psychological Association* to sponsor continuing professional education for psychologists.
- (b) “educational programs recognized as approved at the time of attendance as “category I” continuing medical education programs by the council on medical education of the American Medical Association or the American Osteopathic Association.”
- (c) “graduate level courses or continuing education courses relevant to the professional practice of psychology offered by accredited colleges and universities [see “**Does the 20-hour rule apply...**” below].
- (d) “continuing education courses approved by the psychology licensing board in another state where the participant is also licensed.”
- (e) “publishing a scholarly book or article in a peer–review journal relevant to psychology” [see “**Does the 20-hour rule apply...**” below].

Does teaching count as CE? Yes, if you are teaching the material from categories (a)-(d) above for the first time. If you teach / present for an APA approved sponsor or cosponsor, you accrue hours the same as an attendee (documented by the same certificate of attendance as the participants). If teaching a regionally accredited university or college course, you must document the course registration and the syllabus, but can claim no more than 20 CE hours. [Psy 4.02(3)]

Can I earn CE hours for helping DHS? Yes; if you voluntarily assist the Department of Health Services in the evaluation of community outpatient mental health programs, you can be credited with one CE hour for every four hours of work, provided you apply for the CE in advance on forms provided by the board. [See Statute 455.065 (6) and Administrative Code section Psy 4.02 (5) for more details.]

Does the 20-hour rule apply if I attend a 35-hour intensive training; can I count it for CE? Yes, only 20 CE hours count if obtained from any one activity, i.e., if you take a 35-hour-long training, you can only count 20 hours. [See Administrative Code section Psy 4.02(6)]. The 20-hour rule applies to other situations; you can only count 20 if you:

- attend a week-long conference (e.g., APA convention with pre-convention and/or post-convention training) and earn more than 20 CE hours from a variety of sessions.
- write a book, chapter.
- teach a university or college course for the first time.

The 20-hour limit does not apply if you obtain all 40 CE hours from the same provider organization (e.g., PESI, DOC, or WPA) if the events are separated across time, e.g., WPA’s Spring Convention, Topical presentation, Fall convention. [See Administrative Code section Psy 4.02 (6)]

The board strongly discourages using on-line providers to accumulate more than 10 CE hours on a given day or more than 20 CE hours during any given biennium.

The rationale for the 20-hour CE limitation is that the board values diversity of learning experiences and the social encounters involved.

Can I use hours from this licensure period to compensate for a shortage from the last licensure period? No. Our code says, “Continuing education hours may apply only to the registration period in which the hours are acquired.” [Psy 4.02(1)(b)]. It goes on to say, “a licensee who fails to meet the continuing education requirements by the renewal deadline shall cease and desist from practice.” [Psy 4.02(1)(d)].

Are there any exceptions to this rule? Yes, but it takes a lot of work, persuasion, and expense. Remember that from the end of the licensure period until the board “may grant permission to apply continuing education hours acquired after lapse of the license” a person is not licensed and cannot practice psychology. The board may also impose other conditions before renewing a license. It is best to avoid such a situation. [Psy 4.02(1)(b)].

Are there no other exceptions? Yes, two.

1. “(g) A licensee may apply to the board for a postponement or waiver of the requirements of this section on grounds of prolonged illness or disability, or on other grounds constituting extreme hardship.” This is best done before the end of a licensure period. “The board shall consider each application individually on its merits, and the board may grant a postponement, partial waiver or total waiver as deemed appropriate.” [Psy 4.02(1)(g)].
2. The second exception is for a psychologist “who certifies to the board that he or she has permanently retired from the active practice of psychology” but still chooses to remain licensed. [Psy 4.02(1)(h)].

For additional resources please reference the Psychology Examining Board [Practice FAQs](#)