

244 CMR 5.00: CONTINUING EDUCATION

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5.01: Introduction

The purpose of 244 CMR 5.00 is to require all registered nurses and licensed practical nurses to comply with continuing education requirements. The Board and Council assume licensed nurses will maintain the high standards of the profession in selecting quality educational programs to fulfill the continuing education requirement.

5.02: Continuing Education Requirement

15 hours of continuing education within the two years immediately preceding renewal of registration are required for licensure.

5.03: Definitions

Board - Board of Registration in Nursing.

Conditions for Renewal - A licensed nurse who has attested under penalty of perjury to completion of 15 contact hours of continuing education for the current registration period.

Contact hour - The unit of measurement of organized learning experience lasting 50 consecutive minutes.

Continuing Education in Nursing - Consists of planned, organized learning experiences designed to augment the knowledge, skills, attitudes for the enhancement of nursing practice, to the end of improving health care to the public.

Evaluation - The process of determining whether objectives have been met.

Experience - In 244 CMR 5.00 shall mean a supervised clinical practice with an organized plan of study.

New Licensee - A nurse who has been graduated and or granted an initial Massachusetts nursing license in the current registration period.

Objective - A statement that delineates a desired, specific attainable and/or measurable change in learner behavior.

Offering - A single learning experience or a segment of at least one hour of a program directed toward attainment of specific objectives.

Orientation - The means by which nurses are introduced to the philosophy, goals, policies, basic procedures, role and expectations, physical facilities and special services in a specific work setting. Orientation is not considered continuing education for the purpose of these rules.

Program - Multiple offerings based on an organized effort directed toward accomplishing major objectives. A program includes several segments which are described as offerings or courses.

Provider - Means those individuals, organizations, institutions of higher education health care facilities, schools of nursing, etc. offering continuing education.

5.03: continued

Registration period -

- (a) RN - birthdate to birthdate in the even numbered years.
- (b) LPN - birthdate to birthdate in the odd numbered years.

Type - Means kind, sort, nature, description, character of continuing education for nurses. Examples to include lecture, panel discussion, demonstration, academic courses, self-study, workshops, correspondence courses and planned and supervised clinical experiences.

5.04: Criteria for Qualification of Continuing Education Programs/Offerings

The following guidelines are to assist the licensed nurse to select an appropriate program/offering and the provider to plan and implement continuing education program/offering. The overriding consideration in determining whether a specific program/offering qualifies as acceptable continuing education is that it be a planned program of learning which contributes directly to the professional competence of the licensed nurse.

(1) Amount.

- (a) 50 consecutive clock minutes is equivalent to one contact hour.
- (b) One continuing education unit (C.E.U.) equals ten contact hours.
- (c) One semester hour equals 15 contact hours.
- (d) Two clinical hours (100 minutes) is the equivalent of one contact hour.

(2) Standards.(a) Learner Objectives.

1. Objectives shall be written and be the basis for determining content, learning experience, teaching methodologies, and evaluation.
2. Objectives shall be specific, attainable, measurable, and describe expected outcomes for the learner.

(b) Subject Matter.

1. Appropriate subject matter shall include one or more of the following:
 - nursing science and practice
 - nursing education
 - research in nursing and health care
 - management, administration and supervision in health care delivery
 - social, economic, political, legal aspects of health care
 - teaching health care and consumer health education
 - requirements for a formal nursing program or a related field beyond that completed for original licensure
 - that which improves competency and is not specified on the foregoing list
2. Employee orientation, subject matter, standard operating procedure of the employing agency shall not qualify for continuing education purposes under 244 CMR 5.00.
3. Subject matter shall be described in outline form and shall include learner objectives, content, time allotment, teaching methods, faculty and evaluation format.
4. Types of continue education should be included (see definition "Types").

(c) The following guidelines are applicable to the selection of a continuing education program/offering and/or planning implementation of a program/offering.

1. When the type is an academic course, the following applies: The course must be within the framework of curriculum that leads to an academic degree in nursing or relevant to nursing, or any course within that curriculum that is necessary to an individual's professional growth and development.
2. When the type of continuing education is designated as a self-study offering or a correspondence course, the course should:
 - a. Be developed by a professional group such as an educational corporation or professional association.
 - b. Follow a logical sequence.
 - c. Involves the learner by requiring active response to module materials and provide feedback.
 - d. Contain a test to indicate progress and verify completion of module.
 - e. Supply a bibliography for continued study.

5.04: continued

3. When the type of continuing education is designated as a planned and supervised clinical experience, the course:
 - a. Should be beyond the basic level of preparation of the individual who is licensed and be based on a planned program of study.
 - b. The instructor-supervisor should possess the appropriate credentials related to the discipline being taught.
 - c. The experience should take place in a clinical setting.
- (d) Education Methods.
 1. Learning experiences and teaching methods should be appropriate to achieve the objectives of the offering/program.
 2. Principles of adult education should be used in the design of the offering/program.
 3. Time allotted for each activity should be sufficient for the learner to meet the objectives of the offering.
 4. Facilities and educational resources should be adequate to implement the offerings/programs.
- (e) Faculty Qualifications.
 1. The faculty should present documentation to the provider/learner illustrating competency in the content of the planned learning experience and possess knowledge of the principles of adult education.
 2. If the offering includes a clinical nursing component, a licensed qualified nurse in Massachusetts shall provide supervision.
 3. If the offering includes a clinical component other than nursing, a qualified instructor possessing the appropriate credentials of the discipline shall provide instruction.
- (f) Evaluation.
 1. Provision must be made for evaluating the participant's attainment of the stated learner objectives/outcomes.
 2. Participants must be given the opportunity to evaluate faculty, learning experiences, instructional methods, facilities and educational resources used for the offering/programs.
- (g) Records.
 1. Records of offerings/programs should be kept by the provider for a period of four years.
 2. Records should include content, objectives, outline of offering, faculty qualifications, teaching methods and materials, evaluation tools and data and a list of participants.
 3. The provider shall furnish to each participant an authenticated record of attendance specifying provider, title of offering, date of offering, number of contact hours and successful completion of program/offering.

5.05: Responsibility of Individual Licensee

It is the responsibility of each nurse to maintain an authenticated record of continuing education offerings completed, and to submit evidence of the required number of contact hours for that specific registration period upon request of the Board. This evidence should be maintained for two consecutive registration periods.

- (1) Application for licensure renewal shall be signed under the pains and penalties of perjury.
- (2) The licensed nurse requested to submit evidence of qualifying courses will submit a statement (or xerox) copy including the following:
 - (a) name of school, institution or organization conducting the course;
 - (b) location of course;
 - (c) title of course;
 - (d) dates attended;
 - (e) hours claimed;
 - (f) name (or signature) of authorizing individual.

5.05: continued

(3) New licensees shall not be required to submit evidence of continuing education for the current registration period.

(5.06: Reserved)

5.07: Appeal Process

Any individual who wishes to appeal a decision of the Board for not accepting submitted contact hours must submit a letter of appeal within 30 days of receipt of the notification of the non-qualifying continuing education experiences.

(1) Acknowledgement of appeal request will be made within one week from receipt of the appeal letter. At that time a list of members of the Advisory Council shall be sent to the appellant.

(2) An Appeal Board consisting of three members of the Advisory Council (selected by the appellant) and two Board members shall review and recommend on all appeals.

(3) The appellant will be notified of the hearing ten days in advance. The appellant may be present, or may be requested to be present at the hearing.

(4) The Board of Registration in Nursing must be notified of the outcome of the appeal within one week after the meeting of the Appeal Board. The appellant will be notified of the decision of the Appeal board at the same time.

(5) Request for continuation of the appeal process must be made to the Board of Registration in Nursing within ten days of notification of the Appeal Board decision by the appellant. The Board shall conduct a final hearing, at its earliest convenience. The Board shall make the final decision and inform the appellant and Appeal board in 30 days of the decision.

(6) The Board reserves the right to allow the appellant to practice during the appeal process.

5.08: Responsibility of the Board

(1) Establish a system to verify information submitted by nurses who are candidates for renewal.

(2) Establish deadline for submission of documents.

(3) Provide appeal mechanism for licensees.

(4) Establish and maintain a record of currently licensed nurses.

(5) Conduct an ongoing evaluation of the system.

(6) Supervise related activities as necessary and appropriate.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

244 CMR 5.00: M.G.L. c. 112, §§ 74 and 74A.