

BULLETIN

Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners Continuing Education Requirements

This bulletin summarizes the continuing education requirements for biennial license renewal for dentists and dental hygienists holding general licenses in Maryland. It is not intended to be exhaustive. Please refer to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 10.44.22 titled Continuing Education for the text of the regulations. Note that dentists holding general anesthesia and sedation permits as well as those holding drug dispensing permits have additional continuing education requirements not discussed here for renewal of those permits.

A licensee must earn at least 30 hours of continuing education from Board approved sponsors. Of the required 30 hours, 2 hours must be in infection control. The 2 hours of infection control count toward the required 30 hours.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification must be continuously maintained and must not expire. The CPR course does not count toward the required 30 hours.

Beginning with the 2011 renewal cycle, each licensee must complete a 2-hour Board-approved course on abuse and neglect for **every other renewal cycle**. For example, those who renewed their license in 2011 must have completed the course as a condition of license renewal in 2011, and then must complete the course again for the 2015 and 2019 renewal cycles and so on. Those renewing their license in 2012 must complete the course as a condition of license renewal in 2012, 2016, and 2020 and so on. The course on abuse and neglect must relate to Maryland law on the subject of abuse and neglect.

Every dentist seeking renewal in 2015 and thereafter must complete a 2-hour Board-approved course on proper prescribing and disposal of prescription drugs. The course must be completed **every other renewal cycle** beginning with the 2015 renewal cycle. Dentists who do not prescribe prescription drugs are not exempt. Dental hygienists are not required to complete the course but they may do so for continuing education credits. The course may be taken on-line. These hours count toward the required 30 hours. For dentists holding drug dispensing permits the course may not be taken to fulfill the continuing education requirements contained in Senate Bill 603, Chapter 267, Laws of Maryland 2012.

Up to 17 hours of continuing education credit may be earned for self-study activities such as internet courses the licensee has successfully passed.

A licensee may earn up to 8 continuing education hours for providing volunteer pro-bono dental services at Board-approved programs within the State of Maryland. Each

60 minutes of pro-bono services will earn 1 continuing education hour up to 8 hours. Those interested should review the Board's Bulletin titled Pro Bono Dental and Dental Hygiene Services for Continuing Education Credit. Please contact the Board before engaging in pro-bono services for continuing education credit to ensure that the services that you provide will qualify.

A licensee may earn up to 4 continuing education hours for successful completion of Board-approved courses on cultural competency. These hours count toward the required 30 hours.

A dental hygienist who, after graduating from dental hygiene school, successfully completes a Board-approved course on local anesthesia in order to qualify to receive Board recognition to administer local anesthesia by infiltration, may receive continuing education credit toward renewal of their general license if the course is completed within the prescribed continuing education timeframe.

With the exception of the required course on abuse and neglect, the optional courses on cultural competency, and the optional pro bono program, the rule is that all continuing education courses or programs must be "designed to enhance the licensee's clinical knowledge and ability to treat dental patients." Therefore courses or programs that will not be approved for continuing education credit include, but are not limited to, those courses or programs on money management, personal finance, personal health and recreation, politics, memory training, and speed reading, etc.

The 2 year period for completing continuing education extends from January 1 through December 31 of the following year. This 2 year period in which the continuing education must be completed ends on December 31st of the year preceding the year in which the license is due for renewal. For example, if a license expires on June 30, 2013, the period to complete all continuing education requirements extends from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2012. A licensee may ask the Board for an extension until June 30, 2013 to complete the continuing education. However a license may not be issued until all continuing education requirements have been met. "Double dipping" of continuing education hours for 2 renewal periods is not permitted.

A licensee must maintain accurate records of continuing education hours for at least 5 years.

Please keep in mind that the Board's laws and regulations change over time. All licensees are responsible for complying with the applicable law.

Dentists who have questions should direct them to Ms. Debbie Welch, Licensing Coordinator at 410-402-8511, and dental hygienists with questions should contact Ms. Sandra Sage, Dental Hygienist Coordinator at 410-402-8510.