

10.28.02.05

.05 Required Credit and Other Course Credit.

A. Credit for continuing professional education shall be:

- (1) Accredited; or
- (2) Approved by the Board solely on whether or not it constitutes improvement, advancement, and extension of one's professional skill and knowledge relating to the practice of optometry.

B. General Requirements.

(1) TPA certified optometrists shall:

- (a) Document 50 hours of continuing professional education every 2 years, with 30 of the 50 hours focused on therapeutic topics; and
- (b) Provide proof of CPR certification every renewal which may count as 3 credit hours.

(2) DPA certified optometrists shall:

- (a) Document 36 hours of continuing professional education, every 2 years, with 6 of the 36 hours focused on diagnostic pharmaceuticals; and
- (b) Provide proof of CPR certification every renewal which may count as 3 credit hours.

(3) Non-Certified licensed optometrists shall:

- (a) Document 36 hours of continuing professional education every 2 years; and
- (b) Provide proof of CPR certification every renewal which may count as 3 credit hours.

(4) The Board accepts:

- (a) Only accredited or Board-approved continuing education programs; and
- (b) Therapeutic courses that fall within the Ocular Disease and related Systemic Disease categories.

C. Trainings.

(1) Except for those identified in §I of this regulation, an optometrist who is issued a license by the Board may complete continuing professional education by attending in-person, virtual synchronous, or asynchronous trainings with post-test assessments conducted by an accredited administrator. The trainings may include:

(a) Courses given by:

- (i) The Maryland Optometric Association;
- (ii) Another Statewide association; or
- (iii) Any organization approved by the Board, solely on whether or not it constitutes improvement, advancement, and extension of one's professional skill and knowledge relating to the practice of optometry.

(b) Observation of ophthalmic procedures at sites approved by the Board; or

(c) Other continuing professional education activities given by:

- (i) The Maryland Optometric Association;
- (ii) Another Statewide association; or
- (iii) A nonprofit organization approved by the Board.

(2) If requested pursuant to Regulation .04 of this chapter, an optometrist shall provide to the Board a certificate of attendance or other method of verifying attendance at an event conducted by an accredited event administrator.

(3) In accordance with §A of this regulation, events conducted by an accredited event administrator shall have Board approval.

D. Other than those required in §C of this regulation, credit hours may be approved for the following:

- (1) Scheduled post-graduate or continuing education courses given by schools or colleges of optometry which have been approved by the Board;
- (2) Courses, either in-person, online, or both, that have received accreditation; however, the Board reserves the right to refuse credit when its established criteria are not met;

- (3) Courses, either in-person, online, or both, on Practice Management directly related to optometric care, up to a maximum of 4 hours per renewal cycle;
- (4) Courses given by local optometric societies or health-related sponsors, or both, upon prior approval by the Board.
- (5) Courses, seminars, and lectures prepared and given by Maryland licensed optometrists for which credit will be awarded at the rate of 2 hours for preparation and 1 hour for lecture, up to a maximum of 24 hours per renewal cycle;
- (6) Published papers in professional journals, papers approved for publication, or papers that have been peer-reviewed for which credit will be awarded at 2 hours per paper, up to a maximum of 12 hours per renewal cycle;
- (7) Observation of ophthalmic procedures at sites approved by the Board, up to a maximum of 8 hours per renewal cycle;
- (8) Courses, either in-person, online, or both, in optometric ethics, Maryland optometric jurisprudence, or both, as approved by the Board, up to a maximum of 4 hours per renewal cycle;
- (9) Pro bono work providing patient eye care as outlined in §J of this regulation;
- (10) Public board meeting attendance as outlined in §K of this regulation;
- (11) Courses, either in-person or online, and certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) up to a maximum of 3 hours per renewal cycle; and
- (12) Courses in cultural competency, up to a maximum of 4 hours per renewal cycle.

E. Credit hours will be allowed on the basis of 50 minutes being equivalent to an hour, except for pro bono work. Fractional credit hours are allowed.

F. Unless Board or COPE approved, credit may not be allowed when a specific product, technique, procedure, or company is promoted or promulgated for the economic benefit of a particular person, company, group, etc.

G. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, credit is allowed only in and for the license year in which the course was actually attended.

H. The determination of whether or not a course meets these standards shall be entirely within the Board's province. The Board shall also determine whether or not credit for an entire course, or any lesser number of hours, may be granted.

I. The Board may waive continuing education requirements for, but not limited to, licensees who:

- (1) Have applied for licensure within 1 year of graduation from an accredited school or college of optometry; and
- (2) Are renewing their license for the first time.

J. Pro Bono Work.

- (1) Pro bono work shall earn 2 credit hours for each 3 hours of approved continuing education activity, up to a maximum of 12 credit hours per renewal cycle.
- (2) The licensee shall provide to the Board a written application for approval of pro bono work. The application shall include:
 - (a) The place where the pro bono will be provided;
 - (b) The type of work to be provided;
 - (c) The number of hours of actual work provided for which the licensee desires credit hours; and
 - (d) A statement guaranteeing that the work provided no financial benefit to the licensee.
- (3) Upon completion of the work, the licensee shall obtain from the facility evidence of completion of pro bono hours.
- (4) Credit hours for pro bono work are in the general category.

K. Public Board Meeting Attendance.

- (1) Licensees may receive 2 credit hours for attending in its entirety an open session meeting of the Board of Examiners in Optometry.
- (2) The Board shall issue to the licensee a certificate of proof of attendance.
- (3) A licensee may not earn more than 4 credit hours in this area per renewal cycle.