

"Clarification Continuing Professional Education Requirements"
for the License Renewals:
(Revised 04/24/2024)

Clarification of In-Person Trainings

(1) Except for those identified in §H of this regulation, an Optometrist, who is issued a license by the Board shall complete a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education per renewal cycle by attending *in-person trainings conducted in Maryland* by an accredited administrator, (COMAR10.28.02.05 (B)).

The Board has chosen to expand its interpretation of the "in-person" to include synchronous virtual training in addition to synchronous in-person (i.e. face-to-face) training and will now accept both formats to satisfy the requirement for 10 hours of in person training conducted in Maryland.

SYNCHRONOUS IN-PERSON training means the course in Maryland and is delivered;

- face-to-face;
- the instructor is physically present in the same room with the participants.

SYNCHRONOUS VIRTUAL means the instructor is:

- not physically present in the same room with the participants;
- not able to reach out and touch the participants;
- meeting with learners in real-time; and/or
- able to provide immediate feedback to participants.

Examples of synchronous virtual training include: Interactive webinars in real time, Videoconferences, Interactive posters with authors presenting in real time. Once the event has taken place, learners may no longer participate in that activity.

Continuing Education that is:

- (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 **16 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.

Pro bono work shall earn 1 credit hour for each 3 hours of approved continuing education activity, up to a maximum of 6 credit hours per renewal cycle.

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.

- (10) Courses, either in-person or online, and certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) up to a maximum of 3 hours per renewal cycle; and
- (11) Courses in **cultural competency**, up to a maximum of 4 hours per renewal cycle.

(12) Public Board Meeting Attendance.

(1) Licensees may receive 4 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

- For TPA licensees, 30 of the 50 required hours must be focused on therapeutic topics
- CPR certification is required every renewal and may count for 3 credit hours.

For DPA licensees:

- 36 total hours of continuing professional education every 2 years.
- 6 of the 36 required hours must be related to diagnostic drugs.
- CPR certification is required for each renewal and may count for 3 credit hours.

License only (no DPA or TPA certification):

- 36 hours of continuing professional education are required each renewal cycle"

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.
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