



STATE OF NEBRASKA
BOARD OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY

A N N O U N C E M E N T

January 2004

SUBJECT: Continuing Education Guidelines Effective January 2004

Attached is a copy of the Board's most current continuing education requirements and guidelines which are effective January 1, 2004. Please read and then retain this document for future reference.

You should check with the Board office for PRE-APPROVAL of any courses you plan to take to be sure that the credit will qualify for continuing professional education. A **Program Qualification Form** is attached to these Guidelines for your use in submitting courses for approval to the Board. Programs selected should contribute directly to the permit holders professional competency to practice public accountancy. The Board recommends, but does not require, that any permit holder performing audits, reviews or compilations obtain a minimum of forty percent (40%) of the required hours in accounting and auditing subjects.

The CPE Report of Attendance is due to the Board by January 31. Failure to submit the report will not allow the permit holder to renew their permit. If a permit holder does not meet the continuing education requirements for permit issuance, they must write to the Board prior to January 31 stating the reason for the deficiency. These reports for planned completion of CPE are due in the Board office on February 28. All course work must be completed and reported to the Board office by June 15. If the Board office does not receive a letter or report form from an individual by the January 31st deadline, the individual would be subject to the signing of a Stipulation and Consent Order which will include an administrative fee.

PLEASE RETAIN A COPY OF YOUR CPE REPORT FOR YOUR PERMANENT CPE RECORDS.

CPE MUST BE EARNED BY DECEMBER 31st
AND
REPORTED BY JANUARY 31st!

NEBRASKA STATE BOARD OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY

CONTINUING EDUCATION GUIDELINES

(Effective January 1, 2004)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. Basic Requirements	3
(Renewal of Active Permit, Inactive Registrants and Ethics)	
II. Types of Programs which Qualify	3
A. Formal Programs	3
B. Formal Self-Study or Other Individual Study Programs	4
C. Technical Committee Service.....	4
D. Instruction or Presentation	4
E. Published Articles or Books	4
F. Quality Enhancement Program and Peer Review Program.....	4
III. Credit Hours Granted	5
A. Acceptable Subject Matter and Programs.....	5
B. Credit Hours Granted.....	5
IV. What is a Qualified Instructor	5
V. Evidence of Completion - Retention.....	5
VI. Controls and Reporting	6
A. Annual Reporting	6
B. Verification.....	6
C. Course Disapproval.....	6
VII. Reciprocity.....	6
VIII. Re-Entry to Public Practice (Reinstatement of Active Permit)	6

CONTINUING EDUCATION GUIDELINES

I. BASIC REQUIREMENTS

- A. Applicants for the renewal of an active permit shall have completed 80 hours of acceptable continuing education within the preceding two calendar years. CPE taken in a calendar year must be reported by January 31 of the next year.
- B. The Board of Accountancy shall have authority to make reasonable exceptions.
- C. All holders of an active permit to practice public accountancy are required to comply with the continuing education requirements.
- D. Inactive Registrants and “Inactive-Retired” certificate holders are not required to report continuing education.
- E. The applicant for renewal of an active permit to practice shall, by January 31st of each year, provide a signed statement of the continuing education in which he or she has participated in the preceding calendar year, on the reporting form provided by the Board of Public Accountancy. If a permit holder has a valid reason they cannot report by January 31, they shall communicate in writing the reason before January 31. Subject to Board approval, the reporting of these hours will be extended to February 28.
- F. **A permit holder must complete 4 hours of ethics in every reporting period for renewal or reinstatement. The Board’s intent is to remain flexible and allow the requirement to cover broad and general course content for ethics. You are not required to complete the 4-hour requirement in one course setting. You can submit one-hour increments for portions of courses that cover ethics.**

II. TYPES OF PROGRAMS WHICH QUALIFY

The overriding consideration in determining whether a specific program qualifies is that it shall be a program of learning directly related to the **practice of public accountancy** including, but not limited to information or skills reasonably calculated to be utilized by a participant in the practice of public accountancy. Courses should contribute to professional development and technical competence of a permit holder. **Pre-approval of the program by the Board is encouraged through the use of a “Program Qualification Form” (see page 8 of these Guidelines).**

- A. **Formal Programs** (Code “F” on reporting form) requiring class attendance shall qualify if, (1) the program is conducted by a qualified instructor; (2) a record of registration or attendance is maintained; (3) the program is at least one hour (50 minute period) in length; (4) an outline of the program with a detailed timeline is prepared in advance; and (5) the program contributes directly to the professional skills and competence of the permit holder. The following are deemed to be acceptable as formal programs:
 - 1. Professional development programs of national and state professional societies.
 - 2. Technical sessions at meetings of national and state professional societies and chapters.
 - 3. University or college courses:
 - a. Each semester hour credit shall equal 8 hours CPE credit. A quarter hour credit shall equal 4 hours. **Not more than 50% of required hours during a licensing or reinstatement period shall be given for college credit. The course must be completed with a passing grade before credit is allowed.**
 - b. Non-credit short courses: contact hours only; must obtain a signed statement of attendance from instructor.
 - 4. Formal, organized, in-firm educational programs. Firm meetings will qualify only if the program is conducted by a qualified instructor, AND an outline of the

program with a detailed timeline is prepared in advance and preserved. **They must consist of at least 50 minutes of continuous instruction.** Portions of such meetings devoted to administrative and firm matters cannot be included.

5. Programs in other organizations (accounting; professional; appropriate private sector). Dinner, luncheon and breakfast meetings of recognized accounting organizations may qualify, if they meet the appropriate requirements and have at least one hour of presentation on professional topics.

- B. Formal self-study or other individual study programs** (Code “S” on reporting form) which require registration and provide evidence of satisfactory completion. In determining the amount of credit to be allowed for specific correspondence and formal individual study programs (including taped study programs), the Board will determine the equivalency of the program to a comparable seminar or comparable course for credit in an accredited educational institution. Permit holders claiming credit for such courses will be required to furnish evidence of satisfactory completion of the course. Credit will be allowed in the renewal period in which the certificate of completion is dated. **Not more than 50% of required hours during a licensing or reinstatement period shall be represented by such courses or programs. A certificate of completion designating the number of hours must be attached before any credit will be allowed.**
- C. Service on technical committees of professional organizations** (Code “C” on reporting form). Participation in technical committee meetings of recognized professional societies will qualify, if the subject matter has relevance to the practice of public accountancy. Must be at least one hour in length. **No more than 16 hours will be allowed for any renewal or reinstatement period.**
- D. Instruction or Presentation of Programs** (Code “T” on reporting form). Credit for one hour of continuing education will be awarded for each hour completed as an instructor or discussion leader to the extent that the particular activity contributes to the professional competence of the permit holder as it relates to the practice of public accountancy. Credit as an instructor, discussion leader, or speaker will be allowed for any meeting or engagement provided that the session is one which would meet the continuing education requirements of those attending. The credit allowed an instructor, discussion leader or speaker will be on the basis of a maximum of two hours for subject preparation for each hour of presentation. **Not more than 50% of required hours for preparation and instruction will be allowed for any renewal or reinstatement. Not more than 50% of required hours for preparation and instruction of a college or University course will be allowed for any renewal or reinstatement.** Repetitious presentations of the same material within the renewal period will not be counted. Credit for permit holders attending not as instructors, discussion leaders, or speakers is limited to the actual meeting time. **A total of no more than 10 hours may be granted for updating material for previously presented courses**
- E. Published Articles, Books, etc.** (Code “P” on reporting form). **No more than 16 hours of credit for preparation of such publications may be given on a self-declaration basis for any renewal or reinstatement period.**

- F. **Quality Enhancement Program and peer review programs** (Code “Q” on reporting form). Must be sponsored by a state board or national or state professional society. Board will determine amount of credit. **Not more than 50% of required hours can be used for these programs during a licensing or reinstatement period.** No credit will be allowed for additional review of problem reports if the individual receives a fee for such services.

III. CREDIT HOURS GRANTED

A. Acceptable Subject Matter and Programs

The purpose of continuing professional education is to assist the practitioner in maintaining professional knowledge and competence. Programs selected should contribute directly to his or her professional competency to practice public accountancy. Programs can be approved, partially approved or not approved for CPE credit based upon the relevance to the practice of public accountancy as determined by the Board.

Acceptable programs include those related to the performance or offer to perform professional services. The responsibility for substantiating that a particular program is acceptable and meets the requirements rests upon the permit holder, and is subject to approval by the Board

B. Credit Hours Granted

Continuing education credit will be given for whole hours only, with a minimum of 50 minutes constituting one hour. As an example, 100 minutes of continuous instruction would count for two hours; however, more than one 50 minutes but less than 100 minutes of continuous instruction would count for only one hour. Travel time cannot be claimed. **The Board does not recognize fractions of hours. Contact hours only will qualify. Credit may not be claimed for advance reading, homework, etc.**

IV. WHAT IS A QUALIFIED INSTRUCTOR

A qualified instructor or discussion leader is anyone whose background training, education or experience makes it appropriate for them to lead a discussion on the subject matter of the particular program.

V. EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION – RETENTION

Primary responsibility for documenting the requirements rests with the permit holder and evidence to support fulfillment of those requirements must be retained for a period of five years after the completion of educational courses. Satisfaction of the requirements, including the retention of attendance records and written outlines, may be accomplished as follows:

- A. In the case of courses taken for scholastic credit in accredited universities and colleges (state, community or private) or high school districts, evidence of satisfactory completion of the course will be sufficient by attaching either a grade report or a transcript from the institution.
- B. In all other instances, the permit holder must retain an outline or program and evidence of attendance; i.e. canceled check, certificate of attendance or certificate of satisfactory completion, etc. In the case of non-credit courses taken in educational institutions, a signed statement of the hours of attendance must be obtained from the instructor.

VI. CONTROLS AND REPORTING

A. Annual Reporting

The Board will approve and send to permit holders on December 1 of each year a “Report of Continuing Education Attendance” form to complete and return signed to the Board **by January 31.**

B. Verification

The Board will verify information submitted by permit holders. If a permit holder does not meet the continuing education requirements for permit issuance, they must write to the Board prior to January 31 stating the reason for the deficiency. Then, reports for planned completion of CPE are due in the Board office on February 28. The decision of the Board on the amount of credit granted for participation in continuing education programs is final. The Board may waive compliance with the Rule for good cause shown in cases involving illness or other hardship or extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the permit holder.

C. Course Disapproval

An applicant has thirty (30) days from date of notification to request re-evaluation of disapproved courses.

D. Failure to Comply

1. If a permit holder is unable to submit a Report of Continuing Education by January 31, they **SHALL WRITE** to the Board prior to January 31 requesting an additional amount of time to complete this form. This report will then be due by February 28, if permission granted.
2. The Board may waive compliance with the Rule for good cause shown in cases involving illness or other hardship or extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the permit holder.
3. If the Board office does not receive a letter or report form from an individual by the January 31 deadline, the individual would be subject to the signing of a Stipulation and Consent Order which will include an administrative fee to renew their permit.
4. Failure to submit the report will not allow permit holder to renew their permit.

VII. RECIPROCITY

An individual who holds a valid and unrevoked certified public accountant certificate from another state or other political subdivision of the United States, or comparable certificate or degree issued by any foreign country, and who received a permit to practice in this state under the appropriate provisions of the Public Accountancy Act, will be required to comply with the continuing education requirement when their permit is next renewed and each succeeding renewal thereafter.

VIII. RE-ENTRY TO PUBLIC PRACTICE (REINSTATEMENT OF ACTIVE PERMIT)

An individual wishing to re-enter public practice or reinstate an active permit must satisfy the 120 hour requirement prior to issuance of the permit to practice. To assist in this process it is strongly recommended to contact the Boards’ office.

**STATE OF NEBRASKA
BOARD OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY
P.O. Box 94725, Lincoln, NE 68509
www.nol.org/home/BPA**

Program Qualification Form

USE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH QUALIFICATION REQUESTED.

A. Please answer items 1 through 11:

1. Name of requesting person/firm: _____

Organization of person/firm: _____

Certificate # _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

2. Course Title: _____

3. Requested number of CPE hours of credit: _____

4. Date(s) of course/presentation: _____

5. Method of Delivery:

<input type="checkbox"/> Self Study	<input type="checkbox"/> Formal (live)	<input type="checkbox"/> Publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Instruction/Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> College Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Video-conference
<input type="checkbox"/> Audio-conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Tele-conference	

6. Location of Course: _____

7. Sponsoring Organization: _____

8. Is the Sponsor registered with NASBA? Registry # Yes No

9. Business address of Sponsoring Organization: _____

10. Contact Person: _____ Phone #: _____

11. ATTACH A STATEMENT ON HOW THIS COURSE RELATES TO THE PRACTICE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY. DESCRIBE HOW THE COURSE CONTRIBUTES TO THE PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCY OF A CPA IN PUBLIC PRACTICE.

B. You **Must** Include:

Course outline/syllabus Course timeline
 Name and background of Instructor/Speaker