



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

August 1, 2012

2012-R-0285

## **OLR BACKGROUNDER: CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS**

By: James Orlando, Associate Analyst

State law requires continuing education for license renewal for several categories of health professions. Generally, the applicable law or regulations (1) define basic requirements for continuing education programs, (2) establish a system to document that a professional satisfied the requirements, and (3) allow the relevant agency to waive a continuing education requirement due to a medical disability or for good cause.

Table 1 lists all professions regulated by the Department of Public Health that must complete continuing education for state license or certification renewal. The table also includes pharmacists, who are licensed by the Department of Consumer Protection.

Please note that for all of the professions listed below, the continuing education requirements are waived for the first license renewal period.

**Table 1: Continuing Education Requirements for Health Professions' License Renewal**

<i>Profession</i>	<i>Statutory Authority</i>	<i>Required Hours (per Period)</i>
Acupuncturists	<a href="#">PA 12-39</a> and <a href="#">PA 12-197</a> (amending <a href="#">CGS § 20-206bb</a> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 (two years) or</li> <li>• maintain certification by National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine</li> </ul> Requirement starts with registration periods beginning on or after October 1, 2014
Alcohol and Drug Counselors	<a href="#">CGS § 20-74t</a>	20 (one year)
Audiologists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-395d</a>	20 (two years) Requirement started with registration periods beginning on or after October 1, 2011
Chiropractors	<a href="#">CGS § 20-32</a>	48 (two years)
Dental Hygienists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-126l</a>	16 (two years)
Dentists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-126c</a>	25 (two years)
Electrologists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-275</a>	10 (two years)
Embalmers	<a href="#">CGS § 20-219a</a>	6 (one year)
Funeral Directors	<a href="#">CGS § 20-219a</a>	6 (one year)
Hearing Instrument Specialists	<a href="#">PA 12-110</a> (amending <a href="#">CGS § 20-402</a> )	16 (two years) Requirement starts with registration periods beginning on or after October 1, 2014
Marital and Family Therapists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-195c</a>	15 (one year)
Massage Therapists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-206f</a>	24 (four years)
Naturopathic Physicians	<a href="#">CGS § 20-41a</a>	15 (one year)
Nursing Home Administrators	<a href="#">CGS § 19a-515</a>	40 (two years)
Occupational Therapists*	<a href="#">CGS §§ 20-74h</a> and <a href="#">20-74i</a>	24 (two years)
Occupational Therapy Assistants*	<a href="#">CGS §§ 20-74h</a> and <a href="#">20-74i</a>	18 (two years)
Opticians	<a href="#">CGS § 20-146</a>	7 (one year)
Optometrists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-128a</a>	20 (one year)
Pharmacists	<a href="#">CGS §§ 20-599</a> and <a href="#">20-600</a>	15 (one year)
Physical Therapists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-73b</a>	20 (one year)
Physicians/Surgeons	<a href="#">CGS § 20-10b</a>	50 (two years)
Professional Counselors	<a href="#">CGS § 20-195cc</a>	15 (one year)
Radiographers	<a href="#">CGS § 20-74ff</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 (two years) or</li> <li>• maintain registration as a radiographer or radiation therapy technologist by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists</li> </ul>
Respiratory Care Practitioners	<a href="#">CGS § 20-162r</a>	6 (one year)

Table 1: -Continued-

<b>Profession</b>	<b>Statutory Authority</b>	<b>Required Hours (per Period)</b>
Social Workers	<a href="#">CGS §§ 20-195o</a> and <a href="#">20-195u</a>	15 (one year)
Speech and Language Pathologists	<a href="#">CGS § 20-411a</a>	20 (two years) Requirement started with registration periods beginning on and after October 1, 2011
Veterinarians	<a href="#">CGS § 20-201a</a>	24 (two years) Requirement started with registration periods beginning on and after July 1, 2011

\*called "continued competency" for these professions

In addition, some professions' national certifying bodies may require continuing education to maintain certification. For example, the American Nurses Credentialing Center (a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association) requires professional development, which may include continuing education or other specified components, as part of the certification renewal process. Certifications must be renewed every five years, and the specific requirements vary depending on the type of certification. Effective January 1, 2014, all renewal applicants will be required to fulfill 75 contact hours of continuing education as half of their professional development requirement. More information is available on the center's website:

<http://www.nursecredentialing.org/RenewalRequirements.aspx>.

For another example, the American Academy of Physician Assistants requires physician assistants to complete 100 hours of continuing education every two years to maintain national certification

([http://www.aapa.org/your\\_pa\\_career/licensing\\_and\\_certification.aspx](http://www.aapa.org/your_pa_career/licensing_and_certification.aspx)).

JO:ts