



OLR BACKGROUNDER: CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS

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This report provides a brief overview of state continuing education requirements for health professionals. It updates OLR Report [2012-R-0285](#).

State law requires continuing education for license renewal for several categories of health professions. Generally, the applicable law or regulations (1) define basic continuing education requirements; (2) specify qualifying activities; (3) establish a system to document that a professional satisfied the continuing education requirement; and (4) allow the relevant agency to waive the requirement in certain circumstances, such as a medical disability.

Table 1 lists all health-related professionals regulated by the Department of Public Health who must complete continuing education for state license or certification renewal. The table also includes pharmacists, who are licensed by the Department of Consumer Protection. (The table does not include emergency medical technicians, who are required to complete refresher training, or tattoo technicians, who are required to complete a course on preventing disease transmission and blood-borne pathogens, for recertification or license renewal.)

The table lists the basic continuing education hours requirement for each profession and the statutory authority for that requirement. It also indicates if any 2014 Public Acts amended the continuing education statutes. The relevant provisions of these acts are effective October 1, 2014 unless otherwise specified in the table. For all of the professions listed in the table, the continuing education requirements are waived for the first license renewal period.

In addition to requirements in state law, 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, including continuing education and 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. Renewal applicants must complete 75 contact hours of continuing education as half of their professional development requirement (<http://www.nursecredentialing.org/RenewalRequirements.aspx>).

For another example, the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants requires physician assistants to complete 100 hours of continuing education every two years to maintain national certification (<http://www.nccpa.net/ContinuingMedicalEducation>).

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

<i>Profession</i>	<i>Required Hours (per period)</i>	<i>Statutory Authority (and 2014 amendments)</i>
Acupuncturists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 (two years) or maintain certification by National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine <p>Requirement starts with registration periods beginning on and after October 1, 2014</p>	CGS § 20-206bb
Advanced Practice Registered Nurses	50 (two years)	PA 14-12 (§ 4), as amended by PA 14-231 (§ 53), effective upon passage
Alcohol and Drug Counselors	20 (one year)	CGS § 20-74t
Audiologists	20 (two years)	CGS § 20-395d
Chiropractors	48 (two years)	CGS § 20-32
Dental Hygienists	16 (two years)	CGS § 20-126l (PA 14-231 (§ 41) amended this statute to change the requirements to reinstate a voided license)
Dentists	25 (two years)	CGS § 20-126c
Electrologists	10 (one year)	CGS § 20-275
Embalmers	6 (one year)	CGS § 20-219a
Funeral Directors	6 (one year)	CGS § 20-219a
Hearing Instrument Specialists	16 (two years)	CGS § 20-402 (PA 14-231 (§ 44) amended this statute regarding the organizations authorized to offer continuing education courses)
Marital and Family Therapists	15 (one year)	CGS § 20-195c (PA 14-231 (§ 57) made a change to this statute, not affecting continuing education)
Massage Therapists	24 (four years)	CGS § 20-206f
Naturopathic Physicians	15 (one year)	CGS § 20-41a

Table 1 (continued)

Profession	Required Hours (per period)	Statutory Authority (and 2014 amendments)
Nursing Home Administrators	40 (two years)	CGS § 19a-515 (PA 14-194 (§ 7) amended this statute to (1) require training in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care as part of the existing continuing education requirement and (2) add courses offered by the Alzheimer's Association to the qualifying courses)
Occupational Therapists*	24 (two years)	CGS §§ 20-74h and 20-74j
Occupational Therapy Assistants*	18 (two years)	CGS §§ 20-74h and 20-74j
Opticians	7 (one year)	CGS § 20-146 (PA 14-231 (§ 33) made a change to this statute, not affecting continuing education)
Optometrists	20 (one year)	CGS §§ 20-128a and 20-132a
Pharmacists	15 (one year)	CGS §§ 20-599 and 20-600
Physical Therapists	20 (one year)	CGS § 20-73b
Physicians/Surgeons	50 (two years)	CGS § 20-10b (PA 14-231 (§ 32) made a minor change to this statute, effective upon passage)
Professional Counselors	15 (one year)	CGS § 20-195cc
Psychologists	10 (one year) Requirement starts with registration periods beginning on and after October 1, 2014	PA 14-231 (§ 56)
Radiographers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 (two years) or • maintain registration as a radiographer or radiation therapy technologist by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists 	CGS § 20-74ff
Respiratory Care Practitioners	6 (one year)	CGS § 20-162r
Social Workers	15 (one year)	CGS §§ 20-195o and 20-195u
Speech and Language Pathologists	20 (two years)	CGS § 20-411a
Veterinarians	24 (two years)	CGS § 20-201a

*called "continued competency" for these professions

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