

**STATE BOARD OF MEDICINE
STATE BOARD OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE**

CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS

In order to renew a respiratory therapy license, a minimum of 30 hours of continuing education must be completed within the biennial renewal period, which runs from January 1 of the odd year through December 31 of the next even year.

- **EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2015**, Per Act 31 of 2014, two (2) hours of Board-approved continuing education in child abuse recognition and reporting requirements must be completed for renewal or reactivation of a license. Details and a list of Board-approved providers can be found at www.dos.pa.gov. Verification of completion must be sent electronically and directly from the course provider. It may take up to 7 days for the provider to submit the records to the Board's office.
- At least 10 hours must be obtained through traditional continuing education, such as classroom lecture, real-time web-cast or other live sessions where a presenter is involved.
 - As of December 24, 2020, Governor Wolf granted the Department of State's request to suspend the restrictions on distance-learning for continuing education requirements for Respiratory Therapists. For the 2022 biennial renewal, licensees may take classes online or participate in distance-learning opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- No more than 20 hours will be accepted through non-traditional continuing education such as internet presentations, journal review programs, and prerecorded audio or video presentations.
- One (1) continuing education hour shall be completed in patient safety through either traditional or non-traditional coursework. The following topics will qualify for patient safety credit:
 - Improving medical records and record keeping
 - Reducing medical errors
 - Professional conduct and ethics
 - Improving communications
 - Preventative medicine
 - Healthcare quality improvement
- One (1) continuing education hour shall be completed in medical ethics through either traditional or non-traditional coursework. The course provider should identify medical ethics as the topic in the course title.
 - If medical ethics content is not specified in the course title, the Board will also accept a statement from the course provider of the amount of course time specific to medical ethics.

The Board accepts respiratory care continuing education programs designated for professional development credits by the AARC, AMA, AOA and CSRT. Qualifying AMA continuing education programs shall be in AMA PRA Category 1 credits, and qualifying AOA continuing education programs shall be in Category 1A or 1B credits.

- The board will not accept courses of study which do not relate to the clinical aspects of respiratory care, such as studies in office management and financial procedures.
- Credit will **not** be given for continuing education in basic life support, including basic cardiac life support and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

- In any given biennial renewal period, a licensee may receive credit for no more than 8 continuing education hours in advanced life support, including advanced cardiac life support, neonatal advanced life support/neonatal resuscitation and pediatric advanced life support.
- Advanced coursework in respiratory care beyond the academic requirements necessary for licensure as a respiratory therapist, successfully completed at a degree-granting institution of higher education approved by the US Dept of Education which offers academic credits, is also approved for continuing education by the Board. Proof of completion of the academic credits shall be submitted to the Board for determination of the number of continuing education hours completed.

The following exemptions apply for certain respiratory therapists:

- A respiratory therapist applying for licensure in this Commonwealth for the first time shall be exempt from the continuing education requirement for the biennial renewal period in which initial certification is acquired.
- A respiratory therapist who is on **inactive status** shall be exempt from the continuing medical education requirement.
- A respiratory therapist who is seeking to reinstate an inactive or lapsed license shall show proof of compliance with the continuing education requirement for the preceding biennial renewal period.

Waiver of the CE requirements may be permitted as follows:

- The board may grant a hardship waiver of all or a part of the continuing education requirement in cases of serious illness, military service or other undue hardship provided that the public's safety and welfare will not be jeopardized by the granting of the waiver.
- A request for waiver must be made in writing, with appropriate documentation, and include a detailed description of circumstances sufficient to show why compliance is impossible.
- Waiver requests will be evaluated by the board on a case-by-case basis. The Board will send written notification of its approval or denial of a waiver request. A licensee who requests a waiver may not practice as a respiratory therapist after the expiration of the licensee's current license until the Board grants a waiver.
- **The waiver request should be submitted to the Board 90 days prior to the end of the biennial renewal period for which the waiver is being sought.**

For additional information regarding continuing education course providers, the following websites may be helpful:

American Medical Association	www.ama-assn.org
American Association for Respiratory Care	www.aarc.org
American Osteopathic Association	www.aoa-net.org
Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists	www.csrt.com

Additional information regarding continuing education, and a copy of the Board's law and regulations, can be found on the website of the Board under which you are licensed:

State Board of Medicine	www.dos.pa.gov/med
State Board of Osteopathic Medicine	www.dos.pa.gov/ost

PLEASE NOTE:

THE BOARD DOES NOT RECOMMEND OR ENDORSE CME COURSES.

IT IS THE LICENSEE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN/TRACK THEIR PERSONAL CME CREDIT HOURS.

LICENSEES SHALL RETAIN PROOF OF COMPLETION OF CME FOR AT LEAST 2 YEARS AFTER COMPLETION OF THE CME OR AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE BIENNIAL RENEWAL FOR WHICH THE CME WAS REQUIRED, WHICHEVER IS LATER.