

## FAQs about Continuing Education

**QUESTION:** When did the continuing education requirement start in Wisconsin?

**ANSWER:** On July 1, 1999.

**QUESTION:** How many hours of continuing education are required for social workers certified in Wisconsin?

**ANSWER:** 30 hours of continuing education activities must be completed every two years.

**QUESTION:** When will I have to complete the 30 hours during this first two-year cycle?

**ANSWER:** You will have to complete 30 hours by June 30, 2001.

**QUESTION:** If I become certified for the first time after July 1, 1999, will I still have to complete 30 hours of continuing education by June 30, 2001?

**ANSWER:** No. For individuals certified between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2001, your continuing education requirement will not begin until July 1, 2001. You will then need to complete 30 hours of continuing education by June 30, 2003.

**QUESTION:** I understand that if I become certified for the first time during the last two months of the certification period I don't have to renew until the end of the following two-year period. Does this mean that I am exempt from the continuing education requirements until the end of the following two-year period?

**ANSWER:** No. Even though you are not paying for the last two months or less of the certification period, your certification has still started before the July 1 beginning of the new certification period and you are therefore responsible for completing 30 hours by the end of certification period.

**QUESTION:** Can I count any continuing education hours I have taken prior to July 1, 1999?

**ANSWER:** No.

**QUESTION:** Are there any specific topics I need to include in my 30 hours.

**ANSWER:** Yes, the rules require that at least two hours be completed in social work ethics and two hours in issues concerning professional boundaries.

**QUESTION:** Aside from ethics and professional boundaries, are there any other guidelines on the subject matter of continuing education?

**ANSWER:** Yes. To be used to satisfy the requirements, the subject matter of a continuing education program must be in one of the following areas:

1. Social work practice, knowledge and skills.
2. A field or subject area allied with and relevant to the practice of social work.
3. Theories and concepts of human behavior and the social environment.
4. Social work research, social policy and program evaluation, or social work practice evaluation.
5. Social policy and program administration or management.
6. Social work ethics
7. Professional boundaries
8. A subject of current importance as designated by the Social Workers Section.

**QUESTION:** Will the State of Wisconsin approve programs or sponsors for continuing education?  
**ANSWER:** No

**QUESTION:** Then, how will I know if what I take is acceptable to the State?

**ANSWER:** Included in the rules is the following note which provides some guidance: "Note: The following are examples of acceptable programs if the program covers subject matter described in this section: programs provided by public and private agencies as ongoing in-house training and development programs which meet agency mission requirements; programs by accredited colleges and university schools of social work; and, programs sponsored by or provided by local or national social work professional associations."

**QUESTION:** Does this mean that NASW WI's programs (regional and annual conferences, educational programming etc.) will be acceptable to the State for continuing education.

**ANSWER:** Yes

**QUESTION:** My agency provides in-service training for social workers. Will this count for continuing education?

**ANSWER:** Yes

**QUESTION:** If I attend another agency's inservice training for social workers, can I count the hours?

**ANSWER:** Yes

**QUESTION:** Will the Social Workers Section accept programs by any other sponsors aside from local or national social work professional associations, accredited college and university schools of social work and public and private agencies conducting in-house training?

**ANSWER:** Yes. Sponsors approved by the Association of Social Work Boards will be acceptable to the Social Workers Section. In addition programs provided by other sponsors might be acceptable if they meet the criteria listed in the rules.

**QUESTION:** If I am permanently retired and no longer use a social worker title in any professional practice can I be exempted from the continuing education rules?

**ANSWER:** Yes. Simply notify the Social Workers Section in writing, ATTN: Legal Counsel, of your retired status.

**QUESTION:** What if after retiring I decide I want to return to social work practice? What do I do to meet the continuing education requirements?

**ANSWER:** You will have to complete at least 30 hours of continuing education during the two years immediately preceding the date of your certification application. You will also need to meet the requirements for late renewal specified in 440.08, Stats.

**QUESTION:** I have just moved to Wisconsin from another state. What are my continuing education requirements?

**ANSWER:** Applicants from other states applying for reciprocity must submit proof of completion of at least 30 hours of continuing education substantially meeting the requirements of this chapter within the 2-year certification period prior to application.

**QUESTION:** Are there any other exceptions to the continuing education rules?

**ANSWER:** A certificate holder may apply to the Social Workers Section for a postponement or waiver of the requirements of this chapter on grounds of prolonged illness or disability, or on other grounds constituting extreme hardship.

**QUESTION:** How long do I have to retain records of my continuing education activities?

**ANSWER:** You need to retain records for at least four years from the time that you claim credit (certification renewal) for the continuing education program.

**QUESTION:** Do I need to submit copies of my training certificate with my renewal?

**ANSWER:** No.

**QUESTION:** Will there be an audit of certificate holder's continuing education activities?

**ANSWER:** The Social Workers Section may conduct a random audit of the continuing education activities of certificate holders. In addition any certificate holder who is investigated for disciplinary action will automatically be audited.

**QUESTION:** How long is a continuing education hour?

**ANSWER:** Not less than 50 minutes.

**QUESTION:** What happens if I don't complete the 30 hours of continuing education by the renewal deadline?

**ANSWER:** Unless granted a postponement or waiver, you will have to stop using the social work title.

**QUESTION:** What is the difference between CEU's and clock hours?

**ANSWER:** 1 clock hour equals 0.1 CEU, 2 clock hours equal 0.2 CEU, etc. Every two years, certificate holders must complete 30 hours or 3 CEU's.

**QUESTION:** How will I know where to obtain continuing education for renewal of social work certification?

**ANSWER:** There are and will be numerous avenues for continuing education including: in-service training at your agency, NASW WI's regional and annual conferences, NASW WI's programs on ethics and other issues, courses offered at accredited schools of social work, etc. You will find some information about upcoming continuing education programs in the chapter newsletter.

**QUESTION:** What types of continuing education activities are acceptable?

**ANSWER:**

1. Formal presentation of relevant professional material at seminars, workshops, programs or institutes, which may include formal presentation and directed discussion of videotaped material: 1 CEH per hour of continuing education for attendees, 2 CEHs per hour of continuing education for presenters, but no additional CEH's will be granted for subsequent presentations of the same material.
2. University, college or vocational technical adult education courses, which may include formal presentation and directed discussion of videotaped instruction: 10 CEHs per semester credit or 6.6 CEHs per quarter credit for students, 20 CEHs per semester hour or 13.2 CEHs per quarter hour for instructors, but no additional CEHs will be granted for subsequent presentations of the same material.
3. Educational sessions at state and national conferences: 1 CEH per hour of continuing education for attendees; 2 CEHs per hour of continuing education for presenters, but no additional CEH's will be granted for subsequent presentations of the same material.

4. Educational telephone network (ETN) courses: 1 CEH per hour of continuing education for attendees, 2 CEHs per hour of continuing education for presenters, but no additional CEHs will be granted for subsequent presentations of the same material, and ETN courses may not be used to satisfy the social work ethics requirement.
5. Interactive internet learning courses offered by an accredited university or pre-approved by the ASWB: 1 CEH per .1 CEU of instruction, but no more than 16 CEHs for interactive internet courses will be accepted in any biennium.
6. Self-study courses approved by the association of social work boards, including courses via the internet: 1 CEH per credit completed, but self-study courses may not be used to satisfy the social work ethics requirement, and a maximum of 10 CEHs for self-study courses will be accepted in any biennium unless an exception is granted in advance by the section based on hardship or other extenuating circumstances.
7. Authorship of a published textbook or professional resources book: 20 CEHs.
8. Authorship of a published chapter in a textbook, or professional resource book or a professional journal article: 8 CEHs.
9. Development of alternative media, computer software, videotapes, or audiotapes: 8 CEHs.