



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
BOARD OF PESTICIDES CONTROL
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Memorandum

To: Board of Pesticides Control
From: Amanda Couture, Manager of Pesticide Programs
Subject: Draft Policy for Synchronous and Asynchronous Online Recertification Training

BACKGROUND: There has been a significant increase in the number of recertification training sessions transitioning to a web-based platform, as well as the number of applicators utilizing this option. The goal of this policy framework is to ensure that all online training modalities provide educational content equivalent to in-person instruction.

Purpose and Scope:

This policy establishes the criteria by which the Maine Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) will evaluate and approve synchronous (live, real-time) and asynchronous (self-paced, pre-recorded) online training programs for licensed pesticide applicators seeking to earn required continuing education credits (CECs).

Draft Policy:

Definitions:

- **Synchronous Online Training:** A live, instructor-led course delivered via an online platform (e.g., Zoom, Teams, webinar software) at a specific date and time. It features real-time interaction between the instructor and participants.



- **Asynchronous Online Training:** A self-paced course delivered through pre-recorded modules, videos, and materials that can be accessed at any time. Interaction with an instructor or content is not in real-time.
- **Continuing Education Credit:** 60 consecutive minutes of approved training content, equivalent to one CEC. Maine BPC does not offer half credits.

General Requirements for All Online Programs

All programs, regardless of delivery method, must meet the following criteria to be eligible for BPC approval:

- **CEC Course Submission:** Persons organizing meetings for which they want credits awarded must contact the Board in writing at least 15 days in advance of the meeting and submit details of the pesticide topics, including titles and length of time devoted to them. Board staff will review program agendas and assign credit values. Board staff will monitor programs as time permits.
- **Relevance and Content:** Course content must be relevant to pesticide use, safety, regulations (state and federal), integrated pest management (IPM) and comply with the requirements set forth in CMR 01-026 Chapter 32, Section 2C and requirements set forth in 22MRSA 1471-C, 23-B and CMR 01-026 Chapter 31, Section 5B
- **Agenda:** A detailed syllabus or agenda must be submitted to the BPC for review, showing the length of each presentation and a description of topics covered.
- **Credit Calculation:** One CEC is awarded for each hour of actual instruction time. (e.g., a 60-minute module is 1 credit; a 30-minute module does not qualify for credit).
- **No Repeated Courses:** Applicants may not receive credit for completing the same course within the same recertification cycle.
- **Record Keeping:** Providers must maintain records of all participants for a minimum of two years and be able to provide these records to the BPC upon request.
- **Assessment:** Each course must include a final assessment (quiz or exam) that participants must pass to earn credit. A minimum passing score of 80% is required.

Specific Criteria for Synchronous Online Training

Synchronous training most closely mirrors traditional in-person workshops and is subject to the following specific criteria:

- **Interactive Capability:** The platform used must have the capability for verbal or text-based interaction (e.g., Q&A, chat function) between the applicator and the speaker/instructor.

- **Attendance Verification:** The provider must implement methods to verify attendance for the full duration of the course, such as timed login/logout, periodic check-ins, attendee reporting from the online platform, etc.
- **Instructor Monitoring:** The BPC may periodically monitor/participate in live web-based programs to ensure compliance and quality control.

Specific Criteria for Asynchronous Online Training:

- **Verification of Identity and Completion:**
 - The system must verify the applicator's identity at the beginning of the course (e.g., pre-registration, unique login/password, license number verification).
 - The system should track the time spent in the course to ensure the applicator engages with the content for the specified credit hours.
- **Content Engagement:** The course must require active participation (e.g., interactive elements, module completion checks, post-course quiz with a minimum passing grade to earn CEC) rather than passive viewing of materials.

Questions regarding the application process should be directed to the BPC by emailing pesticides@maine.gov or calling the office at 207-287-2731.