

Maine Board of Social Worker Licensure

Continuing Education FAQ

How many hours of continuing education are required for licensees?

Completion of 25 contact hours of continuing education activities is required for renewal of licensure. Continuing education may only be counted for the licensure cycle in which it was taken and must be obtained prior to renewal of the social work license.

Are there any specific topics I need to include in my 25 hours?

Yes. The Board's Rules require that at least 4 contact hours must be completed in social work ethics. Maine State Law requires LSW Conditionals to complete 6 contact hours of ethics and 6 contact hours of psychosocial assessment for their first renewal.

Aside from ethics and psychosocial assessment (LSW Conditionals only) are there any other guidelines on the subject matter of continuing education?

Yes. To satisfy the continuing education requirements, the subject matter of a continuing education program must relate directly to social work practice. Final determination of the acceptability of continuing education hours rests with the Board. Licensees are encouraged to not only save their certificates of completion but to also save descriptions and agendas of continuing education programs should it become necessary to substantiate the program's relevance to social work practice at audit. Computer-related training, time management, supervisory sessions, and personal enrichment are examples of some topics that likely would not be accepted for continuing education credit.

What is the difference between contact hours and CEUs? Which do I need to accrue for renewal of my license?

One "contact hour" is 1 clock hour of learning time. Technically, 1 CEU is equal to 10 contact hours. The Maine Board measures continuing education in contact hours. Again, licensees are encouraged to save their agendas along with their certificates of completion should it become necessary to substantiate the number of contact hours at audit.

Does the continuing education activity need to be approved by the Maine Board?

No. Most continuing education activities are not pre-approved by the Maine Board.

Will the Maine Board approve programs or sponsors of continuing education?

The Rules allow the Maine Board to pre-approve continuing education programs at the request of providers only. Program sponsors who wish to apply for pre-approval of continuing education hours should complete a request form and mail to the Board with the required documentation.

Do I need to submit copies of my certificates with my renewal?

No. You will submit continuing education documentation only upon request from the Board or if you are selected for random audit. Audits are performed after renewal and may be done at any time during the two-year licensure cycle. Licensees should not rely on the Board or their employers to maintain their continuing education documentation.

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

Licensees should maintain continuing education documentation for a minimum of 2 licensing cycles.

What types of continuing education activities are acceptable?

Hours may be earned in a number of ways including seminars, workshops and academic courses. Academic courses must be demonstrated by an official transcript from the university or college where the course was taken. One academic credit is equal to 15 contact hours. Certificates of attendance that include the name of the program, name(s) and credentials of the presenter(s), the date(s) and number of hour(s) will serve as evidence of participation in a workshop or seminar. A maximum of 10 contact hours may be earned through independent study as outlined below:

- **Teaching.** *A social worker may claim continuing education credit for preparation and presentation of a course, workshop or seminar for the first time it is presented, only. An outline or syllabus will serve as documentation.*
- **Writing.** *A social worker may claim continuing education credit for writing articles and books for publication, as well as for the review and editing process for articles and books. Documentation should include a copy of the article, letter from the editor or publisher, or the title page of the book.*
- **Online.** *A social worker may claim continuing education credit for online continuing education programs in which immediate interaction with the instructor is not available. Documentation should include a certificate of completion indicating the name of the program, the sponsor, the date(s) of completion and number of hours.*
- **Audiotapes, Videotapes and Reading.** *The title, subject matter, creator or author of the material used, and duration of time expended on the material shall be provided.*

Where can I find additional information regarding the continuing education requirements?

Chapter 14 of the Board's Rules outlines the continuing education requirements. The Rules can be found on the Board's Website: www.maine.gov/professionallicensing.