

CHAPTER 181  
CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR OPTOMETRISTS

**645—181.1(154) Definitions.** For the purpose of these rules, the following definitions shall apply:

“*Active license*” means a license that is current and has not expired.

“*Approved program/activity*” means a continuing education program/activity meeting the standards set forth in these rules.

“*Audit*” means the selection of licensees for verification of satisfactory completion of continuing education requirements during a specified time period.

“*Board*” means the board of optometry.

“*CELMO*” means the Council on Endorsed Licensure Mobility for Optometrists.

“*Continuing education*” means planned, organized learning acts designed to maintain, improve, or expand a licensee’s knowledge and skills in order for the licensee to develop new knowledge and skills relevant to the enhancement of practice, education, or theory development to improve the safety and welfare of the public.

“*Hour of continuing education*” means at least 50 minutes spent by a licensee in actual attendance at and completion of an approved continuing education activity.

“*Inactive license*” means a license that has expired because it was not renewed by the end of the grace period. The category of “inactive license” may include licenses formerly known as lapsed, inactive, delinquent, closed, or retired.

“*Independent study*” means a subject/program/activity that a person pursues autonomously that meets standards for approval criteria in the rules and includes a posttest.

“*License*” means license to practice.

“*Licensee*” means any person licensed to practice as an optometrist in the state of Iowa.

**645—181.2(154) Continuing education requirements.**

**181.2(1)** The biennial continuing education compliance period shall extend for a two-year period beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30 of each even-numbered year. Each biennium, each person who is licensed to practice as an optometrist in this state shall be required to complete a minimum of 50 hours of continuing education approved by the board.

**181.2(2)** Requirements of new licensees. Those persons licensed for the first time shall not be required to complete continuing education as a prerequisite for the first renewal of their licenses. Continuing education hours acquired anytime from the initial licensing until the second license renewal may be used. The new licensee will be required to complete a minimum of 50 hours of continuing education per biennium for each subsequent license renewal.

**181.2(3)** Hours of continuing education credit may be obtained by attending and participating in a continuing education activity. These hours must be in accordance with these rules.

**181.2(4)** No hours of continuing education shall be carried over into the next biennium except as stated for second renewal. A licensee whose license was reactivated during the current renewal compliance period may use continuing education earned during the compliance period for the first renewal following reactivation.

**181.2(5)** It is the responsibility of each licensee to finance the cost of continuing education.  
[ARC 9641B, IAB 7/27/11, effective 8/31/11]

**645—181.3(154,272C) Standards.**

**181.3(1) General criteria.** A continuing education activity which meets all of the following criteria is appropriate for continuing education credit if the continuing education activity:

- a. Constitutes an organized program of learning which contributes directly to the professional competency of the licensee;
- b. Pertains to common subject matters which integrally relate to the practice of the profession;

c. Is conducted by individuals who have specialized education, training and experience by reason of which said individuals should be considered qualified concerning the subject matter of the program. At the time of audit, the board may request the qualifications of presenters;

d. Fulfills stated program goals, objectives, or both; and

e. Provides proof of attendance to licensees in attendance including:

(1) Date, location, course title, presenter(s);

(2) Numbers of program contact hours; and

(3) Certificate of completion or evidence of successful completion of the course provided by the course sponsor.

**181.3(2) Specific criteria.**

a. Continuing education hours of credit may be obtained by attending:

(1) The continuing education programs of the Iowa Optometric Association, the American Optometric Association, the American Academy of Optometry, and national regional optometric congresses, schools of optometry, all state optometric associations, and the department of ophthalmology of the school of medicine of the University of Iowa;

(2) Postgraduate study through an accredited school or college of optometry;

(3) Meetings or seminars that are approved and certified for optometric continuing education by the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry's Council on Optometric Practitioner Education Committee (COPE); or

(4) Beginning with the July 1, 2006, biennium, therapeutic licensees who provide proof of current CELMO certification meet continuing education requirements for the biennium.

b. The maximum number of hours in each category in each biennium is as follows:

(1) Ten hours of credit for local study group programs that meet the criteria.

(2) Ten hours of credit for correspondence courses, which include written and electronically transmitted material and have a posttest. Certification of the continuing education requirements and of passing the test must be given by the institution providing the continuing education, and that institution must be accredited by a regional or professional accreditation organization which is recognized or approved by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation of the United States Department of Education.

(3) Six hours of credit for practice management courses.

(4) Two hours of credit for dependent adult abuse and child abuse identification.

(5) Twenty hours of credit for postgraduate study courses.

c. Required continuing education hours. Licensees shall provide proof of continuing education in all of the following areas:

(1) Current certification in CPR offered in person by the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross or an equivalent organization. At least two hours per biennium is required but credit will be granted for four hours.

(2) Current CELMO certification. If the licensee does not have current proof of CELMO certification, then the following is required:

1. A combined total of 40 hours required from COPE Category B (Ocular Disease and Management) and COPE Category C (Related Systemic Disease) with a minimum of 14 hours in each category; and

2. Ten additional hours required from any of the COPE Categories of A (Clinical Optometry), B, C and D (Optometric Business Management). Hours obtained in Category D may not exceed 6 hours of the total continuing education hours' requirement.

(3) As a condition of license renewal, a minimum of one hour of continuing education per biennium regarding guidelines for prescribing opioids, including recommendations on limitations on dosages and the length of prescriptions, risk factors for abuse, and nonopioid and nonpharmacologic therapy options. Credit will be granted for up to two hours per biennium. These hours may count toward the continuing education hours required from COPE Category B (Ocular Disease and Management) or COPE Category C (Related Systemic Disease). The licensee shall maintain documentation of these hours, which may be subject to audit. If the continuing education did not cover the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guideline for prescribing opioids for chronic pain, the licensee shall read the guideline

prior to license renewal. “Opioid” means any drug that produces an agonist effect on opioid receptors and is indicated or used for the treatment of pain.

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**645—181.4(154,272C) Audit of continuing education report.** Rescinded IAB 11/5/08, effective 12/10/08.

**645—181.5(154,272C) Automatic exemption.** Rescinded IAB 11/5/08, effective 12/10/08.

**645—181.6(154,272C) Continuing education exemption for disability or illness.** Rescinded IAB 11/5/08, effective 12/10/08.

**645—181.7(154,272C) Grounds for disciplinary action.** Rescinded IAB 11/5/08, effective 12/10/08.

**645—181.8(154,272C) Continuing education exemption for inactive practitioners.** Rescinded IAB 8/3/05, effective 9/7/05.

**645—181.9(154,272C) Continuing education exemption for disability or illness.** Rescinded IAB 8/3/05, effective 9/7/05.

**645—181.10(154,272C) Reinstatement of inactive practitioners.** Rescinded IAB 8/3/05, effective 9/7/05.

**645—181.11(272C) Hearings.** Rescinded IAB 8/3/05, effective 9/7/05.

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<sup>◇</sup> Two or more ARCs