

CHAPTER 5
CONTINUING EDUCATION
[Prior to 8/26/87, Nursing Board[590] Ch 5]

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 6/4/30

655—5.1(272C) Definitions. The board adopts by reference the definitions in Iowa Code section 272C.1 as well as the following:

“Academic offering” means an extension course, independent study, or other course that is offered for academic credit or audit by an accredited institution of higher education.

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

“Certification” means evidence of advanced credentials earned by a licensee who has met all eligibility criteria.

“Continuing education credit” means contact hours or continuing education units (CEUs) to show evidence of course attendance.

“Extended course” means an organized program of study offered in a series of sessions.

“Informal offering” means a workshop, seminar, webinar or online course, institute, conference, lecture, extended course, provider-designed self-study, or learner-designed self-study that is offered for credit in contact hours or continuing education units.

“Learner-designed self-study” means lecture development, research, preparation of articles for publication, development of patient care programs or patient education programs, or projects directed at resolving administrative problems in which the learner takes the initiative and the responsibility for assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating an educational activity under the guidance of an Iowa approved provider.

“Practicum” means a course-related, planned and supervised clinical experience that includes clinical objectives and assignment to practice in a laboratory setting or with patients/clients/families for attainment of the objectives.

“Provider-designed self-study” means a program that the provider designs for the nurse to complete at the nurse’s own pace (e.g., home study, programmed instruction).

[ARC 9162C, IAB 4/30/25, effective 6/4/25]

655—5.2(272C) Continuing education—licensees.

5.2(1) Requirements. License renewal requires the verifiable completion of 36 contact hours or 3.6 CEUs of credit or an exemption within the renewal period.

5.2(2) Accumulating hours or credit.

a. Units of measurement used for continuing education courses is as follows:

(1) One contact hour = 60 minutes of didactic instruction, work on learner-designed self-study, and clinical or laboratory practicum in an informal offering.

(2) One CEU = 10 contact hours.

(3) One academic semester hour = 15 contact hours.

(4) One academic quarter hour = 10 contact hours.

b. Up to 18 contact hours or 1.8 CEUs of credit may be carried over to a future license period if the licensee has exceeded the minimum required hours for the reporting period.

c. Approved make-up credit may only be used once.

5.2(3) Appropriate subject matter. Appropriate subject matter for continuing education includes:

a. Nursing practice related to health care of patients/clients/families in any setting.

b. Professional growth and development related to nursing practice roles with a health care focus.

c. Sciences upon which nursing practice, nursing education, or nursing research is based.

d. Social, economic, ethical and legal aspects of health care.

e. Management of or administration of health care, health care personnel, or health care facilities.

f. Education of patients or patients’ significant others, students, or personnel in the health care field.

g. Academic offerings that meet the qualifications of appropriate subject matter, meet the requirements of a nursing education program that extends beyond the education completed for the original nursing license, or both. The licensee shall retain a transcript exhibiting a passing grade for each academic offering.

h. Current national certification or recertification related to the practice of nursing. The national certification or recertification is recognized as 36 contact hours of continuing education.

i. Completion of a board-approved nurse refresher course. Hours of participation will be recognized as contact hours of continuing education.

j. Participation as a preceptor for a nursing student or employee transitioning into a new clinical practice area, for a minimum of 60 hours as a part of an organized preceptorship program. A licensee shall maintain documentation issued by the institution supervising the student or employee demonstrating the objectives of the preceptorship and the hours completed. A preceptorship shall be recognized as 6 contact hours of continuing education.

k. Completion of a nurse residency program. A residency program is recognized as 36 contact hours of continuing education.

l. Academic offerings provided by the following entities:

- (1) Community colleges.
- (2) Public and private colleges and universities.
- (3) Governmental academies.

5.2(4) Documentation. Licensees are required to keep continuing education documentation for a period of four years, including proof of attendance, licensee's name, course date, course title, awarded hours and provider approval information.

5.2(5) Exemptions to continuing education. A licensee may be exempt from continuing education requirements if the licensee provides proof upon request of the following:

a. Honorable active duty in the United States military during the license period.

b. Possesses a current license to practice in another state that has mandatory continuing education requirements, so long as the license is active and the licensee resides in a state other than Iowa at the time of renewal or reactivation.

c. Worked outside the United States during the renewal period as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse for the government or foreign service or in missionary work.

d. Had a physical or mental disability or illness during the relevant time period and applied for an extension of time to complete continuing education requirements or for a medical exemption from the continuing education requirements. An application is available upon request and requires the signature of a health care provider who can attest to the existence of a disability or illness during the license period. The application form shall be submitted prior to license expiration. A licensee shall not claim an extension of time or exemption from continuing education requirements on a license renewal application pursuant to this rule unless and until the licensee has received approval.

5.2(6) Failure to meet requirement or qualify for an exemption. A licensee who fails to meet continuing education requirements or qualify for an exemption prior to license expiration cannot renew the license until completion of the continuing education requirements or qualification for an exemption during the late renewal period.

5.2(7) Audit of licensees. The board may select licensees for audit following a period of licensure.

a. The licensee must submit verification of compliance with continuing education requirements or of exemptions for the period of licensure being audited.

b. The licensee must submit proof of completion of the mandatory reporter training course(s) provided by the department of health and human services in the previous three years as specified in 655—subrule 3.7(3).

c. Verification must be submitted within 30 days after the date of the audit notification. An extension of time may be granted on an individual basis.

d. If submitted materials are incomplete or unsatisfactory, the licensee will be notified. The licensee will be given the opportunity to submit credit to cover the deficit found through the audit. The make-up credit shall not be reused for the current renewal period.

- e. The board will notify the licensee of satisfactory completion of the audit.
- f. Failure to complete the audit satisfactorily or falsification of information may result in disciplinary action.
- g. Failure to notify the board of a current mailing address will not absolve the licensee of the audit requirement.

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These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 272C.2 and 272C.3.

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