

**PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE DIVISION[645]**

**Notice of Intended Action**

**Proposing rulemaking related to continuing education for physician assistants and providing an opportunity for public comment**

The Board of Physician Assistants hereby proposes to rescind Chapter 328, “Continuing Education for Physician Assistants,” Iowa Administrative Code, and to adopt a new chapter with the same title.

*Legal Authority for Rulemaking*

This rulemaking is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 147.36, 147.76, 148C.3, 148C.5, 272C.3 and 272C.4.

*State or Federal Law Implemented*

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapters 17A, 147, 148C and 272C.

*Purpose and Summary*

This proposed rulemaking sets forth continuing education requirements for physician assistants. It includes definitions related to continuing education, the required number of hours of continuing education that licensees are required to obtain, the standards that licensees need to meet in order to comply with the rulemaking, and the types of continuing education courses that are permissible. The intended benefit of continuing education is to ensure that physician assistants maintain up-to-date practice standards and, as a result, provide high-quality services to Iowans.

*Fiscal Impact*

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

*Jobs Impact*

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

*Waivers*

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 645—Chapter 18.

*Public Comment*

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this proposed rulemaking. Written or oral comments in response to this rulemaking must be received by the Department no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 14, 2024. Comments should be directed to:

Michele Royer  
Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing/Bureau of Board Support  
6200 Park Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50321  
Phone: 515.281.5234  
Email: [michele.royer@iowa.gov](mailto:michele.royer@iowa.gov)

*Public Hearing*

Public hearings at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

February 13, 2024  
1:10 to 1:30 p.m.

6200 Park Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Video call link: [meet.google.com/isb-pmab-qob](https://meet.google.com/isb-pmab-qob)  
Or dial: 1.813.252.1868  
PIN: 724 486 884#  
Phone numbers:  
[tel.meet/isb-pmab-qob?pin=8352415222450](https://tel.meet/isb-pmab-qob?pin=8352415222450)

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Phone numbers:  
[tel.meet/isb-pmab-qob?pin=8352415222450](https://tel.meet/isb-pmab-qob?pin=8352415222450)

Persons who wish to make oral comments at a public hearing may be asked to state their names for the record and to confine their remarks to the subject of this proposed rulemaking.

Any persons who intend to attend a public hearing and have special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should contact the Department and advise of specific needs.

*Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee*

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rulemaking action is proposed:

ITEM 1. Rescind 645—Chapter 328 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 328  
CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

**645—328.1(148C) Definitions.** For the purpose of these rules, the following definitions will 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 physician assistants.

“*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.

“*License*” means license to practice.

“Licensee” means any person licensed to practice as a physician assistant in the state of Iowa.

**645—328.2(148C) Continuing education requirements.**

**328.2(1)** The biennial continuing education compliance period will extend for a two-year period beginning on October 1 of each year and ending on September 30 two years later. Each biennium, each licensee will be required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of continuing education approved by the board.

**328.2(2)** Requirements of new licensees. Those persons licensed for the first time will not be required to complete continuing education as a prerequisite for the first renewal of their licenses. The new licensee will be required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of continuing education per biennium for each subsequent license renewal.

**328.2(3)** 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.

**645—328.3(148C,272C) Standards.**

**328.3(1) General criteria.** A continuing education activity is appropriate for continuing education credit if the continuing education activity:

- a. Constitutes an organized program of learning that contributes directly to the professional competency of the licensee;
- b. Pertains to subject matters that 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;
- d. Fulfills stated program goals, objectives, or both; and
- e. Provides an individual certificate of completion or evidence of successful completion of the course provided by the course sponsor. This documentation must contain the course title, date(s), contact hours, sponsor and licensee’s name.

**328.3(2) Specific criteria.** Continuing education requirements are as follows:

a. The licensee will complete a minimum of 50 hours of credit designated as Category I by the American Academy of Physician Assistants, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association Council on Continuing Medical Education, the American Academy of Family Physicians or other organizations accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME).

b. For the remaining 50 hours of required continuing medical education (CME), Category I or Category II credit, as accepted by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), will satisfy the CME requirements. In case of audit, licensees will provide evidence of NCCPA certification during the time period being audited or an activity log for all Category II credits for which a certificate of completion is not available. The activity log will list for each activity the date and type of activity and number of hours claimed per activity.

c. Licensees who maintain certification by the NCCPA may show proof of meeting the board’s CME requirements by providing proof of current certification by the NCCPA for the time period being reviewed or audited.

d. A licensee who has prescribed opioids to a patient during the renewal cycle will complete a minimum of two hours of continuing education regarding the guidelines for prescribing opioids for chronic pain, as issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, including recommendations on limitations on dosages and the length of prescriptions, risk factors for abuse, and nonopioid and nonpharmacologic therapy options, as a condition of license renewal. These hours may count toward the 100 hours of continuing education required for license renewal. The licensee will maintain documentation of these hours, which may be subject to audit.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 272C.2 and chapter 148C.