

ACCOUNTANCY EXAMINING BOARD[193A]

Adopted and Filed

Rulemaking related to continuing education

The Accountancy Examining Board hereby rescinds Chapter 10, “Continuing Education,” Iowa Administrative Code, and adopts a new chapter with the same title.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code section 542.4.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapter 542 and Executive Order 10 (January 10, 2023).

Purpose and Summary

These amendments implement changes recommended by Executive Order 10. Chapter 10 sets forth continuing education requirements for individual Certified Public Accountants (CPAs)/Licensed Public Accountants (LPAs). 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 rules, and the types of continuing education courses that are permissible. The intended benefit of continuing education is to ensure that CPAs and LPAs maintain up-to-date practice standards and, as a result, provide high-quality services to Iowans.

Public Comment and Changes to Rulemaking

Notice of Intended Action for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on January 10, 2024, as **ARC 7393C**. Public hearings were held on January 30, 2024, and January 31, 2024, at 12:30 p.m. at 6200 Park Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa. No one attended the public hearings. No public comments were received. No changes from the Notice have been made.

Adoption of Rulemaking

This rulemaking was adopted by the Board on February 15, 2024.

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa. No current fees are being changed, and no new fees are being imposed.

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 481—Chapter 6.

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).

Effective Date

This rulemaking will become effective on April 10, 2024.

The following rulemaking action is adopted:

ITEM 1. Rescind 193A—Chapter 10 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 10 CONTINUING EDUCATION

193A—10.1(542) Scope. The right to use the title “Certified Public Accountant” and “Licensed Public Accountant” is regulated in the public interest and imposes a duty on accounting professionals to maintain public confidence and current knowledge, skills, and abilities in all areas of services. CPAs and LPAs have to accept and fulfill their ethical responsibilities to the public and the profession regardless of their fields of employment.

10.1(1) The development of professional competence involves a continued commitment to learning and professional improvement. A CPA and an LPA performing professional services need to have a broad range of knowledge, skills and abilities. A program that promotes professional competence in the practice of accountancy is defined as one that refers to the process, methods, or principles of accounting or is directly related to the CPA's and LPA's employment and is above the level of the CPA's and LPA's current knowledge.

10.1(2) Acceptable subjects for continuing professional education include accounting, assurance/auditing, consulting services, specialized knowledge and applications, management, taxation, and ethics. Other subjects, including nontechnical professional skills, may be approved by the board if they maintain or improve CPAs' and LPAs' competence in their current employment.

193A—10.2(542) Definitions. The following definitions apply to the rules of this chapter.

“*Continuing professional education (CPE)*” means education that is acquired by a licensee in order to maintain, improve, or expand skills and knowledge present at initial licensure or to develop new and relevant skills and knowledge.

“*Firm meeting*” means a formally arranged gathering/assembly of staff or management groups or both to inform them of administrative matters.

“*Formal program*” means a structured learning activity based on clearly defined learning objectives and outcomes that articulate achievable knowledge, skills and abilities.

“*In-house or on-site training*” means a formally organized professional educational program sponsored by the employer.

“*Live instruction*” means an educational program delivered in a classroom setting or through videoconferencing whereby the instructor and student carry out essential tasks while together. Examples include distance learning and webcasts.

“*Nontechnical professional skills*” means formal programs of learning that contribute to the professional competence of a certificate holder or license holder in fields of study that indirectly relate to the holder's field of business. “Nontechnical professional skills” includes, but is not limited to, the following programs or courses:

1. Communication;
2. Interpersonal management;
3. Leadership and personal development;
4. Client and public relations;
5. Practice development;
6. Marketing;
7. Motivational and behavioral; and

8. Speed reading and memory building.

“*Qualified instructor*” means an individual whose training and experience adequately prepares the individual to carry out specified training assignments.

“*Self-study*” means a computer-generated program or written materials or exercises intended for self-study that do not include simultaneous interaction with an instructor but do include tests transmitted to the provider for review and grading.

“*Technical professional skills*” means formal programs of learning that contribute to the professional competence of a certificate holder or license holder in fields of study that directly relate to the holder’s field of business. “Technical professional skills” includes, but is not limited to, the following programs or courses:

1. Auditing standards or procedures;
2. Compilation and review of financial statements;
3. Financial statement preparation and disclosures;
4. Attestation standards and procedures;
5. Projection and forecast standards or procedures;
6. Accounting and auditing;
7. Management advisory services;
8. Personal financial planning;
9. Taxation;
10. Management information systems;
11. Budgeting and cost analysis;
12. Asset management;
13. Professional ethics;
14. Specialized areas of industry;
15. Human resource management;
16. Economics;
17. Business law;
18. Mathematics, statistics and quantitative applications in business;
19. Business management and organization;
20. General computer skills, computer software training, information technology planning and management;
21. Operations management, inventory, and production; and
22. Negotiation or dispute resolution.

193A—10.3(542) Applicability. Completion of continuing professional education is a condition precedent to the renewal of the certificate or license.

193A—10.4(542) Cost of continuing professional education. All costs of completing continuing professional education are the responsibility of the certificate holder or license holder wishing to maintain registration in this state.

193A—10.5(542) Basic continuing professional education.

10.5(1) Except as provided in subrules 10.5(2) through 10.5(7), an applicant for renewal will have completed 120 hours of qualifying continuing professional education during the three-year period ending on the December 31 or June 30 preceding the July 1 renewal date of the certificate or license. The following conditions apply:

- a. On each renewal, a CPA or LPA self-selects December 31 or June 30 as the date by which continuing education will be completed in order to be eligible to renew the certificate or license.
- b. A CPA or LPA applying to renew a certificate or license may declare a continuing education deadline of December 31 in one renewal cycle and a continuing education deadline of June 30 in a subsequent renewal cycle, and vice versa.

c. Licensees need to maintain continuing education records in a manner that corresponds with the self-selected continuing education deadline of December 31 or June 30.

d. When declaring a June 30 continuing education deadline, licensees should be cautious to ensure that the continuing education is fully completed on or prior to the date the renewal application is submitted to the board.

e. Licensees who renew with penalty during the 30-day grace period following June 30 need to declare either December 31 or June 30 as the continuing education deadline. The deadline cannot be extended beyond June 30.

10.5(2) At the first annual renewal date of July 1 that is less than 12 months from the date of filing of the initial application for the certificate or license, the certificate holder or license holder is not required to report continuing professional education.

10.5(3) At the annual renewal date of July 1 that is 12 months or more than 12 months, but less than 24 months, from the date of filing of the initial application for the certificate or license, the certificate holder or license holder will report 40 hours of continuing professional education earned in the one-year period ending December 31 or June 30 prior to the July 1 renewal date.

10.5(4) At the annual renewal date of July 1 that is 24 months or more than 24 months, but less than 36 months, from the date of filing of the initial application for the certificate or license, the certificate holder or license holder will report 80 hours of continuing professional education earned in the two-year period ending December 31 or June 30 prior to the July 1 renewal date.

10.5(5) A licensee is deemed to have completed continuing education under this rule if, for the period that the licensee is a resident of another state or district having a continuing professional education obligation, the licensee met the resident state's mandatory continuing professional education.

10.5(6) The board may make exceptions for reasons of individual hardship including health, certified by a medical doctor, military service, foreign residency, retirement, or other good cause. No exceptions may be made solely because of age. Applicants entitled to a full or partial exception under the provisions of Iowa Code section 272C.2(4) for active military service or government service outside of the United States may request an exception by submitting acceptable documentation as applicable to the exception requested. Applicants seeking an exception on other grounds of undue hardship can submit an application for waiver as provided in 193—Chapter 5.

10.5(7) Licensees who apply to reinstate a lapsed or inactive certificate or license to active status pursuant to 193A—subrule 5.6(3) or 5.9(7) need to satisfy 120 hours of continuing professional education earned in the preceding three-year period prior to the date of the application, including all mandatory education described in rule 193A—10.7(542). Once the certificate or license is reinstated, the continuing education obligations apply at each subsequent renewal. The 120-hour obligation described in this subrule is modified as needed to incorporate the phase-in schedule for initial licensees described in subrules 10.5(2) through 10.5(4).

193A—10.6(542) Measurement standards. The following standards will be used to measure the hours of credit to be given for qualifying continuing professional education programs completed by individual applicants:

10.6(1) Credit is measured with one 50-minute period equaling one contact hour of credit. Half-hour credits may be allowed (equal to not less than 25 minutes) after the first hour of credit has been earned.

10.6(2) Only class hours or the equivalent, and not student hours devoted to preparation, will be counted.

10.6(3) Credit expressed as continuing education units (CEUs) will be counted as ten contact hours for each continuing professional education unit. (0.1 CEU = 1 CPE)

10.6(4) Service as lecturer or discussion leader of continuing professional education programs will be counted to the extent that this service contributes to the applicant's professional competence.

193A—10.7(542) Mandatory education.

10.7(1) Every CPA certificate holder or LPA license holder who is responsible for supervising compilation services or who signs or authorizes someone to sign the accountant's compilation report

on behalf of a firm will complete, as a condition of certificate or license renewal, a minimum of eight hours of continuing professional education devoted to financial statement presentation, such as courses covering the statements on standards for accounting and review services (SSARS) and accounting and auditing updates. The financial statement presentation continuing education has to be completed within the three-year period ending on the December 31 or June 30 preceding the application for certificate or license renewal. For credit to be claimed for a course covering multiple topics, a minimum of one hour as outlined in subrule 10.6(1) has to be devoted to financial statement presentation. For example, if a seminar or presentation is conducted for a total of four hours and only one hour is devoted to financial statement presentation, then only one hour may be claimed toward satisfaction of this subrule.

10.7(2) Every CPA certificate holder or LPA license holder needs to complete a minimum of four hours of continuing education devoted to ethics and rules of professional conduct during the three-year period ending December 31 or June 30, prior to the July 1 annual renewal date. For a course to qualify to satisfy this subrule, the course description will clearly outline the subject matter covered as professional or business ethics. If credit is to be claimed for a course covering multiple topics, a minimum of one hour as outlined in rule 193A—10.6(542), measurement standards, specifically in subrule 10.6(1), needs to be devoted to business or professional ethics. For example, if a seminar or presentation is conducted for a total of four hours and only one hour is devoted to business or professional ethics, then only one hour may be claimed toward satisfaction of this subrule. Ethics courses, which are defined as courses dealing with regulatory and behavioral ethics, are limited to courses on the following:

- a.* Professional standards;
- b.* Licenses and renewals;
- c.* SEC oversight;
- d.* Competence;
- e.* Acts discreditable;
- f.* Advertising and other forms of solicitation;
- g.* Independence;
- h.* Integrity and objectivity;
- i.* Confidential client information;
- j.* Contingent fees;
- k.* Commissions;
- l.* Conflicts of interest;
- m.* Full disclosure;
- n.* Malpractice;
- o.* Record retention;
- p.* Professional conduct;
- q.* Ethical practice in business;
- r.* Personal ethics;
- s.* Ethical decision making; and
- t.* Corporate ethics and risk management as these topics relate to malpractice and relate solely to the practice of certified public accounting.

193A—10.8(542) Programs that qualify and CPE limitations.

10.8(1) The overriding consideration in determining whether a specific program qualifies as acceptable continuing education is that it be a formal program of learning that contributes directly to the professional competence of an individual certified or licensed in this state. It will be left to each individual certificate holder or license holder to determine the technical or nontechnical professional skills courses of study to be pursued. Thus, the auditor may study accounting and auditing, the tax practitioner may study taxes, and the management advisory services practitioner may study subjects related to such practice. Job-related continuing professional education qualifies as acceptable provided the courses selected from nontechnical professional skills contribute to the professional competence of the certificate holder or license holder.

10.8(2) Program standards have to include the following:

a. Learning activities based on clearly defined, relevant learning objectives and outcomes that clearly articulate the knowledge, skills, and abilities that can be achieved by participants.

b. Learning activities developed in a manner consistent with the prerequisite education, experience, and advanced preparation of the participants.

c. Activities, materials, and delivery systems that are current, technically accurate, and effectively designed. Providers, sponsors, or contractors that are competent in the subject matter. Competence may be demonstrated through practical experience or education.

d. Learning programs that are reviewed by qualified persons other than those who develop the program to ensure that the program is technically accurate and current and addresses the stated learning objectives. This standard is waived for single presentations such as lectures that are given once.

10.8(3) Continuing professional education programs will qualify only if:

a. An outline of the program is prepared in advance and preserved.

b. The program is at least one hour (50-minute period) in length.

c. The program is conducted by a qualified instructor, discussion leader or lecturer. A qualified instructor, discussion leader or lecturer is anyone whose background, training, education or experience makes it appropriate for that person to lead a discussion on the subject matter of the particular program.

d. A record of attendance or certification of completion or transcript is maintained.

10.8(4) The following programs are deemed to qualify provided all other criteria of this rule are met:

a. Professional development programs of recognized national and state accounting organizations.

b. Technical sessions at meetings of recognized national and state accounting organizations and their chapters.

c. Formally organized in-house or on-site educational programs provided by the certificate holder's or license holder's employer.

d. Distance learning programs or group study webcast programs.

e. University or college courses meet the continuing professional education obligations of those attending. Each semester hour is equal to 15 contact hours of credit. Each quarter hour is equal to 10 contact hours of credit.

f. Technical or nontechnical sessions offered by employers in business and industry, as well as firms of certified public accountants.

10.8(5) Formal correspondence and formal self-study programs contributing directly to the professional competence of an individual that obligate the licensee to register and provide evidence of satisfactory completion will be considered for credit. The amount of credit to be allowed for correspondence and formal self-study programs (including tested study programs) will be recommended by the program sponsor and based upon appropriate "field tests" and will not exceed 50 percent of the renewal obligation. A licensee claiming credit for correspondence or formal self-study courses will obtain evidence of satisfactory completion of the course from the program sponsor. Credit will be allowed in the renewal period in which the course is completed.

10.8(6) Credit may be allowed for self-study programs on the basis of one hour of credit for each 50 minutes spent on the self-study program if the developer of such programs is approved by either the national continuing professional education registry or by the NASBA continuing education registry and the program sponsor has not designated the amount of credit to be claimed for completing the course of study. The licensee has to estimate the equivalent number of hours and justify the amount of hours claimed. The maximum credit will not exceed 50 percent of the renewal obligation. Credit will be allowed in the renewal period in which the course is completed.

10.8(7) The credit allowed an instructor, discussion leader, or speaker will be on the basis of two hours for subject preparation for each hour of teaching. Credit for teaching college or university coursework may be claimed for courses taught above the elementary accounting or principles of accounting level. Repetitious presentations will not be considered. The maximum credit for such preparation and teaching will not exceed 50 percent of the renewal period obligation.

10.8(8) Credit may be awarded for published articles and books. The amount of credit so awarded will be determined by the board. Credit may be allowed for published articles and books provided they contribute to the professional competence of the licensee. Credit for preparation of such publications

may be given on a self-declaration basis up to 25 percent of the renewal period obligation. In exceptional circumstances, a licensee may request additional credit by submitting the article(s) or book(s) to the board with an explanation of the circumstances that the licensee believes justify additional credit.

10.8(9) Credit may be allowed for the successful completion of professional examinations as detailed below. Credit is calculated at the rate of five times the length of each examination, which is presumed to include all preparation time, claimed in the calendar year of the examination, and limited to 50 percent of the total renewal obligation.

- a. Certified Management Accountant/CMA.
- b. Certified Information Systems Auditor/CISA.
- c. Certified Information Technology Professional/CITP.
- d. Certified Financial Planner/CFP.
- e. Enrolled Agent/EA.
- f. Certified Governmental Financial Manager/CGFM.
- g. Certified Government Auditing Professional/CGAP.
- h. Certified Internal Auditor/CIA.
- i. Accredited Business Valuation/ABV.
- j. Certified Financial Forensics/CFF.
- k. Certified Valuation Analyst/CVA.
- l. Certified Insolvency & Restructuring Advisor/CIRA.
- m. Forensic Certified Public Accountant/FCPA.
- n. Certified Fraud Examiner/CFE.
- o. Certified Business Analyst/CBA.
- p. Certified Trust and Financial Advisor/CTFA.
- q. Chartered Financial Analyst/CFA.
- r. Registered Representative, Series 6 and 7 and other examinations.
- s. Registered Investment Advisor/RIA.
- t. Certified Forensic Accountant/CrFA.
- u. Personal Financial Specialist/PFS.
- v. Chartered Life Underwriter/CLU.
- w. Fellow of the Society of Actuaries/FSA.
- x. Chartered Property & Casualty Underwriter/CPCU.
- y. Fellow Life Management Institute/FLMI.
- z. Other similar examinations approved by the board.

10.8(10) Firm meetings for staff or management groups for the purpose of administrative and firm matters do not meet the standards set forth in subrule 10.8(1).

10.8(11) Dinner, luncheon and breakfast meetings of recognized organizations may qualify if they meet the appropriate provisions and are limited to 25 percent of the total renewal criteria if the individual meeting is no more than two hours long.

10.8(12) Continuing professional education taken in nontechnical skills area as defined in rule 193A—10.2(542) is limited to 50 percent of the total renewal obligation.

10.8(13) The board may look to recognized state or national accounting organizations for assistance in interpreting the acceptability of and credit to be allowed for individual courses.

10.8(14) The right is specifically reserved to the board to approve or deny credit for continuing professional education claimed under these rules.

193A—10.9(542) Controls and reporting.

10.9(1) An applicant for renewal may be requested to provide, in such manner, including but not limited to the online renewal process, and at such time as set forth by the board, verification and documentation setting forth the continuing professional education in which the licensee has participated. The board may allow for attestation that the licensee has completed continuing education in lieu of providing a listing. If the applicant for renewal is requested to provide a listing of the continuing professional education completed, the documentation will include:

- a. School, firm or organization conducting the course and contact information.
- b. Location of course.
- c. Title of course or description of content.
- d. Principal instructor.
- e. Dates attended.
- f. Hours claimed.
- g. Certificate of completion.
- h. Name of participant.
- i. Course field of study.
- j. Type of instruction or delivery method.
- k. Amount of CPE recommended.
- l. Verification by CPE program sponsor representative.

Canceled checks and registration forms are not proof of attendance.

10.9(2) The board may request sponsors of courses to furnish an attendance record, a certification of completion or any other information the board deems essential for administration of these continuing professional education rules.

10.9(3) The board will verify, on a test basis, information submitted by licensees. If an application for renewal is not approved, the applicant will be so notified and may be granted a period of time by the board in which to correct the deficiencies noted.

10.9(4) Primary responsibilities for documenting the continuing education compliance is with the licensee, and such documentation has to be retained for a period of three years subsequent to submission of the report claiming the credit. (More information can be found in 193A—subrule 14.3(1) and Iowa Code section 542.10(1) “a,” which provides for permanent revocation based on fraud or deceit in procuring a license.) Satisfaction of the obligations, including retention of attendance records, certification of completion records, and written outlines, may be accomplished as follows:

- a. For courses taken for scholastic credit in accredited universities and colleges (state, community, or private) or high school districts, evidence of satisfactory completion of the course will be sufficient; for noncredit courses taken, a statement of the hours of attendance, signed by the instructor, will be obtained by the licensee.
- b. For correspondence and formal independent self-study courses, written evidence or a certificate of completion from the sponsor or course provider will be obtained by the licensee.
- c. In all other instances, the licensee will maintain a record of the information as listed in subrule 10.8(3).

193A—10.10(542) Grounds for discipline. A licensee or an applicant is subject to discipline, including permanent revocation, if the licensee or applicant provides false information to the board in connection with an application to renew or reinstate a certificate or license. A licensee or an applicant is also subject to discipline if the licensee or applicant is unable to document the continuing professional education hours reported to the board in connection with an audit or other request for documentation. False information of this nature will subject the licensee or applicant to discipline whether the false information was supplied intentionally or with reckless disregard for the truth or accuracy of the number of hours claimed. Licensees and applicants are accordingly cautioned to supply the board with accurate continuing professional education information.

193A—10.11(272C,542) Alternative continuing education cycles authorized.

10.11(1) Purpose. For a variety of reasons, some CPAs and LPAs may wish to complete their continuing education on a three-year cycle ending on a date other than December 31. By way of illustration, some licensees may prefer to take courses on particular substantive topics that are not always offered at the same time each year. Some licensees may wish to schedule continuing education to comply with the differing obligations of multiple jurisdictions. This rule is intended to authorize a more flexible time frame within which continuing education may be satisfied. This rule does not alter any other requirement of this chapter.

10.11(2) *Declaration may vary by renewal cycle.* A CPA or LPA applying to renew a certificate or license may declare a continuing education deadline of December 31 in one renewal cycle and a continuing education deadline of June 30 in a subsequent renewal cycle, and vice versa. Licensees are expected to maintain continuing education records in a manner that complies with the self-selected declaration in any particular renewal cycle.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapters 272C and 542.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 3/6/24.