

TITLE 21 NORTH CAROLINA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE CHAPTER 22

SUBCHAPTER 22F - GENERAL EXAMINATION AND LICENSE PROVISIONS

SECTION .0200 - CONTINUING EDUCATION

21 NCAC 22F .0201 CONTINUING EDUCATION DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to the Rules contained in this Section:

- (1) "CE Program" means a continuing education presentation where attendance is monitored and the participants are required to be present at one or more designated physical locations. The CE Program shall consist of sessions which may be eligible for Board-approved CEU credit. A CE Program may be televised or conducted via the internet only if participants must be at a designated location where attendance is monitored by the CE Program provider.
- (2) "CEU accrual period" means the calendar year (January 1 through December 31) immediately preceding the March license renewal deadline.
- (3) "CEU reporting deadline" means the tenth day of January which immediately follows the CEU Accrual Period.
- (4) "CEU Verification Report" means the electronic form available on the Board website (www.nchalb.org) for recording CEU credits earned to satisfy the license renewal requirement.
- (5) "Continuing Education Unit" (CEU) means the reporting unit used in calculating approved continuing education hours. One-tenth of a CEU (0.10) equals one hour of approved instruction. Ten hours of approved instruction equals 1.00 CEU credit. The Board-approved CEU credits are recorded to two decimal points (for example, a session conducted for two hours would be recorded as 0.20 CEU).
- (6) "Educational objective" means a statement of the working knowledge or understanding of presented content that a participant should attain upon completion of the session.
- (7) "Hour" means a full clock hour (60 minutes) of instruction and learning, excluding any time allowed for any other activity such as meals, breaks, or business or committee meetings.
- (8) "Program application" means the Board's official application for the purpose of program review for Board-approved CEU credit, which is available on the Board website.
- (9) "Presentation format" means the teaching method utilized to impart information to the participants (for example, lecture, panel discussion, demonstration, practicum, or debate).
- (10) "Report of Attendance" means the official attendance verification form entitled "Continuing Education Report of Program Attendance," which is available on the website in generic form and in specific form for approved programs and self-study.
- (11) "Self-study" means independently completed internet-based activities or events provided by the Board, or approved by the International Institute for Hearing Instruments Studies (IIHS), American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), or American Academy of Audiology (AAA), for at least one hour of credit that includes an internet-presented examination pertaining to the content of the self-study session. Self-study may be:
 - (a) live, online presentations;
 - (b) prerecorded, downloaded presentations; or
 - (c) text-based, downloaded readings.
- (12) "Session" means an instructional or learning event, with at least two primary educational objectives pertaining to a single Board topic content category, and a specific amount of time allotted for accomplishing the specified objectives.
- (13) "Topic Content Categories" means a system to separate Board-approved sessions by content. "Category 1" is for amplification and hearing rehabilitation issues. "Category 2" is for hearing loss, regulations, and consumer-related issues. "Category 0" is assigned to unapproved sessions in a program when other sessions in the program are approved.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11;
Eff. September 1, 2013.*

21 NCAC 22F .0202 ANNUAL CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

- (a) A licensee shall complete and record with the Board at least ten hours (1.00 CEU credit) of Board-approved continuing education annually, including at least five hours (0.50 CEU credit) classified as Category 1 in accordance with Rule .0203 of this Section.
- (b) The CEU Accrual Period for each license renewal shall be the calendar year preceding license renewal. CEU credit cannot be carried over from one CEU Accrual Period to the next, even if the CEU credit earned exceeds the license renewal requirement.
- (c) A licensee may receive CEU credit for only one of the sessions when sessions with essentially identical content are presented at the same or different CE Programs during any two consecutive Board CEU Accrual Periods. The Board shall determine whether sessions have essentially identical content by reviewing the presenters, educational objectives, and content for each session as provided on the program application.
- (d) A licensee completing the same self-study during any two consecutive CEU Accrual Periods shall be granted CEU credit only once.
- (e) An individual passing the licensing exam during a CEU Accrual Period satisfies the continuing education requirement for the corresponding license renewal.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11;
Eff. September 1, 2013.*

21 NCAC 22F .0203 CONTENT CATEGORIES

(a) Sessions assigned to Category 1 or Category 2, as described herein, satisfy the continuing education requirement for license renewal. Category 0 sessions, as described herein, do not satisfy any part of the continuing education requirement.

(b) Category 1 is for amplification and hearing rehabilitation issues, and shall be assigned to continuing education sessions which are comprised of the following topics:

- (1) hearing aid technology: instrument circuitry and acoustic performance data;
- (2) earmold or shell coupling systems: design, selection, modifications, and ear impressions;
- (3) hearing aid selection procedures, verification, fitting and adjustment techniques, and servicing or repairs; and
- (4) aural rehabilitation using amplification: auditory training, hearing aid orientation and counseling techniques, and hearing aid validation techniques.

(c) Category 2 is for hearing loss, regulations, and consumer-related issues, and shall be assigned to continuing education sessions which are comprised of the following topics:

- (1) biological, physical, and behavioral bases underlying normal and pathological hearing processes;
- (2) detection, assessment, or monitoring of hearing impairment (such as measurement techniques and test interpretation), including intraoperative monitoring;
- (3) cochlear implants or implantable hearing devices;
- (4) central auditory processing;
- (5) assistive listening devices, including FM Systems and ancillary wireless devices;
- (6) techniques for development of speech and language in children with hearing loss, or augmentative and alternative communication strategies for children or adults with hearing loss;
- (7) cerumen management, dizziness, or tinnitus as it directly pertains to persons with hearing loss;
- (8) hearing impaired consumers' views of the hearing health care industry and consumer complaints;
- (9) infection control issues for the hearing health care profession;
- (10) professional conduct and regulatory issues pertaining to the fitting and selling of hearing aids; and
- (11) hearing aid business practices such as hearing aid office management, sales contracts, and hearing aid marketing or industry trends.

(d) Category 0 shall be assigned to all unapproved sessions in a continuing education program, including sessions comprised of the following programs, activities and topics:

- (1) financial planning unrelated to the fitting or programming of hearing instruments;
- (2) computer training unrelated to the fitting or programming of hearing instruments;
- (3) employment contracts;
- (4) balance mechanism or tinnitus, if not directly pertaining to persons with hearing loss;
- (5) cerumen management, if not directly pertaining to persons with hearing loss;
- (6) training designed for license examination preparation;
- (7) factory tours, poster sessions, open forum sessions, and poster-type sessions conducted at a CE Program where participants are free to determine the amount of time that they interact with multiple presenters; and
- (8) all other topics not listed as approved for Category 1 or Category 2.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11;
Eff. September 1, 2013.*

21 NCAC 22F .0204 CE PROGRAM APPLICATION

- (a) Any individual or program sponsor shall submit a program application to the Board to request Board-approved CEU credit for a CE program. The person designated on the Board's program application as the program's applicant shall receive all Board communication related to program submission and approval.
- (b) The applicant shall complete and submit a duly made application prior to the Board's evaluation of the program for approval. A duly made application shall consist of responses to all information requested on the application form, the required application fee in accordance with Rule 21 NCAC 22A .0501, a copy of the published program announcement and the published time-ordered program agenda listing the exact time that each session begins and ends, which sessions are divided into parts, and scheduled breaks.
- (c) The Board shall use the initial duly made application to determine Board-approved CEU credit for the program. The initial program applicant shall be responsible for the accuracy of the submitted information. If a subsequent application for the same CE program is received by the Board from another applicant, the Board shall respond by providing either a copy of the Board's written notification of approval or denial of the initial application, or written notice of the status of the initial application.
- (d) A program sponsor may seek prior approval for a CE Program or submit a program application after the CE program date. CE Program sessions shall not be advertised as "approved by the Board" until Board approval is granted. Prior to Board approval, published announcements shall state that "sessions have been submitted for approval."
- (e) The Board will accept one program application for a series of CE Programs if:
 - (1) the initial program starting date is more than 30 days after the Board receives submission of the duly made application;
 - (2) identical content will be presented at each program on different dates or at different locations during the same calendar year; and
 - (3) all program dates and locations are listed on the application.
- (f) The Board shall not accept a program application for a series of identical CE Programs submitted after the starting date of a program in the series pending approval. A separate program application is required for each program that has already occurred. Future program dates in the series may be combined on one application as set forth in Paragraph (e) of this Rule.
- (g) A licensee shall submit to the Board a signed Report of Attendance with the program application when seeking Board approval for a program after the program date.
- (h) The program sponsor shall submit to the Board a program application with a roster of licensees who attended a CE Program when seeking Board approval for a program after the program date.
- (i) The deadline to submit a program application shall be the 10th day of January following the calendar year in which the program was offered.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11;
Eff. September 1, 2013.*

21 NCAC 22F .0205 CONTENT APPROVAL PROCESS

(a) The Board shall use the start date of a program to determine the CEU Accrual Period assigned to Board-approved CEU credit. The Board shall deny CEU credit for a program when the program application does not list the date and location of the program.

(b) In order for the Board to assign CEU credit, each program application received by the Board shall subdivide the CE Program into sessions classified according to the Topic Content Categories set forth in Rule .0203 of this Section. The Board shall evaluate sessions for approval using the following criteria:

- (1) the content of a session;
 - (A) educational objectives clearly demonstrate relevance to the fitting and selling of hearing aids;
 - (B) presentation enhances a practitioner's knowledge of issues relating to the fitting and selling of hearing aids; and
 - (C) format includes time for questions and answers;
- (2) the length of each session and published breaks;
 - (A) no credit shall be offered for any session less than one full hour;
 - (B) for sessions lasting longer than one hour, 0.05 CEU credit shall be issued for each additional full half-hour increment (a session lasting one hour and 45 minutes shall be issued 0.15 CEU);
 - (C) any session lasting more than three hours shall include a published break, lasting at least 15 minutes, or the session shall be eligible for a maximum of 0.30 CEU credit;
 - (D) for every three hours of continuous presentation time (regardless of the number of sessions presented during that time interval), a published break must be provided in order for any additional program sessions to be eligible for CEU credit; and
 - (E) if a session is divided into parts, all such parts must pertain to the same Board topic content category. No single part may be of a duration of less than one hour. The session shall be clearly listed in the published program agenda as being divided into parts with attendance required at all parts in order to receive CEU credit. A session is considered to be divided into parts if there is a published break scheduled to interrupt the session during the CE Program; and
- (3) the way in which attendance is monitored;
 - (A) the program provider shall have a program representative verify attendance at each session of a CE Program;
 - (B) a speaker or facilitator shall be present to actively interact with the participants and monitor attendance for sessions relying primarily on prerecorded (audio or video) materials or computer-generated presentations;
 - (C) there shall be an announced means for participants to ask questions during each session for all televised or telephone distance learning presentations; and
 - (D) the published program announcement shall state that a program representative will be present at each distance learning site to monitor attendance.

(c) The Board shall post the processing and approval status of an application on the Board website in addition to posting a CE Program Report of Attendance for each approved CE Program which shows the Board-approved CEU credit for each session of the program.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11;
Eff. September 1, 2013.*

21 NCAC 22F .0206 APPEALS AND CE PROGRAM MODIFICATION

(a) Only the initial applicant shall possess the right to appeal the decision of the Board. The applicant's appeal shall include a written statement and any supplemental documentation the applicant determines will support the request for Board reconsideration. The appeal shall be submitted prior to the end of the CEU Accrual Period for the program. The Board shall review the appeal to determine compliance with the rules in this Section. The Board shall respond in writing to the applicant within 30 days. An applicant who is not satisfied with the Board decision after the appeal may request an administrative hearing in accordance with 21 NCAC 22L .0103.

(b) The program sponsor shall submit documentation regarding any modifications to an approved program to the Board within 30 calendar days after the CE Program completion date and shall notify program participants that approved CEU credit is subject to change due to modifications in the agenda.

(c) The program sponsor shall write all program modifications in the appropriate section on the Report of Attendance and sign the form in the area designated for CE Program modifications if any session of an approved CE program is modified after publication of the program announcement or after submission of the program application to the Board.

(d) The Board may modify its approval of sessions and the CEU credit allowed when a program is changed after receiving Board approval. The Board shall update the program status on the website to reflect CEU credit changes.

(e) The program applicant shall submit a new program application if:

- (1) the Board approved a CE Program for multiple dates and the content or duration of the CE Program changes after one or more of the approved program dates have occurred. The remaining program dates shall constitute a new CE Program; or
- (2) the program sponsor offers a pre-approved CE Program on additional dates. The additional date(s) shall constitute a new CE Program, unless the program sponsor notifies the Board within 20 days of the canceled CE Program's date that a different date has been substituted.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11;
Eff. September 1, 2013.*

21 NCAC 22F .0207 RECORDING CEU CREDIT

- (a) A licensee shall have proof of attendance in order to record CEU credit with the Board:
- (1) For pre-approved CE Programs, the program sponsor shall provide each licensee in attendance with the approved CE Program Report of Attendance. At the conclusion of each session, the program sponsor's representative or the session speaker shall sign the CE Program Report of Attendance of each licensee in attendance in the space provided for attendance verification. Alternatively, a program sponsor may initial or rubberstamp the space for session attendance verification after each session and then sign the bottom of each page of the Report of Attendance at the end of the program; or
 - (2) If the CE Program is not pre-approved, the licensee shall print a generic CE Program Report of Attendance from the Board website and take it to the program to complete the session titles as listed on the program sponsor's agenda presented to participants on the day of the continuing education event. The licensee shall obtain the hand-written signature of the program sponsor's representative or the session speaker on the Report of Attendance at the end of each session.
- (b) The program applicant shall submit a roster of licensees who attended a CE Program no later than 30 days following completion of a pre-approved CE Program:
- (1) If the program applicant is recording CEU credit with the Board on behalf of licensees, the payment of the recording fee as set forth in Rule 21 NCAC 22A .0501 and an original Report of Attendance for each licensee shall accompany the submission of the roster; or
 - (2) If licensees are responsible for recording CEU credit with the Board, including paying the recording fee, the program applicant shall provide the original signed Report of Attendance form to each licensee at the end of the program, and shall submit only the roster.
- (c) The Board shall accept the Board form entitled "Continuing Education Report of Program Attendance" for attendance verification when recording CEU credit. The Board shall reject certificates of attendance issued by any entity other than the Board as proof of attendance or as verification of CEU credit earned.
- (d) A licensee shall record CE Program CEU credit with the Board by submitting all of the following:
- (1) an electronic CEU Verification Report;
 - (2) an original Report of Attendance; and
 - (3) a recording fee for each CE Program as set forth in Rule 21 NCAC 22A .0501.
- (e) A licensee shall record self-study CEU credit with the Board as set forth in Rule .0208 of this Section.
- (f) The Board shall accept an electronic image of the Report of Attendance as the original Report of Attendance when submitted electronically in conjunction with a CEU Verification Report or a roster.
- (g) A licensee shall record sufficient Board-approved CEU credit to satisfy the continuing education requirement for license renewal by the CEU reporting deadline, which is the 10th day of January immediately following the CEU Accrual Period.
- (h) A licensee's failure to record sufficient CEU credit with the Board by the CEU reporting deadline shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11; 93D-13;
Eff. September 1, 2013.

21 NCAC 22F .0208 SELF-STUDY

- (a) Self-study may be completed to satisfy up to all 10 hours of the continuing education requirement during each CEU Accrual Period.
- (b) Each self-study event shall be one session and up to 10 sessions completed in the same CEU Accrual Period may be reported on one self-study Report of Attendance as a self-study Program.
- (c) A licensee shall record self-study CEU credit with the Board by submitting all of the following:
 - (1) an electronic CEU Verification Report;
 - (2) a completed self-study Report of Attendance;
 - (3) an official transcript listing the licensee's score of 80 percent or greater on an internet-presented examination pertaining to the content of the self-study activity; and
 - (4) the recording fee as set forth in Rule 21 NCAC 22A .0501 for each self-study program.
- (d) The Board shall accept electronic images of the self-study Report of Attendance and official transcripts when submitted electronically in conjunction with the CEU Verification Report.

History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11; Eff. September 1, 2013.

21 NCAC 22F .0209 CONTINUING EDUCATION RECORDS

- (a) The Board shall maintain a cumulative record of the CEU credit recorded for each licensee during the three most recent CEU Accrual Periods.
- (b) A summary of recorded CEU credits may be viewed on the Board website. A request for a full copy of a licensee's CEU record, including copies of the original forms submitted for the three most recent CEU Accrual Periods, is subject to the provisions of G.S. 132-6.
- (c) The Board shall destroy all records of program applications and CEU credits reported to the Board no sooner than five years after such records are received by the Board.

History Note: Authority G.S. 93D-3(c); 93D-11; 93D-13;
Eff. September 1, 2013.