

WAC 388-71-0992 When must continuing education be completed when public health emergency waivers are lifted, and what continuing education credit is granted to long-term care workers employed during the pandemic?

(1) The department finds that long-term care workers employed during the COVID-19 pandemic between March 1, 2020, and February 28, 2021, required emergent and intensive on-the-job training. Long-term care workers received critical, ongoing training in such topics as:

- (a) Donning and doffing personal protective equipment (PPE);
- (b) Hand hygiene;
- (c) Disinfection of high-touch surfaces;
- (d) Managing visitations and physical distancing;
- (e) Responding to newly infected residents;
- (f) Promotion of vaccination;
- (g) Protocols for quarantine;
- (h) Use of cloth face coverings;
- (i) Personal protection outside of the work environment; and
- (j) How to reduce exposure and spread.

(2) This on-the-job training was required of all workers in all long-term care environments in Washington state. Instruction was provided in assisted living facilities, adult family homes, home care agencies, enhanced services facilities, certified community residential services, and to individual providers by the SEIU775 benefits group and DSHS to discuss infection control and the availability and distribution of personal protective equipment. Recognition of this training as a valid learning experience, in its various forms, was agreed upon with input from consumer and worker representatives, as the content was based on guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other federal, state, and local health care authorities.

(3) During this time, long-term care workers required ongoing critical training because guidance from the CDC, department of labor and industries, and other health authorities changed as more was learned about the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The department finds that this unprecedented on-the-job training constituted at least 12 hours of continuing education between March 1, 2020, and February 28, 2021, and that this training is not considered to be repeated training as described in WAC 388-112A-0600(2).

(4) All long-term care workers employed during the dates in section (3) of this section are granted 12 hours of DSHS-approved continuing education credit for the training entitled "COVID-19 On-The-Job Training Protocols," bearing the DSHS approval code CE2135218. No physical certificate for this training will be issued or required. The COVID-19 continuing education hours may be applied to renewal periods ending no earlier than March 1, 2020, and no later than December 31, 2021.

(5) The department recognizes that long-term care workers may not have completed training hours in excess of the 12 hours of CE granted in section (4) of this section due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. All long-term care workers shall have until December 31, 2022, or 120 days from the end of the COVID-19 training waivers established by gubernatorial proclamation, whichever is later, to complete any additional CE that may have become due while training waivers were in place in excess of the 12 hours of CE granted in subsection (4) of this section. If a worker's next birthday allows fewer than 120 days after the waivers are lifted to complete required CE for their current

renewal cycle, the worker will have 120 days from the end of training waivers to complete the required CE.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090 and 74.09.520. WSR 22-12-081, § 388-71-0992, filed 5/31/22, effective 7/1/22.]