

WAC 246-803-420 Continuing education requirements. The goal of continuing education is to encourage the lifetime development of the licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner, and enhance the professional skills and judgment needed to protect the health and safety of all patients.

(1) A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner shall complete a minimum of twenty hours of continuing education every two years.

(a) The two-year continuing education reporting period for an acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner licensed in Washington before April 30, 2021, begins May 1, 2021, and verification of completion of continuing education hours will be due on the acupuncturist's or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner's annual license renewal date in 2023, and every two years thereafter. The two-year continuing education reporting period for an acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner initially licensed in Washington on or after May 1, 2021, begins upon date of licensure.

(b) A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner shall attest to the completion of twenty hours of continuing education every two years as a part of their license renewal requirement.

(c) The department of health (department) may randomly audit up to twenty-five percent of licensed acupuncturists or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioners every two years for compliance after the license is renewed as allowed by chapter 246-12 WAC, Part 7.

(d) A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner shall comply with the requirements of chapter 246-12 WAC, Part 7.

(e) The department will not authorize or approve specific continuing education courses.

(2) A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner may alternatively meet the requirement of twenty hours of continuing education every two years if they hold a current diplomate status from the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM). The required documentation is proof of diplomate status during the two-year period.

(3) A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner shall maintain a current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and basic first aid certification. A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner may count the actual hours earned per renewal cycle for this requirement.

(4) Continuing education must contribute to the professional knowledge and development of the licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner or enhance services provided to patients or public health and safety. Continuing education must be completed in one or more of the following categories:

(a) Educational courses as listed in RCW 18.06.050 relating to the practice of health care, western clinical sciences, acupuncture, or acupuncture and Eastern medicine;

(b) Emergency management or disaster preparedness;

(c) Infection control and federal/state safety standards;

(d) Ethics;

(e) Patient care related education including patient communication, risk management, methods of health delivery, cultural diversity, and suicide prevention education;

(f) Washington state acupuncture and Eastern medicine law;

(g) Patient communication;

(h) Practice management and billing practices. A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner may not count more than ten hours every two years in this category.

(5) Continuing education in subject categories identified in subsection (4) of this section may be completed using any of the following activities or methods:

(a) Attendance at local, state, national, or international education courses, live interactive webinars, postdoctoral education, and study clubs. A study club is defined as two or more practitioners meeting to discuss topics relative to their health care practice;

(b) Self-study by various means, relevant to acupuncture or acupuncture and Eastern medicine, without an instructor physically present.

(i) Self-study can be continuing education provided online or through the mail provided by a continuing education provider.

(A) A licensee must have documentation of course completion; or

(B) Provide a two-page synopsis of what was learned written by the licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner is required. Two hours of continuing education for each synopsis will be granted. A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner may earn up to a maximum of six hours every two years for this activity.

(ii) Self-study can be reading a book that contributes to the professional knowledge and development of the licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner, or enhance services provided to patients. A two-page synopsis of what was learned written by the licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner is required. Two hours of continuing education for each book and synopsis will be granted. A licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner may earn up to a maximum of six hours every two years for this activity.

(c) Teaching, presenting, or lecturing in a course, only if the presentation or lecture is created or authored by the acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner claiming the continuing education hours, may earn up to a maximum of ten hours every two years;

(d) Panelist at a conference or seminar for health care providers. Up to a maximum of two hours may be applied per topic in the two-year period;

(e) Primary author of published multimedia material including, but not limited to: CD, audio, or video. Up to a maximum of five hours may be applied per publication in the two-year period;

(f) Participating member of a clinical research study team. Up to a maximum of ten hours may be applied in the two-year period;

(g) Direct clinical supervision of acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine students in a school verified externship, internship, or preceptorship, may earn up to a maximum of ten hours every two years;

(h) Acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine licensure examinations or serving on an acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine professional board, committee or association may earn up to a maximum of ten hours every two years;

(i) Publishing a paper in a peer review journal up to a maximum of five hours the year the paper is published; and

(j) Provision of clinical acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine patient care services in a documented volunteer capacity, may earn up to a maximum of ten hours every two years.

(6) The department may not accept any claim of credit for a continuing education course that does not meet the requirements of subsection (4) or (5) of this section.

(7) Proof of continuing education is a certificate of completion, letter, or other documentation verifying or confirming attendance or completion of continuing education hours. Documentation must be from the organization that provided the activity, except in subsection (5)(b)(i) and (ii), and (c) of this section, and must contain at least the following:

(a) Date of attendance or completion;

(b) Name of licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner;

(c) Hours earned; and

(d) Course title or subject.

(8) Upon showing good cause by the licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner in writing, the department may waive the acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner from any, all, or part of the continuing education requirements in this chapter or may grant additional time for the acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner to complete the requirements. Good cause includes, but is not limited to:

(a) Illness;

(b) Medical necessity or family emergency;

(c) Hardship to practice; or

(d) Other extenuating circumstances.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.06.160, chapter 18.06 RCW, 2019 c 308, 2020 c 229 and 2020 c 76. WSR 21-09-008, § 246-803-420, filed 4/8/21, effective 5/9/21.]