



## Continuing Education Information & FAQs

### Understanding Continued Competency Requirements in Virginia

- For each physical therapist and physical therapist assistant license renewal is biennial meaning it happens every two years.
- Renewal must happen by December 31 in each even- numbered year, for example the next renewal will be December 31, 2018.
- The need for continuing education hours start at the beginning of the new cycle, for example, January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2018.
  - ONLY EXCEPTION: For the first biennial renewal for persons newly licensed by exam (new graduates only), the continuing education requirement is waived (you are not required to have any continuing education hours for the current cycle).
- Effective July 17, 2013, the continuing education requirements are:
  - Physical Therapists must complete at least 30 hours total – a minimum of 20 contact hours must be type 1 and no more than 10 contact hours can be type 2.
  - Physical Therapist Assistants must complete 30 hours total - a minimum of 15 contact hours must be type 1 and no more than 15 contact hours can be type 2.



## FAQ's

### What makes a course Type 1?

- Type 1 continuing education courses are any organized program of study, classroom experience or similar experience such as online coursework, webinars, podcasts, face to face workshop etc.
- Type 1 course MUST relate directly to your clinical practice of physical therapy such as:
  - (i) the need to promote ethical practice
  - (ii) an appropriate standard of care
  - (iii) patient safety
  - (iv) application of new medical technology
  - (v) appropriate communication with patients
  - (vi) knowledge of the changing health care system
- Type 1 courses have been approved or provided by one of the following organizations or its component
  - The Virginia Physical Therapy Association
  - The American Physical Therapy Association
  - Local, state or federal government agencies
  - Regionally accredited colleges or universities
  - Health care organizations accredited by a national accrediting organization granted authority by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to assure compliance with Medicare conditions of participation
  - The American Medical Association- Category 1 Continuing Medical Education course
  - The National Athletic Trainers Association
  - The Federal of State Boards for Physical Therapy (FSBPT)

**NOTE:** The components of the American Physical Therapy Association are the individual states and individual sections. This means that if you take a course approved by any state section of the APTA (i.e. North Carolina) then it will count for Type I in Virginia. It is not necessary that every course carry the approval of the Virginia Physical Therapy Association to allow you to claim it as Type I.

**NOTE:** You want to find good quality courses to meet this requirement. Always look for (1) learner objectives and (2) up to date references including research studies used as evidence for the coursework offered.



### **What are Type 2 credits?**

- Course or activities which may or may not be offered by an approved organization, but relate to clinical practice such as in-service presentations
- May include but not be limited to consultation with colleagues, independent study, and research or writing on subjects related to practice.
- IF THERE IS ANY QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER A COURSE IS QUALIFIED AS TYPE 1 OR 2 THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY HAS THE FINAL SAY IF YOU ARE AUDITED.

### **How many hours are required for license renewal?**

For each two year period PTs and PTAs must have a total of 30 continuing education contact hours. PTs must have a minimum of 20 Type I hours and PTAs must have a minimum of 15 Type I hours. All required hours may be Type I.

### **What is the difference between Type I and Type II contact hours?**

Type 1 continuing education courses are any organized program of study, classroom experience or similar experience such as online coursework, webinars, podcasts, face to face workshop etc.

Type 1 courses MUST relate directly to your clinical practice of physical therapy such as

- (i) the need to promote ethical practice
- (ii) an appropriate standard of care
- (iii) patient safety
- (iv) application of new medical technology
- (v) appropriate communication with patients
- (vi) knowledge of the changing health care system

Type 2 continuing education may include but not be limited to consultation with colleagues, independent study, and research or writing on subjects related to practice.



**Q: Who can approve a Type I course?**

Courses approved by any of the following organizations will be accepted:

- (i) The Virginia Physical Therapy Association
- (ii) The American Physical Therapy Association and any of its components (If a course is approved by another state chapter it will be recognized in Virginia)
- (iii) Local, state or federal government agencies
- (iv) Regionally accredited colleges or universities
- (v) Health care organizations accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)
- (vi) The American Medical Association- Category 1 Continuing Medical Education course
- (vii) The National Athletic Trainers Association
- (viii) The Federation of State Boards for Physical Therapy (FSBPT)

**NOTE:** The components of the American Physical Therapy Association are the individual states and individual sections. This are courses or activities which may or may not be offered by an approved organization, but relate to clinical practice such as in-service presentations.

This means that if you take a course approved by any state section of the APTA (i.e. North Carolina) then it will count for Type I in Virginia. It is not necessary that every course carry the approval of the Virginia Physical Therapy Association to allow you to claim it as Type I.

**What documentation does the Board of Physical Therapy require?**

You must record your courses on the Continued Competency Activity and Assessment Form and keep the certificates of completion for courses attended.

**Licensing**

- (i) Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy Exam and Practice Exam information for Candidates Continuing Competence and Regulatory information for Licensees
- (ii) Virginia Laws and Regulations
- (iii) Virginia Applications and Forms
- (iv) Licensure by Examination or Endorsement (already licensed in another state)
- (v) Continued Competency Activity and Assessment Form Direct Access Certification
- (vi) Virginia Board of Physical Therapy Home Page



## Other FAQs

### **Would A Clinical Instructor get any continuing education credit for working with a student?**

Yes. One Type II contact hour is equal to 40 hours of clinical instruction. Therefore if a CI has a student for 8 weeks clinical time that is 8 hours of type II credit

### **What if I have more questions?**

Any questions can of course be addressed to the members of the Virginia Board of Physical Therapy or to the Virginia Physical Therapy Association's Continuing Education Approval Committee.

The VPTA Continuing Education Committee is responsible for reviewing courses whose sponsors apply for approval in Virginia. However, they are not responsible for reviewing continuing learning activities by individual practitioners applying for re-licensure; that responsibility will be held solely by the Virginia Board of Physical Therapy. Any concerns regarding the acceptability of a particular learning activity should be addressed to the Virginia Board of Physical Therapy.

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