

*Thanks to Tracy A. Bombara, ASHA Continuing Education Administrator for DSHA for a clear and concise explanation of the differences between the continuing education requirements for Delaware Licensure, and those for maintaining your ASHA CCCs.*

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## CEU REVIEW

DSHA Members regularly ask several different questions about Continuing Education Units (CEUs) indicating there may be some confusion about the requirements for Delaware Licensure and for CCC maintenance through ASHA. While many of the CE activities that SLPs and AUDs attend may be used for both the DE License and the ASHA CCC maintenance, the processes are not the same and the SLP or AUD is responsible for making sure the requirements are met for both organizations. The information in this article will hopefully shed some light on the different requirements and what you, the licensed, certified SLP or AUD, need to do to obtain the CEUs to maintain these documents which are essential to practice in the State of Delaware.

### Delaware Licensure

SLPs and AUDs in the State of DE are required to complete 30 hours of continuing education activities every two years to maintain a **professional license** from the Department of Professional Regulation, Board of Speech-Language Pathologists, Audiologists and Hearing Aid Dispensers. Licenses are renewed every other odd year (e.g. 2011, 2013, 2015, etc....). Licenses expire on July 31 of those years. Licensees who were licensed for less than 1 year prior to the expiration of their license do not need to complete continuing education units for that licensure period. Those holding a license for more than 1 year but less than 2 years must complete 15 hours of continuing education units prior to July 31.

A renewal notice will be sent to all current licensees prior to the expiration of the licensure period. Licensees are responsible for completing the online renewal procedure prior to July 31. Licensees **ATTEST** that they have completed the continuing education hours listed on the form. Legally, this means the licensee has **written proof** of attendance for all hours reported. Once the licensure period ends, the licensure board will audit a random sample of licensees who will be notified by mail. Those licensees who are selected for audit will be required to submit documentation to the licensure board supporting the completion of the required continuing education hours.

### What Counts for DE Licensure?

The Board of Speech-Language Pathologists, Audiologist and Hearing Aid Dispensers is charged with approving continuing education activities and hours for license holders. The Board requires that a **minimum** of 20 of the required 30 hours in the 2 year period relate to Clinical Skills. This would include workshops, conferences, college courses, etc...that directly relate to the clinical practice of speech-language pathology and/or audiology. A **maximum** of 10 hours in the 2 year period may be Professional Growth hours that would include learning activities related to the professions, but not necessarily about clinical practice. Activities such as routine or required employer sponsored inservice trainings (e.g. infection control, agency policies and procedures, general staff meetings) **DO NOT** count toward continuing education requirements.

The good news is that any course, workshop or evening meeting sponsored or co-sponsored by DSHA will fulfill the DE Licensure requirement. In addition, any course or workshop sponsored by an approved

ASHA CE Provider (CE Provider logo will appear in the brochure for the activity) or AAA (American Academy of Audiology) will also count toward the requirement. Activities that are not sponsored by DSHA, an ASHA CE Provider or AAA may count, but a COMPLETE Board Approval form with all required information about the activity must be submitted to the Board for approval. The form is easily accessible on the Board website at <http://dpr.delaware.gov/boards/speechaudio/index.shtml>. Look on the left side of the website under Licensure Requirements, then Forms. The Board prefers that the Board Approval form be submitted prior to the activity. If the Board Approval form is submitted after the activity, the board will review the information, but there is no guarantee that the hours will be approved and counted. Please remember that the Board only meets one day per month, 10 months per year. If the submitted Board Approval form is not complete, it will not be reviewed until additional, completed information is submitted. The Licensure Board website also posts a list of courses that the Board has approved. Once a course has been submitted by one attendee and approved by the Board, the activity will count for all licensees who attended the course.

If audited, the SLP or AUD must provide documentation about the 30 hours completed for the continuing education requirement. Information required by the Board includes:

- Date of CE course
- Instructor of CE course
- Sponsor of CE course
- Title of CE course
- Number of hours of CE course
- Certificate of completion

The Board will accept an ASHA or AAA continuing education registry listing any or all courses completed to meet the continuing education requirement. Licensees seeking additional information are strongly encouraged to visit the DE Licensure Board website where the specific requirements for licensure are clearly explained.

#### ASHA CCC Maintenance

ASHA requires 30 continuing education hours or 3.0 CEUs every 3 years to maintain the **Certificate of Clinical Competence** (CCC). Your 3 year interval for obtaining the 30 hours is dependent upon the year in which you initially received your CCC. Each SLP or AUD **DOES NOT** have the same 3 year interval, but all intervals expire on December 31. You may contact ASHA to find out when your three year period ends.

CCC holders are required to attend courses that are within the scope of practice of Speech-Language Pathology or Audiology, are related to any area of clinical practice or fall under ASHA's definition of professional development. ASHA defines a professional development activity as one where the certificate holder is the learner, the topic is related to the science or contemporary practice of speech-language pathology, audiology, or the speech/language/hearing sciences that results in the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, or the enhancement of current knowledge and skills necessary for independent practice in any practice setting and area of practice. In addition, ASHA states that the certificate holder is responsible for determining that the professional development activity is appropriate, relevant, and meaningful to any practice setting and area of practice and that the certificate holder's attendance can be documented by a third party such as an employer, educational institution, or sponsoring organization. Prior approval of continuing education activities **is not required** by ASHA.

ASHA will notify CCC holders when they have met their 30 hour requirement during the three year interval if the CCC holder uses the ASHA CE Registry. I received mine in the middle of my second year via email. Whether the CCC holder uses the CE Registry or not, the CCC Holder is required to complete the documentation form required and submit it via a web site, fax or mail. The CCC holder must be a member in good standing (i.e. your ASHA dues must be paid) in order to submit the form.

Similar to DE Licensure, a sample of CCC Holders will be audited at the end of each CCC maintenance interval to provide documentation of completed CEUs.

What Counts for ASHA CCC Maintenance?

Again, all CE activities sponsored or cosponsored by DSHA will count toward the CEU requirement. This includes DSHA full day conferences and evening meetings. Any activity offered by an approved ASHA CE Provider (CE Provider logo will appear in the brochure) will also count. ASHA accepts many other activities without prior approval. Specific information on what types of activities may be used can be found by visiting the ASHA website at <http://www.asha.org/certification>. There are several links on this webpage that provide examples and explanations of acceptable activities.

If a CCC Holder is audited, ASHA requires the following documentation for activities that **were not registered** with ASHA by means of completing a CE Participant Form (a.k.a. Bubble Sheet) at an activity:

- Date of Activity
- Brief Biography of Presenter(s)
- Brief Description of Activity
- Learning Objectives for Activity
- Certificate of Completion of Activity

Because DSHA full day conferences are registered with ASHA prior to the completion of the activity, completing the bubble sheet and turning it in prior to leaving the activity is sufficient to register the course with ASHA. While evening meetings are NOT generally registered with ASHA, the certificate of attendance provided by DSHA contains all of the information needed to submit to ASHA for the hours to count toward the CE requirement. An exception would be an evening meeting that involves a webinar or other learning activity offered through ASHA. Participants are given information to submit documentation via email, fax or mail so that ASHA CEUs can be awarded and registered with ASHA. The evening meeting held in Dover in May 2010 about Vocabulary Development was recorded with ASHA if the attendee completed the necessary procedures. The evening meeting on ADHD in October 2010 was not registered with ASHA, so therefore, attendees would submit the certificate of attendance provided by DSHA as proof of hours if audited by ASHA.

If CCC Holders plan on using employer sponsored trainings or courses offered by organizations or agencies that are not pre-approved ASHA CE Providers, it is essential that the information listed above is received and saved for possible audit. The employer or sponsoring organization should provide attendees with this information. If they do not, ASK FOR IT.

A Few Things to Keep In Mind

ASHA has very strict guidelines for awarding CEUs. Participants at an approved CE Activity must sign in to the activity, fill out the bubble sheet, complete a learning assessment and/or sign out of the activity (DSHA uses the learning assessment and not the sign out) and complete a course evaluation form. ASHA also "rounds down" with regard to continuing education hours. This means that if an attendee arrives

late or leaves an ASHA approved CE course early, ASHA rounds down to the nearest 15 minute time marker for CEUs. While partial hours are now accepted by ASHA, please see the Continuing Education Administrator or representative at the CE course PRIOR to leaving to discuss details of CE time obtained.

Member should know that CEUs are awarded only after the CE Administrator submits the required paperwork to ASHA following the activity AND ASHA ACCEPTS IT. CEUs are not officially awarded until the process is completed. The certificate of attendance provided at the end of the full day conference does not become valid for ASHA purposes until the paperwork has been accepted. The CE Administrator has up to 45 days to submit the paperwork following the activity completion date, and ASHA can take up to 30 days to reply. Therefore, CEUs may not be posted on a CCC Holder's transcript for up to 75 days following a CE Activity. DSHA attempts to submit the paperwork within 2 weeks of the activity, but there may be a 1 to 2 month delay before it appears on a transcript. CCC Holders should remember these timelines when taking courses at the end of their CCC maintenance interval.

DSHA strongly recommends that CCC Holders consider using the ASHA CE Registry as a means of documenting continuing education hours. While there is a cost of \$25 per year to use the CE Registry, the only paperwork required to make sure continuing education hours are registered is completion of the bubble sheet at ASHA CE Provider sponsored activities. CCC Holders do not need to make sure they have copies of certificates or the other information ASHA requires as it has already been submitted prior to the activity by the CE Administrator. ASHA will notify YOU when you have achieved the required 30 hours, taking the burden of tracking hours out of your hands. In addition, DE Licensure accepts an ASHA transcript of CE Activities for documentation of the 30 hours required every 2 years for licensure renewal. That means one document from ASHA would be submitted to the DE Licensure Board to document required hours. DSHA members should also remember that DSHA implemented a \$20 fee for each replacement copy of a certificate of attendance if lost or destroyed. Once 2 certificate copies are requested, it is cheaper to pay the \$25 to ASHA!

Finally, DSHA Members should remember that it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to know the requirements for renewal of DE Licensure and/or ASHA CCC Maintenance. It is also **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to make sure that you have the required documentation if audited. Transcripts from the ASHA CE Registry or copies of certificates of attendance may take time to secure, and will more than likely, not be available on an immediate basis. Members are encouraged to be aware of deadlines and plan ahead. Your professional livelihood depends on it 😊.