



Optometrist Continuing Education Requirements

According to [Business and Professions Code \(BPC\) Section 3059](#), all active or retired volunteer licensed optometrists must complete their continuing education (CE) every two years as a condition of license renewal. Licensees on inactive status do not need complete CE for renewal. New optometry licensees, who were issued their license within one year of graduation, do not need to complete the required CE hours for their first renewal.

[California Code of Regulations Section 1536](#) sets out the various requirements for continuing education, methods to complete continuing education, and how a course may be approved or accepted for credit by the Board.

Non-TPA Licensed Optometrists:

Under CCR Section 1536, all non-TPA licensed optometrists must complete 40 hours of board-approved CE every two-year renewal period to renew their license as active status.

TPA-Certified Licensed Optometrists:

Under BPC Section 3059, all TPA-certified licensed optometrists must obtain 50 hours of CE. 35 of the required 50 hours of continuing education shall be on the diagnosis, treatment, and management of ocular disease in any combination of the following areas:

- Glaucoma.
- Ocular infection.
- Ocular inflammation.
- Topical steroids.
- Systemic medication
- Pain medication, including the risks of addiction associated with the use of Schedule II drugs.
- TPG or TLG Certified Licensed Optometrists:

Licensed optometrists who are TPG or TLG certified must follow the same continuing education requirements as TPA-certified optometrists. Additionally, glaucoma-certified optometrists are required to complete 10 hours of glaucoma-specific continuing education every license renewal period under CCR Section 1536(I). These 10 hours shall be part of the 35 hours on the diagnosis and treatment and management of ocular disease.

Approved Providers and Courses:

CE courses that are approved as meeting the required standards of the Board include the following:

- Courses directly [approved by the Board](#).
- Courses sponsored or recognized by any accredited US school or college of optometry.

- Any national or state affiliate of the American Optometric Association, the American Academy of Optometry, or the Optometric Extension Program.
- Courses approved by the International Association of Boards of Examiners in Optometry known as COPE (Council on Optometric Practitioner Education).

If you are a CE provider looking to obtain Board approval for your course, please refer: [Request for Approval of Continuing Education Course\(s\) and Instructions](#)

Acceptability of Live, Interactive Coursework:

As of May 2020, licensees may complete all of their required CE hours using online courses, as set out below. This change is permanent and does not have an end date.

Under current law, live, interactive, and participatory courses provided over an internet platform do not fit within the plain meaning of self-study (i.e. the study of something by oneself, as through books, records, etc., without direct supervision or attendance in a class). Interactive courses offered live over internet platforms such as Zoom, WebEx, BlueJeans, RingCentral or courses being offered by COPE will count towards the 30 hours required of live continuing education course credits.

Conversely, online courses that are recorded and made available for viewing later tend to meet the plain meaning definition of "self-study." These courses are not live, interactive, or participatory. Thus, these courses will not qualify as live courses and would instead qualify as self-study/correspondence courses.

Self-Study/Correspondence Courses:

The Board will accept a maximum of 20 hours of CE earned through the completion of acceptable documented and accredited self-study courses. Credit for self-study courses (i.e., review of written, audio, video material, or a combination) is given at the ratio of one hour of credit for one hour of self-study earned.

Licensees can also earn up to eight hours of credit for participation in a Subject Matter Expert Workshop for the Board.

If you need further clarification or information on CE requirements, please do not hesitate to contact us: optometry@dca.ca.gov