

Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers and Land Surveyors

CONTINUING EDUCATION GUIDELINES FOR LAND SURVEYORS

(NOTE: The CE requirements for architects, engineers and landscape architects differ from land surveyors and are addressed separately.)

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Qualifying continuing education (CE) activities may be sponsored or presented by colleges or universities, employers, government agencies, nationally affiliated land surveyor technical/professional societies, or by various other individuals or organizations. **The board does not pre-approve courses for professional development hour (PDH) credit.** It is your responsibility to assure that the activities in which you participate meet the CE requirements as described.

Qualifying activities that meet Alaska's CE requirement can be earned in any jurisdiction. A PDH credit is roughly equivalent to one clock hour of instruction. One clock hour must be at least 50 minutes.

The regulations specify that each registered land surveyor is required to obtain 30 PDH prior to each two-year renewal period. If a registrant exceeds the biennial requirement in any renewal period a maximum of 15 PDH may be carried forward into the next renewal period. The question arises, "Can a registrant who earns, for example, 50 PDH in a two-year biennial period carry forward 20 PDH into the next biennial period?" The answer is NO. A maximum carryover of only 15 PDH into the subsequent renewal period is permitted. The effective date for CE is from January 1 of even-numbered years to December 31 of odd-numbered years.

For the upcoming December 31, 2007 renewal, land surveyors will be required to earn 15 PDH as a condition of registration renewal. Subsequent renewals will require 30 PDH.

WHY IS CE REQUIRED AND WHO APPROVES COURSES?

Credit Criteria for All Qualifying CE Activities

The purpose of the CE program is to maintain a continuing level of competency of professional land surveyors in this state.

12 AAC 36.410, Continuing education requirements, specifies qualifying activities which were designed to give flexibility in selecting among a broad range of subject matter that are intended to strengthen or maintain competency in technical, ethical or managerial fields. Registrants are

encouraged to select meaningful CE activities which will be of benefit in the pursuit of their chosen fields.

The Determination of Qualifying Activities

The question most often asked by registrants is, “How do I know what is acceptable CE to the board?” Many are looking for assurance that efforts spent will qualify for CE credit. With the broad range of opportunities for earning CE credits, the board has elected to distribute information on the requirement of what is and is not acceptable and leave it up to the registrant to assure that the activity qualifies. This permits the widest range of opportunity for registrants to earn CE credit. Examples of typical qualifying and non-qualifying activities are listed later in this document.

PDH DEFINITION AND REQUIREMENTS

What is a Professional Development Hour?

The term Professional Development Hour (PDH) is defined as a contact hour (nominal) of instruction or presentation. It is the common denominator for the other units of credit. Erroneous interpretations concerning this definition of a PDH can occur. For example, consider a one-day seminar that begins at 8 am and ends at 5 pm with a one-hour break for lunch. The rules intend that the maximum PDH units that can be earned for this seminar are eight PDH. But the question arises, “What about a morning and afternoon break of about 20 minutes each?” The general understanding is that short-term breaks are permissible as long as a minimum of 50 minutes of presentation/participation per hour is undertaken. If there are no breaks or breaks of less than 10 minutes per hour, no additional time may be claimed. Seminar presenters may attempt to take the number of elapsed minutes (such as 8 hours times 60 minutes) and then divide by 50 to arrive at the PDH units for which the seminar is advertised. This would result in over nine PDH in an eight-hour period, which is not permitted. **The general rule is that PDH units cannot exceed the actual contact clock hours.**

The rule is silent on fractions of hours. It is recommended that PDH units be rounded and reported to the nearest half-hour and that no activity of under a half-hour is accepted as qualifying for PDH credit. For example, a qualifying activity of 50 minutes would be reported as one PDH and an activity of 40 minutes would be reported as 0.5 PDH.

Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is a nationally recognized method of quantifying the time spent in the classroom during professional development and training activities. Ten hours of instruction = 1.0 CEU. One CEU = 10 professional development hours (PDH).

COURSES AND ACTIVITIES THAT QUALIFY

Description of Activity	CEU/PDH Units
A. Successful completion of college courses.	1 semester hour - 45 PDH 1 quarter hour – 30 PDH
B. Successful completion of continuing education courses.	1 CEU hour – 10 PDH
C. Successful completion of short courses, tutorials, and correspondence, web-based courses, and televised or videotaped courses.	1 PDH per hour of attendance
D. Presenting or attending seminars, in-house courses, workshops, or professional or technical presentations made at meetings, conventions, or conferences.	1 PDH per hour of attendance
E. Initial instruction of the subject matter when teaching professional development courses, seminars, or professional or technical presentations. (Does not apply to full-time faculty or repetitive teaching.)	1 hour – 2 PDH
F. Published papers, articles or books, based on the amount of time and effort required to produce the papers, articles or books.	Each publication – up to 10 PDH
G. Serving as an officer or actively participating in a committee of professional and technical societies.	Up to 8 PDH per year for each professional or technical society

To qualify for credit each course or activity must be relevant to the practice of land surveying and may include technical, ethical or managerial content. The course or activity must be designed to maintain, improve or expand professional land surveying skills and knowledge. Each course or activity must be well organized and the content presented in a sequential manner. The presentation must be made by persons who are well qualified by education or experience in the subject. A system must exist for documentation of the land surveyor’s participation in the course or activity, including information required for record keeping and reporting.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL QUALIFYING AND NON-QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES

To further clarify the definition of qualifying and non-qualifying activities, the following examples are given:

Typical Qualifying Activities

- Completing or attending courses, seminars, instruction, in-house programs, or training which relate to land surveying.
- Attending technical or professional society meetings where a land surveying topic is presented as a principal part of the program. Only the portion of the meeting during which the topic is presented will count toward CE.

- Teaching a course for the first time. (Note: Teaching counts for non-full-time faculty members only.)
- Attending satellite downlink video courses where attendance is verified and program material meets the requirements established in regulation.
- Computer software instructional courses which relate to the improvement of one's business or profession.
- Communication courses which relate to the improvement of one's business or profession.
- Management or ethical courses which relate to the improvement of one's business or profession.
- Correspondence courses on a land surveying topic where lessons are prepared, returned for correction and/or grading.

Typical Non-Qualifying Activities

- Regular employment.
- Reading trade journals or magazines.
- Personal self-improvement.
- Service club meetings or activities.
- Equipment demonstrations or trade show displays.
- Topics not relevant to the land surveying profession.
- Enrollment without attendance at courses, seminars, etc.
- Repetitive attendance or teaching of the same course.
- Attending general business meetings of any organization.
- Conversational language courses for personal use.
- Taking professional or required examinations.
- Personal, estate, or financial planning.
- Real estate licensing courses.

CARRYOVER HOURS AND RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

Land Surveyors must earn 30 PDH during each two-year registration period as a condition of registration renewal. An exception to this requirement is that land surveyors renewing for the first time that CE is required, the January 1, 2008-December 31, 2009 renewal period, are only required to earn 15 PDH. All subsequent renewal cycles will require 30 PDH.

There is a maximum carryover of 15 PDH per renewal cycle. It is the responsibility of the registrant to maintain a log of carryover hours. If a registrant claims carryover hours they must maintain proof of the carryover hours

The requirement to keep adequate records is the responsibility of the registrant and must be maintained by the registrant for a minimum of four years. This permits the board to conduct random audits of CE compliance by registrants. Do not send these records to the board unless required to do so for audit.

Records required include, but are not limited to:

A log showing the course or activity claimed, the sponsoring organization, the location and duration of the course or activity, the name of the speaker or instructor, and the unit of credit or number of professional development hours earned. (12 AAC 36.440(a)(1))

Attendance verification records in the form of completion certificates or other documents supporting evidence of attendance.

The question arises, “Does each activity require attendance verification?” The answer is that a good faith effort should result in obtaining verification for most activities attended. If you attend a qualified activity ask the sponsor for documentation for your records.

Available on the AELS website is a Continuing Professional Development Report for Land Surveying that you may find beneficial for tracking your CE. **This form is required if you are selected for CE audit: <http://www.dced.state.ak.us/occ/pub/ael4167.pdf>**

EXEMPTIONS

Who May Claim an Exemption?

Please note an exemption granted from the CE requirement does not exempt a registrant from the renewal fee. If a registrant is exempted from the CE requirement during the exempted period, that registrant is not allowed to carryover any CE from that period to the next renewal cycle. (e.g., new registrants cannot carry forward hours earned before registration and any PDH earned during the first renewal cycle.)

New Registrants

A professional land surveyor is exempt from the CE requirements for the first biennial registration renewal period following initial registration.

Temporary Active Duty Status

A registrant is exempt from the CE requirements immediately following a period of service on active duty in the armed forces of the United States exceeding 120 consecutive days in a year.

Retired Status

Retired Status is for those registrants who choose to remain registered, **but not to practice**. A registrant in retired status is exempt from the CE requirements. A retired registrant may return to active status by obtaining a minimum of 30 PDH for the current registration period, and by completing the current renewal form and appropriate fee (if in retired status less than five years).

A registrant in retired status for over five years must complete a minimum of 30 PDH, complete the “Reactivation Form” and submit the appropriate fee.

Other Exemption Requests

A land surveyor may request an exemption from the CE requirements by submitting a written request to the board that describes the reasons for the request and include supporting documentation. If the board finds good cause, the board will grant an exemption to a land surveyor who is experiencing a physical disability, serious illness, family emergency or other extenuating circumstance.

RANDOM CE AUDITS

Audit Process

The auditing of a percentage of renewals will be done by a random-generated computer selection. While it is anticipated that registrants will make a good faith effort to comply with the CE requirements there is a need for auditing to verify that the rules are being met. The audit also allows the board to identify any miscommunications between the registrants and the board.

Randomly selected registrants for audit – This is the official audit to be conducted by the board for each renewal period. Each selected registrant will be asked to furnish evidence of completion of the CE claimed on the biennial renewal form. This includes resident and non-resident registrants. (A land surveyor registered in another jurisdiction may use the CE earned in that jurisdiction to meet the requirements of Alaska if the CE requirements of that jurisdiction are substantially similar or exceed the Alaska requirements.) Fraudulently reported activities can result in disciplinary action against a registrant.

Should an investigation be initiated the board may, as part of its investigation, request that documentation of CE compliance be submitted.

DO NOT SEND IN DOCUMENTATION OF CE ACTIVITIES UNLESS YOU ARE NOTIFIED YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED FOR AUDIT