



ARIZONA BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY NEWS

OCTOBER 2019

MISSION: The mission of the Arizona State Board of Physical Therapy is to protect the public from the incompetent, unprofessional, and unlawful practice of physical therapy. The Arizona Physical Therapy Practice Act establishes the standards for the practice of physical therapy, continuing competence and testing, and defines the scope and limitations of practice. The Board licenses and certifies qualified applicants as physical therapists and physical therapist assistants; and receives, investigates and adjudicates complaints against licensees and certificate holders.



PTA's Will Be Required to Obtain 10 Continuing Competency Hours Prior to Renewing Certification in 2020

In April 2019, the Board of Physical Therapy established new rules that require all physical therapist assistants to obtain continuing competency hours in order to renew certification in 2020.

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The New Continuing Competency Rule Changes:



For Physical Therapist Assistants:

B. Except as provided in subsection (G), a certified physical therapist assistant shall earn 10 contact hours of continuing competence for each compliance period to be eligible for certificate renewal.

1. The certificate holder shall earn at least six contact hours from Category A continuing competence activities. No more than three of the required contact hours from Category A may be obtained from nonclinical course work.

2. No more than four contact hours may be earned by the certificate holder during any compliance period from Categories B and C continuing competence activities. No more than two contact hours from Categories B and C may be obtained from nonclinical course work.

3. If the certificate holder's initial certificate is for one year or less, the certificate holder shall earn six contact hours from Category A continuing competence activities during the initial compliance period. No more than three of the required contact hours from Category A may be obtained from nonclinical course work.

C. A licensee or certificate holder shall not receive contact hour credit for repetitions of the same activity.

D. The continuing competence compliance period for a licensee or certificate holder begins on September 1 following the issuance of an initial or renewal license or certificate and ends on August 31 of even-numbered years.

E. A licensee or certificate holder shall not carry over contact hours from one compliance period to another

F. An applicant for renewal shall submit a signed statement to the Board with the renewal application stating whether continuing competence requirements have been fulfilled for the current compliance period.

G. The Board may, at its discretion, waive continuing competence requirements on an individual basis for reasons of extreme hardship such as illness, disability, active service in the military, or other extraordinary circumstance as determined by the Board. A licensee or certificate holder who seeks a waiver of the continuing competence requirements shall provide to the Board, in writing, the specific reasons for requesting the waiver and additional information the Board may request in support of the waiver

For Physical Therapists: (New in Category B)



Clinical instruction: Maximum five contact hours for physical therapists and two contact hours for physical therapist assistants.

a. Clinical instruction involves assisting a student physical therapist or physical therapist assistant or a physical therapist resident or fellow acquire clinical skills required of a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

b. An individual to whom clinical instruction is provided shall be enrolled in:

i. A physical therapist or physical therapist assistant program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education; or

ii. A physical therapist residency or fellowship program approved by the American Physical Therapy Association.

c. The program referenced under subsection (D)(4)(b) shall provide the enrolled individual with proof of completing the hours of clinical instruction. d. Each 120 hours of clinical instruction equals one contact hour.



CEU Category A, B and C Descriptions:

Category A continuing competence activities shall be approved by:

1. An accredited medical, health care, or physical therapy program;
2. A state or national medical, health care, or physical therapy association, or a component of the association; or
3. A national medical, health care, or physical therapy specialty society.

Category A continuing competence activities include:

1. A physical therapy continuing education course designed to provide necessary understanding of current research, clinical skills, administration, or education related to the practice of physical therapy. Calculation of contact hours is determined by dividing the total minutes of instruction by 60. Breaks shall not be included as part of instructional time;

2. Coursework towards granting or renewal of a physical therapy clinical specialty certification approved by the Board. Each 60 minutes of instruction equals one contact hour;
3. Coursework in a physical therapy clinical residency program. Each 60 minutes of instruction equals one contact hour;
- and 4. Coursework in a postgraduate physical therapy education from an accredited college or university. Each 60 minutes of instruction equals one contact hour. C

Category B continuing competence activities include:

1. **Study group**: Maximum five contact hours for physical therapists and two contact hours for physical therapist assistants.
 - a. A study group is a structured meeting designed for the study of a clinical physical therapy topic dealing with current research, clinical skills, procedures, or treatment related to the practice of physical therapy
 - b. A study group shall have a minimum of three participants and two hours of participation to equal one contact hour.
2. **Self instruction**: Maximum five contact hours for physical therapists and two contact hours for physical therapist assistants.
 - a. Self instruction is a structured course of study relating to one clinical physical therapy topic dealing with current research, clinical skills, procedures, or treatment related to the practice of physical therapy. Self instruction may be directed by a correspondence course, video, internet, or satellite program.
 - b. Each 60 minutes of self instruction equals one contact hour.
3. **Inservice education**: Maximum five contact hours for physical therapists and two contact hours for physical therapist assistants.
 - a. Inservice education is attendance at a presentation pertaining to current research, clinical skills, procedures, or treatment related to the practice of physical therapy or relating to patient welfare or safety, including CPR certification.
 - b. Each 60 minutes of inservice education equals one contact hour. D.

Category C modes of continuing competence include:

1. **Physical therapy practice management coursework**: Maximum of five contact hours for physical therapists and two contact hours for physical therapist assistants.
 - a. Physical therapy practice management course work is course work concerning physical therapy administration, professional responsibility, ethical obligations, or legal requirements applicable to physical therapy practice settings.
 - b. If the course is graded, a licensee or certificate holder shall receive a “pass” in a pass/fail course or a minimum of a C in a graded course to receive credit.

- c. Each 60 minutes of practice management coursework equals one contact hour.
2. Teaching or lecturing: Maximum five contact hours for physical therapists and two contact hours for physical therapist assistants.
 - a. Teaching or lecturing is the presentation of an original educational program dealing with current research, clinical skills, procedures, treatment, or practice management related to the practice of physical therapy principally for health care professionals. Credit may be earned for teaching when the presentation is accompanied by written materials prepared, augmented, or updated by the presenter including course objectives and program content.
 - b. One 60 minute instructional period equals 2.5 contact hours.
 - c. Credit shall be given only once for a presentation within a compliance period.
3. Publication: Maximum five contact hours for physical therapists and two contact hours for physical therapist assistants. a. Publication includes writing for professional publication, platform, or poster presentation abstracts

Activities Not Eligible for Continuing Competence Credit



A licensee or certificate holder shall not receive continuing competence credit for the following activities:

1. A regularly scheduled educational opportunity provided within an institution, such as rounds or case conferences;
2. A staff meeting;
3. A publication or presentation by the licensee or certificate holder to a lay or nonprofessional group;
4. Routine teaching of personnel, students, or staff as part of a job requirement.

All courses can be taken on-line or in person.

Each 60 minutes = 1 contact hour

For clinical education Instruction: Each 120 hours = 1 contact hour