

BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE CONTINUING COMPETENCE REQUIREMENTS UNDER HRS CHAPTER 461J FOR HAWAII LICENSED PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

Q1: Are all physical therapist licensees subject to the continuing competence requirements?

A1: No; only those physical therapists with active Hawaii licenses are subject to these requirements.

Licensees who are on inactive status are not subject to the new requirements while they are on inactive status. Please note that while on inactive status, the licensee shall not engage in the practice of physical therapy (“PT”).

In addition, a physical therapist with an active Hawaii license may seek an exemption from the requirements by complying with the provisions of Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) section 461J-10.14.

Currently, physical therapist assistants are not subject to continuing competence requirements.

Q2: When do I need to have obtained at least thirty (30) units of approved continuing competence units (“CCU”) in order to renew my Hawaii physical therapist license?

A2: All physical therapists with active Hawaii licenses must complete the CCU requirement by their license expiration date (December 31st of every even-numbered year).

Please note that for the first-time license renewals, if the initial license was issued less than twelve (12) months prior to the renewal date, no CCUs will be required for the first renewal period. If the initial license was issued more than twelve (12) months prior to the renewal date, the licensee shall be required to obtain fifteen (15) units of approved CCUs for the first renewal period.

Q3: What if my license is on active status and I have not obtained the 30 CCUs by the expiration date of my license?

A3: You cannot renew your license. All licensees will be required to sign an attestation certifying that they have completed their required CCUs during the renewal process.

Q4: Do I have to take an examination at the end of each continuing competence course?

A4: No; it is up to each continuing competence course provider or agency to determine whether to include an examination at the end of their course or not.

Q5: What are the record keeping requirements?

A5: Each licensee is required to keep and maintain his or her continuing competence records for a period of seven (7) years after the course of activity concludes. It is important to properly maintain these records because the Hawaii Board of Physical Therapy (“Board”) may randomly audit a licensee’s CCUs. It is up to each licensee to determine how to maintain records of the CCUs the licensee has obtained during each renewal period.

Q6: Is there a free continuing competence record system?

A6: The Board previously recommended the use of the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy’s (“FSBPT”) aPTitude system which was a free continuing competence record system. As of December 31, 2019, the FSBPT discontinued the aPTitude system.

The Board currently is not recommending or endorsing any similar free continuing competence record system.

Q7: Will the Board accept all subjects related to the professional practice of physical therapy?

A7: No. As the courses are being submitted for renewal of a Hawaii physical therapist license, all subjects must be related to the professional practice of physical therapy in Hawaii. Therefore, if the Hawaii scope of practice does not allow the physical therapist to perform any techniques or modalities related to the class (e.g. dry needling), the course will not be accepted.

Q8: Will the Board accept continuing education approved by another organization?

A8: To date, the Board will accept continued competence courses in subjects related to either the professional practice of physical therapy **in Hawaii*** or patient/client management from the following:

- Courses sponsored by the American Physical Therapy Association (“APTA”) or Hawaii Chapter of the APTA (“HAPTA”) (this does not include other state’s chapters of the APTA);
- Courses approved by the FSBPT’s ProCert;
- Courses approved by another state or jurisdiction’s physical therapy board or its equivalent; and
- Courses offered or approved by any other provider or agency approved by the Board.

** all courses for renewal of a Hawaii physical therapist license must be in subjects related to the practice of PT in Hawaii. If the subject of the course is on a topic or technique which is not allowed under Hawaii's scope of practice (e.g. dry needling), the Board will **not** accept the course for license renewal, even if it is approved by one of the organizations listed above.*

If you take a course from one of the organizations listed above, including those approved by another state or jurisdiction, you will be responsible to have the approval or index number issued by that organization noted somewhere on the course completion certificate. This will allow the Board to verify that the course was approved by that organization.

Q9. What courses in ethics, laws, and rules (jurisprudence) will the Board accept?

A9: All courses in ethics, laws, and rules (jurisprudence) must be approved by the Hawaii Board of Physical Therapy. The Board will not accept a course approved by any other organization or state/jurisdiction. Also, all courses must include Hawaii's laws and rules (jurisprudence), therefore, the Board will not accept a course on any other state or jurisdiction's laws and rules.

Q10. Can I take a life support course other than the American Heart Association ("AHA") basic life support health care provider course?

A10. Yes; but you do so at your own risk. Please note the course must be at least four (4) CCUs in length and the training must be comparable to, or more advanced than the AHA's basic life support health care provider course. For more information on the contents of the AHA's basic life support course, please visit their website:
<http://cpr.heart.org/>

Q11: Where can I find a list of courses approved by the Hawaii Board of Physical Therapy?

A11: The Board's list of approved courses can be found on the following web page:

<http://cca.hawaii.gov/pvl/boards/physicaltherapy/continuing-competence-information/>

Please ensure that you are looking at the correct list for the biennium that you are taking the courses for. As licenses can be restored within a year of the expiration date, there may be two different lists posted: one for the current biennium and one for the previous biennium.

Q12: How can I get my course approved by the Board?

A12: On the web page listed in the response to Q11, there are two separate lists of requirements – one for approval of courses in the professional practice of physical therapy or patient/client management; and another for ethics, laws and rules (jurisprudence) courses. Please review the appropriate list of requirements based on your course topic(s).

Q13: Can I take a continuing competence course from a provider or agency that has not been approved by the Board?

A13: Yes; but you do so at your own risk. There is no guarantee that the provider or agency will seek the Board's approval after the course has been given, or that the Board will approve the course.

Q14: How long is the Board's approval of a course, provider, or agency good for?

A14: The Board's approval is only good for the licensing biennium in which it is issued (but no longer than two (2) years). Thereafter, the provider or agency must obtain the Board's approval for the next two (2) year period (even if the course is unchanged and remains the same).

Q15: How often do I have to obtain the 30 CCUs?

A15: Every two (2) years, beginning with the December 31, 2016 renewal date. Thereafter, licensees are required to obtain at least 30 CCUs every two (2) years (i.e., by December 31 of every even-numbered year) in order to subsequently renew their license.

Q16: Can I request an exemption from the continuing competence requirement?

A16: Pursuant to HRS §461J-10.14, prior to the expiration of a renewal period, a licensee may submit a written request to the board for an exemption from the continuing competence requirements. Please see HRS §461J-10.14 for the information required in the request for exemption.

Q17: Where can I find more information on the continuing competence requirements?

A17: Please visit the Board's website: <http://cca.hawaii.gov/pvl/boards/physicaltherapy/>

Q18: Who do I contact if I have further questions?

A18: You may contact the Board by telephone at (808) 586-2701, or e-mail at phys_therapy@dcca.hawaii.gov.