

**TITLE 27
LEGISLATIVE RULE
BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN COUNSELING**

**SERIES 3
LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR LICENSE RENEWAL AND
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

§27-3-1. General.

1.1. Scope. -- This rule establishes standards for license renewal requirements, continuing professional education requirements, and the sanctions to be imposed for failure to comply with the requirements.

1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Code §§30-31-5 and 30-31-6.

1.3. Filing Date. – April 14, 2026.

1.4. Effective Date. – April 14, 2026.

1.5. Sunset Provision. – This rule shall terminate and have no further force or effect upon the expiration of August 1, 2031.

§27-3-2. Definitions.

2.1. “Approved program of continuing professional education” means a formally organized educational program sponsored by an approved provider and offered in the form of a class, course, workshop, seminar, staff development or training activity, or formally structured discussion. Programs shall be designed to enhance counseling skills, values, knowledge, and/or ethical considerations in the counseling practice.

2.2. “Approved provider” means an agency, organization, person, institution, or professional association or its local affiliates which has applied to and received approval by the Board to provide approved programs of continuing professional education under its own auspices, and which remains approved by complying with the provisions of subdivision 6.2.b. of this rule.

2.3. “Biennium” means the two-year reporting period for continuing education beginning July 1, 2015, and ending June 30, 2017, and every two (2) year period thereafter.

2.4. “Contact hour” means 60 minutes spent in an approved program offered by an approved provider. Contact hours exclude travel time, meeting time devoted to business, refreshment breaks, receptions, award banquets and other social gatherings and meals that do not include an acceptable program.

2.5. “Continuing professional education” means a program to enable the licensee to maintain and/or expand professional expertness, to become more aware of new professional developments and

to provide responsible and quality service to clients and the community including, but not limited to, educational programs in the following areas: Counseling theories; counseling techniques; human growth and development; social and cultural foundations; supervised practicum; supervised internship; addictions; crisis intervention; group dynamics, processes, counseling and consulting; life-style and career development; marriage and/or family therapy; research and evaluation; principles of etiology, diagnosis, treatment planning, prevention of mental and emotional disorders and dysfunctional behavior; and community resources and rehabilitation services.

2.6. "Formal program" means a program attended synchronously, in person or virtually with a presenter.

§27-3-3. Renewal of license.

3.1. A licensee shall renew their license annually on or before June 30.

3.1.1. A licensee shall file the required renewal application in the manner prescribed by the Board and shall pay the appropriate renewal fee.

3.1.2. For each biennium reporting period, the licensee shall provide proof of continuing education;

3.2. All licenses are eligible for random audits.

3.3. A licensee selected for audit shall upload all certificates of completion corresponding with the information entered in the system.

3.4. The licensee is responsible for maintaining continuing education records including certificates of completion for a period of six (6) years.

3.5. An audit shall be automatic for a licensee who was determined to be non-compliant during the immediately preceding audit or found in violation of the Code of Ethics by the Board.

3.6. Failure to meet the continuing education requirements, providing documentation as requested by the board, or providing fraudulent documentation is a violation of Board rules and may result in disciplinary action.

3.7. All licenses not renewed by the renewal date each renewal cycle shall expire. Any individual who has not renewed their license and who continues to practice after their license has expired will be deemed guilty of unlicensed practice.

3.8. All expired licenses, within 60 days after the expiration date, may renew their license upon payment of a renewal fee and a late fee pursuant to 27CSR2.

3.9. After 60 days, individuals with expired licenses may reinstate their license upon payment of a renewal fee, late fee and a reinstatement fee pursuant to 27CSR2.

3.10. A licensee who fails to reinstate their license within two (2) years after its expiration date, may not renew, restore, reissue, or reinstate the license. This person may apply for and obtain a new license by meeting the current requirements of Series 1, Licensing rule.

3.11. The board may require that a person applying for renewal or reinstatement of their credential show proof of having completed continuing education requirements.

3.12. A licensee shall update the change of their home address, work address and email address within 30 days of the occurrence. Failure to receive a renewal notice or audit notice from the Board shall not relieve the licensee from the renewal requirements.

§27-3-4. Continuing Professional Education.

4.1. A licensee shall obtain 35 continuing education contact hours of approved continuing professional education every biennium.

4.1.1. At least three (3) of the 35 contact hours shall be in counselor-related ethics. The program in ethics shall follow the adopted ethical code of this rule. The three (3) contact hours in ethics shall be earned in a formal program with an approved presenter on the first renewal cycle of a licensee. The three (3) contact hours in ethics in the subsequent renewals can be obtained through American Counseling Association (ACA) home studies, ACA online programs or any other modality.

4.1.2. At least two (2) of the 35 contact hours shall be in mental health conditions specific to veterans and family members of veterans. Each licensee shall complete these two (2) contacts hours of continuing education on a biennium basis beginning July 1, 2017. Training specific to veterans and family members of veterans may include, but not be limited to, inquiring about whether clients are veterans or family members of veterans; screening for conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder; readjustment issues; risk of suicide and prevention of suicide; military sexual assault; and depression and grief. The contact hours will be approved by the Board through requirements established in section §27-3-6.2.a of this rule.

4.2. The Board shall grant approval for academic graduate courses offered in accredited educational institutions by counseling degree programs. The Board shall grant 15 contact hours for one (1) academic graduate semester hour. The Board shall grant 10 contact hours for one (1) academic graduate quarter hour.

4.3. The Board shall grant up to 12 hours per year in peer consultation/supervision through a Board approved provider.

4.4. The Board shall grant 10 contact hours for a journal article directly related to the counseling profession published during the renewal period in a professional journal related to the counseling profession. Articles having joint authorship shall be divided equally among the authors.

4.5. The Board shall grant 30 contact hours for a book that is published during the renewal period and is directly related to the counseling profession. Books having joint authorship shall be divided equally among the authors. Chapters authored by licensees in books acceptable under this rule shall be treated as journal articles.

4.6. The Board shall grant no more than half of the hours for any reporting period for continuing education presented by the licensee's employment agency personnel. The agency personnel shall meet the presenter qualifications as cited in subparagraph 6.2.a.2.A of this rule. The continuing education programs shall be directly related to the counseling profession. A licensee attending a continuing education program delivered in the licensee's employing agency by an out-of-agency presenter shall not be counted in the 15 contact hours described in subsection 4.5 of this rule.

4.7. The Board shall grant 10 contact hours to a presenter of an approved three (3) hour graduate college course related to the counseling profession, up to 10 contact hours per renewal period, if such teaching or instruction is outside the licensee's regular employment duties or if the licensee can document such teaching activity or instruction was newly developed and presented for the first time.

4.8. The Board shall grant contact hours to licensees who conduct presentations on subjects related to counseling which meets the following requirement:

4.8.1. Credit, up to 10 contact hours per renewal shall be granted for first time preparation and presentation of an in-service training workshop, a seminar or a conference presentation which is related to the enhancement of counseling practices, values, skills or knowledge; and,

4.8.2. A given presentation can be counted once per biennium period.

4.9. A licensee with approved professional supervisor counselor status shall complete three (3) of the 35 contact hours in clinical counseling supervision.

4.10. The Board shall grant a maximum of 20 contact hours within each biennium period for home study programs. Only home study programs pre-approved by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) and the American Counseling Association (ACA) and American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) are granted home study program approval.

4.11. Any out-of-state counseling related continuing education programs or conferences pre-approved by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), the American Counseling Association (ACA), and the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), are automatically granted approval by the board.

4.12. At least 50% of contact hours shall be obtained from attendance in offerings other than those taught, conducted, produced, or presented by the licensee.

4.13 Excess contact hours may not be carried over to the next biennium period.

§27-3-5. Documentation of continuing professional education required for renewal of a license.

5.1. Transcripts shall verify courses taken for credit at accredited educational institutions. Completion of non-credit and audited courses shall be verified by certificates of completion or by signed statements from instructors.

5.2. Presenters of approved graduate college courses shall submit a letter from the institution including: the date the course was taught; the course number; the course description; and the signature of the department chair.

5.3. Copies of publications presented for continuing professional education shall be furnished to the Board. In the case of journal articles, a copy of the journal's page showing the names of its editorial review Board shall be included in the document that the journal references.

5.4. A copy of the certificate of completion furnished by the provider shall document all other continuing professional education. The certificates shall contain the information cited in subparagraph 6.2.a.2.L of this rule. In addition, the licensee shall record his or her license number in the appropriate place on the certificate of completion.

§27-3-6. Approved programs for continuing professional education.

6.1. The goal of the Board's continuing professional education requirements is to: enable licensees to maintain and/or expand professional expertise; become aware of new professional developments; provide responsible and quality service to clients and community; and continue to conduct professional practice in an ethical and appropriate manner. The Board will not grant credit for continuing education to promote personal growth of the licensee.

6.2. A licensee may obtain continuing education credits in five (5) ways: programs offered by approved providers; approved programs of continuing professional education; post-approved programs; asynchronous programs and publications and presentations as cited in subsections 4.3. and 4.4. of this rule. The Board or its designee shall approve providers, programs, and home study programs and offer post-program approval according to the following guidelines:

6.2.1. Guidelines for program approval:

6.2.2. Academic micro credentials offered in accredited education institutions by counseling degree programs are automatically granted program approval; and

6.2.3. Approved programs may be sponsored by departments of accredited educational institutions; national, regional, state, or local professional organizations or associations; public or private human service agencies or organization; private consultants; or individuals. The organization or individual shall make application for approval on a form designated by the Board and pay the appropriate fee. To obtain approved status from the Board, a program shall meet the following requirements:

6.2.3.a. Competent individuals as documented by appropriate academic training, master's level or above and professionally recognized experience shall present the program. Presenters should have an identifiable involvement with human services. In approving a particular presenter, the Board shall be guided by the following range of presenter qualifications:

6.2.3.b. Counselors with appropriate credentials and appropriate expertise in the content area shall clearly be accepted;

6.2.3.c. A related presenter with the ability to connect content to counseling practice shall usually be accepted;

6.2.3.d. Expert presenters with no apparent link to counseling may or may not be acceptable based upon the content to be presented and intended audience;

6.2.3.e. A presenter with no apparent professional qualifications nor link to counseling or human services shall not be accepted; and,

6.2.3.f. A presenter providing training in a practice area that would require licensure shall show evidence of current licensure in West Virginia or another state.

6.2.3.g. The program shall meet the professional needs of the intended clientele, which shall include counselors;

6.2.4. The program shall have a minimum duration of one (1) contact hour;

6.2.5. The program shall have written goals and objectives that are responsive to the needs of prospective counselor attendees;

6.2.6. The program shall have an agenda, clearly listing the time and date of the program, including starting and ending times and refreshment and meal breaks;

6.2.7. The program shall be related to counselor content areas as cited in subsection 2.5. in this rule;

6.2.8. The program shall be disseminated via appropriate instructional methods, such as lecture, group discussion, video, film, interactive webinar or interactive teleconferencing;

6.2.9. The program shall include an evaluation component directly related to its stated goals and objectives;

6.2.10. The program shall be offered in a site that shall be accessible under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act;

6.2.11. The organization or individual shall submit their program approval request for review, on a form designated by the Board, at least 60 days prior to the scheduled program date;

6.2.12. The program's promotional information shall state that program approval has either been applied for or has been granted; and,

6.2.13. The provider of the program shall provide program participants certificates of completion, which contain the following information:

6.2.13.a The title and dates of the program and the Board's program approval number;

6.2.13.b. The name of the sponsoring agency or organization;

6.2.13.c. The name of the participant and the number of contact hours of continuing professional education earned by the participant;

6.2.13.d. The presenters name and his or her credentials; and,

6.2.13.e. The signature of the presenter and/or the official representative of the sponsoring organization.

6.2.14. Guidelines for provider approval:

6.2.14.a The Board shall grant approved provider status for newly approved providers for a one (1) year period and is subject to renewal if the provider meets the requirements of this rule;

6.2.14.b. An approved provider who does not pay a fee to re-certify within 30 days of notice forfeits all rights and privileges of an approved provider.

6.2.15. The Board shall refuse to renew the approved status of any provider who fails to comply with the requirements of this rule. The Board shall withdraw approved provider status for cause.

6.2.15.a. Programs offered by a provider while that provider does not have approved status shall not be accepted by the Board toward fulfillment of license renewal requirements unless program approval for the programs were obtained as set forth in this rule;

6.2.15.b. Provider status is automatically accorded to counseling degree programs, as cited in subsection 2.5. of this rule, in accredited educational institutions. Transcripts or grade cards shall serve as evidence of completed coursework. If the licensee audits an approved course, a letter from the professor is required to verify actual number of hours of attendance, which is used to determine hours of continuing education credit granted;

6.2.15.c. The Board may grant approved status to providers not automatically approved in paragraph 6.2.b.4. of this rule. The providers shall include but are not limited to national, regional, state, or local professional organizations, public or private human service agencies, private consultants or individuals. The applicant for approved provider status shall:

6.2.15.c.1. Make application for approval status on a form provided by the Board and pay the appropriate fee, at least two (2) months prior to the date of the first scheduled program offering. A list of proposed programs and program goals shall be included with the application;

6.2.15.c.2. Submit to the Board, no later than two (2) months before the end of the probationary period, a synopsis of all programs during the previous 10 months;

6.2.15.c.3. Apply for renewal of approved provider status two (2) months prior to the desired one (1) year period and pay the appropriate fee;

6.2.15.c.4. Provide or arrange for appropriate educational facilities, instructional aids, and offer programs and facilities that are accessible under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act;

6.2.15.c.5. Have program presenters who have professionally recognized skills to conduct the programs being offered in accordance with subdivision 6.2.a. of this rule;

6.2.15.c.6. Conduct programs that satisfy one (1) or more of the program areas in counseling as cited in subsection 2.5. of this rule;

6.2.15.c.7. Include an evaluation component in all programs offered;

6.2.15.c.8. Maintains records of program content, presenter qualifications and individual participation, and a summary of evaluations forms for five (5) years and make the records available if requested by the Board; and,

6.2.15.c.9. Furnish to each participant a certificate of completion that includes the following information:

6.2.15.c.9.A. The title and date of the program and the Board's program approval number;

6.2.15.c.9.B. The name of the sponsoring agency or organization;

6.2.15.c.9.C. The name of the participant and the number of contact hours earned by the participant;

6.2.15.c.9.D. The presenters' names and their credentials;

6.2.15.c.9.E. The signature of the presenter and/or the official representative of the sponsoring organization; and

6.2.15.c.9.F. An approved provider that offers a program on counseling ethics shall incorporate the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association as a substantial part of the program.

6.2.16. Post program approval:

6.2.16.a. A licensee shall apply on a form prescribed by the Board for post-approval of counseling programs which they attended, for relevant out of state continuing professional education programs and for relevant graduate coursework in related disciplines.

6.2.16.a.1. A licensee shall apply for post-program approval, on a form designated by the Board, within 90 days of completing program;

6.2.16.a.2. To obtain post-program approval, the licensee shall provide the following:

6.2.16.a.2.A. Documentation that the program presenters met the requirements in paragraph 6.2.a.2.A. of this rule;

6.2.16.a.2.B. A copy of the program brochure and other documentation, if necessary, demonstrating that the program met the requirements of paragraph 6.2.a.2.B. through paragraph 6.2.a.2.I. of this rule; and,

6.2.16.a.2.C. A certificate of completion, transcript, grade card, or signed statement from the presenter to demonstrate the licensee's attendance at the program or course.

6.2.17. Home study and asynchronous approval:

6.2.17.a. Home study programs may be sponsored by departments of accredited educational institutions; national, regional, state, or local professional organizations or associations; public or private human service agencies or organizations; private consultants; or individuals. To obtain approval from the Board, the sponsoring organizations of a home study program shall meet the following requirements:

6.2.17.a.1. Home study program content shall satisfy one (1) or more of the program areas in subsection 2.5. of this rule;

6.2.17.a.2. A home study program shall contribute to the current knowledge of master's level counselors. Program materials should not be more than six (6) years old. Materials that are more than six (6) years old shall include a statement for review regarding the reason that the material is still relevant and valuable to the counselor;

6.2.17.a.3. Home study programs focusing on ethics in counseling practice shall include information on the ethical codes of the American Counseling Association (ACA);

6.2.17.a.4. Information on how the home study material may be used by the counselor with their clients shall be included either in the learning instrument or as an addendum;

6.2.17.a.5. The home study program shall have the following components:

6.2.17.a.5.A. Appropriate learning instruments such as, but not limited to, a book, tape, internet-based text, video, subscription to a professional periodical or volumes of past periodicals;

6.2.17.a.5.B. An assessment component, such as, but not limited to, a quiz, test or essay;

6.2.17.a.5.C. An evaluation component; and,

6.2.17.a.5.D. An instruction sheet with clear information regarding how to obtain continuing education credit.

6.2.17.a.6. A home study provider shall file with the Board the required application forms in a manner prescribed by the Board and pay the appropriate fee. A sample of the entire home study program including a sample of the certificate of completion shall be included with this application. The certificate of completion shall contain all information cited in paragraph 6.2.a.2.L of this rule.