

Department of Health
Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission
Guidance Document

<i>Title:</i>	Continuing Education Requirements	<i>Number:</i>	G001
<i>References:</i>	WAC 246-945-178, WAC 246-945-220, WAC 246-861-090, and WAC 246-901-061.		
<i>Contact:</i>	Dr. Lauren Lyles-Stolz, Executive Director, Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission		
<i>Phone:</i>	360-236-4946		
<i>Email:</i>	WSPQAC@doh.wa.gov		
<i>Effective Date:</i>	July 1, 2020 (Updated December 3, 2020)		
<i>Supersedes:</i>	N/A		
<i>Approved By:</i>	Tim Lynch, PharmD, MS, FABC, FASHP Chair, Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission		

Pharmacists whose licenses expire on or after December 1, 2022, shall complete the equivalent of 3.0 continuing pharmacy education (CPE)¹ administered by an ACPE accredited provider prior to renewing their license pursuant to WAC 246-945-178. Pharmacists whose licenses expire before December 1, 2022 shall complete the equivalent of 1.5 continuing education units (CEU)² prior to renewing their license pursuant to WAC 246-861-090(1).

Pharmacy technicians whose certifications expire on or after December 1, 2022, shall complete the equivalent of 2.0 CPE³ administered by an ACPE accredited program prior to renewing their certification pursuant to WAC 246-945-220. Pharmacy technicians whose certifications expire before December 1, 2022 shall complete the equivalent of 1.0 CEU⁴ prior to renewing their certification. The 1.0 CEU shall include at least one (1) hour of course work in pharmacy law and nine (9) hours in any course work that relates to the practice of pharmacy pursuant to WAC 246-901-061(1).

The Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission (commission) recently completed a 2.5-year process to consolidate their thirty-three (33) chapters of WAC into one new chapter (chapter 246-945 WAC). While the vast majority of rules contained in chapter 246-945 WAC were effective on July 1, 2020, the new continuing pharmacy education (CPE) requirements for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians will not become effective until **December 1, 2021**. The following table provides a comparison between the older continuing education requirements and the new continuing education requirements:

¹ The 3.0 CPE requirement is equivalent to thirty (30) hours of continuing education.

² The 1.5 CEU requirement is equivalent to fifteen (15) hours of continuing education.

³ The 2.0 CPE requirement is equivalent to twenty (20) hours of continuing education.

⁴ The 1.0 CEU requirement is equivalent to ten (10) hours of continuing education.

Profession	Older CE Requirement	New CE Requirement
Pharmacists	1.5 CEU ⁵	3.0 CPE ⁶
Pharmacy Technicians	1.0 CEU ⁷	2.0 CPE ⁸

The new CPE requirements for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians will not become effective until December 1, 2021 because the commission is transitioning all individual licenses (pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy assistants) to a two-year renewal cycle. The transition to a two-year renewal cycle for licenses has necessitated changing CPE requirements to a two-year cycle as well. Consequently, the commission intends for the new CPE rules to be effective on December 1, 2021, when the transition to a two-year renewal cycle is complete.

To avoid confusion and provide pharmacists and pharmacy technicians with clear expectations as it relates to CPE requirements, the commission has developed the following table that identifies how much CPE will be required prior to renewal based on when the pharmacist license or pharmacy technician certification expires:

If my license EXPIRES between		CE required for pharmacists	CE required for pharmacy technicians
N/A	June 30, 2020	1.5 CEU	1.0 CEU
July 1, 2020*	November 30, 2021	1.5 CEU	1.0 CEU
December 1, 2021**	November 30, 2022	1.5 CEU	1.0 CEU
December 1, 2022	N/A	3.0 CPE	2.0 CPE

* Chapter 246-945 WAC is effective, except for the new CPE rules (WAC 246-945-178 and WAC 246-945-220).

** The transition to a two-year renewal cycle will be complete and the new CPE rules (WAC 246-945-178 and WAC 246-945-220) will become effective.

Conclusion: Under new CPE rules effective December 1, 2021, pharmacists whose licenses expires on or after December 1, 2022, shall complete the equivalent of 3.0 CPE administered by an ACPE accredited provider prior to renewing their license pursuant to WAC 246-945-178. Pharmacists whose licenses expire before December 1, 2022 shall complete the equivalent of 1.5 CEU prior to renewing their license pursuant to WAC 246-861-090(1).

Under new CPE rules effective December 1, 2021, pharmacy technicians whose certifications expire on or after December 1, 2022, shall complete the equivalent of 2.0 CPE administered by an ACPE accredited program prior to renewing their certification pursuant to WAC 246-945-220. Pharmacy technicians whose certifications expire before December 1, 2022 shall complete the equivalent of 1.0 CEU prior to renewing their certification. The 1.0 CEU shall include at least one (1) hour of course work in pharmacy law and nine (9) hours in any course work that relates to the practice of pharmacy pursuant to WAC 246-901-061(1).

⁵ WAC 246-861-090(1).

⁶ WAC 246-945-178.

⁷ WAC 246-945-220; pharmacy technician continuing education shall include at least one (1) hour of course work in pharmacy law and nine (9) hours in any course work that relates to the practice of pharmacy.

⁸ WAC 246-945-220