

## **Frequently Asked Questions about New Continuing Competence Requirements in Massachusetts for PTs and PTAs**

*These questions and answers represent APTAMA interpretation of the Continuing Competence Regulations as published. It is the responsibility of the licensee to review the regulations and clarify any points in questions. APTAMA is not responsible for any discrepancies in interpretation as the Board of Allied Health is the authority pertaining to Continuing Competence Regulations and their interpretation.*

**Q:** How many continuing competence points do I need?

**A:** Licensees must complete 24 continuing competence points per renewal period beginning in August 2024. Between September 2022 and July 2024, the number of points required is prorated according to the chart outlined by the BOAH linked below.

**[This chart will let you know how many Continuing Competence Points you need to attest to based on your renewal month](#)**

**Q:** What exactly are the ethics, laws, and regulations requirements and how can I fulfill them?

**A:** Renewal periods beginning in **August 2024** will require “two points in ethics, laws and regulations governing practice in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or some combination thereof.”

APTAMA is ironing out logistics but is looking to create a course to meet this need. There will be more communication on this topic over the next year.

**Q:** As a new grad, do I need continuing competence points to get my license?

**A:** No, not for your initial license or when you renew for the first time after obtaining your license. Beginning with your second renewal, you will need to attest to completing 24 continuing competence points in the 2-year period prior to your second renewal.

**Q:** What counts as a continuing competence course or “activity”?

**A:** Please refer to section 259 CMR 7.01(2) of the regs for detailed language around what counts as continuing competence activities. The categories include publications, academic courses, continuing education courses, workshops and seminars, academic coursework, and continuing competence programs.

**Q:** Will I need to maintain Continuing Competence Requirements even if I retire from practice?

**A:** To maintain a PT or PTA license in Massachusetts, you will need to have the 24 continuing competence points each renewal cycle.

**Q:** Will I get credit for taking a student?

**A:** The current regulations do not allocate points for service as a clinical instructor. APTAMA has asked the Board of Allied Health to reconsider this in future versions of this document.

**Q: Do I need to maintain records and keep track of my Continuing Education hours?**

**Yes, you are responsible for maintaining records!**

**APTAMA Members can utilize CEU Locker to store and track continuing competence activities**

Please visit <https://ceulocker.com>, click “Create a CEU Holder Account”. Click “CEU Holders register here” and toggle to APTAMA and enter your information – including your PT/PTA license number and APTA Member ID

**Q: Does the Board of Allied Health or any approval organization have a list of courses or companies that already have pre-approved courses?**

**A:** APTAMA has asked the Board to publicize their list of approved providers. All content that has been approved for competence by APTAMA will be found on our CEU Locker listing page once live. We cannot speak for other institutions.

**Q: When can we start collecting/tracking our continuing competence points?**

**A:** For the first renewal cycle that falls between September 2022 and July 2024, the Board will accept activities that fall at any point during that renewal period. Ex: If you renewed January 1, 2021, you can use anything after that renewal for continuing competence for your next renewal on January 1, 2023.

**Q: How will auditing and attestation work?**

**A:** In the first cycle, you will be asked to attest to your continuing competence compliance when you renew your license. The BOAH reserves the right to audit at any time, so it will be your responsibility to maintain paperwork. The BOAH may randomly audit your continuing competence documents and may request additional documentation for 2 prior renewal periods.

Below is what you are required to submit, if asked to prove your work (for courses and academics):

- (a) the **title** of the program or course, **course outline/objectives** and **faculty with qualifications**;
- (b) the **number of hours** spent in the program or course;
- (c) the **date(s) and location** that the program or course was given; and
- (d) the **name of the Board-recognized entity that reviewed and approved the program** or course.

Board recognized entities include, but are not limited to, APTA, FSBPT, AOTA and such other entities identified in 259 CMR 7.03(2).

APTAMA recommends that you hold onto a certificate of completion which should have most of the above information. We also recommend that you hold onto any brochure, website page, handouts with the course description, objectives, reference list (bibliography) and presenter bio/credentials. This will help verify that the course meets the standard of contemporary clinical practice of physical therapy

**Please refer to section 259 CMR 7.02 of the full regulations for auditing submission requirements for all other activities.**

**Q: Does APTAMA approve courses for Continuing Competence Requirements?**

**A:** Yes, APTAMA can approve courses for Continuing Competence in Massachusetts (National APTA does not approve courses.) Details on this process will be published in the near future.

The Board of Allied Health is the only organization that can approve **Continuing Education Providers**. The only approved providers are listed in the regs (259 CMR 7.03(2)). APTAMA will have processes to make it more cost-effective for groups not named in this section to get individual courses approved through our process, but we cannot approve providers.

**Q:** Is APTAMA in charge of the Continuing Competence process?

**A:** **No**, the Board of Allied Health is the organization responsible for the regulations, the release, the roll out and the verification of continued competence for licensed individuals. The APTA, as your professional organization, will continue provide our best interpretation of these regulations, elevate questions to the Board of Allied Health, and support members to develop professionally by offering internal events that meet Continuing Competence requirements and streamline an approval process for external groups.

**Q:** How will APTAMA communicate further information as it is learned?

**A:** We will continue to communicate through email and will post all updates to our members-only Mighty Networks page under the “Continuing Competence” group. [Members can request to join here.](#)

**Q:** What happens if I do not complete the requirements or cannot provide the documentation?

**A:** The Board of Allied Health may determine additional requirements that must be fulfilled to allow you to renew if competence requirements are not met. Failure to complete or provide appropriate documentation may result in non-renewal or disciplinary action.

**Q:** Are there waivers for extenuating circumstances?

**A:** You can request for a waiver for reasons of health, disability, out of state military service, or undue hardship. Please see regulations for more details.

**Q:** Will my employer be required to help pay for continuing competence to maintain my license?

**A:** No. Employers cannot be mandated to pay for clinicians’ continuing competence.

**Q:** This Q+A was great but where can I find all the details? **Here is the full version of the regulations.**

**Other questions submitted to the Board of Allied Health from APTAMA**  
**(answers have not been received, further information will be posted to Mighty Networks)**

- How does the Board of Allied Health plan to approve Continuing Education providers not listed in 259 CMR 7.03 (2)? Is there any timeline on when this process will begin?
  - Would the Board consider delegating this process to other entities that have processes in place to approve Providers, such as APTA Massachusetts?
- Can the Board publish a regularly updated listing of approved providers for licensees to reference?
- Can the Board please clarify how a CEU point is calculated? It is our understanding that one hour is equivalent to 0.1 CEU point. Is this correct?
- Do courses taken prior to the release of this document not approved by the institutions named in 259 CMR 7.03 (2) need any sort of retroactive approvals in order to qualify for points for attendees next license renewal?
- What will the communication be to licensees leading up to their renewal period?
- In regards to 259 CMR 7.01 (2), would the following activities fit into section e?
  - APTA's Combined Sections Meeting
  - APTA's Clinical Instructor training course
  - Advanced Clinician Preparation Courses

\*Of note, these prep courses can far exceed 24 hours. Is there a concern that only allowing 6 points in this category will discourage clinicians from pursuing advanced certification? Could this prep fit into any other section?