



# State Board of Certified Public Accountants of Louisiana

## CPE Frequently Asked Questions

### What are the CPE requirements in Louisiana?

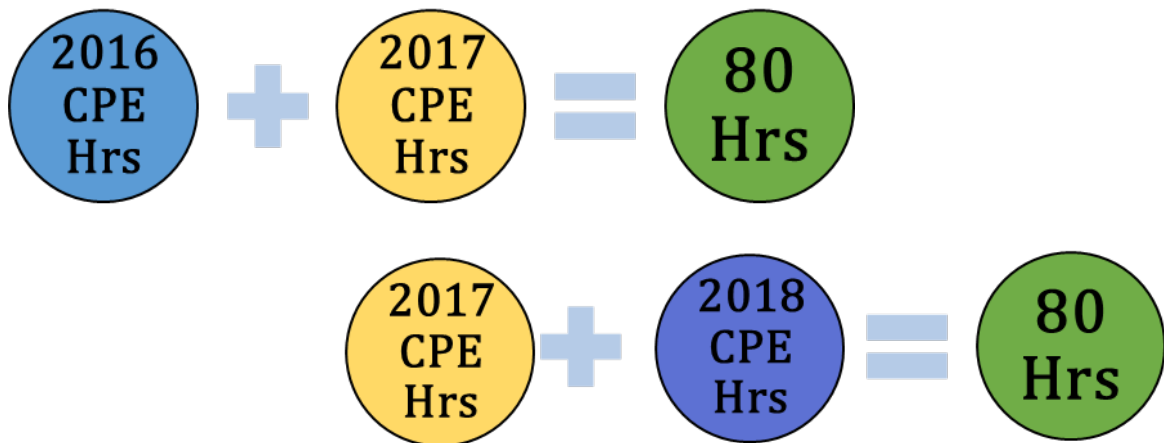
Each certificate holder must complete a minimum of 20 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) annually, and at least 80 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) within a rolling two (2) calendar year period defined as the compliance period in Board Rule §1301.F.1.

Prior to January 1, 2016, each certificate holder is required to complete at least 120 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) every three years.

### How does the rolling two-year period work?

The CPE requirement for the rolling two-year period beginning January 1, 20X1 and ending December 31, 20X2 (i.e. 2016 – 2017) must equal at least 80 hours.

The CPE requirement for the next rolling two-year period will begin January 1, 20X2 and end December 31, 20X3 (i.e. 2017-2018) and your hours must equal at least 80 hours. And so on.



### When are my CPE hours due?

Required CPE hours must be obtained by December 31 each year.

The CPE Report must be submitted to the Board no later than January 31 at the end of each December 31 calendar year.



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### **Does Louisiana allow the carryover of CPE hours from one year to the next year?**

No, CPE hours in excess of the annual limitations for personal development, publishing material, teaching or presenting, etc. do not carry over to the next year. CPE hours earned in excess of the annual limitations will be disregarded (see FAQ on requirements and limitations).

### **How many CPE hours must I earn annually?**

Beginning January 1, 2016, you must earn and report at least of 20 CPE hours each year. The total CPE earned for a rolling two-year period must equal 80 hours. For example: in order to be compliant in 2017, even if you earned 80 CPE hours in 2016, you would still need to earn 20 hours in 2017.

The rolling two-year calculation is designed for those CPAs who need additional flexibility due to licensing in other states or unexpected workloads. If you do not need the flexibility of earning hours each year, you should consider earning and reporting 40 hours each year to avoid miscalculations.

### **How long do I have to keep a record of my earned CPE?**

CPE documentation must be retained for a *full five calendar years* from when the program was completed. Participants in CPE programs shall also retain advance materials, which should include the requirements set forth in §1303.B.1, and other promotional material which reflects the content of a course and the name of the instructor(s) in the event the participant is requested by the board to substantiate the course content.

### **What is the requirement for the Louisiana Board-Approved Ethics Course?**

The *SBCPA of LA* requires that all licensees complete a Board approved Ethics Course that complies with Board Rule §1301.A.2. It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure that the Board approved Ethics Course taken complies with Board Regulations and policy.

For the 2016 reporting period, there will be no CPE requirement for Ethics. The Board will determine the CPE requirement for Ethics for the year 2017 at a later date.

### **Can I substitute another type of ethics course for the Board-Approved Ethics Courses?**

No, only the Board approved CPA professional ethics courses listed on our website satisfies this requirement.

All other ethics courses are classified as behavioral ethics. Those courses may be counted towards your total CPE reported hours earned, but they will not be accepted in lieu of the mandatory Board-approved ethics course.



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### **Where can I find a list of approved CPE courses? (Can you tell me if my CPE course will be approved?)**

- **Board approved Ethics Course:** There is a list available on the [SBCPA of LA website](#) of approved sponsors for the Louisiana-Specific Ethics Course. Courses listed on the website have been reviewed by the Board members.
- **Is there a list of other approved CPE courses?** There is no list. CPE sponsors are not required to register with the Board. The Board does not pre-screen/approve CPE programs and does not issue credit-hours for a CPE course. It is the responsibility of the license holder to assess whether or not a course meets the Board's rules and has appropriate documentation.

### **If I'm licensed in another state and my principle employment is in that state, do I have to take more than one CPA professional ethics course?**

If you are a CPA who (1) primarily practices or works outside of Louisiana, and (2) you have a valid active CPA license issued by another state board, and (3) that state board has an ETHICS continuing education requirement during the current reporting period, then you may report your completion of that ETHICS course(s) instead of one of the Louisiana specific ethics courses.

### **If I am not providing services to the public or to an employer, do I have CPE requirements?**

Yes, CPAs who hold an *Active CPA License* are required to complete their CPE hours and report it to the Board in order to maintain their CPA License.

### **How do I submit my CPE report and my license renewal?**

An original copy of the CPE report must be submitted by mail to the Board's office. Submitting your CPE report form is a separate action from renewing your license and firm permit. You may renew your license online or by submitting a license renewal application with your CPE report form. The CPE report form and instructions are available on our website on the Forms & Links page: <http://cpaboard.state.la.us/forms-links/>

You do not have to submit the actual certificates of completion at this time. You will complete the form by itemizing the courses you have taken on the CPE report form. There is no advantage to report over the required number of CPE hours. If any hours are disallowed during an audit, the CPA can provide the additional hours at that time. CPAs expose themselves unnecessarily to possible Board action for unconfirmed hours.

If you are selected for an audit, then we will provide you with additional instructions on how to submit your CPE documents. You will need to submit a valid certificate for every course reported.



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### **How many CPE hours are required if I participate in attestation and/or preparation work?**

CPAs who participate in attest engagements during the calendar year (e.g., compilations, reviews, audits, and agreed-upon-procedures) must have at least *20% of required CPE hours in Accounting and Auditing programs*. The minimum number of CPE hours in Accounting and Auditing (A & A) must be met annually. This requirement precedes any other limited subject areas.

Participation includes being responsible for performing substantial portions of the procedures, or being responsible for planning, directing, or reporting an attest engagement. Persons who “plan, direct and report” generally include the in-charge accountant, the supervisor or manager, and the firm partner (owner) who signs or authorizes someone to sign the attest engagement report on behalf of the firm. [Board Rule §1301.A.1]

### **Can I earn CPE credit for teaching a class or giving a speech?**

Credit for hours completed as a lecturer or speaker to the extent it contributes directly to the individual’s professional knowledge and competence will be awarded on the first presentation only, unless a program has been substantially revised. Teaching college courses at the freshman and sophomore level, according to the college’s degree program curriculum, is eligible for CPE on the first presentation only. However, teaching college courses at the junior, senior or graduate level are eligible for CPE for repetitive presentations.

Credit for one hour of CPE will be granted for each hour completed to the extent it contributes to the individual’s professional competence as a CPA and provided the program would qualify for credit under the Board’s CPE Rules. Up to two hours of credit for advance preparation for each teaching hour is allowed provided that the time is actually devoted to preparation.

The maximum credit allowed for teaching and preparation cannot exceed 20 hours of continuing professional education earned in a calendar year; excess hours in a calendar year cannot be used for CPE credit. Prior to January 1, 2016, the maximum credit for teaching and preparation cannot exceed 50 percent of the hours required in a three-year report period.

### **Can I take CPE courses online and/or thru self-study? Are there any restrictions?**

There are no restrictions to the number of CPE hours that can be earned online or thru self-study.

**Online CPE Programs:** An online CPE course must be interactive requiring ongoing responses, comments, and evaluations that communicate the appropriateness of a learner’s response to a prompt or question. *Not all technology based self-study programs constitute interactive programs.*

*(Continued. See next page.)*



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**Self Study Program.** Self-study courses developed by or registered with the AICPA, NASBA, or a State Society of CPAs are acceptable as continuing education. Note this does not guarantee the course will be acceptable. All courses must meet the Board's criteria. (See Board Rules §§1303 & 1305)

### **I cannot find the certificate of completion for my CPE. Can I submit my receipt, registration confirmation, cancelled check, course description, outline, sign-in sheet, etc., as documentation of the CPE?**

Registration forms, nametags, outlines, sign-in sheets, fee receipts, etc., are not acceptable proof of completion. Self-generated transcripts and lists of courses are not satisfactory evidence of completion. Please contact the sponsor to obtain a valid certificate of completion for the course(s) reported. A certificate of completion or other official form of verification supplied by the sponsor must include the following information:

- Name of CPE provider/sponsor
- Name and signature of a sponsor representative
- Participant's name
- location of course (formal class location or online)
- title and/or description of content
- dates attended
- number of CPE hours awarded by the course sponsor

### **The provider did not issue CPE credits for the course. Will the Board grant CPE credit?**

The SBCPA of LA does not grant CPE credits. The credits must be awarded by the program sponsor based on a 50-minute hour.

### **How are CPE hours measured?**

Continuing education hours are measured in 50-minute increments. For group programs, after at least one 50-minute credit is earned, half credits (of 25 minutes) are permitted. For self-study, half credits (of 25 minutes) are permitted.

When the total minutes of a total program are greater than 50 but not equally divisible by 50, the CPE credits granted must be rounded down to the nearest one-half credit.



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### What are the *new* requirements and limitations when earning CPE hours for 2016 and thereafter? (Course Requirements and Limits)

For the reporting year 2016 and every calendar year thereafter, there are annual limits on the type and number of CPE credits earned each year. These limits apply *regardless* of total hours earned that year. Any hours earned in excess of the following annual limitations will be disregarded and cannot be used or rolled over into the next year.

Each certificate holder shall complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPE annually, and at least 80 hours CPE within a rolling two (2) calendar year period. [Board Rule §1301.F.1]

- **Accounting and Auditing (A&A):** CPAs practicing in attest services during a calendar year must take a minimum of 20% of their required CPE hours for that calendar year in A&A courses.
- **Personal Development:** CPE credits cannot exceed 20 hours annually.
- **Publishing articles, writing books:** CPE credits cannot exceed 10 hours annually.
- **Completion of Board approved exams:** CPE credits cannot exceed 20 hours annually.
- **Lecturing / Speaking Presentation:** CPE credits cannot exceed 20 hours annually.

**Professional Ethics:** There will be no CPE requirement for Ethics for the year 2016. The Board will determine the CPE requirement for Ethics for the year 2017 at a later date.

Below is a table of the requirements and limitations based on the total hours earned in a given year:

#### *CPE Requirements and Limitations Effective January 1, 2016*

CPE Restrictions by Subject Type	If Total CPE Earned per Year Equals:			
	20 Hrs	30 Hrs	40 Hrs	60 Hrs
<b>*Accounting &amp; Auditing Courses – <u>20% minimum required</u></b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
<b><i>CPE Subject Area Limits</i></b>				
Personal Development – Maximum hours allowed	20	20	20	20
**Published Material - Maximum hours allowed	10	10	10	10
***Credential Exams - Maximum hours allowed	20	20	20	20
Teacher/ Speaker Credit - Maximum hours allowed	20	20	20	20

\*Minimum A & A requirement must be met annually and precedes any other limited subject areas.

\*\*Published Material must be approved by Board in advance

\*\*\*Credential Exams (Board approved) CPE hrs = 5x's length of exam



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### **I just realized that I did not meet the CPE requirements for the current reporting year. What should I do?**

If you did not obtain the required CPE (including the required Board Approved Ethics Course), please submit a letter to the Board by December 31<sup>st</sup> explaining the reasons for non-compliance and include any supporting documentation.

The board may at its sole discretion grant extensions of time or waivers to complete the continuing education requirements for hardship situations or for medical reasons. The hardship or incapacity must be sufficiently documented (for example, by appropriate third parties, or by medical providers in the case of a medical issue) in order for the board to consider granting an extension or waiver.

### **What if I have additional questions?**

Please visit our website for more information, review the Board Rules on CPE (Chapter 13 in particular), or contact the Board's office at (504) 566-1244.