



COLORADO

**Department of
Regulatory Agencies**

Division of Professions and Occupations

**Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Manual
Psychologist**

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Psychologist Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Requirements

What is Continuing Professional Development (CPD)?

Once a psychologist is licensed, they are required to complete continuing professional development to maintain their license.

CPD is the State Board of Psychologist Examiners' (Board) program through which a licensed psychologist satisfies the requirements set forth in section 12-43-307, C.R.S. to ensure their ongoing ability to learn, integrate, and apply the knowledge, skill, and judgment to practice psychology according to generally accepted industry standards and professional ethical standards.

Who is required to participate?

Effective September 1, 2017, all Colorado licensed psychologists must satisfy continuing professional development requirements in order to renew, reinstate, or reactivate a license.

How do I comply with Colorado's psychologist CPD requirements?

Per statute, licensed psychologists will comply with the continuing professional development requirement by one of two methods:

- CPD program administered by the Board (section 12-43-307, C.R.S.)
- Active Duty Military Exemption (section 12-70-102, C.R.S.)

Continuing Professional Development Program Steps

Psychologists must complete the following CPD program during their renewal period in order to renew, reinstate, or reactivate a license. For each renewal period, the CPD program consists of the following elements:

1. An **optional** Reflective Self-Assessment Tool (RSAT) and establishment of learning goals;
2. Development of a Learning Plan;
3. Execution of the Learning Plan. Accrual of forty (40) Professional Development Hours (PDH) through the Professional Development Activities (PDA) is required; and
4. Documentation of completed PDH.

Step 1: Complete Reflective Self-Assessment Tool (RSAT) and Establish Learning Goals (optional, but recommended)

The **RSAT** is a reflective practice tool that uses the American Psychological Association's (APA) Benchmarks Model to identify the foundational knowledge areas of the psychology profession by one's professional role.

The RSAT is designed to assist psychologists in creating professional development goals and build their required Learning Plan. It is an **optional** step and will not be viewed or used by DORA.

The RSAT form is available at www.colorado.gov/dora/Psychologist_CPD.

Step 2: Develop a Learning Plan

In accordance with section 12-43-307(2)(a), C.R.S, all licensed psychologists are required to develop and complete an official CPD **Learning Plan**. Learning Plan forms are available at www.colorado.gov/dora/Psychologist_CPD.

Learning Plans are to be used as a tool to document professional learning goals and demonstrate completion of required Professional Development Hours (PDH). They should be created at the beginning of each renewal cycle, consist of learning goals that develop new skills or improve upon existing skills, and allow time for completion of all learning goals by the end of each cycle.

Modifications to Learning Plans are prohibited once a license is renewed or at the end of the licensure renewal grace period (October 31st of odd numbered years).

Learning goals documented on the Learning Plan may be satisfied by the completion of Professional Development Activities (PDA). Board-approved PDA are outlined in detail below, or can be found at www.colorado.gov/dora/Psychologist_CPD.

Completed Learning Plans are subject to inspection upon an audit of completion.

Step 3: Execution of Learning Plan / Completing Learning Activities

Professional Development Hours (PDH)

Professional Development Hours (PDH) are the units of measurement of active learning used to accrue credit in the CPD Program. PDH may only be calculated for time spent engaged in a learning activity. Time spent commuting, traveling, scheduling, or planning your activities

does not count towards the PDH requirements. At least forty (40) PDH must be completed during each 2-year renewal cycle.

For licensees who obtain their license during the renewal cycle, PDH requirements will be prorated at 1.67 hours per month, including the month the license is issued through the month the license expires.

A maximum of ten (10) PDH may be carried from the last renewal cycle to the next cycle if the PDH were earned within three (3) months of license expiration and are in excess of the forty (40) PDH required for the current cycle.

The Board does not pre-approve or accredit PDH, see PDA descriptions below for specific requirements.

Professional Development Activities (PDA) Categories

PDH may be earned in one (1) or more of the Professional Development Activities (PDA) listed below. PDA chosen should maintain or enhance competence as a licensed psychologist, and they must be relevant to the documented Learning Plan. The ability to describe how the chosen PDA provided new knowledge or skills and/or how it sharpened existing skills is expected.

A quick reference for all PDA may be found at www.colorado.gov/dora/Psychologist_CPD.

Coursework

Attend workshops, seminars, symposia, colloquia, invited speaker sessions, postdoctoral institutes, or scientific or professional programs offered at meetings of local, state, regional, national, or international professional or scientific organizations.

- With the exception of five (5) PDH, activities must qualify as continuing education units or continuing medical education credit as approved and/or accredited by the American Psychological Association, state medical association, Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, or by a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
- Activities may include online continuing education.
- One (1) continuing education hour is equivalent to one (1) PDH.

Documentation of learning activities shall include a transcript or certificate of attendance with a statement of the credits earned, which includes the name of the participant, the date(s) of attendance, the name of provider(s), the number of hours earned, etc.

Ethics

Complete an ethics course offered by the American Psychological Association, state medical association, Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, or a regionally accredited institution of higher education.

- One (1) continuing education hour is equivalent to one (1) PDH.

Documentation of completion of an ethics course shall include a transcript or certificate of attendance with a statement of the credits earned, which includes the name of the participant, the date(s) of attendance, the name of the provider(s), the number of hours earned, etc.

Develop and Teach an Academic Course

Develop and teach an academic course in psychology at an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association.

- Credit can be earned for the first time within a given licensure cycle that the licensed psychologist develops and teaches the course.
- One (1) academic credit, unit, or hour is equivalent to ten (10) PDH.

Documentation of the development and teaching of an academic course shall include written verification by the dean or head of the department of the institution in which the course was taught.

Graduate Coursework

Successfully complete a graduate course in psychology offered by an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association.

- One (1) academic credit, unit, or hour is equivalent to ten (10) PDH.

Documentation shall include an academic transcript showing the graduate credits earned.

Presenting

Develop and present a workshop, seminar, symposium, colloquium, or invited speaking session, at a meeting of a professional or a scientific organization or a postdoctoral institute.

- Credit can be earned for the first time within a given licensure cycle that the workshop, seminar, symposium, colloquium, or invited speaking session is developed and presented.
- One (1) hour of workshop, seminar, symposium, colloquial presentation, or invited speaking session is equivalent to three (3) PDH.

Documentation shall include a printed program or agenda showing the name of the licensed psychologist, the date(s) of the presentation, the name of the organization, the total number of hours presented, etc.

Publication

Author or edit a psychology publication. Maximum hours earned as follows:

- Authoring a professional or scientific book is equivalent to forty (40) PDH.
- Authoring a professional or scientific book chapter or journal article is equivalent to twenty (20) PDH.
- Editing a professional or scientific book or journal is equivalent to thirty (30) PDH.

Documentation shall include a coversheet, masthead, or table of contents from the publication showing the name of the licensed psychologist, the date of authoring or editing, etc.

Editorial Review

Provide editorial review of a professional psychological or scientific journal article at the request of the journal's editorial staff.

- Completion of activity is equivalent to one (1) PDH.

Documentation shall include the acknowledgment of the completed review by the editorial staff with the name of the licensed psychologist, date of review, etc.

Step 4: Documentation

Documentation of all completed PDH is required (e.g. certificates of completion, transcripts, letters of acknowledgment, etc.) and must be kept for a period of five (5) years from the license expiration date of the renewal cycle. **Do not send any documentation to DORA unless it is specifically requested from you.**

License Renewal

All licensed psychologists must attest to their compliance with Continuing Professional Development when renewing their license. **A license may not be renewed until all CPD requirements for that renewal cycle have been completed.** Audits of compliance will be conducted by the Board after each renewal cycle ends.

Military Exemptions

Pursuant to section 12-70-102, C.R.S., a licensed psychologist who has been called to federally funded active duty for more than 120 days for the purpose of serving in a war, emergency, or contingency may request an exemption from continuing professional development requirements for the renewal, reinstatement, or reactivation of his/her license for the two-year renewal period that falls within the period of service or within six (6) months following the completion of service.

Military exemptions must be approved by the Division of Professions and Occupations (DPO). A psychologist seeking a Military Exemption from licensing fees and continuing professional development requirements must submit a written request following the procedure found on the DPO website at www.colorado.gov/dora-military/renewal-fee-waiver. Questions regarding military exemptions should be emailed to dora_dpo_licensing@state.co.us.

Audit of Compliance

Audits of compliance are conducted following each renewal cycle. All licensed psychologists are subject for audit to determine compliance with Continuing Professional Development requirements.

A psychologist selected for an audit of compliance will be notified by both email and mail. Addresses of record and email addresses must be kept current with DPO. Instructions for updating an address may be found at www.colorado.gov/dora/dpo.

Documentation of compliance should not be sent to DPO unless a notice of audit is received. Any documentation received that was not specifically requested will not be retained by the Board or DPO and will not be returned.

Required Documentation

In order to show compliance with the Continuing Professional Development program, an audited psychologist must provide the following documentation:

- A **Learning Plan** signed by the licensed psychologist that contains the PDH completed in each PDA category.
- Documentation of **ALL** forty (40) PDH listed on the Learning Plan, e.g. certificates of completion, transcripts, letters of acknowledgment, etc.

The CPD program allows substantial flexibility to determine the course and subject matter of learning; however, licensed psychologists are expected to comply with Board requirements. In an audit, psychologists may be asked to defend their PDH, PDA and Learning Plan, especially if activities appear to be outside the norm or to disregard requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

When do CPD requirements start?

Licensed psychologists must begin participating in CPD after August 31, 2017. Requirements are ongoing and must be completed each renewal cycle prior to renewing a license.

How do I choose learning activities?

The Board does not preapprove specific courses or providers. Select PDA that match the learning goals on your Learning Plan and choose appropriate providers.

How long do I need to keep documentation?

Documentation of compliance must be kept for 5 years from the expiration date for the renewal cycle during which PDH were accrued.

If I indicate that I need improvement in my practice, can I be disciplined or can any of this information be used in a civil action?

No. Any records or documentation regarding the continuing professional development program can only be used to determine if a licensee is maintaining continuing competency as required. Pursuant to section 12-43-307(5)(a), C.R.S., "Records of assessments or other documentation developed or submitted in connection with the continuing professional development program are confidential and not subject to inspection by the public or discovery in connection with a civil action against a licensed psychologist. The records or documents shall be used only by the Board for the purpose of determining whether a licensed psychologist is maintaining continuing professional development necessary to engage in the profession."

Please contact the Continuing Competency Helpdesk with any additional questions, by email at dora_dpo_continuedcompetency@state.co.us or by phone at 303-894-2363.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program Overview

