

Guidelines for Acceptable Continuing Education Credits for PTs/PTAs Licensed in South Dakota

This document provides information to physical therapists and physical therapist assistants licensed in South Dakota and seeking guidance about:

- Approved continuing education hours compliant with § [20:66:03:01](#) and § [20:66:03:02](#)
- Applying for a waiver of continuing education hours (§ [20:66:03:04](#))

The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) considers continuing competence “[t]he lifelong process of maintaining and documenting competence through ongoing self-assessment, development, and implementation of a personal learning plan, and subsequent reassessment.”^(1, p1) For regulatory agencies such as the FSBPT and the South Dakota Board of Physical Therapy (SDBPT), continuing competence is viewed in the context of public protection.

1. How many continuing education (CE) hours do I need, and by when?

- Licensees must document 30 continuing education hours during the two-year license cycle (refer to § [20:66:03:01](#))

2. If I complete more than 30 CE hours during the licensing cycle, can the extra hours “roll over” into the next licensing cycle?

- No; CE hours may only be credited to the licensing cycle within which they are completed.

3. What’s the difference between “continuing education hours” and “continuing education units”?

- Both CE hours and CE units (CEUs) are measurements of time spent participating in an organized educational experience for continuing education. CEUs are calculated using rules issued by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training with these equivalents:
 - 1 Clock Hour = 1 Continuing Education Hour = 0.10 Continuing Education Units

South Dakota administrative rules establish CE hours as the unit of measurement; however, some CE course certificates report continuing education credit as CEUs. In this case, CEUs must be converted to CE hours (number of CEU’s x 10) to determine credits toward SD CE hour requirements. For instance, if 0.5 CEUs are issued on the certificate, the course earns 5.0 CE hours (0.5 x 10 = 5.0) toward the 30 CE hours required within the two-year licensing period.

4. What’s the difference between “certified” and “participatory” CE hours acceptable in South Dakota?

- Category 1 activities (Table 1, Appendix) consist of certified coursework. These activities are approved through a formal process used by a credentialing agency (i.e., state board, university unit, designated agency) to determine if an educational activity meets minimum expectations for CE credit. As many as 30 CE hours (100%) may be used to meet § 20:66:03:01 requirements.
- Category 2 activities (Table 2, Appendix) are designed as options that help licensees individualize their professional development and continued competence. These participation activities are designed for completion apart from typical structured coursework pedagogy. If audited, licensees seeking renewal must be prepared to provide evidence of completion, as detailed in the tables below. During biennial renewals, licensees may receive CE credit for **no more than 15 CE hours** (or 1.5 CEU credits) from Category 2 activities.

¹ APTA and FSBPT Joint Commission on Continuing Competence, January 23, 2012. Access at: <https://www.fsbpt.org/Free-Resources/Continuing-Competence/Continuing-Competence-Discussion-Paper>

5. Who has the authority to approve my continuing education?

- If you are randomly audited to show evidence of continuing education activity hours, approval sources are found in the table below.
 - **01.01.23 – 01.01.24 licensing period:** any continuing education you took during calendar years 2023 and 2024 must have been approved by entities identified under administrative rules effective December 7, 2017 – October 2, 2024 (Set A in the below table).
 - **01.01.24 – 01.01.26 licensing period:**
 - Any continuing education you completed during calendar year 2024 must have been approved by entities identified in the administrative rules effective December 7, 2017 – October 2, 2024 (**Set A or B** in the below table).
 - Any continuing education you completed during calendar year 2025 must have been approved by entities identified in the administrative rules effective October 3, 2024 (Set B in the below table).
 - **01.01.25 – 01.01.27 licensing period:** any continuing education you took during calendar years 2025 and 2026 must have been approved by entities identified in the administrative rules effective October 3, 2024 (Set B in the below table).

Administrative Rule § 20:66:03:02 Set A: December 7, 2017 – October 2, 2024	Administrative Rule § 20:66:03:02 Set B: Effective October 3, 2024
<p>20:66:03:02. Activities for continuing education requirements. To meet the continuing education hours required in § 20:66:03:01, an activity must be:</p> <p>(1) Sponsored or approved by the American Physical Therapy Association or other national or state physical therapy association;</p> <p>(2) Conducted by a hospital or related institution;</p> <p>(3) Approved by the State Board of Physical Therapy; or</p> <p>(4) Sponsored by a college or university.</p> <p>The activity must also have significant intellectual or practical content dealing primarily with matters directly related to the practice of physical therapy or to the professional responsibility or ethical obligations of the participants.</p> <p>Source: 44 SDR 95, effective December 7, 2017; 50 SDR 66, effective December 3, 2023.</p> <p>General Authority: SDCL 36-10-36. Law Implemented: SDCL 36-10-51.</p>	<p>20:66:03:02. Activities for continuing education requirements. Activities for continuing education are planned, organized, and designed to maintain, improve, or expand a licensee’s practice knowledge and skills to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. To meet the continuing education hour requirements in § 20:66:03:01, an activity must be directly relate to the practice of physical therapy and be approved by:</p> <p>(1) The American Physical Therapy Association or the South Dakota Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association;</p> <p>(2) The State Board of Physical Therapy; or</p> <p>(3) A board responsible for licensing physical therapists or physical therapist assistants in another state.</p>

6. Is there a limit to the number of CE hour credits that I can complete through online activities?

- There is no limit to the number of online CE hours, as long as the online course:
 1. Deals with matters directly related to the practice of physical therapy;
 2. Is not among the activities deemed as “not acceptable” (Box 1, Appendix);
 3. Is approved by the APTA, APTA-SD or a physical therapy licensing board in another state (Categories 1 and 2, Appendix); and,
 4. Complies with Category 2 maximum CE hour limitations (Table 2, Appendix)

7. How do I share evidence of my CE hour credits?

- You will select an indicator box on your renewal application verifying you have met the CE hour requirements for renewal (§ [20:66:03:03](#)), and you will attach the SDBPT [CE hour summary form](#) (Appendix) to your application. You are not required to provide evidence of completion of

activities unless you are randomly audited by SDBPT. You will receive specific instructions on how to provide evidence of CE hour completion if you are audited.

- 8. I am a new licensee who completed a continuing education course prior to graduating from an accredited program, but within the 2-year licensing cycle. Can I use the continuing education credits earned from this course toward my renewal CE hours?**
 - Yes. If you completed a CE course that was not a part of your regular education in an accredited PT/PTA program and if the course dates are within the 2-year SDBPT licensing cycle, you may use these hours as a part of your first-time renewal requirements. For instance, if your license expires 01.01.26, you may use Category 1 CE hours earned between 01.01.24 and 01.01.26. You may not use Category 2 activities earned prior to your initial licensure date for use toward the required CE hours.

- 9. I am a new licensee who graduated from an accredited DPT/PTA program within the 2-year licensing cycle. Do I need to complete the full 30 CE hours to apply for renewal?**
 - You may complete a [waiver form](#) (Appendix) requesting a partial waiver based upon financial hardship experienced by students and new graduates. SDBPT allows a waiver of up to 15 CE hours for first renewal licensees who graduated from an accredited DPT/PTA program within the same 2-year licensing cycle.

- 10. I have experienced unusual hardship that has made completing my CE hours a challenge. How do I request a waiver for the CE hour requirement?**
 - A provision to Codified Law [36-10-51](#) (§ [20:66:03:04](#)) exists for requesting a waiver because of illness, disability, military service, or financial hardship. Instructions for requesting a waiver of CE requirements are found on the SDBPT application renewal [webpage](#) (see also, Appendix for a copy of the waiver form). A request for a waiver of continuing education is not an assurance that the waiver will be granted. Second, consecutive requests for CE waiver receive a higher level of approval scrutiny, since a 4-year period without CE may present a greater public protections risk than a 2-year period without CE.

- 11. I am planning to take [or have taken] a continuing education course that has not been approved by APTA, APTA-SD, or a licensing board in any state, but I believe it should be approved for continuing education credit. What is the process for seeking approval for this course?**
 - SDBPT and APTA-SD use CEU Locker (<https://ceulocker.com>) to help SD licensees (a.k.a., CEU holders) manage and maintain their CE records. One of the functions of this system is that SD licensees may submit a course inquiry through CEU Locker to determine if the course meets § [20:66:03:02](#) requirements. This is an individual approval that does not grant broad course approval for all individuals who complete the course. There is a separate, different process that CEU providers undertake to receive a seal assuring approval in SD for attendees who have completed the provider's course. Licensees are encouraged to seek course approvals as individuals prior to completing the continuing education course in question.

Additional, unique questions can be directed to the South Dakota Board of Physical Therapy at 605.642.1600 or office@sdlicensing.com.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Category 1 (Certified/Credentialed) Activities Approved by the State Board of Physical Therapy		
Activity ²	Maximum CE Hour Credits/ 2-year license cycle	Evidence SDBPT may request upon random audit
Continuing Education Coursework that is related to the practice of physical therapy -AND- approved by: (1) SDBPT, or (2) A physical therapy licensing board in another state, or (3) APTA, or (4) APTA-SD	No limit 1 CEU = 10 CE hours • Convert CEUs to CE hours using [#CEUs x 10 = CE hours]	Certificate of Completion Information: • Licensee Name • Course Name • Number of contact hours/CEUs • Presentation date and location • Official signature of the sponsor • Approval seal/stamp from APTA, APTA-SD or PT licensing board in states other than SD
Post-Professional Coursework (related to the practice of physical therapy) • NOTE: University coursework offered by an accredited PT/PTA program that is part of the required curriculum plan of study for the entry level professional degree is not accepted for CE credit.	No limit 1 Academic Credit = 15 CE hours • Convert credits to CE hours using [#Credits x 15 = CE hours]	Transcript Evidence of Course Completion with Grade of "C" or higher

Table 2. Category 2 (Participatory) Activities Approved by the State Board of Physical Therapy			
Activity ²	Continuing Education (CE) Hour Credits	Maximum CE Hour Credits/ 2-year license cycle ^a	Evidence SDBPT may request upon random audit
<u>First-time development</u> of an academic course teaching/lecturing physical therapy or primarily healthcare students in formal classroom setting, <i>if teaching is not your primary occupation.</i>	1 classroom contact hour = 0.20 CE hour credits • Conversion: Student contact hours ÷ 5 = CE hour credits	4.0 CE hour credits	Verification of topic, date, number of contact hours from course director.
Clinical Instruction for Student Physical Therapists or Student Physical Therapist Assistants	160 instructional contact hours = 5.0 CE hour credits	5.0 CE hour credits	Certificate from CAPTE Accredited Program, including number of contact hours of clinical instruction
Performing clinical mentorship in a credentialed/accredited clinical residency or fellowship program	160 instructional contact hours = 7.5 CE hour credits	7.5 CE hour credits	Letter from credentialed/accredited residency or fellowship director with number of mentorship hours
Credentialed/accredited clinical residency or fellowship (i.e., ABPTRFE) hours <u>under mentorship</u>	160 hours = 15 CE hour credits	15.0 CE hour credits	Letter from credentialed/accredited residency or fellowship director or mentor with number of residency or fellowship hours under mentorship
Authorship in a peer-reviewed publication in a content area that pertains to PT, <i>if research dissemination is not a requirement for your primary occupation</i>	Case Studies = 2 CE hour credits Original Research = 5 CE hour credits	5.0 CE hour credits	Published journal articles
ABPTS Specialist Certification or specialist certification through an accredited and professionally recognized organization (i.e., RESNA ATP; Advanced Proficiency Pathways for PTAs)	15 CE hour credits – initial certification 5 CE hour credits – re-certification	15.0 CE hour credits	Evidence of specialist certification
Web Seminars (aka, Webinars) that are not developed by a manufacturer or product company to promote a commercial product. ³	1 hour = 0.10 CE hour credit • Conversion: Contact hours ÷ 10 = CE hour credits	0.5 CE hour credits	Evidence of attendance that includes topic, date, and number of hours

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²Licensees should be prepared to demonstrate that the activity deals with matters directly related to the practice of physical therapy (§ 20:66:03:01; General Authority SDCL 36-10-36)

³Web seminars (aka webinars) are live events during which a presenter or group of presenters delivers educational content on a topic of special interest to a virtual audience. Attendance is not self-monitored. Many webinars are recorded and made available for on-demand viewing after the live session. *Category 2 webinars are those that are related to the practice of physical therapy but have not been certified/credentialed by an agency or organization approved under § 20:66:03:02.*

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Table 2. Category 2 (Participatory) Activities Approved by the State Board of Physical Therapy			
Activity²	Continuing Education (CE) Hour Credits	Maximum CE Hour Credits/ 2-year license cycle^a	Evidence SDBPT may request upon random audit
Holding an office or serving as an organizational delegate or director for a professional organization whose mission is dedicated to the practice of physical therapy.	2 CE hour credits/term year	4.0 CE hour credits	Evidence of office tenure.
Volunteerism related to the practice of physical therapy (includes contributions as a committee, workgroup, or task force member for a professional organization whose mission is dedicated to the practice of physical therapy.)	≥ 4 volunteer hours or more = 1 CE hour credit	1.0 CE hour credit	Evidence of volunteerism from organization, including number of volunteer hours

^aNote: There is a limit of 15 CE hour credits on Category 2 activities for the 2-year license cycle.

Box 1. Activities <u>Not Accepted</u> as credit for CE hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaks in instruction time; • Courses less than 60 minutes in duration; • CPR certification/recertification; • Credit for repetitions of the same activity, except where explicitly allowed within Category 1 or Category 2; • Employment orientation sessions; • Entertainment or recreational activities or programs; • Management seminars not directly concerning physical therapy operations; • Meetings for the purpose of making policy; • Non-educational association meetings; • Presentations delivered by students; • Regularly scheduled institutional activities such as rounds; • Routine teaching as a part of a job requirement; • Staff meetings, presentations, publications directed at lay groups; • Training developed by a manufacturer or product company, unless the training has specifically been approved for CEUs by SDBPT, a regulatory board of physical therapy in another state, APTA, or APTA-SD; • University coursework completed prior to graduating from an accredited PT/PTA program.



South Dakota Board of Physical Therapy

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SDBPT Continuing Education Summary Form

*Completed Only if PT/PTA is Randomly Selected for CE Hour Auditing

Refer to the [“Guidelines for Acceptable Continuing Education Credit for PTs/PTAs Licensed in South Dakota”](#) document for information about approved continuing education hours compliant with § [20:66:03:01](#) and § [20:66:03:02](#), including details about CE hour equivalents for acceptable Category 2 activities and activities that are not accepted as CE hours.

Licensees Name: _____

License Number: _____

Professional Designation: Physical Therapist Physical Therapist Assistant

Did you graduate from an accredited PT/PTA program within the last 2 years? Y N

Record of Category 1 Activities (add additional page as needed)

Course Title	Date	CE hours ^a
Total		

^aConvert from CEUs to CE hours using: #CEUs x 10 = CE hours; convert from academic credits (AC) using: #ACs x 15 = CE hours

Record of Category 2 Activities (add additional page as needed)

Participatory Activity	Date	CE hour Equivalence ^b
Total		

^bCE hour equivalencies can be found in the “Guidelines for Acceptable Continuing Education Credit for PTs/PTAs Licensed in South Dakota”

Affidavit: Waiver of Physical Therapy Continuing Education Requirements

SDCL 36-10-51 states that the Board **may** grant a full or partial waiver of continuing education requirements if an applicant submits evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant was unable to comply because of illness, disability, military service, or financial hardship. Per ARSD 20:66:03:04, an applicant must submit this affidavit to the board stating they were prevented from completing the requirement because of the circumstances listed in SDCL 36-10-51. The affidavit for a waiver must be submitted at least thirty days prior to the expiration date of the license.

To Submit the Waiver of Physical Therapy Continuing Education Requirements Affidavit:

1. Complete the "Licensee Information" section and print this form.
2. Sign this affidavit in the presence of a Notary.
3. Scan the document.
4. Email the document to office@sdlicensing.com.

Licensee Information

Licensee Name: _____ SD License Number: _____

Reason for Waiver Request: illness disability military service financial hardship

Did you graduate from an accredited DPT or PTA program within the 2-year licensing period for which you seek a waiver?

No Yes

Provide more information about the reason for waiver request using the box below.

Have you previously received a waiver of continuing education? No Yes

If your response to the above question is "yes," please specify all dates: _____

***The Board may request additional information and/or documentation if necessary**

Signatures and Notary

X _____ Date _____
Licensee's Signature (must be signed in the presence of a notary - No Electronic or Stamp Signatures will be Accepted)

Licensee's Printed Legal Name (First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name, and Suffix (e.g., Jr.))

NOTARY

I certify that on the date set forth below, the individual named above, did appear personally before me and presented one of the following form(s) of identification as proof of his/her legal name identity:

- Valid passport; or,
 Other USD Government Issued ID.

I further certify that I did identify this applicant by comparing his/her physical appearance with the photograph on a Government issued photo identification presented by the applicant.

X _____
US Notary Public Signature
State of _____
County of _____
SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this _____ day of _____, 20____.
My commission expires*: _____

(US NOTARY PUBLIC SEAL)