**Continuing Nursing Education Required for NJ License Renewal**

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Half of the NJ Registered Nurses (RNs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), and Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs,) will begin the process to renew their NJ licenses soon. In order to renew these licenses 30 Continuing Nursing Education contact hours are required to be completed before renewal. However, most nurses are unaware that the NJ Board of Nursing (BON) can take action against a nurse’s license when a nurse fails to complete the required CNE contact hours including: a public reprimand which remains on record permanently (cannot be expunged by the courts); as discipline, a $250 fine and suspension of the license until the CNE contact are complete and all fines paid.

**This year there is also a change in the interpretation of the regulations. In the past new graduates were allowed to forego completion CNE contact hours for the first 2 years after they graduate. Following a review of the regulations that is no longer the policy.** All nurses who apply for renewal regardless of when they graduated must show that they have completed the required CNE contact hours or CNE contact hour equivalents, as spelled out in the regulations, **13:37-5.3 CONTINUING EDUCATION (**page 30) <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/regulations/Chapter-37-New-Jersey-Board-of-Nursing.pdf>

**Frequently Asked Questions**

The most common FAQs the Board receives regarding CNE credits follow:

1. **May employer’s programs grant CNE contact hours?**  Continuing nursing education offered by employers or facilities ARE NOT always eligible for the award of CNE contact hours. The employer or facility must apply for and be authorized to grant CNE contact hours before the course is given. If you are not sure ask. If you submit employer’s or facilities’ programs that are not an approved provider of CNE contact hours for the time period you take the program, it will not count toward required CNE credits and you can be disciplined.
2. **Do I need to send my CNE certificates of contact hours to the BON when I renew?** Do not send your CNE certificates to the BON unless you are asked to do so. If you are asked to send them, send them in one batch and ALWAYS keep copies for your records. The Board may ask you for up to two past biennium’s CNE records, therefore you must retain CNE certificates after you complete the license renewal. The Board recommends that you keep your certificates for a minimum of four (4) years.
3. **I am going back for my BSN (or any nursing degree), can any of those school credits be applied to my CNE requirement?** Yes. Under **13:37-5.3 CONTINUING EDUCATION,** you will find that there are a number of activities, such as being a preceptor, teaching, working on a degree that are accepted as meeting your CNE requirements. Please read the regulation and if you have any questions call the BON.
4. **If I take a few courses a week after the renewal deadline, is there a grace period?** No. If you need 3 CNE contact hours by the May 31, 2016 renewal deadline, don’t wait until June 1, 2016 to complete them. You will be disciplined.
5. **I completed 30 contact hours, but I received a letter from the Board of Nursing stating that I checked NO so I now have to pay a fine and complete courses, why?** Some people receive a letter in error, when they have completed their CNE contact hours. If you are one of those people, contact the Board, and send copies of your CNE certificates; there will not be any discipline or fine imposed. If you did not complete you CNE contact hours, follow the letter’s instructions.

**Additional FAQs are available at** <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/nur/Pages/Continuing-Education-FAQ.aspx>

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