

Continuing Education FAQs for Washington State Acupuncturists

The Washington State Rule

- The Washington legislature passed the RCW 18.06.240 in 2019 to implement continuing education requirements for acupuncturists and acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioners (AEMPs) in the state.

- *RCW 18.06.240*

Continuing education.

The department shall adopt a rule requiring completion of continuing education for acupuncturists as a condition of license renewal.

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=18.06.240>

Rationale for Continuing Education (CE) Requirements

- Continuing education helps maintain high standards for the AEM profession, as well as being criterium for most if not all other healthcare professions.
- Having these requirements benefits us as practitioners by maintaining an updated knowledge and experience base.

When CE Requirements Will Go Into Effect

- The continuing education rules will not be finalized by the department of health until the summer of 2021. What we present here is an overview based on the latest draft of the rules to help you all prepare.
- This also means that the soonest any continuing education activities will be valid for license renewal will not be until summer 2021 when the rules are finalized.
- The soonest any continuing education hours will be due is two years from then, in the summer of 2023.

Continuing Education Requirements

- The rule states that a minimum of twenty hours of continuing education is required every two years.
- The AEMP license will still be renewed annually on the licensee's birthday, with the continuing education requirements starting two years from the time the rules are finalized, which will be the summer of 2021.
- Alternatively, a current diplomate status with the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) will meet the Washington continuing education requirements.

Qualifying Continuing Education Activities

- In general, topics related to the scope of practice of acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioners will meet the continuing education requirements.

Additional Continuing Education Requirements

- There are two additional specific continuing education requirements:
 1. maintaining a current CPR and basic first aid certification for each renewal
 2. attending a one time 6-hour suicide prevention training.
- Approved trainings for Suicide Prevention can be found here, be sure to choose the 6-hour training options under Model List: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/SuicidePrevention/TrainingPrograms/ModelList>

Documentation

- Each AEMP will be responsible for tracking their continuing education hours and maintaining records of activities completed.
- Proof of continuing education is a certificate of completion, letter, or other documentation verifying or confirming attendance or completion of continuing education hours.
- Proof of continuing education is a certificate of completion, letter, or other documentation verifying or confirming attendance or completion of continuing education hours. Documentation must be from the organization that provided the activity, and must contain at least the following:
 - (a) Date of attendance or completion;
 - (b) Name of licensed acupuncturist or acupuncture and Eastern medicine practitioner;
 - (c) Hours earned; and
 - (d) Course title or subject.
- The department of health may randomly audit up to twenty-five percent of licensed AEMPs every two-years for compliance after the license is renewed.
- The department of health will not authorize or approve specific continuing education courses, and it is the acupuncturist's responsibility to make sure their continuing education complies with the rules as written.

More Information

WAEMA is working to bring more continuing education activities to acupuncturists including seminars, local meetups, and free and discounted webinars. Contact WAEMA at info@weama.info if you are interested in learning more or being a part of these projects.

For reference, the full details will be posted to the Washington State Legislature website as WAC 246-803-420.