

## MD CME Requirements for 2020 Renewal Adjusted in Response to COVID-19

At its June 2020, meeting the Vermont Board of Medical Practice passed a motion reducing the requirements for the number of hours of CME that must be completed for physician (MD) license renewal during the renewal period that begins in August and ends in November of this year. **The changes apply only to the total number of hours that must be completed.**

- For physicians licensed to practice in Vermont for the entire two-year licensing period, they must complete a minimum of 15 hours of qualifying activity. (Reduced from the normal requirement of 30 hours.)
- For physicians who were granted a Vermont license during the first year of the licensing period (December 1, 2018 to November 30, 2019), they must complete a minimum of 10 hours of qualifying activity. (Reduced from the normal requirement of 15 hours.)

The requirements for specific subjects are in law and have not been modified. Renewing MDs must have completed at least one hour of CME on hospice, palliative care, and/or pain management services. Licensees who have a DEA registration must complete at least two hours of training on prescribing controlled substances as detailed in the Board Rules. The subject-specific requirements apply the same to all physicians who must complete CME.

### Information about the Decision to Reduce the Hours

Many conferences and CME events have been cancelled or reduced in hours and converted to “virtual” events online. In addition, even though Vermont has not encountered demands on the healthcare system to a degree seen in other states, most all physicians have been challenged to adapt to new protocols and systems for delivering care, and many Vermont-licensed physicians regularly practice in some of the states that have been hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Members also took note of the fact that many licensees have needed to engage in numerous hours of study and professional development regarding COVID-19 treatment and protocols, and it is unlikely that much of that activity qualifies for AMA PRA Category 1™ credit. The Board hopes that Vermont physicians find this small accommodation helpful during these difficult times.

### General Information about Vermont CME

The requirements for CME are established in law ([26 V.S.A. § 1400\(b\)](#); Act 173 of 2016, Sec. 9) and in the [Board's Rules, Rule 22.0](#). To count toward the requirements, an activity must qualify for AMA PRA Category 1™ credit. The only exception to the requirement for completion of CME is for physicians in the US armed forces whose ability to complete CME is affected by a call to active duty or deployment, as detailed in Rule 22.1.8. Physicians who hold a full license, but who are also participating in GME training, may seek constructive credit as detailed in Rule 22.2.3. Physicians who have not completed the requirements can still renew their licenses; they need only submit a make-up plan in accordance with Rule 22.3. Licensees are not required to submit certificates for CME at the time of renewal, but completion of CME is subject to audit. Audits are conducted after each renewal period.