



## Notice of Proposed Changes in The Regulations of the Alaska Board of Professional Counselors

### Proposed Regulations - FAQ

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*January, 2023 (updated February 2023)*

#### 1. What is the purpose of the proposed regulations? What will this regulation do?

**12 AAC 62.100(d).** This will change the time limit in which initial applications by examination are to be considered abandoned; reducing it from three years to one year, in keeping with current Division standard and aligned with the Division's Occupational Licensing Centralized Regulations. The intention is to reduce delays in the application process and encourage applicants to apply only when they are ready to do so and in possession of all necessary documents to be submitted.

**12 AAC 62.310(a).** This will revise the current continuing education requirements for license renewals. To ensure licensees are up to date with and, fully comprehend, the current and differing challenges facing Alaskan populations, they will be required to complete a certain number of hours of study dedicated to the specified topics of telehealth, suicidality, and cultural competency, before each and every renewal application.

**12 AAC 62.310.** This will add a maximum number of hours in which a licensee is able to spend completing continuing education requirements, to renew their license, to no more than 12 contact hours per day. The purpose of the restriction is to ensure that licensees are not rushing through self-study courses and not benefitting from the intended education. By limiting the number of study hours to no more than 12 in one day, it is more likely that the licensee will take the time to thoroughly comprehend and retain the information provided by the course(s) taken.

#### 2. How will the proposed changes impact CE requirements for existing licensees during the current renewal period?

The answer to this question largely depends on the next stages of the process all of which determine the effective date of the final approved regulations. Pending completion of those final steps, it is not possible to provide a concrete answer to licensees. In the meantime, the best effort answer is a likelihood that they will begin upon the next renewal period.

**3. How will the board verify the proposed limitation of more than 12 CE hours in a 24 hour period?**

The proposal is to use information already provided by applicants on submission of documentary evidence needed to meet CE requirements. For example, the information on a valid certificate of attendance, certifying successful completion of the course, the number of accredited CE hours earned, and the date of completion. For the purposes of this section a “24-hour period” will mean “one calendar day”. A licensee will receive credit for a maximum of 12 CE accredited hours per calendar day.

**4. What cultures will qualify to meet the new specific CE requirement?**

In general, a course which is identified by the providers as being related to cultural competency should count towards this requirement. The determination of whether a specific CE course will meet those requirements is at the discretion of the Board.

**5. What are the costs to comply with the proposed regulations?**

There is no expected cost to comply with the proposed regulation.

**6. What are the positive and negative consequences of the regulations**

Both licensees and the public will benefit from the certainty that all licensed professional counselors in Alaska will have received appropriate and comprehensive training regarding the prevalent and recurring challenges facing Alaskans today.

There are no negative consequences to the proposed changes.

**7. When will the regulations be effective?**

After the public comment deadline, comments received are compiled and given to the Board for consideration. The Board may adopt the regulation as written/publicly noticed, may amend and adopt them, choose to take no action, or may withdraw the proposed regulations in part or in its whole. After Board action, the adopted regulations go to Department of Law (DOL) for final review/approval. DOL either approves or disapproves regulations. Once approved by DOL, it goes to the Lt. Governor for filing. Regulation takes effect on the 30th day after they have been filed by the Lt. Governor.

Do you have a question that is not answered here? Please email [RegulationsAndPublicComment@alaska.gov](mailto:RegulationsAndPublicComment@alaska.gov) so it can be added.