

What has changed in the new Continuing Education (CE) policy?

Thanks to our members' feedback, we have tried to simplify and streamline the process as much as possible.

Things that have not changed:

- 60 hours required within the three years
- 20 hours of carry over allowed

Things that have changed:

- **We have removed Schedule A and Schedule B classifications**
 - All CE acquired must include content related directly to:
 - ocular diseases and management
 - pharmacology
 - therapeutics
 - or be related to diversity, equity and inclusion
 - There is a list of preapproved activities (supervising externs, achieving fellowship, remote clinics) that are approved as CE that can be found in the standard of practice.
- **We have removed the requirements around live or synchronous hours**
 - There are no restrictions on asynchronous or pre-recorded CE provided you can provide a certificate of completion and the provider is on the list supplied in the policy (e.g., SAO, another provincial association/regulator, COPE, etc.)
- **We have added an annual minimum number of hours**
 - 10 credit hours must be completed each year of the cycle. This can include your carry over hours. (e.g., if you have 20 hours of carry over you would meet your year 1 and year 2 minimum requirements)
- **We have changed the CE deadline to December 15th of each year**
 - The new deadline will coincide with the licensing deadline. Submission of CE will be part of the license renewal process.

Member licenses for the new year will not be sent out until the CE requirements are met as completing CE is a condition of licensure.

SP-LR-4a FAQ's

What are the consequences of not completing my CE?

- A member that has not completed the required CE will not be in good standing with the SAO.
- Failure to achieve the minimum requirements or to submit information by December 15th will result in a fine of \$700. The member will be required to complete and submit proof of achieving the minimum requirements prior to receiving their license.
- In the event an audit uncovers that a member did not meet the minimum requirements by December 15th, a member may be subjected to a fine of \$700 as well as further disciplinary action.

I am joining the SAO in the second year of the cycle. How many hours do I need?

Year of License	Number of Hours Needed by December 15, 2026
2023	60
2024	40
2025	20

*If you complete the Canadian national entry-to-practice examination in the year that you license, you are awarded 20 credit hours for the time involved in preparing for the examination.

I am joining the SAO in the second/third year of the cycle and have qualifying CE hours for the prior years of the cycle. Can I use them?

The SAO pro-rates your CE requirement based on your year of licensure. If you want to use CE hours from a prior year of the cycle you will need to meet the full cycle requirement.

What are extenuating circumstances for extensions?

These are evaluated on a case-by-case basis – examples include sudden illness that prevents you from working or significant illness or death of a family member.

What is the Canadian national entry-to-practice examination?

The OEBC (Optometry Examining Board of Canada) OSCE and Written Exam is the Canadian national entry-to-practice examination.

How will CE be reported this year?

If all goes as plans, our regulatory software should be in place, which allows members to electronically input each course and attach a picture or scan of the corresponding certification. The regulatory software will also allow the SAO office to input the continuing education hours that are provided by the SAO into each member's

file. In the meantime, it is recommended that you keep copies of your certificates, as they will be required when uploading your hours.