

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS CONTINUING EDUCATION APPROVAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES

©2011

National Association of Social Workers.

All Rights Reserved.

750 First Street, NE, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20002

-

GUIDELINES FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION APPROVAL

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) offers formal social work continuing education (CE) approval for programs that meet the requirements put forth in NASW Standards for Continuing Professional Education. Social workers are ethically bound to lifelong learning as a means to ensure both practice competence and professional growth. Continuing education credits may be used for licensing renewal, toward professional credentials, or to remain current with the most current research, best practices, or the application of new theory in practice.

2. ELIGIBILITY

All providers who offer continuing education programs that are relevant to social workers may submit an application. These include, but are not limited to, providers of workshops, conferences, home study programs, and internet-based distance

-learning education. The NASW CE Approval Program extends to national, regional, and multi-state continuing education providers. State or local continuing education providers should contact our NASW state chapters except where no state approval programs are in place. Application for continuing education approval must be made by the sponsoring organization (provider), not by individual participants who attend the program.

3. SOCIAL WORK LICENSURE BOARD ENDORSEMENT

The NASW CE Approval Program is currently endorsed by 46 state licensure boards. Providers, however, are still responsible for following the states' rules and regulations regarding licensure. For example, several states do not recognize distance-learning programs as valid continuing professional education. For a listing of state social work boards, and their contact information, visit www.aswb.org.

4. NASW STANDARDS

The standards for organizations applying to the NASW CE Approval Program are contained in the NASW Standards for Continuing Professional Education. Applicants must review the standards and comply with the requirements. See the APPENDIX for the excerpt for Standards for Assessing Providers of Continuing Professional Education or for a copy of the complete Standards, visit www.socialworkers.org/practice/standards/cont_professional_ed.asp

5. DETERMINING THE NUMBER OF CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

NASW awards contact hours for approved programs. One contact hour equals one hour of face-to-face instruction. Distance learning contact hours are determined based on content, time to review the content, and an appropriate number of test questions that reflect whether the learning objectives have been met. The number of contact hours is determined prior to the beginning of the program and is based on the objectives, content, format, methods of instruction, and program schedule. A workshop or program must be a minimum of one hour in length. Continuing education providers and licensees should be aware that some social work licensure boards require a minimum of three-hour programs. Time devoted to announcements, welcoming speeches, scheduled coffee breaks, lunch, and other social events is not included in the number of hours considered. Credit is usually given at 50% of the allotted time for an educational program connected with a meal function. The continuing education provider is instructed to estimate the number of contact hours on their application. NASW determines the final number of contact hours for a program.