



RENEWAL FAQs

The Virginia Board of Counseling has implemented an initiative to “Go Green” which requires licensees, certification holders and registrants to **renew online**. **PAPER RENEWAL NOTICES ARE NO LONGER MAILED BY THE BOARD**. Email renewal notices will be sent to all licensees at least 45-60 days prior to the renewal deadline.

1. Whom do I contact if I am having difficulties with the online renewal system?

If you have technical difficulties renewing your license through the online system, call (804)-367-4444. The Health Professions Call Center is available to assist you Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time or by email at CallCenter@dhp.virginia.gov.

2. What are the types of statuses available for my license, certification or registration?

- **ACTIVE**: This status allows for practice in the state of Virginia.
- **INACTIVE**: This status does not allow practice in the state of Virginia. (LPC, LMFT and LSATP only)
- **EXPIRED**: If no payment is received by your expiration date, the licensure status will automatically be changed to EXPIRED.

3. When are licenses, certifications and registrations renewed?

All licensees, certifications and registrations are required to renew June 30th of each year with the exception of residents in counseling, marriage and family therapy and substance abuse treatment and certified rehabilitation providers.

Residents that were previously approved for supervision prior to 1/1/2020, will be required to renew on or before January 31st of each year. Residents approved after 1/1/2020 will be required to renew annually in the month the resident license was initially issued. To verify your expiration date enter your information on [License Lookup](#).

Certified rehabilitation providers (CRP) certifications expire on January 31st each year.

4. Were Licensed Resident in Counseling, Licensed Resident in Marriage & Family Therapy and Licensed in Substance Abuse Treatment granted an extension to complete the required annual continuing education?

All residents are required to renew annually and must complete three (3) hours of continuing education that courses that emphasize the ethics, standards of practice, or laws governing behavioral science professions in Virginia, offered by an approved provider as set forth in subsection B of 18VAC115-20-106.

Residents were not granted an extension to complete continuing education hours and must complete the continuing education prior to their expiration date.

On March 23, 2020, the board announced that the one-year extension to complete any required Continuing Education (CE) applied specifically to Licensed Professional Counselors, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Substance Abuse Practitioners, as well as Registered Peer Recovery Specialists and Qualified Mental Health Professionals. For more detailed information please review the [Renewal Explanation Chart](#).

5. Will Licensed Professional Counselors, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Substance Abuse Practitioners and Qualified Mental Health Professionals need to complete the continuing education requirements for 2020 and 2021 by June 30, 2021?

Yes, licensees and registrants that were given an extension must complete continuing education hours for both 2020 and 2021 by their expiration date.

6. Is there a “retired” status?

No, the Virginia Board of Counseling does not offer a “retired” status. Please see the above listed question for types of statuses.

7. What is the fees to renew my license?

A [fee chart](#) can be found on our website under “Fees”.

8. Is there a “grace period” if I do not renew my license, certification or registration prior to the expiration date?

No, a late fee will be automatically added to your account and cannot be waived.

9. Can I renew early?

A license, certifications and registrations can only be renewed 45-60 days prior to the expiration date. Early renewal for military deployment may be considered by calling (804) 367-4610.

10. How do I renew my license?

The Board will **email** all renewal notices and Personal Identification Number (PIN) number approximately 45-60 days prior to the expiration date. Please make sure that your email address is up-to-date.

You should renew your license [Online](#) no later than the expiration date to avoid a late fee.

If you have not received your renewal notice and PIN 30 days prior to your expiration date, please call or email the Board of Counseling at (804) 367-4610 or coun@dhp.virginia.gov or email the Health Professions Call Center at CallCenter@dhp.virginia.gov. Please provide the following information in your request:

- Full Name
- 10-digit Virginia License Number
- Date of Birth
- Last 4 Digits of Social Security Number

11. How do I notify the board office of an address change and/or name change?

You can update your address at any time by logging on to the [Online Licensing system](#) . You can also visit the [Update Your Information](#) page on the Board’s website for the required the link to the form to change your name or address. Please note that you cannot change your name online.

Any change in the address of record or the public address, if different from the address of record, must be furnished to the board within 30 days of such change.

12. I renewed my license but have not received it in the mail, when will I received my license?

The Board of Counseling has ceased mailing hard-copy licenses, certifications, and registrations following renewal. During the 2019 renewal, a final hard copy was issued that contained no expiration date. This final copy should be maintained, carried, or posted in accordance with relevant applicable laws and regulations. State health regulatory boards, employers, insurance providers and citizens seeking verification of current licensure status in the Commonwealth of Virginia may obtain this information via [License Lookup](#). Licenses, certification and registrations issued after January 1, 2019 were issued a final license, certification and registration at the time of approval.

A replacement or duplicate of a final hard-copy license, certification, or registration may be requested through an individual [online account](#).

13. What if I didn’t receive my renewal notice?

You should contact the Board office at (804) 367-4610 if you have not received your renewal notice 30 days prior to your expiration date. Failure to receive a renewal notice from the board shall not relieve the licensee, registrant, or certification holder from the renewal requirement

14. If my licensure status is “inactive,” do I have to renew?

Yes, in order to keep your license in “inactive” status, you must renew your license by the deadline. No person shall practice clinically in Virginia unless one holds a current active license. A licensee who has placed themselves in inactive status may become active by fulfilling the reactivation requirements set forth in in the Regulations.

15. How many hours of continuing education are required for renewal?

Licensed Residents in counseling, marriage and family therapy or substance abuse treatment must complete **3 hours of continuing education** that emphasize ethics, standards of practice, or laws governing behavioral science professions in Virginia.

Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and Licensed Substance Abuse Treatment Practitioner (LSATP) are required to complete a minimum of **20 hours of continuing competency hours** of which **2 hours must be in courses** that emphasized ethics, standards of practice, or laws governing behavioral science professions in Virginia.

Certified substance abuse counselors (**CSAC**) are required to complete a minimum of **10 contact hours** of continuing education in substance abuse and certified substance abuse counseling assistants (**CSAC-A**) are required to complete a minimum of **5 contact hours** of continuing education in substance abuse. **(CE hours are required for renewal in 2021)**

Qualified mental health professionals (**QMHP-A and QMHP-C**) are required to complete a minimum of **8 hours of continuing education hours** of which **1 hour must be in course** that emphasizes ethics. (QMHP-Trainees are not required to complete continuing education hours)

Registered peer recovery specialists (**RPRS**) are required to complete a minimum of **8 hours of continuing education hours** of which **2 hours must be in courses** that emphasize ethics.

Certified rehabilitation providers (**CRP**) are not required to complete continuing education hours.

You will **not** be required to submit your CEs to the Board unless you are audited following the renewal period.

16. How do I know if my CEs are approved before I complete the activity?

Please refer to Regulations for the requirements of continued education (CE) on the [Laws and Regulations](#) page. Please be aware that Board staff cannot pre-approve any CE courses. Each licensee, certification holder or registrant must use their best and professional judgment to determine if the course meets the requirements outlined in the regulations.

17. How many continuing education (“CE”) hours can be on-line or in person?

There is no restriction on the number of hours that may be obtained on-line or in person.

18. May I carry over hours of continuing education (“CE”) for the next renewal period?

No, the Board does not allow for CE hours to be carried over from year to year.

19. Do I need to submit my CE documentation to the Board for renewal?

No, you must maintain this information in your records for a period of three years following renewal. The Board may conduct an audit to verify compliance with the requirement for that renewal period. If selected, you will be notified by mail to provide evidence that you have completed the required continuing education hours.

20. What are types of continuing competency activities?

There are two types of continued competency activities for licensees:

1. Formally organized learning activities or home study from a board-approved provider.
2. Individual professional activities. See Regulations for a list of professional activities accepted.

21. What kind of continuing education hours will count?

Licensed Residents in counseling, marriage and family therapy or substance abuse treatment must complete continuing education hours that emphasize the ethics, standards of practice, or laws governing behavioral science professions in Virginia.

Licensed Professional Counselors (**LPC**), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (**LMFT**) and Licensed Substance Abuse Practitioners (**LSATP**) must complete competency activities that focus on increasing knowledge or skills in one or more of the following areas:

1. Ethics, standards of practice or laws governing behavioral science professions;
2. Counseling theory;
3. Human growth and development;
4. Social and cultural foundations;

5. The helping relationship;
6. Group dynamics, processing and counseling;
7. Lifestyle and career development;
8. Appraisal of individuals;
9. Research and evaluation;
10. Professional orientation;
11. Clinical supervision;
12. Marriage and family therapy; or
13. Addictions.

Certified substance abuse counselors (**CSAC**) and certified substance abuse counselor assistants (**CSAC-A**) must complete hours in the below content areas:

- a. Dynamics of human behavior;
- b. Signs and symptoms of substance abuse;
- c. Counseling theories and techniques;
- d. Continuum of care and case management skills;
- e. Recovery process and relapse prevention methods;
- f. Professional orientation and ethics;
- g. Pharmacology of abused substances;
- h. Trauma and crisis intervention;
- i. Co-occurring disorders;
- j. Cultural competency;
- k. Substance abuse counseling approaches and treatment planning;
- l. Group counseling; and
- m. Prevention, screening, and assessment of substance use and abuse

Qualified mental health professionals (**QMHP-A and QMHP-C**) are required to completed continuing education hours that are directly related to the provision of mental health services.

Registered peer recovery specialists (**RPRS**) must complete continuing competency activities that focus on increasing knowledge or skills in one or more of the following areas:

1. Current body of mental health or substance abuse knowledge;
2. Promoting services, supports, and strategies for the recovery process;
3. Crisis intervention;
4. Values for role of peer recovery specialist;
5. Basic principles related to health and wellness;
6. Stage appropriate pathways in recovery support;
7. Ethics and boundaries;
8. Cultural sensitivity and practice;
9. Trauma and impact on recovery;
10. Community resources; or
11. Delivering peer services within agencies and organizations.

22. Who can provide continuing education hours?

Licensees, CSAC and CSAC-A approved providers are listed below:

- a. Regionally accredited university or college level academic courses in a behavioral health discipline.
- b. Continuing education programs offered by universities or colleges.
- c. Workshops, seminars, conferences, or courses in the behavioral health field offered by federal, state or local governmental agencies or licensed health facilities and licensed hospitals.
- d. Workshops, seminars conferences or courses in the behavioral health field offered by an individual or organization that has been certified or approved by one of the following:
 - (1) The International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors and its state affiliates.
 - (2) The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and its state affiliates.
 - (3) The American Association of State Counseling Boards.
 - (4) The American Counseling Association and its state and local affiliates.
 - (5) The American Psychological Association and its state affiliates.
 - (6) The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.
 - (7) NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals and its state and local affiliates.
 - (8) National Association of Social Workers.
 - (9) National Board for Certified Counselors.
 - (10) A national behavioral health organization or certification body.
 - (11) Individuals or organizations that have been approved as continuing competency sponsors by the American Association of State Counseling Boards or a counseling board in another state.
 - (12) The American Association of Pastoral Counselors.

Qualified mental health professionals (**QMHP-A and QMHP-C**) approved providers are listed below:

1. Federal, state, or local governmental agencies, public school systems, licensed health facilities, or an agency licensed by DBDHS; and
2. Entities approved for continuing education by a health regulatory board within the Department of Health Professions.

Registered peer recovery specialists (**RPRS**) approved providers are listed below:

1. Federal, state, or local governmental agencies, public school systems, or licensed health or mental health facilities.
2. A national or state recovery-oriented association or organization recognized by the profession.
3. A national behavioral health organization or certification body recognized by the board.
4. An agency or organization holding approval by DBHDS as a certifying body for peer recovery specialists.
5. The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and its state affiliates.
6. The American Association of State Counseling Boards.
7. The American Counseling Association and its state and local affiliates.
8. The American Psychological Association and its state affiliates.
9. The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.
10. NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals and its state and local affiliates.
11. National Association of Social Workers.
12. National Board for Certified Counselors.
13. Individuals or organizations that have been approved as continuing competency sponsors by the American Association of State Counseling Boards or a counseling board in another state.
14. Regionally accredited colleges or universities.

21. How do I request inactive licensure?

Any LPC, LMFT or LSATP who holds a current, unrestricted license in Virginia may change to inactive status by completing and mailing the Board the Inactive License Request Form and paying the inactive status fee. The option to change your license from active to inactive is not available online. Please contact the board office at (804) 367-4610 with any questions.

22. What if I am newly licensed? Do I have to obtain CE hours before my first renewal?

Newly licensed individuals LPC, LMFT and LSATP who were licensed by examination are not required to document continuing education on the first renewal date following initial licensure, however, you are required to renew your license by the June 30th deadline. (Those who applied by endorsement are required to complete continuing education on their first renewal)

Newly CSAC, CSAC-A, QMHP-A, QMHP-C, and RPRS are not required to complete continuing education requirements for the first renewal following initial license, certification or registration approval.

23. I am an active duty service person or spouse and am deployed outside the U.S. Can I request an extension for renewal?

Yes, Virginia law allows active duty service people or their spouses who are deployed outside the U.S. to have an extension of time for any requirement or fee pertaining to renewal until 60 days after the person's return from deployment. The extension cannot last beyond 5 years past the expiration date for the license. For more information, please read the [attached policy](#) and contact the applicable board for your license.

24. What if I can't renew my license online, or I don't have a debit/credit card?

You may request a paper renewal online at <https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/paper/>. The form will be sent by U.S. Mail to the address of record. If you believe that your address of record is incorrect, please see the above question on how to notify the board office of an address change.

25. How will licensees and registrants verify that they completed their continuing education requirements for 2020?

Licensees and registrants will be required to complete and attest at renewal that they have completed both the 2020 and 2021 continuing education prior to June 30, 2021.

26. I am dually licensed by the Board of Counseling, must I complete 20 hours of continuing competency for each license?

Those individuals dually licensed by this Board will not be required to obtain continuing competency for each license. A total of 20 hours will fulfill the requirements of all licenses held from this Board.

27. What if I become ill or incapacitated and unable to complete my continuing competency requirements prior to renewal?

Upon written request from a licensee prior to the renewal date explaining the circumstances, the Board may grant an extension or exemption for all or part of the required hours.

28. Can I volunteer instead of completing continuing education hours?

For licensees only, up to two hours of the 20 hours required for annual renewal may be satisfied through delivery of counseling services, without compensation, to low-income individuals receiving health services

through a local health department or a free clinic organized in whole or primarily for the delivery of those services. One hour of continuing education may be credited for three hours of providing such volunteer services, as documented by the health department or free clinic.

29. Can college courses or continuing education that I completed for my license, certificate or registration be used toward renewal?

No. Courses completed from a university that was used to meet the requirements for licensure, certification or registration cannot be used again to meet the renewal requirements. In additionally, didactic training hours used to satisfy the requirements for CSAC or CSAC-A cannot be used again to meet the renewal requirements.