

FAQs

Oregon Driver Education Instructor Continuing Education

The requirement:

OAR 737-015-0070(6) An instructor must be re-certified every two years. To qualify, the instructor must, during the previous two years:

(a) Participate in 15 hours of continuing education to improve driver education teaching competency. This professional development training may be obtained through a state agency, college or university or professional education organization. Professional development hours will be accepted for the purpose of enhancing instructional knowledge and skills in support of teaching driver education best practices. Every instructor must maintain a professional development file that includes the agenda, objectives, time schedule and completion certificates for the continuing education;

We've been telling you for at least two years, now, that the Division will start checking instructor continuing education (CE) hours in September 2009. We are receiving more and more questions related to CE, so we put together the following frequently asked questions in an effort to reach all of you. Most of the guidance was provided by the Driver Education Advisory Committee (DEAC). Be sure to refer to the full language in Oregon Administrative Rule, OAR 737-015-0070.

1. What do you mean by “re-certified” and what is the certification period, as described in the administrative rule requirement quoted above?

The certification period runs Oct 15 to Oct 15. This means for the two year period October 15, 2007, to October 15, 2009, an instructor needs at least 15 hours documented CE. Earned hours are “rolling”; they remain current for two years.

TIP: Each Oct 15, count back 2 years; you need to have earned 15 hours qualifying education during that period.

Examples:

- If the Division reviews your records in February 2010, we will look at instructor CE hours for the period Oct 15, 2007, through Oct 15, 2009 (the two years leading up to the most recent October 15).
- Looking ahead further, if the Division reviews your records in November 2010, we will look for 15 hours accrued between October 15, 2008, through October 15, 2010.

2. If the certification period runs Oct to Oct, why will the Division start checking CE in Sept?

Good question! Rather than September, as we have been telling you, we will hold off until October. As of October 15, each instructor must have documentation showing at least 15 hours of qualifying CE in the previous 2 years.

3. I successfully completed behind-the-wheel instructor training last year. Am I OK?

Yes! But begin accumulating CE hours so you remain current. Will you have 15 hours (in the previous two years) by Oct 15 next year?

4. I already took Foundations several years ago. What if I re-take it as a refresher course? Does that qualify?

Yes, the hours qualify for continuing education.

5. What do you make of this hypothetical situation: I complete a 7 hour DE workshop November 1, 2009. The Division reviews our program records December 1 of the same year.

Although I have always maintained at least 15 hours CE in the previous two years, the Oct 15 to Oct 15 certification period doesn't work to my advantage.

During the period October 15, 2007, and October 15, 2009, I'm short the required 15 hours. If you count back from the inspection date, however, I have more than 15 hours. Will our program be cited?

If the Oct 15 to Oct 15 certification period doesn't show the full 15 hours, the Division will count back two years from the inspection date, whichever way is to the best advantage of the instructor. In this example, the program would not be cited for noncompliance.

6. I completed my core courses in 2004. I worked two years, then quit. I've not taken continuing education. Now, I'd like to get back into driver ed. How can I qualify?

You need 15 hours CE before you can teach.

All other requirements listed in administrative rule must also be met before teaching. To reinstate your continuing teaching experience, we have special guidance. Contact us for details.

7. I found some online DE courses offered through another state. Do online courses count toward CE?

At this point, the Division has not approved online courses.

8. I'm a behind-the-wheel instructor, but have the opportunity to take a workshop on classroom activities. Will this qualify for CE hours?

The Division realizes the benefit in behind the wheel and classroom instructors obtaining a more rounded DE education. Yes, the hours would qualify for CE.

9. My PowerPoint skills are weak. If I take a PowerPoint course through my local community college, will it qualify?

The Division recognizes that PowerPoint skills can improve an instructor's ability to teach. But the Division cannot approve that course hour for hour. The DEAC has approved up to three hours for each technology course taken. (Also, see question #9).

10. Is there a maximum number of courses I can take that are not directly related to driver education?

Yes, there is a limit. DEAC guidance states that at least 10 hours of continuing education must be directly related to driver education.

Even if the remaining five hours are not specifically driver education related, they must clearly enhance your instructional knowledge and skills in support of teaching DE best practices. Ask yourself, "How will I apply this to my teaching?"

11. What do I need to keep in my file?

Administrative rule states that each instructor must maintain a professional development file that includes the following for each class taken: agenda, objectives, time schedule and completion certificate.

12. Besides the two annual conferences, where can I find courses that qualify?

- See the link to WOU's training website on the Division's webpage:
http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/drivers_ed.shtml/
Click on Upcoming Events.
- Attend a workshop the Friday evening prior to the annual conferences (March and October each year). See conference registration information on the Division's website, prior to each conference:
http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/drivers_ed.shtml
- Some public schools and private drive schools offer workshops. Before attending, it is your responsibility to assure that the workshop meets all requirements in OAR 737-015-0070(6). Also, assure the hosts provide each of the items listed under FAQ #11.
- The Oregon Traffic Safety Education Association (OTSEA) posts workshops on their site: <http://www.otsea.org/>

- If your program wants training in a specific area, ask WOU's mentors to provide it. Contact WOU,
<http://www.wou.edu/provost/extprogram/trafficsafetyeducation.php#top>

Plan ahead! It is your responsibility as an instructor to assure your continuing education hours remain current. You are not qualified to teach driver ed if your CE lapses.