



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Olympia, Washington 98504

NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF POLICY STATEMENT

Title of Policy Statement: Continuing Medical Education Requirements During the COVID-19 Response | PO 20-51.4

Issuing Entity: Podiatric Medical Board

Subject Matter: Addressing the impact COVID-19 response measures are having on the podiatric physician profession with regard to meeting the continuing medical education (CME) requirements. The Podiatric Medical Board is extending the expiration of this policy through December 31, 2022

Effective Date: July 14, 2022

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**Department of Health
Office of Health Professions
Podiatric Medical Board**

Policy Statement

Revised – 10/18/11

Title:	Continuing Medical Education Requirements During the COVID-19 Response	Number: PO 20-51.4
References:	Chapter 18.22 RCW ; WAC 246-922-300 ; WAC 246-922-310 ; WAC 246-12-210	
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Approved By:	Randy Anderson, DPM Chair, Podiatric Medical Board	

Through the end of the calendar year 2022, it is the policy of the Podiatric Medical Board (board) to accept online¹ courses that meet the requirements of Category 1 or Category 2 as meeting the continuing medical education (CME) requirements in [WAC 246-922-310](#). This policy was initially approved through December 31, 2021, extended through June 30, 2022, and is now extended through December 31, 2022.

The board made the decision to accept online courses in response to the Governor issued Proclamation 20-25 that, for a time, required people to cease leaving their homes except to conduct essential activities or for employment of essential services. The Governor is rescinding any remaining COVID-19 emergency orders and the state of emergency by October 31, 2022. This policy is intended to allow licensees to complete any remaining online courses that were started under the state of emergency.

Other circumstances related to completing CME and/or credentialing requirements beyond the individual licensee's control will be considered on a case-by-case basis for extension or waiver under the authority of [WAC 246-12-210](#).

Background

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and as it continued to spread the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance was to encourage the restriction of large gatherings. At that time organizations and entities canceled large professional development events and conferences that included significant continuing medical education opportunities.

Many podiatric physicians, while not explicitly prohibited from providing patient care, either scaled back or ceased practicing during the COVID-19 pandemic to adhere to the social distancing guidelines.

¹ Online courses include those that are in-person, remote-attended, or prerecorded.

The measures in place attempting to stem the spread of COVID-19 continued to contribute to financial hardship and uncertainty.

As well, without the capability to access expected routinely attended CME offerings and as financial uncertainty increased, podiatric physicians were without the ability and/or the means to meet their CME obligations for renewal of their licenses.

[WAC 246-922-300](#) requires podiatric physicians to complete one hundred (100) hours of CME every two years and [WAC 246-922-310](#) outlines creditable podiatric CME.

[WAC 246-12-210](#) states: “A practitioner may be excused from or granted an extension of continuing education requirements due to illness or other extenuating circumstances. The profession’s regulatory entity determines when the requirements may be waived or may grant an extension.”

In order to allow licensees time to complete any remaining online courses that were started under the state of emergency, the board is extending this policy through the end of calendar year 2022. Under this policy the board will accept online courses that meet the requirements of Category 1 or Category 2 as meeting the CME requirements in [WAC 246-922-310](#). This policy was initially approved through December 31, 2021, extended through June 30, 2022, and is now extended through December 31, 2022.

Other circumstances related to completing CME and/or credentialing requirements beyond the individual licensee’s control will be considered on a case-by-case basis for extension or waiver under the authority of [WAC 246-12-210](#).