**Section 1249.220 Continuing Education**

a) Pursuant to Section 10-30 of the Act, every cemetery manager shall complete 6 hours of continuing education (CE) during each renewal cycle, and every customer service employee shall complete 3 hours of CE during each renewal cycle.

b) CE credit may be earned as follows:

1) Verified attendance at or participation in a program given by a sponsor as set forth in this Section.

2) For a maximum of half of the required CE hours per renewal cycle:

A) Personal preparation of an educational presentation pertaining to cemetery management and/or the practice of providing customer service at a cemetery that is orally delivered before a recognized professional cemetery organization;

B) Writing of educational articles pertaining to cemetery management and/or the practice of providing customer service at a cemetery and having them published in recognized cemetery industry journals, trade publications, newsletters, or other publications upon approval by the Division;

C) Completion of self-study courses taken through an accredited college or university or an approved sponsor. Self-study courses designed for CE credit must include an examination that tests the skills of the licensee and is of sufficient depth that answers are not readily apparent and have not been provided to the licensee. Sponsors have the obligation to craft examinations in ways to prevent candidates from obtaining unearned credit; and/or

D) A licensee who serves as an instructor, speaker or discussion leader of an approved course will be allowed CE course credit for actual presentation time, plus actual preparation time of up to 2 hours for each hour of presentation. Preparation time shall not be allowed for repetitious presentations of the same course and will only be allowed for additional study or research.

3) The CE hours used to satisfy the CE requirements for renewal of an applicable license held in another jurisdiction shall be applied to fulfillment of the CE requirements for renewal of the applicant's Illinois license, upon approval by the Division.

4) A CE hour means a minimum of 50 minutes of actual continuing education spent by a licensee in actual attendance at and completion of an approved CE activity. A CE program shall not be presented during a dinner or social function. The dinner or social function must be concluded before the CE program commences or be held after the CE program is completed. If the program involves one or more hours of education, credit may be issued in one-half hour increments.

5) Credit will not be given for activities that are not included in this subsection (b).

c) CE Sponsors and Programs

1) Sponsor, as used in this Section, shall mean any death care trade association, school, college or university, State agency or any other person, firm or association that has been approved and authorized by the Division to coordinate and present CE courses and programs in conjunction with this Section.

2) A sponsor intending to offer CE courses and programs shall first obtain the approval of the Division by making application on forms provided by the Division and including the required fee under Section 1249.20. The application shall certify the following:

A) That all courses and programs offered by the sponsor for CE credit will comply with the criteria in this Section;

B) That the sponsor will be responsible for verifying attendance at each course or program and will provide a certificate of completion as set forth in this Section;

C) That, upon request by the Division, the sponsor will submit evidence necessary to establish compliance with this Section. The evidence shall be required when the Division has reason to believe that there is not full compliance with the Act and this Part and that this information is necessary to ensure compliance; and

D) The sponsor shall report the locations where the courses or programs will be offered and a description of each facility. A sponsor shall only conduct courses and programs in locations that are conducive to learning. The Division may conduct an inspection of the facility during regular business hours.

3) The approval of a sponsor by the Division shall be valid for a period of 4 years or until August 31, 2016, whichever comes first. Sponsor approvals issued after August 31, 2016 will expire every 4 years thereafter.

4) All courses and programs shall:

A) Contain materials that contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of professional skills and knowledge in the practice of cemetery management and/or providing customer service at a cemetery. The course content shall be designed to focus on such advancement and enhancement of professional skills and knowledge;

B) Specify the course objectives, course content and teaching methods;

C) Be developed and presented by persons with education and/or experience in the subject matter of the program;

D) Specify the number of CE hours that may be applied to fulfilling the Illinois CE requirements for license renewal; and

E) Include some mechanism through which participants evaluate the overall quality and content of the program.

5) All programs given by sponsors should be open to all licensees and not be limited to the members of a single organization or group.

6) Certificate of Attendance or Participation. It shall be the responsibility of the sponsor to provide each participant in an approved program or course with a certificate of attendance or participation that shall contain the following information:

A) The name and address of the sponsor;

B) The name and license number of the participant;

C) A brief statement of the subject matter;

D) The number of CE hours awarded in each program;

E) The date and place of the program; and

F) The signature of the sponsor.

7) The certificate of attendance shall be distributed following the educational program or otherwise be provided to the attendee by the sponsor, by such means as mailing the certificate or summary of attendance.

8) The sponsor shall maintain course materials and attendance records containing all information in subsection (c)(5) for not less than 5 years, except for the signature of the sponsor.

9) The sponsor shall be responsible for assuring that no participant shall receive CE credit for time not actually spent attending the program.

10) If it is determined after a hearing before the Division that a sponsor has failed to comply with the foregoing requirements, the Division shall thereafter refuse to accept for CE credit attendance at any of the sponsor's CE activities until such time as the Division receives assurances of compliance with this Section.

11) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, the Division may evaluate any sponsor of any CE program at any time.

12) The Division shall maintain a list of all approved CE sponsors.

13) No approved CE sponsor shall advertise that it is endorsed, recommended or accredited by the Division. The sponsor may indicate that it is approved by the Division to provide CE courses and programs.

d) Certification of Compliance with CE Requirements

1) Each renewal applicant shall certify, on the renewal application, full compliance with the CE requirements set forth in subsection (a).

2) The Division may require additional evidence demonstrating compliance with the CE requirements. It is the responsibility of each renewal applicant to retain or otherwise produce evidence of compliance.

3) The Division may conduct random audits to verify compliance with this Section.

e) Waiver of CE Requirements

1) In cases of extreme hardship, a renewal applicant seeking renewal of a license without having fully complied with these CE requirements may file with the Division a request for waiver of the CE requirements with his or her renewal application, the required renewal fee, and a statement setting forth the facts concerning the non-compliance. If the Division finds from the evidence submitted that extreme hardship has been shown, the Division may waive enforcement of CE requirements for that renewal cycle.

2) Extreme hardship shall be determined on an individual basis by the Division and be defined as an inability to devote sufficient hours to fulfilling the CE requirements during the applicable renewal cycle because of:

A) Full-time service in the Armed Forces of the United States during a substantial part of the renewal cycle;

B) An incapacitating illness, documented by a currently licensed physician;

C) A physical inability to travel to the sites of approved programs documented by a currently licensed physician; or

D) Other similar extenuating circumstances (i.e., family illness, prolonged hospitalization or advanced age).

3) Any renewal applicant who, prior to the expiration date of the license, submits a request for a waiver pursuant to the provisions of this subsection (e) shall be deemed to be in good standing until the Division's final decision on the application has been made.

4) Any applicant who submits a request for waiver that is denied may then request his or her license be placed on inactive status. The applicant shall comply with the CE requirements prior to restoration of the license from inactive status in accordance with Section 1249.50 of this Part.