**Section 1345.35 Continuing Education**

a) Continuing Education Requirements

1) Beginning with the 2028 renewal period, all licensed certified professional midwives shall complete 20 hours of approved continuing education per two-year license renewal cycle.

2) All continuing education must be completed in the 24 months preceding expiration of the license.

3) A renewal applicant shall not be required to comply with continuing education requirements for the first renewal of an Illinois license.

4) Licensed certified professional midwives licensed in Illinois but residing and practicing in other states shall comply with the continuing education requirements set forth in this Section.

5) Continuing education hours used to satisfy the continuing education requirements of another jurisdiction may be applied to fulfill the continuing education requirements of the State of Illinois.

b) Approved Continuing Education Sponsors and Programs

1) Sponsor, as used in this Section, shall mean:

A) The Illinois Council of Certified Professional Midwives;

B) Birth Emergency Skills Training;

C) American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation;

D) National Association of Certified Professional Midwives;

E) American College of Nurse Midwives;

F) American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists;

G) Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses;

H) American Academy of Pediatrics;

I) American Nurses Association;

J) American Nurse Credentialing Center;

K) Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing;

L) American College of Nurse Practitioners;

M) American Academy of Nurse Practitioners;

N) Any Midwifery Education Accreditation Council accredited or North American Registry of Midwives approved continuing education;

O) Any other accredited school, college, or university, State agency, or association approved by the Division upon recommendation of the Board. The organization seeking approval shall submit an application on forms provided by the Division and pay the required fee as provided in Section 1345.55.

2) All programs shall:

A) Contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of the professional skills and scientific knowledge of the licensee in the profession of midwifery;

B) Foster the enhancement of the midwifery profession and values;

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

D) Specify the course objectives, course content, and teaching methods to be used; and

E) Specify the number of continuing education hours that may be applied to fulfilling the Illinois continuing education requirements for license renewal.

3) Continuing education may be offered in a classroom setting or by online instruction.

4) Each continuing education program shall provide a mechanism for evaluation of the program and instructor by the participants. The evaluation may be completed on-site immediately following the program/presentation or an evaluation questionnaire may be distributed to participants to be completed and returned by mail or electronic means. The sponsor and instructor, together, shall review the evaluation outcome and revise subsequent programs accordingly.

5) A sponsor approved pursuant to subsection (b)(1) may subcontract with individuals or organizations to provide approved programs. All advertising, promotional materials, and certificates of attendance must identify the approved sponsor. The presenter of the program may also be identified but should be identified as a presenter. When an approved sponsor subcontracts with a presenter, the sponsor retains all responsibility for monitoring attendance, providing certificates of attendance, and ensuring the program meets all of the criteria established by the Act and this Part, including the maintenance of records.

6) Certification Attendance. It shall be the responsibility of a sponsor to provide each participant in a program with a certificate of attendance or participation. The sponsor's certificate of attendance shall contain:

A) The sponsor's name and, if applicable, sponsor approval number;

B) The name of the participant;

C) A brief statement of the subject matter;

D) The number of hours attended in each program;

E) The date and place of the program; and

F) The signature of the sponsor.

7) The sponsor shall maintain attendance records for not less than five years.

8) The sponsor shall be responsible for assuring that no renewal applicant will receive continuing education credit for time not actually spent attending the program.

9) Upon the failure of the sponsor to comply with any of the requirements of this subsection (b), the Division, after notice to the sponsor, shall thereafter refuse to accept for continuing education attendance at or participation in any of that sponsor's continuing education programs until the Division receives assurances of compliance with this Section.

10) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, the Division or Board may evaluate any sponsor of any approved continuing education program at any time to ensure compliance with requirements of this Section.

c) Certification of Compliance with Continuing Education Requirements

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

2) The Division may require additional evidence demonstrating compliance with the continuing education requirements (e.g. certificates of attendance). This additional evidence shall be required in the context of the Division's random audit. It is the responsibility of each renewal applicant to retain or otherwise produce evidence of compliance.

3) When there appears to be a lack of compliance with continuing education requirements, an applicant shall be notified in writing and may request an interview with the Board. At that time, the Board may recommend that steps be taken to begin formal disciplinary proceedings.

d) Continuing Education Earned in Other Jurisdictions

1) If a licensee has earned continuing education hours offered in another jurisdiction not given by an approved sponsor for which the licensee will be claiming credit toward full compliance in Illinois, the applicant shall submit an individual program approval request form, along with a $25 processing fee, prior to participation in the program or within 90 days prior to expiration of the license. The Board shall review and recommend approval or disapproval of the program using the criteria set forth in subsection (b)(2).

2) If a licensee fails to submit an out-of-state continuing education approval form within the required time, late approval may be obtained by submitting the approval request with the $25 processing fee plus a late fee of $50 per continuing education hour, not to exceed $300. The Board shall review and recommend approval or disapproval of the program using the criteria set forth in subsection (b)(2).

e) Waiver of Continuing Education Requirements

1) Any renewal applicant seeking renewal of a license without having fully complied with these continuing education requirements shall file with the Division a renewal application, along with the required fee set forth in Section 1345.55, an affidavit setting forth the facts concerning noncompliance and a request for waiver of the continuing education requirements on the basis of these facts. A request for waiver shall be made prior to the renewal date. If the Division, upon the written recommendation of the Board, finds from the affidavit or any other evidence submitted that good cause has been shown for granting a waiver, the Division will waive enforcement of continuing education requirements for the renewal period for which the applicant has applied.

2) Good cause shall be determined on an individual basis by the Board and be defined as an inability to devote sufficient hours to fulfilling the continuing education requirements during the applicable pre-renewal period because of:

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

B) An incapacitating illness documented by a statement from a currently licensed health care provider;

C) A physical inability to access the sites of approved programs or online sources documented by a currently licensed health care provider; or

D) Any other similar extenuating circumstances.

3) When the licensee is requesting a waiver due to physical or mental illness or incapacity, the licensee shall provide a current fitness to practice statement from a currently licensed health care provider familiar with the licensee's medical history.

4) Any renewal applicant who, prior to the expiration date of the license, submits a request for waiver, in whole or in part, pursuant to the provisions of this Section shall be deemed to be in good standing until the final decision on the application is made by the Division.