**Section 1515.80 Continuing Education**

a) Continuing Education Requirements

1) One Continuing Education (CE) hour shall be equal to one clock hour of attendance. After completion of the initial CE hour, credit may be given in one-half hour increments. Lunch hours, socials and breaks do not count towards CE hours.

2) A prerenewal period is the 12 month period proceeding January 1 of each year.

3) A renewal applicant shall not be required to comply with CE requirements for the 1st renewal period. This exemption applies only for a single renewal period, including the transition from a provisional license to a general license.

4) Every licensee who applies for renewal of a license as a sign language interpreter for the deaf for 2011 shall complete within the prerenewal period 12 hours of CE relevant to the practice of sign language interpreting.

5) Every licensee who applies for renewal of a license as a sign language interpreter for the deaf for 2012 shall complete within the prerenewal period 16 hours of CE relevant to the practice of sign language interpreting.

6) Beginning with the 2013 license renewal, every licensee who applies for renewal of a license as a sign language interpreter for the deaf shall complete within the prerenewal period 20 hours of CE relevant to the practice of sign language interpreting.

7) Interpreters licensed in Illinois but residing and practicing in other states shall comply with the CE requirements set forth in this Section.

8) CE hours used to satisfy the CE requirement of another jurisdiction may be applied to fulfill the Illinois CE requirements if they meet the requirements of this Section.

9) Upon proof of successful completion, courses that are part of the curriculum of an accredited university, college or other educational institution relating to interpreting shall have the following contact hours:

A) Semester system courses – 1 credit hour = 15 CE hours; and

B) Quarter system courses – 1 credit hour = 10 CE hours.

10) Upon proof of successful completion of the Commission's prescribed mentoring program pursuant to Section 1515.105, a licensed interpreter can earn up to 10 CE hours a year. CE hours can only be earned for the initial completion of the Commission's mentoring program between the Mentor and Mentee. Neither the Mentor nor Mentee can earn CE hours for repeated mentoring relations with the same Mentor/Mentee relationship.

b) Carryover of CE Hours

1) An interpreter may carry over a maximum of 50% of the required CE hours from the time he or she is licensed until the first renewal requiring CE; and

2) If an interpreter earns more than the CE hours required during a renewal period, the interpreter can carry over into the next renewal period a maximum of 50% CE hours required for that renewal period.

c) Certification of Compliance with CE Requirements

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

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

3) Applicants shall maintain for three years after the end of the relevant reporting period certificates of attendance received pursuant to subsection (d); proof of completion of continuing education required by another jurisdiction, if deemed sufficiently equivalent by the Commission; or transcripts indicating successful completion of a course described in subsection (e)(6) or (7) delivered by a college or university.

4) When there appears to be a lack of compliance with CE requirements, an applicant shall be notified in writing. At that time, the Commission may refuse to renew an interpreter's license or refer the application to the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation for disciplinary action as allowed by Section 115 of the Act.

d) Approved Continuing Education

CE hours shall be earned by verified attendance (e.g., certificate of attendance or certificate of completion) at or participation in a program or course that is offered or sponsored by an approved CE sponsor that meets the requirements set forth in subsection (e), except for those activities provided in subsection (a).

e) Approved CE Sponsors and Programs

1) Approved sponsor, as used in this Section, shall mean:

A) Approved CMP sponsors for the Registry for Interpreters for the Deaf (RID);

B) Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission; and

C) Any other person, firm, association, corporation or group that has been approved and authorized by the Commission pursuant to subsection (e)(2) of this Section, upon the recommendation of the Board, to coordinate and present CE courses or programs.

2) Entities seeking approval as a CE sponsor pursuant to subsection (e)(1) shall file a sponsor application, along with the required fee of $150. (State agencies and State colleges and universities shall be exempt from paying this fee.) The applicant shall certify to the following:

A) That all programs offered by the sponsor for CE credit will comply with the criteria in subsection (e)(3) and all other criteria in this Section. A sponsor shall be required to submit a CE program with course materials for review prior to being approved as a CE sponsor;

B) That the sponsor will be responsible for verifying attendance at each program and provide a certificate of attendance as set forth in subsection (e)(10);

C) That, upon request by the Commission, the sponsor will submit evidence (e.g., certificate of attendance or course materials) as is necessary to establish compliance with this Section. Evidence shall be required when the Commission has reason to believe that there is not full compliance with this Section and that this information is necessary to ensure compliance.

3) All programs shall:

A) Contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of the professional skill and knowledge of the licensee;

B) Foster the enhancement of general or specialized interpreting practice and values;

C) Be developed and presented by a person 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 CE hours that may be applied to fulfilling the Illinois CE requirements for license renewal.

4) To maintain approval as an approved sponsor, each sponsor shall submit to the Commission by each odd-numbered year a renewal application, the renewal fee of $100 and a list of courses and programs offered within the last 24 months. The list shall include a brief description, location, date and time of each course given.

5) Presenters of workshops or training can receive CE hours equal to 1 hour for each hour of presentation. CE hours can only be earned for the initial presentation of a workshop. A presentation abstract must be submitted and approved by an approved CE sponsor 30 days prior to the event.

6) Each CE program shall provide a mechanism for evaluation of the program by the participants.

7) All programs given by approved sponsors shall be open to all licensed sign language interpreters for the deaf and not be limited to members of a single organization or group.

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

A) The name, address and license number of the sponsor;

B) The name and license number of the participant;

C) A brief statement of the subject matter;

D) The number of contact hours attended in each program;

E) The date and place of the program; and

F) The signature of the sponsor.

9) The sponsor shall maintain attendance records for not less than 5 years.

10) The sponsor shall be responsible for assuring that a renewal applicant does not receive CE credit for time not actually spent attending the program.

11) Upon the failure of a sponsor to comply with any of the requirements of this Section, the Commission, after notice to the sponsor and hearing before and recommendation by the Board (see 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1110), shall refuse to accept attendance at or participation in any of that sponsor's CE programs until such time as the Commission receives assurances of compliance with this Section.

12) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, the Commission or the Board may evaluate any sponsor of any approved CE program at any time to ensure compliance with the requirements of this Section.

f) Restoration of Nonrenewed License. Upon satisfactory evidence of compliance with CE requirements, the Commission shall restore the license upon payment of the fee required by Section 1515.70.

g) Waiver of CE Requirements

1) Any applicant seeking renewal of a license without having fully complied with the CE requirements of this Section shall file with the Commission a renewal application, along with the fee required by Section 1515.70, a statement setting forth the facts concerning non-compliance, and a request for waiver of all or part of the CE requirements on the basis of those facts. A request for waiver shall be made prior to the renewal date. If the Commission, upon the written recommendation of the Board, finds from the application or any other evidence submitted that extreme hardship has been shown for granting a waiver, the Commission shall waive enforcement of the CE requirements for the renewal period for which the applicant has applied.

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

A) Full-time service in the armed forces of the United States of America during a substantial part of the prerenewal period;

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

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

D) Any other similar extenuating circumstances.

3) Any renewal applicant who, prior to the expiration date of the license, submits a request for a 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 Commission.

(Source: Amended at 37 Ill. Reg. 2552, effective July 1, 2013)