

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION**

BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK
AUTHORITY FOR GUIDANCE

September 27, 2021
DATE OF POLICY

21-002
POLICY NO.

POLICY STATEMENT

**SUSPENSION OF FACE-TO-FACE CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENT
DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC EMERGENCY**

EXTENSION

In light of the current Public Emergency (which is extended until January 7, 2022) the Board of Social Work (Board) has adopted the following policy and offered this guidance related to the continuing education (CE) required to maintain a social work license in the District.

Section 7008.4 of Title 17 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) requires that, to qualify for the licensure renewal, District-licensed social workers must complete forty (40) hours of CE related to social work practice during the two (2) years of the licensure term. Additionally, no more than twelve (12) hours of the required CE may be obtained through home studies, distance learning, or internet courses. 17 DCMR § 7008.4(a). Further, six (6) of the required forty (40) CE hours must be in ethics, professional conduct, or boundary issues and obtained in a live, in-person, face-to-face setting. 17 DCMR § 7008.4(c).

On March 11, 2020, the Mayor declared the state of public health emergency in the District due to the threat of COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor's Order 2020-045. Following this declaration, Mayor Muriel Bowser issued an order prohibiting mass gatherings of fifty (50) or more persons on March 16, 2020. Mayor's Order 2020-048. On March 24, 2020, non-essential businesses were ordered closed. Mayor's Order 2020-053. A stay-at-home order was issued on March 30, 2020, prohibiting District residents from leaving their home except for certain specified essential businesses. Mayor's Order 2020-054. Similar measures have also been adopted in all U.S. states and territories.

As a result of these emergency restrictions, it has become clear that licensees will face the impossibility or at least difficulty in obtaining live, in-person CE. The Board has therefore voted **to extend the suspension** of the live, in-person, face-to-face requirements of subsections (a) and (c) of 17 DCMR §7008.4, effective during the current licensure term from August 1, 2021 **to July 31, 2023**. (Policy Statement No. 21-002.) Accordingly, District social workers may fulfill their CE requirement with CE programs or activities obtained via remote methods, distance learning, or home studies, including pre-recorded online presentations. While the implication of

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Policy Statement 21-002: Suspension of Face-to-Face Continuing Education Requirement
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this guidance may be obvious, the Board nevertheless also advises licensees that live, in-person educational programs completed before, during, or after the public health emergency declaration will also be accepted.

Further, licensees are advised that all other CE requirements continue to be effective, such as the required six (6) hours of ethics, two (2) hours of LGBTQ, and ten (10) percent of public health priority subjects.

All inquiries pertaining to the practice of social work, including the continuing education requirements, may be directed to the Board's Health Licensing Specialist, Ms. Mavis Azariah Armattoo, at (202) 442-4782 or mavis.azariah@dc.gov