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**Ohio Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Athletic Trainers Board**

77 South High Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6108

Governor  
*John R. Kasich*  
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## **Continuing Education Audit Reference Guide**

Rule 4755-23-08 of the Ohio Administrative Code requires the Physical Therapy Section to conduct an audit of continuing education records each renewal. This audit ensures compliance with state laws requiring the completion of continuing education for licensure.

Audit notice letters are mailed out to a random selection of the active renewing licensee population after the end of the renewal period (typically mid-February). Licensees selected for the audit are required to respond to the audit notice letter within the specified time frame outlined in the audit notice letter. Should a licensee fail to respond to the audit notice letter, or fail to obtain the required amount of continuing education needed for licensure renewal, that licensee will likely face disciplinary action. Please be advised that disciplinary actions are a public record and all actions are permanent.

### **How Can I Successfully Complete the Audit?**

If you are audited, follow these simple rules to complete your audit:

- Read the audit letter and follow the appropriate instructions.
- Respond to the audit by the deadline specified in the letter.
- Ensure that you have 24 contact hours (PT) or 12 contact hours (PTA) within the two year time frame which begins on February 1<sup>st</sup> and ends two calendar years later on January 31<sup>st</sup> of your renewal year.
- Ensure that your certificates contain a sponsor/presenter name, your name, date, number of hours awarded, and a valid Ohio approval number.
- Complete the CE tracking form.
- Fax or email the completed CE tracking form and COPIES of your certificates.
- Retain a copy of the fax confirmation page or the sent email for your records.

## **The Audit and You: Additional Information and Frequently Asked Audit Questions**

### **How do I know if I'm being audited?**

Licensees selected for the audit will receive an audit notice letter via regular mail from the Board a few weeks after the renewal period has ended (typically mid-February). To ensure that you receive proper notification of the audit, make sure the Board has your current address on file. Please remember that rule 4755-23-07 of the Administrative Code requires licensees to notify the Board of any address changes within 30 days after the change.

### **What do I do once I receive the letter?**

The letter contains specific instructions on how to appropriately respond to the audit, the period for which you're being audited, and a CE tracking form. More importantly, the audit letter specifies the deadline when all audit responses must be received by the Board. You will need to follow the instructions outlined in the audit notice letter.

### **Will the Board accept a faxed transmission of my audit materials, or do I need to mail my materials?**

Yes, the Board accepts fax transmissions of your audit certificates. Please utilize the tracking form as a cover letter for your fax when you send in copies of your CE certificates. It is important to save your fax confirmation page for your records. You will be contacted by the Board if your audit information is incomplete. The Board's fax number is 614-995-0816.

### **Will the Board accept an email with a scanned copy of my audit materials, or do I need to mail my materials?**

Yes, the Board accepts scanned copies of your audit certificates via email. Please include the CE tracking form as the first page of your scanned materials when you email copies of your CE certificates. In addition, please include your Ohio license number in the file name of the scanned document to facilitate the processing of your audit. It is important to save a copy of the sent email for your records. You will be contacted by the Board if your audit information is incomplete. The Board's email address is [board@otptat.ohio.gov](mailto:board@otptat.ohio.gov).

### **I don't have an Ohio Approval Number for an activity, what should I do?**

If you do not have an Ohio Approval Number for a continuing education activity, you will need to contact the Ohio Physical Therapy Association (OPTA) at <http://www.ohiopt.org>. The OPTA (not the Board) is the entity that reviews activities and assigns the Ohio Approval Number. The OPTA website maintains a database of approved continuing education activities. In addition, OPTA staff can tell you what steps you need to take to obtain an Ohio Approval Number for a course that you have previously taken if it is not located on the OPTA database.

If you are required to submit an application to obtain an Ohio Approval Number, you should respond to the audit with the certificates you do have and clearly indicate on your tracking form that you are awaiting an Ohio Approval Number for a specific course and enter the date when you submitted your materials to the OPTA. Please keep the Board updated on the status of your pending Ohio Approval Number, as this process can sometimes take several weeks. Once you receive your Ohio Approval Number and validation letter from the OPTA, please fax or email it directly to the Board.

Please note that the OPTA and Physical Therapy Section of the Ohio OTPTAT Board are two separate entities and do not exchange information about your individual Continuing Education Approval Request Form(s). It is your responsibility to relay information to the Board as it comes to you from the OPTA.

**Do all activities require an Ohio Approval Number?**

No. Paragraph (G) of rule 4755-23-08 of the Administrative Code lists specific activities that do not require an Ohio Approval Number. Please review that rule to determine if a continuing education activity does not require an Ohio Approval Number. If the activity is not mentioned in paragraph (G) of this rule, the Ohio Approval Number is mandatory.

**Why does the Board need copies of my certificates?**

The Board needs copies of your certificates to validate the completion of an activity. Any certificates that you submit as part of your audit should include the following information; sponsor/presenter name, your name, date the activity was completed, number of hours awarded, and a valid Ohio Approval Number.

Simply submitting a CE tracking form does not satisfy the audit requirements. You will be contacted and asked to submit copies of your certificates.

**This isn't the first time I've been audited, what is the selection process?**

Post renewal, a percentage (for example, 20%) of the active renewing licensee population is selected for the audit. The list of individuals selected for the audit is randomly selected by the Ohio e-license system. Other than licensees automatically selected for the audit as a result of disciplinary action, the individuals selected for the audit are not known until the audit materials are printed and mailed.

**Some of my hours were earned outside the specific time frame outlined in the audit notice letter, what do I do?**

If you find that you have hours earned outside of the specific time frame, or are short hours for a renewal period, please contact the appropriate number listed on the bottom of your audit notice letter to speak with a Board staff member.

**When is the last day I can request a CE waiver from the Physical Therapy Section?**

All completed waiver forms must be received by the Section for consideration no later than the first day of October of the year preceding the renewal date. For more information regarding the waiver process, please review rule 4755-23-09 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

**Can I reuse my certificates that I used to reinstate my license to count towards the CE audit?**

No. Pursuant to paragraph (D) of rule 4755-23-10 of the Ohio Administrative Code, contact hours used to meet the requirements of reinstatement shall not be used to renew the reinstated license. If this is your first renewal since you reinstated an expired license, you will need to obtain additional continuing education to renew your license.

## License renewal and the audit:

Prior to renewing your license, please ensure that all of the continuing education activities you plan to use to meet the continuing education requirement have CURRENT Ohio Approval Numbers issued by the OPTA. In addition, you should also verify the number of contact hours awarded by OPTA. For some activities, the number of contact hours advertised by the activity sponsor is greater than the number of hours actually approved by OPTA. Please do not rely on the sponsor of a course you have completed to provide you with accurate information related to the number of hours awarded for the course or a current Ohio Approval Number. Please be advised that Ohio Approval Numbers are only valid for specified time frames. You can obtain the number of contact hours awarded by OPTA by visiting the approved continuing education database maintained on their website (<http://www.ohiopt.org>).

Note: You should not renew your license until you are able to confirm that you meet the continuing education requirements for your specific licensure.

### **If I no longer reside/work in Ohio, do I still need to respond to the audit? What if I have retired from the profession?**

Yes, a response is still required in both situations.

Regardless of whether or not you are working in your profession, and regardless of whether or not you currently reside in the state of Ohio, if you renew your license, you are eligible to be audited. If you are selected for the audit and have retired from your job, but still maintain your licensure, you are still required to meet the continuing education requirements for your license.

There is no retirement or escrow status for PT or PTA licenses. If you plan to retire from the profession, or plan to move out of state, and no longer intend to maintain your Ohio license and complete continuing education, you may want to consider letting your license expire.

### **Audit Periods for the Next Four Years**

<b>Profession (expiration date)</b>	<b>CE Period Start Date</b>	<b>CE Period End Date</b>
PTA (1/31/2013)	February 1, 2011	January 31, 2013
PT (1/31/2014)	February 1, 2012	January 31, 2014
PTA (1/31/2014)	February 1, 2013	January 31, 2015
PT (1/31/2015)	February 1, 2014	January 31, 2016