



STAY AUDIT-READY: DON'T LET CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS CATCH YOU OFF GUARD

Continuing education (CE) is not only a requirement for renewal—it's essential for ensuring that mental health professionals remain current with evolving best practices, legal and ethical standards, and emerging treatment modalities. Yet, recent data reveals a concerning trend.

AUDITS HAVE RESUMED—AND THE FAILURE RATE IS HIGH

Following a pause during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board resumed routine CE audits on March 12, 2024. Since then, 190 audits have been conducted, and 118 individuals failed to demonstrate full compliance—a **failure rate of 62%**.

This statistic underscores the need for greater awareness and diligence when it comes to meeting CE requirements.

Failing an audit can result in a Board citation and fine.

Don't let this happen! Below are some tips for ensuring you meet the CE requirements for every renewal.

MOST COMMON REASONS FOR CE AUDIT FAILURES

Most audit failures stem from avoidable issues, including:

- Courses not provided by **Board-accepted CE providers**.
- Not completing the **required hours**, which include the subject of **law and ethics, within the renewal period*** and **before submission** of the renewal application.
- For first-time license renewals, not completing the **specific coursework required** for the license type.
- Failing to retain **proof of completion for the one-time CE course requirements**, such as the Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention or Provision of Mental Health Services via Telehealth (if not already submitted with a license application).

HOW TO STAY IN COMPLIANCE

To help ensure you're always audit-ready:

- **Know your requirements:** Review the CE requirements for your license or registration type on the Board's [website](#).

- **Choose acceptable providers:** CE courses must be taken from BBS-accepted providers, which you can find on the Board's [website](#).
- **Complete all CE hours within your renewal period:** Courses taken outside of your renewal period will not count.
- **Maintain records as required:** Maintain documentation of CE completion (consider keeping multiple backups) for at least two years from the date of renewal for which the courses were completed. You may want to ask your CE provider how long they retain records in case of lost CE certificates.
- **Plan and track your CE:** Have a plan for completion, set calendar reminders, and maintain a log of hours completed.
- **Double-check:** Make sure courses cover the required content areas.

Temporary CE waivers: If you are a licensee with a physical or mental disability or medical condition that meets certain criteria or are the primary caregiver for an immediate family member with a physical or mental disability or medical condition, you may qualify for a temporary CE waiver. You must apply for the waiver at least 60 days prior to your license expiration date. See the Board's [website](#) for more information (*navigate to Mandatory Coursework > Exceptions from CE Requirements*). Waivers are not available for registrants.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Audits are not intended to be punitive—they're part of the Board's role in upholding the integrity and quality of the mental health professions. By taking proactive steps, you can avoid audit failure and continue providing competent care to Californians who rely on your expertise. In doing so, you support your professional growth, protect the public, and uphold the standards of the professions.

* A "renewal period" is defined as follows. Licensees: The two-year period that spans from the first day after the license's issue date or prior expiration date to the current license expiration date. Associates: The one-year period that spans from the first day after the registration's issue date or prior expiration date to the current registration expiration date.