**Section 1480.185 Continuing Education**

The continuing education required as a condition for license renewal under the Act is set forth in this Section. All structural engineers shall meet these requirements.

a) Continuing Education Requirements

1) For every renewal, renewal applicants shall complete 30 hours of Continuing Education (CE) relevant to the practice of structural engineering during each pre-renewal period. The pre‑renewal period is the 24 months preceding the expiration date of the license. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in nonrenewal of the structural engineer's license or other disciplinary action, or both. A maximum of 15 qualifying CE hours gained within six months from the current renewal deadline and not used for the current renewal period may be carried over to the subsequent renewal period but shall not include the requirements for the State statutes and rules, professional conduct and/or ethics, or sexual harassment prevention training, which must all be satisfied during each pre-renewal period. CEs used in this manner must be documented on the appropriate Department issued form.

2) Beginning with the November 30, 2020 renewal and every renewal thereafter, the total continuing education hours shall include one hour of sexual harassment prevention training that shall meet the requirements of 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1130.400. A licensee completing a course on sexual harassment prevention developed or offered by the Illinois Department of Human Rights [775 ILCS 5], the licensee's employer or an acceptable provider listed within this Section, may count that course toward the 1 hour requirement under this Section. (See Section 1205-15.5 of the Department of Professional Regulation Law [20 ILCS 2105].)

3) Beginning with the November 30, 2024 renewal and every renewal thereafter, the total CE hours shall include:

A) A minimum of 1 hour of programs, courses or activities in the area of Illinois statutes and rules that regulate structural engineers and structural engineering.

B) A minimum of 1 hour of programs, courses, or activities in the area of professional conduct and/or ethics.

4) Structural engineers licensed in Illinois but residing and practicing in another state must comply with the CE requirements set forth in this Section. Continuing education credit hours used to satisfy the CE requirements of another state and meeting the requirements of this Section may be submitted toward fulfillment of the CE requirements of the State of Illinois.

5) The minimum length of any single CE activity is one hour. After completion of the initial CE hour, credit may be given in one-half hour increments.

6) One continuing education hour shall represent a minimum of 50 minutes of instruction or participation. No credit will be allowed for introductory remarks, meals, breaks or administrative matters related to courses of study. For a CE activity consisting of a single presentation with duration greater than 60 minutes or consisting of multiple individual presentations with total duration greater than 60 minutes, the CE credit earned shall be determined by totaling the minutes of instruction or participation and dividing by 60 to convert to hours. The number of hours from this calculation shall be rounded down to the nearest one-half hour increment. A maximum of 12 CE hours may be earned within a 24-hour period, where a period begins at midnight.

7) Nontechnical portions of a CE activity, such as receptions, dinners, etc., do not qualify for credit as CE.

b) Activities for which CE credit may be earned are as follows:

1) Successful completion of a college or university course in the area of structural engineering, related sciences and structural engineering ethics. One semester credit hour is equivalent to 15 hours of CE and one quarter credit hour is equivalent to 10 hours of CE.

2) All required CE hours may be obtained online; however, each self-administered course shall include an examination that will be graded by the sponsor.

3) Successful completion of continuing education courses.

4) A maximum of 10 CE credit hours per prerenewal period may be earned for attending in-house courses. Credit for in-house courses will be based on one CE credit for each hour of attendance. For courses presented in‑house by outside individuals, see subsection (b)(3).

5) Attending workshops or professional or technical meetings, conventions or conferences in person or by webinar in real-time with opportunities for interaction with the presenter. Attendance at qualifying programs, professional and/or technical society meetings will earn CE credits for the actual time of each program. Visiting exhibitor booths or similar activities shall not qualify for CE credit. Recorded webinars shall be considered self-administered and subject to the requirements of subsection (b)(2).

6) Teaching or instructing a structural engineering course, seminar, lecture, presentation or workshop shall constitute 3 CE hours for each hour spent in the actual presentation. Teaching credit shall be valid for the initial presentation only. Teaching credit shall not apply to faculty teaching regularly scheduled curriculum courses at a college, university, or other educational institution.

7) Authoring published papers, articles or books. The preparation of each published paper or book chapter dealing with structural engineering may be claimed as 10 hours of CE credit.

8) Active participation on a structural engineering board, on a professional engineering board that includes the structural engineering discipline, or on a committee or serving as an officer in a professional or technical engineering society that includes the structural engineering discipline as part of its charter.

A) Two CEs will be awarded per committee membership or office held.

B) A maximum of 8 CEs may be accepted per pre-renewal period.

c) All programs or courses shall:

1) Contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of the professional skills and scientific knowledge of the licensee in practice of structural engineering;

2) Foster the enhancement of general or specialized practice and values of structural engineering;

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

4) Specify the course objectives, course content and teaching methods to be used.

d) Acceptable providers for programs or course activities shall include, but not be limited to:

1) National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES);

2) Structural Engineers Association of Illinois (SEAOI);

3) National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE);

4) Illinois Society of Professional Engineers (ISPE);

5) American Council of Engineering Companies of Illinois (ACEC-IL);

6) Technical or professional societies or organizations relating to professional engineering, such as the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE);

7) Technical or professional societies or organizations relating to structural engineering;

8) Colleges, universities or other accredited educational institutions; or

9) Providers of services or products used by or specified by structural engineers.

e) The Division shall not pre-approve individual courses or programs.

f) CEs that are non-structural in nature shall not be accepted unless licensee can substantiate how the course enhances their license, as a structural engineer in Illinois cannot legally offer or perform non-structural services.

g) For auditing or restoration purposes, it shall be the responsibility of a licensee to maintain a record of CE for 6 years after the renewal that includes:

1) All of the following:

A) The name and address of the sponsor or presenter;

B) A brief statement of the subject matter, printed program schedules, registration receipts or other proof of participation;

C) The number of hours attended in each program; and

D) The date and place of the program; or

2) The certificate of attendance, transcript or records of CE credits maintained by an acceptable provider of continuing education or a records administrator, or log of activities that include activities for CE credit not given by a CE provider.

h) Certification of Compliance with CE Requirements

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

2) The Division may require additional documentation in order to demonstrate compliance with the CE requirements. It is the responsibility of each renewal applicant to retain or otherwise produce evidence of compliance. The additional documentation will be required in the context of a Division audit.

3) When there appears to be a lack of compliance with CE requirements, an applicant will be notified and may request an interview with the Board. At that time the Board may recommend that steps be taken to begin formal disciplinary proceedings as required by Section 10-65 of the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act [5 ILCS 100].

i) The Division may conduct random audits to verify compliance with continuing education requirements.

j) Waiver of CE Requirements: A licensee may be exempt from the foregoing CE requirements if one of the following situations occurs. If an exemption is claimed, it is required that the renewal fee and any documentation needed to support the exemption be submitted for renewal of a license. Waiver requests must be made before the end of the renewal period. Waiver requests sent after the end of the renewal period shall not be considered.

1) A licensee shall not be required to report continuing education hours during the first biennial renewal period in which the licensee obtained initial licensure in Illinois, but shall be subject to the continuing education requirements for all subsequent biennial renewal.

2) A licensee who is on full-time active duty in the military service of the United States, or is a licensee who is called to temporary active duty in the military service or Armed Forces of the United States for a period of time exceeding 120 consecutive days during the renewal period, when that activity or location restricts participation in a continuing education program.

3) A licensee who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Division that meeting these requirements would be an undue hardship by reason of disability, illness, or other clearly mitigating circumstances shall submit supporting documentation.

A) The documentation shall be in the form of a sworn statement by the licensee, statement from a physician, or medical record showing the disability, illness, or circumstance preventing the licensee’s participation in the continuing education program during a substantial part of the pre-renewal period.

B) If the Division finds from the evidence that good cause has been shown for non-compliance, the Division may waive enforcement, extend the time within which the applicant shall comply, or establish a particular program or schedule of continuing education for the renewal period in which the undue hardship existed.

C) Consecutive waiver requests made for reasons of disability, illness, or other circumstances may be prima facie evidence for non-renewal of applicant’s license based on an inability to actively engage in licensed practice.

4) Any renewal applicant who, prior to the expiration date of his/her license, submits a request for a waiver, pursuant to the provisions of this subsection (h), shall be deemed to be in good standing and may practice until the Division's final decision on the waiver has been made.

(Source: Amended at 47 Ill. Reg. 946, effective January 5, 2023)