Continuing Education (Clock Hours) FAQ

Please carefully read the following information regarding clock hours.

1. WHO CAN OFFER CLOCK HOURS?
   Only a Professional Educator Standards Board-approved provider of clock hours.

2. WHO CAN BE APPROVED BY THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR STANDARDS BOARD TO OFFER CLOCK HOURS?
The following agencies may be approved to offer inservice clock hours when in compliance with standards and procedures set forth in chapter 181-85 WAC: School districts, educational service districts, approved private schools, state agencies, colleges/universities, and professional organizations. (In order for professional organizations to become approved providers, they must be nonprofit and have either a committee or board of directors which provides prior approval to proposed inservice education programs.)

3. HOW WILL AN INDIVIDUAL KNOW IF THE WORKSHOP OR INSERVICE IS OFFERED BY A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR STANDARDS BOARD-APPROVED PROVIDER?
The individual may check with the agency offering the workshop or Professional Certification. Professional Certification can tell an individual if the agency is approved for clock hours. Only the agency offering the workshop knows whether it has gone through the internal process of having that particular workshop approved for clock hours. To assist participants in identifying workshops approved for clock hours, inservice offerings by approved providers of clock hours should be advertised on any literature as “Washington State-Approved Clock Hour Offering, Workshop, or Inservice.” Most out-of-state organizations have not been approved to offer Washington State clock hours. Many organizations offer contact hours, continuing education units (CEUs), or similar credit. Individuals need to check carefully that they are being offered clock hours—not contact hours, CEUs, or similar credit. Contact hours, CEUs, etc., cannot be accepted as clock hours. Only Washington State-approved clock hours can...
be used toward maintenance.

4. CAN AN INDIVIDUAL TAKE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY CREDIT TO USE TOWARD MAINTENANCE?
   Any regionally accredited two- or four-year college credit at the 100 (freshman) level or above may be used toward maintenance. One quarter hour of college credit is the equivalent of 10 clock hours, and one semester hour of college credit is the equivalent of 15 clock hours.

5. CAN AN INDIVIDUAL TAKE A COMBINATION OF COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY CREDIT AND CLOCK HOURS TO MEET THE MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENT?
   Yes.

6. CAN AN INDIVIDUAL USE CLOCK HOURS OR COLLEGE CREDIT TAKEN BEFORE ISSUANCE OF THE CONTINUING CERTIFICATE TOWARD MAINTENANCE OF THE CONTINUING CERTIFICATE?
   No.

7. CAN AN INDIVIDUAL CARRY OVER EXCESS HOURS FROM ONE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD TO THE NEXT?
   No. An individual must complete 150 clock hours every five-year period. Once the requirement for one five-year period has been completed, hours will not be counted toward the next five-year period until after July 1 of the next five-year period.

8. IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS ISSUED MORE THAN ONE CONTINUING CERTIFICATE THAT REQUIRES MAINTENANCE (EXAMPLE: TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR), DOES HE/SHE NEED TO COMPLETE 150 HOURS FOR EACH CERTIFICATE?
   No. An individual is given one five-year cycle for completion of clock hours. Any hours completed during that cycle will maintain any and all clock hour maintenance certificates regardless of issuance date on the second or third certificate.

9. DO INDIVIDUALS WHO OBTAIN CERTIFICATION FROM THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS (NBPTS) NEED TO COMPLETE 150 CLOCK HOURS TO MAINTAIN A CONTINUING CERTIFICATE?
   No, individuals who hold a valid certificate issued by the NBPTS may use that certificate in lieu of completion of the 150 clock hours needed for maintenance. A copy of the valid certificate is submitted with the report for Washington State certification clock hours in order to validate the certificate for an additional five-year period.

10. WHERE IS AN INDIVIDUAL’S RECORD KEPT?
    Approved clock forms, grade slips, or transcripts are given to the individual by the approved provider or by the college/university. Individuals are responsible for maintenance of their own records.
11. CAN AN INDIVIDUAL GET APPROVAL FOR A WORKSHOP TO CARRY CLOCK HOURS IF THE ORGANIZATION DOES NOT HAVE APPROVAL?
No. Only organizations approved by the Professional Educator Standards Board can offer clock hours. Individuals cannot be approved to offer clock hours or have an offering by a non-approved provider approved.

12. CAN AN OFFERING BE APPROVED FOR CLOCK HOURS AFTER THE OFFERING HAS BEEN COMPLETED?
No. Offerings must be approved prior to the start of the offering by an approved provider.

13. IS THERE ANY WAY FOR AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS NOT AN APPROVED PROVIDER OF CLOCK HOURS TO SPONSOR A CLOCK HOUR OFFERING?
An organization that is not approved cannot sponsor a clock hour offering. However, it may team up with an approved provider who would be willing to co-sponsor the workshop for clock hours.

14. HOW DO INDIVIDUALS SHOW THEY HAVE COMPLETED THE 150 CLOCK HOURS NEEDED FOR MAINTENANCE?
Once individuals complete the 150 clock hours needed for maintenance of a continuing certificate, a report is completed and sent to Professional Certification to indicate completion of the requirement. Professional Certification may audit the reports and request the individuals who are audited to submit their records.

15. WHEN SHOULD AN INDIVIDUAL APPLY AFTER COMPLETING THE 150 CLOCK HOURS?
As soon as he/she has met the requirement.

16. WILL THE NEXT FIVE YEARS START FROM THE TIME THE REPORT IS FILED OR AT THE END OF THE FIVE-YEAR CYCLE?
Regardless of how early a person files the report showing completion of his/her 150 clock hours, the next five-year period begins at the end of the previous five-year cycle.

17. WHAT HAPPENS IF AN INDIVIDUAL DOES NOT COMPLETE THE CLOCK HOURS OR DOES NOT FILE THE REPORT SHOWING COMPLETION OF THE REQUIRED 150 CLOCK HOURS?
The certificate lapses. In other words, it is no longer valid for service.

18. HOW DO INDIVIDUALS REINSTATE THEIR CERTIFICATES?
By submitting an application for reinstatement which includes presenting evidence of having completed the 150 clock hour requirement within the five years prior to the date of applying
19. CAN CLOCK HOURS APPROVED FOR MAINTENANCE OF CONTINUING AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATES BE USED FOR CREDIT ON THE SALARY SCHEDULE?
Yes. WAC 392-121-280 requires districts to document eligible credits on an official transcript or letter from the institution granting the credits or performing the inservice training. Districts will accept Form SPI 1125 if providers sign Section IV “Inservice Provider Verification.”

20. HOW DO I BECOME A CLOCK HOUR PROVIDER?
Washington does require that providers of continuing education for educators become approved by the Professional Educator Standards Board. Approval of agencies as providers of clock hours only occurs once a year with approval running from October 1 to September 30th for agencies that apply for approval by July 15. In order to seek approval, agencies must be non-profit, a school district, private school, a regionally accredited college/university, or a local, state or federal government agency.

There is not a mechanism in our rules for an individual to obtain approval for a class as clock hours. We are also not able to accept hours, such as CEU's, Contact Hours, Professional Development Units (PDU's) etc., in place of approved clock hours. Classes/Conferences must first be set up by an approved provider as an approved clock hour class for individuals to request the clock hours. If classes are not approved as clock hours by a provider prior them being held, the rules do not allow for classes to be approved as clock hours after the class has been held. College credit at the freshman level or above from any regionally accredited institution can be used in place of approved clock hours in our system. Our office does not approve course content, the content would be approved by the agency granting the clock hours under their approval as a provider.

The rules for clock hours, is available online at: http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=181-85. There is no fee for agencies to seek approval as a providers of clock hours.

If your agency wishes to hold a program before the next approval period, you would need to have a currently approved provider co-sponsor your program as approved clock hours. If you are working with specific school districts, you may wish to indicate to them that they will need to arrange for any approved clock hours. All school districts in Washington are approved as providers of clock hours, however, some do not have the resources to utilize that approval and rely on a regional service district to provide the clock hours for their program. You may also wish to check the list of agencies that are approved to offer clock hours (available at the above link) to see if you already have a relationship with any of them and if they would then be willing to co-sponsor your program as clock hours.

The form to obtain approval of your organization is here:
Approved organizations who need the official clock hour form should contact our office.

21. WHAT OFFICE SHOULD BE CONTACTED IF THERE ARE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?
Professional Certification email: cert@K12.wa.us
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction web: www.k12.wa.us/certification
Old Capitol Building
PO BOX 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200
Telephone: (360) 725-6400