



Continuing Education Policy
Applicable to BHCD Certified Code Enforcement Personnel
Effective May 01, 2008



Dated August 08, 2008

Overview:

The Jack A. Proctor Virginia Building Code Academy (JPVBCA) currently provides a comprehensive basic or advanced functional level of training to the state's code enforcement personnel, generally in the first 12 to 18 months of their position hire or appointment date. As the field of code enforcement increases its professional capacity, so does the need for participation in a higher competency level of training, professional career development opportunities, and ongoing skill development activities. The establishment of continuing education requirements and the receipt of attendance credit encourages and supports professional advancement, and thus enhances the proficiency capability of the individual and the professional capacity of both the code enforcement community and the locality.

Regulatory Requirement and Guideline:

Effective May 01, 2008, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD or Department) shall require continuing education as a component of maintaining compliance with the state regulations relative to certain certifications granted by the Board of Housing and Community Development (BHCD). All building officials, property maintenance officials, and technical assistants employed by a jurisdiction to enforce the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) as well as local building department personnel certified to enforce the Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR) shall obtain 16 hours of continuing education every two years in addition to the mandatory and/or periodic training required for certificate issuance and maintenance. The 16 hour requirement shall be prompted at the issuance of the first certificate and shall be applicable regardless of the number of BHCD certificates held by the individual. Credit for acceptable continuing education programs and courses shall be granted on an hour received for an hour attended credit basis. A maximum of eight credit hours may be accrued per individual course or activity within a two year requirement period. The retroactive or advance accumulation of credit hours shall not be permitted or accepted. Compliance records of individual certificate holders shall be maintained in the Department Technical Assistance and Services Office (TASO) Training and Certification Unit (TCU).

Compliance:

Compliance with the continuing education requirements, including the assurance of program content and credit hours, shall be the responsibility of the individual certificate holder. It is highly recommended that the local building department or locality monitor the compliance of their certified code enforcement personnel. The Department TASO TCU shall maintain compliance records and provide data reports of individual certificate holders regarding compliance with continuing education requirements upon request and as necessary. Failure to comply with the continuing education requirements or to accumulate the required credit hours within the continuing education period shall result in an inactive certification status of the certificate holder.

Documentation:

The certificate holder shall be required to submit proof of compliance with the continuing education requirements in a format determined and specified by the Department TASO TCU and within 30 days of the completion of the two year continuing education period. A single submission documenting only the minimum required 16 credit hours shall be submitted to the Department once per every two year requirement period. The certificate holder shall be required to submit record of the satisfactorily completed continuing education requirements, including the associated program provider, program content, and credit hours on a prescribed application form issued by the Department and/or by electronic entry as the TCU on-line system is developed and is permissible. The certificate holder shall be required to submit the appropriate substantiating documentation, including verification of program content, confirmation of attendance, certificate of completion, and/or other evidence of compliance, and to attach all associated documentation to the application form or electronic entry. All records shall be subject to further review by the Department and potential denial should program content and/or designated credit hours not meet the continuing education requirements.

Verification:

A periodic audit of documentation and programs shall be conducted by the Department TASO TCU based upon a random selection and schedule. A certificate holder may be required to substantiate their declared continuing education with additional training documentation that affirm and support the program, course, or activity as requested by the Department, including education provider information, course syllabus, attendance history, and participation certificates. Therefore, it shall be the responsibility of the certificate holder to retain and maintain all necessary documentation relative to the continuing education program or course for which approval and credit is sought.

Tracking:

Individual compliance with the continuing education requirements shall be documented and tracked in the Department TASO TCU electronic database, which is available for viewing through each user profile. It is highly recommended that the local building department or locality track the compliance of their certified code enforcement personnel.

Implementation Schedule:

The 16 hour requirement shall be prompted at the issuance of the first certificate and shall be applicable regardless of the number of BHCD certificates held by the individual. All documentation shall be due to the Department TASO TCU in accordance with the following schedule.

Individuals having last names beginning with A through M – due no later than 30 days after May 01 of the even year;
Individuals having last names beginning with N through Z – due no later than 30 days after May 01 of the odd year.

To transition into the continuing education cycle, the following exception to the above schedule and credit hour requirement shall apply for the 2009 and 2010 continuing education period.

Individuals having last names beginning with A through M – 16 credit hours due no later than 30 days after May 01, 2010;
Individuals having last names beginning with N through Z – 8 credit hours due no later than 30 days after May 01, 2009.

In the case of an individual receiving their initial certification during the continuing education cycle, the following exception shall apply toward the credit hour requirement. Based on the date of initial certification and the months remaining in the continuing education period, and in accordance with the above schedules, the following credit hours shall be obtained in the initial continuing education period.

Individuals having 12 months or less remaining in the continuing education period – 8 credit hours;
Individuals having 13 months or more remaining in the continuing education period – 16 credit hours.

Acceptable Programs, Courses, and Activities:

Acceptable continuing education shall constitute professional development for a certificate holder, advancing or enhancing knowledge, skills, and abilities in the applicable field(s) of certification and relative to the code, code enforcement, and code related issues. Acceptable program and course content may relate to, although not be limited to, architectural design, engineering systems, building construction, technical trades, fire protection, fire prevention, property maintenance, construction management, code enforcement, and public administration. The pre-approval of programs and specific courses not categorized or included herein is not offered by the Department TASO TCU. Any programs, courses, and activities not categorized or listed are subject to review and approval, including random audit, by the Department. The certificate holder must comply with the application process as defined by the Department. Program attendees must adhere to the program procedures required by the education provider to document attendance and receive credit and additionally shall provide such documentation to the Department. The following code and code enforcement related programs, courses, and activities shall be accepted toward the obtainment of the continuing education requirements on an hour received for an hour attended credit basis.

DHCD JPVBCA courses not required for certification;
Prince William County (PWC) Code Academy courses not required for certification;
Fairfax County (FFX) Code Academy courses not required for certification;
Jurisdictional in-service educational events and training programs;
State, national, and federal training programs;
State and governmental agency provided or sponsored training programs;
State and national code organization conferences and seminars;
State and national code development committees and hearings;
State and national code related review and advisory committee, commission, and board service;
State and national association or organization sponsored educational events and training programs;
State and national professional association or organization leadership and/or active attending membership;
State and national professional society and trade organization educational events and training programs;
National standards developing organization training programs;
Construction product, product manufacturer or distributor, or service provider training programs;
Industry site or field installation training programs;
Accredited academic institution programs and courses, i.e. college, university, and trade, technical, and vocational schools;
Web-based, on-line, self-study computer training programs;
Platform instruction;
Publication of articles.

Non-acceptable Programs, Courses, and Activities:

The following programs, courses, and activities shall not be accepted toward the obtainment of the continuing education requirements. Any programs, courses, and activities not relative to the code, code enforcement, and code related issues shall not be considered acceptable.

DHCD JPVBCA courses required for issuance of certification, including core, advanced, and applicable technical modules;
Prince William County (PWC) Code Academy courses required for certification;
Fairfax County (FFX) Code Academy courses required for certification;
DHCD JPVBCA code update training courses required for maintenance of certification;
Community service and volunteer or compensated fieldwork.

Credit Hours:

Credit hours shall be granted to the accepted programs, courses, and activities based upon one credit hour for one contact hour, and shall not exceed eight credit hours per individual course or activity per each two year requirement period. The retroactive or advance accumulation of credit hours shall not be permitted or accepted.