

**INSURANCE COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
**THE CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
**FOR LIFE AND/OR ACCIDENT AND SICKNESS INSURANCE AGENTS**

Set out below are the principles that will govern the continuing education program for life and/or accident and sickness insurance agents ("Life C/E Program") effective June 1, 2008. These principles are based on the discussion paper published in November 2007 and subsequent feedback received from industry stakeholders.

**C/E Content Requirements**

The purpose of the Life C/E Program is to develop and maintain an agent's knowledge of life insurance products, practice and business. While the non-insurance areas of continuing education are useful to the overall development of a licensee, the Life C/E Program will focus on education directly related to developing insurance knowledge.

Only C/E credits based on technical education will qualify. Technical education includes courses, seminars or programs that directly relate to:

1. life insurance/accident and sickness insurance products;
2. financial planning, provided that the education is geared toward life insurance and not a non-insurance sector, such as securities or mutual funds;
3. compliance with insurance legislation and requirements such as the Insurance Council of British Columbia's ("Council") Code of Conduct, Council Rules, the *Insurance Act*, privacy legislation, anti-terrorism/money laundering legislation;
4. ethics; and
5. errors and omissions.

Education dealing with professional development issues, such as computer training, sales practices and communication will not qualify.

Because there are so many opportunities for C/E both in British Columbia and in other jurisdictions, it is neither reasonable nor effective for Council to pre-approve or accredit C/E. The responsibility to determine what qualifies as C/E will continue to rest with the licensee.

The above technical education definition should be viewed as a guideline. A licensee is expected to take reasonable steps to satisfy him/herself that a particular course, seminar or program meets the above definition and, if questioned, should be able to demonstrate why it meets the above definition.

## **Annual Number of C/E Credits**

The starting point for the minimum number of C/E credits required is set at 15 credits per licence period.

A licence period is between June 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.

## **Graduated Program**

There is a significant learning curve for new licensees and therefore the graduated program sets a higher C/E requirement for new licensees. The intent of a graduated program is to encourage licensees to work towards a designation.

### **1. New Licensees**

On June 1, 2008, a graduated Life C/E Program will come into effect which requires *new* life and accident and sickness insurance agents to obtain a minimum of 15 C/E credits per licence period.

### **2. Licensees with Five Years' Experience**

A person who meets the following experience criteria will not be considered a new licensee and will have the C/E requirement reduced to 10 C/E credits per licence period:

- the person has been licensed continuously for five years; or
- the person has been licensed for five of the past seven years.

Licensed experience in another Canadian jurisdiction will count towards the experience criteria.

If a licensee reaches the experience criteria and qualifies for the reduction in C/E credits, the reduction will not take effect until the next licence period.

### **3. Licensees with a Recognized Designation**

If a licensee obtains a recognized insurance designation, the C/E requirement drops to five credits per licence period regardless of whether he/she meets the aforementioned experience criteria.

Canadian insurance designations recognized for the C/E reduction are CFP, CLU, RHU, FCIA, FLMI and CEBS. Designations from other countries will be considered where it can be demonstrated to Council they are equivalent to one of the approved Canadian designations.

Some designations (CLU, FCIA and CFP) require the holder to keep their designation in good standing by completing continuing education each year. For designations that have such a requirement, the holder would be "exempted" from Council's C/E program as long as they can demonstrate their designation is in good standing.

### **Maximum C/E Credits Permitted Per Day**

The maximum C/E credits that can be earned in a day is seven.

### **Number of C/E Credits per Course**

To qualify for a C/E credit, the course, seminar or program must be a minimum of 60 minutes, exclusive of any breaks. Providers of C/E credits over the internet must be able to demonstrate that their programs require a minimum of 60 minutes of training before promoting their programs as qualifying for C/E credits in British Columbia.

The maximum C/E credits that can be earned for any one course is 15 hours, so long as the course involves 15 or more hours of classroom (or equivalent) time and is based on successful completion of the course.

Where a course involves an examination, credits will only be granted if the exam is successfully passed. Partial credits will not be permitted if the course is not successfully completed.

Licensees who develop and/or present a course, seminar or program are entitled to earn double the credits. This can only be earned once during each licence period (e.g., if a licensee gives the same one hour seminar on three different occasions during one licence period, only two credits can be claimed). A licensee who presents a course, seminar or program for C/E must be qualified in the area for which they are presenting.

### **Carryover of C/E Credits**

Commencing June 1, 2008, excess C/E credits cannot be carried over into the next licence period (i.e., excess credits cannot be carried over into the 2009 to 2010 licence period, or beyond).

As part of transitioning into the new C/E Program, licensees will be permitted to carry over excess C/E credits from their last licence period prior to June 1, 2008, into the June 1, 2008 to May 31, 2009 licence period as long as:

- the credits meet the new definition of a C/E credit as outlined in this Notice; and
- the maximum that can be carried over is 50% of what was required during the last licence period before June 1, 2008.

### **Pro-rating of C/E Credits**

There is no provision for the pro-rating of C/E requirements for licensees who were licensed for less than the 12 month licence period, regardless of the reason for the absence. There are no exceptions.

A licensee who is licensed for any part of the 12 month licence period will be required to complete the minimum C/E requirement as a condition of maintaining his/her licence.

## **Structure of C/E**

C/E is usually offered in formal, organized settings by organizations that specialise in providing education. It is also possible for C/E to be offered in-house in more informal settings. In these cases, C/E must occur in a structured setting dedicated to learning. As an example, a separate training meeting for the purposes of reviewing the details of a specific product line may qualify, but regular staff meetings that cover a myriad of topics do not.

Day-to-day business meetings or business and professional reading or writing of any kind does not qualify.

## **C/E Records / Proof of Attendance**

Licensees are not required to report C/E credits to Council except when audited. Licensees must maintain C/E records for a period of five years from the end of the current licence period.

Licensees may choose the format for their C/E records (e.g., certificate, letter, etc.), however, each record should be an original and contain the following information: education provider's name; date of the education; licensee's name; number of education credits earned; topic(s) covered with sufficient detail to determine eligibility; and the name and signature of the individual (provider) who may be contacted to verify the information.

## **Non-Resident Licensees**

Non-resident licensees whose principal jurisdiction has a C/E requirement will not be required to meet Council's C/E requirement provided they keep their licence in good standing in their home jurisdiction.

Should questions arise after reading this Notice, please contact the Regulatory Services Department by calling Council's office, at the main menu press "2".

April 28, 2008  
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