



WMHCA Application Guidelines for Continuing Education Approval

The Washington Mental Health Counselors Association (WMHCA) continuing education approval program was established to meet the needs of agencies, hospitals, individuals, and social service organizations desiring to offer continuing education to mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, and social workers. Continuing Education providers must apply and meet certain criteria before being authorized to provide continuing education.

Once the completed application and appropriate fees are processed, the application will be reviewed by a WMHCA representative. After this review, the applicant will be awarded a Continuing Education Provider Number that can be used to advertise CE credits.

A. Course Information

1. Acceptable Courses

- a. The CE program or course must be relevant and contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of the professional competence of the licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed mental health counselor or licensed social worker ([WAC 246-809-610](#)).
- b. WMHCA only approves courses designed for post-graduate level professionals

2. Courses Not Accepted

- a. Courses or workshops primarily designed to increase practice income or office efficiency are not eligible for CE credit.

3. Course Content Requirements

- a. The content of a course shall be related to direct or indirect patient/client care.
- b. Courses shall cover pragmatic aspects of practice (i.e. counseling theory and skills, consultation, insurance risks and benefits, managed care issues, supervision training).
- c. Applicants must de-identify or change any identifying information if discussing particular case examples related to the topic during the presentation.

4. Courses Must Meet Scope of Practice Guidelines

- a. Scope of practice definitions for Licensed Mental Health Providers taken from [RCW 18.225.010](#).
 - i. Mental health counseling means the application of principles of human development, learning theory, psychotherapy, group dynamics, and etiology of mental illness and dysfunctional behavior

to individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations, for the purpose of treatment of mental disorders and promoting optimal mental health and functionality. Mental health counseling also includes, but is not limited to, the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, as well as the application of a wellness model of mental health.

- ii. Independent clinical social work means the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders based on knowledge of human development, the causation and treatment of psychopathology, psycho-therapeutic treatment practices, and social work practice as defined in advanced social work. Treatment modalities include but are not limited to diagnosis and treatment of individuals, couples, families, groups, or organizations.
- iii. Marriage and family therapy means the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorder, whether cognitive, affective, or behavioral, within the context of relationships, including marriage and family systems. Marriage and family therapy involves the professional application of psycho-therapeutic and family systems theories and techniques in the delivery of services to individuals, couples, and families for the purpose of treating such diagnosed nervous and mental disorders. The practice of marriage and family therapy means the rendering of professional marriage and family therapy services to individuals, couples, and families, singly or in groups, whether such services are offered directly to the general public or through organizations, either public or private, for a fee, monetary or otherwise.

B. Types of Courses

1. Lunch and Learn

- a. This is a 1 hour in house training.
- b. Attendees are not charged a fee and the training is only offered one time.
- c. It is not open to the public

2. Single Event-(Can be live or pre-recorded)

- a. One time approval.
 - i. Only offered once.
 - ii. Usually presented in 1 to 2 consecutive days.
 - iii. If the provider wishes to offer the workshop another day after the initial approval, the applicant must submit a copy of the initial approval and pay an additional fee.
- b. Year long approval
 - i. Same as single event except the approval is good for 365 days.
 - ii. Applicant must inform WMHCA of additional dates by emailing dates along with approval number.

3. Multi-day workshop

- a. Offered over multiple days or weeks.

- b. **Only one certificate is given after all sessions of the workshop have been completed.**
 - c. Participants must be present **ALL** days.
- 4. **Conference**
 - a. Multiple workshops presented over a few consecutive days.
 - b. It would have multiple presenters.
 - c. Can be a one-time approval or a year long approval.
 - d. Participants would only get certificates for courses they attend.
- 5. **Series Workshops**
 - a. Similar topics presented over multiple sessions.
 - b. Attendees don't have to attend all sessions.
 - c. Each session will need a separate approval.
- 6. **Workshops delivered via text or home study. (Not pre-recorded)**
 - a. A course which is electronically delivered through text
 - b. Distance Learning Courses must meet state and national standards.
Additional information on distance learning courses follows in the next section.

C. Distance Learning Courses

1. [Department of Health Requirements](#)
2. Text Distance Learning credit measurements are as follows.
 - a. One (1) CE hour will be offered for each 6,000 words of text.
 - b. Text of less than 6,000 words will be measured on a proportionate basis; e.g., 3,000 words of text will be measured as one-half (.5) hour.
 - c. CE credit will be given in .25 (hour) increments with the minimum amount of text being 1500 words.
 - d. Lesser amounts of text do not qualify for CE's.

E. Instructor Requirements

1. **Must be Qualified:** Qualified instructors have a master's degree or higher from an accredited educational institution in an area related to the content being provided.
2. **Copy of Instructor CV or Resume:** CV or Resume must demonstrate the instructor has at least 5 years of work experience in an area related to the subject matter of the course.
3. **Bio:** A brief description stating why the presenter is qualified to present. Can be an except form promotional information.
4. Exceptions to these instructor requirements are subject to WMHCA representative approval.

F. Other Application Information

1. **Learning Objectives-**
 - a. Applicant must clearly state measurable learning objectives.
 - b. Course objectives must be relevant to mental health counseling, social work, and marriage and family therapy, and shall specify how the course

content will help the clinician become a more proficient practitioner in providing direct patient/client care.

- c. Please refer to scope of practice definitions to assist you in ascertaining whether your course content is appropriate for accreditation.
- d. One hour of instruction equals one CE hour.
- e. A good guideline is 1 objective for every hour of instruction. Please list learning objectives for each module of the curriculum.

2. **Course Outline/Agenda**

- a. Applicant must submit a detailed timed agenda.
- b. **The agenda must include scheduled breaks.**
- c. CE's are only given during times of instruction.
- d. Please include in the agenda the topics that are being covered.
- e. As example without specific topics is below.
- f. Also include who is presenting each section if multiple presenters are involved.

i. Timed Outline/Agenda Example	
Sources of Law and Ethics Standards	(0.25 hours)
Record keeping	(0.5 hours)
Diagnosing	(0.25 hours)
Break*	(0.25 hours)
Session, Progress, & Process Notes	(0.5 hours)
Medical Records	(0.75hour)
Good Faith Estimate of Costs	(0.75 hours)
*Total 3.25 Hours (due to break)	

3. **Formal Evaluations**

- a. Formal evaluation of each continuing education activity is required.
- b. The Continuing Education Provider must submit a copy of the evaluation mechanism that will be used with the original application,
- c. The CE provider must, within 45 days of the date of the CE Activity, submit copies of all completed evaluations or a composite of the completed evaluations.

4. **Tests of Comprehension**

- a. All workshops delivered electronically require tests of comprehension
- b. This includes slides and live webinars.

5. **Application Fee**

- a. An application fee is based on the number of CE's being approved, the number of times it is being presented and the method of delivery.
- b. Standard time for processing applications is 4 to 6 weeks.
- c. Please note: approval must be received before advertising CE credits.
- d. Please make sure applications are accurate and complete.
- e. **Fees are non-refundable.**
- f. **Expedited Fee:**
 - i. If application needs processed in less than 4 weeks, an expedited fee will be charge.

- ii. The standard time for processing expedited applications is 1 to 2 weeks.

G. Appeal process

1. An applicant must contact WMHCA within 30 calendar days of the date the rejection is sent to the applicant for the purpose of requesting a meeting or to confer with the review committee to defend the information provided in the application. This may be done in person or in writing.
2. The applicant may request one additional review. If the application is rejected a second time, the application will not be accepted until the requested revisions are made. Additional charges may incur.

H. CE Provider requirements

1. A program evaluation must be obtained from each attendee before awarding certificates.
2. Participants requesting CE credits must be provided with a certificate or document that includes the participant's name, the name of the activity, the number of CE credit hours approved, the date(s) of the activity, the signature of the program coordinator, and the WMHCA provider number.
 - a. Submit within 45 days of the completion of the event(s):
 - b. A copy of each completed evaluation OR a composite of the completed evaluations
 - c. A copy of the program flyer or brochure
 - d. Attendance List