

# OHIO LEAGUE FOR NURSING CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) POLICY MANUAL

Continuing education is a necessity if nurses, dialysis technicians, and other healthcare workers are to provide quality care. Quality continuing education is a direct outgrowth of the missions of both NLN and OLN. Continuing education is defined as a personal, evaluative educational experience, objectively planned for individual growth and achievement of knowledge and skills beyond the basic preparation for a profession or occupation. The goal of continuing education is the ongoing improvement of the individual for nursing practice, professional development, and career growth.

There is a positive relationship between continuing education for health professionals and quality care for patients and/or clients. Because the health care consumer is entitled to the best possible quality care, nurses and other health care professionals must maintain their competencies and keep abreast of new developments in their respective fields.

Desired learning outcomes are achieved by a combination of appropriately chosen subject matter, teaching methods, and teaching materials. Desired learning outcomes for adults are enhanced by using the andragogic model, thereby achieving the ultimate purpose of education, which is to empower individuals through a process of lifelong learning.

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The 1988 Revision of the Ohio Nurse Practice Act, ([Chapter 4723, Ohio Revised Code](#)) the law regulating the practice of nursing in Ohio, added a provision requiring completion of continuing education (CE) for licensure renewal for registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs). This requirement began for LPNs on September 1, 1992 and for RNs on September 1, 1993.

This 1988 Revision also charged the Ohio Board of Nursing with establishing a system of approving educational activities that would meet the CE requirement. The Board established a system whereby most providers of CE are required to secure approval through an Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN) Approver. The Ohio League for Nursing (OLN) applied for approver status and was authorized as an OBN APPROVER (OBN-006-92) in May of 1992. OLN has continued its approver status by reapplying to the Ohio board of Nursing as required. The OLN Approver Unit is authorized to approve all types of applications from sponsors in and out of Ohio.

The Law Regulating the Practice of Nursing, Chapter 4723, Ohio Revised Code (ORC) as well as the Rules [Ohio Administrative Code (OAC)] promulgated for the law, are available on the website of the Ohio Board of Nursing, [www.nursing.ohio.gov](http://www.nursing.ohio.gov).



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| <b>Page</b> | <b>Policy #</b> | <b>Policy Title</b>                                                                                       |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1           | CE-01           | Definitions                                                                                               |
| 4           | CE-02           | Scope of OLN Approver Unit Activities                                                                     |
| 5           | CE-03           | OLN Approver Unit Staff                                                                                   |
| 6           | CE-04           | The Peer Review Process                                                                                   |
| 8           | CE-05           | Use of the Contact Hour                                                                                   |
| 9           | CE-06           | Criteria and Guidelines for Approval of an Individual Faculty-Directed CE Activity                        |
| 12          | CE-07           | Criteria and Guidelines for Approval of an Independent Study                                              |
| 13          | CE-08           | Approval Process and Possible Actions for Individual Faculty-Directed CE and Independent Study Activities |
| 14          | CE-09           | Initial Provider Unit Approval Criteria and Guidelines                                                    |
| 16          | CE-10           | Initial Provider Unit Approval Process and Possible Actions                                               |
| 17          | CE-11           | Provider Unit Reapproval Criteria and Guidelines                                                          |
| 18          | CE-12           | Process and Possible Actions for Provider Unit Reapproval                                                 |
| 19          | CE-13           | Use of the OBN Approver Number                                                                            |
| 20          | CE-14           | Options of CE Applicants                                                                                  |
| 21          | CE-15           | Withdrawal of Approval                                                                                    |
| 22          | CE-16           | Submission Timelines and Fees                                                                             |
| 23          | CE-17           | Reporting of Changes                                                                                      |
| 24          | CE-18           | Activities Which Do Not Meet the CE Requirement                                                           |
| 25          | CE-19           | OLN Record Keeping System                                                                                 |
| 26          | CE-20           | OLN Approver Unit Goals and Total Evaluation                                                              |
| 27          | CE-21           | Reports to the Ohio Board of Nursing                                                                      |
| 28          | CE-22           | Review Process in Response to Complaints                                                                  |
| 29          |                 | Organizational Chart                                                                                      |

## CE-01: DEFINITIONS

For your convenience, the definitions from OAC 4723-14-01 are reprinted here. This chapter of the Ohio Administrative Code can be accessed at [Rule 4723-14-01 - Ohio Administrative Code | Ohio Laws](#)

- (A) "Accredited provider" means an entity that has received accreditation through a nationally recognized system. An accredited provider is authorized to plan, present and award contact hours for continuing education activities.
- (B) "Approved provider unit" means an entity whose continuing education system has been approved by an OBN approver according to this chapter, or who has been approved by a national accrediting body to provide continuing education in a health care field. An approved provider unit is authorized to plan, present and award contact hours for continuing education activities.
- (C) "Asynchronous learning" means forms of education, instruction and learning that do not occur in the same space or at the same time.
- (D) "Blended learning" is a combination of independent study materials and faculty directed education.
- (E) "Category A" means the portion of continuing education that meets the one hour requirement directly related to Chapter 4723. of the Revised Code and the rules of the board as described in rule [4723-14-03](#) of the Administrative Code. To qualify as category A, the continuing education must be approved by the board, an OBN approver, or offered by an OBN approved provider unit headquartered in the state of Ohio.
- (F) "Commercial interest entity" means an entity that produces, markets, re-sells or distributes health care goods or services consumed by or used on patients, or that is owned or controlled by an entity that produces, markets, re-sells or distributes health care goods or services consumed by, or used on patients.
- (G) "Commercial support" means monetary or in-kind contributions given to the provider, or approved provider unit of a continuing education activity by a commercial interest entity that is used to pay for all or part of the costs of a continuing education activity.
- (H) "Conflict of interest" means the financial relationship with a commercial interest entity on the part of any person able to control the content of the educational activity if the products of the commercial interest are related to the topic of the education.
- (I) "Contact hour" means sixty minutes of continuing education.
- (J) "Continuing education" means a learning activity that builds upon a prelicensure or precertification education program and enables a licensee or certificate holder to acquire or improve knowledge or skills that promote professional or technical development to enhance the licensee's or certificate holder's contribution to quality health care and pursuit of health care career goals according to rule [4723-14-05](#) of the Administrative Code.
  - (1) "Faculty-directed continuing education activity" means a continuing education activity in which faculty facilitate the pace and content of the activity, and the

activity is one for which contact hours may be awarded. The activity may occur in settings such as a classroom, on-line, or via teleconference provided that one or more individuals is facilitating the pace of the activity.

- (2) "Independent study continuing education activity" means a self-paced learning activity for which contact hours may be awarded that includes both a mechanism for evaluation of learning and feedback to the learner.
  - (3) "Interprofessional continuing education" means a planned, organized learning experience designed for a target audience made up of members of two or more different professions.
- (K) "Entity means a corporation, whether for profit or nonprofit, a partnership, a limited liability company, or an unincorporated society or association, but does not include a natural person.
- (L) "Marketing" means the process of promoting, selling and distributing a product or service. It includes advertising, selling and delivering products.
- (M) "OBN" means the Ohio board of nursing.
- (N) "OBN approver" means an approver of continuing education, headquartered in the state of Ohio, that has successfully completed the approval or reapproval process set forth in rules [4723-14-09](#) and 4723-14-10 of the Administrative Code.
- (O) "Outcome-based education" means education focused on educational experiences leading to learning, learner confidence and ultimately, improvements in practice and patient care.
- (P) "Planned learning activity" means an educational experience which meets the requirements of this chapter and that may include interprofessional continuing education.
- (Q) "Proof of completion of continuing education" means a document or other verification that is issued by a continuing education provider as evidence of successful completion of a continuing education activity, and that meets the requirements set forth in rule [4723-14-06](#) of the Administrative Code.
- (R) "Provider" means an entity that has received approval to plan and present faculty-directed or independent study continuing education activities.
- (S) "Reactivate" means to change the status of a license or certificate from inactive to active.
- (T) "Reinstate" means to change the status of a license or certificate from lapsed or suspended to reinstated.
- (U) "Reporting period" or "renewal period" means:
- (1) For a licensed practical nurse, November first through October thirty-first in the even numbered years;
  - (2) For a registered nurse, November first through October thirty-first in the odd numbered years;
  - (3) For an advanced practice registered nurse, November first through October thirty-first in the odd numbered years;
  - (4) For an Ohio certified dialysis technician, April first through March thirty-first in the odd numbered years;
  - (5) For a certified community health worker, April first through March thirty-first in the odd numbered years;

- (6) For a certified medication aide, the renewal period as specified in Chapter 4723-27 of the Administrative Code.
- (V) "Synchronous learning" means forms of education, instruction and learning that occur at the same time.
- (W) "Waiver" means a one-time exception from meeting the continuing education requirement set forth in section [4723.24](#) of the Revised Code and rules [4723-8-10](#), [4723-14-03](#), [4723-23-06](#), and [4723-26-05](#) of the Administrative Code.

## CE-02: SCOPE OF OLN APPROVER UNIT ACTIVITIES

**The Approver Unit of OLN** will accept applications from both Ohio providers/provider units and out-of-state providers/provider units of Continuing Education for nurses and dialysis technicians.

A **“Provider,”** as defined by the OBN, “means an entity which has received approval to plan and present of a faculty-directed or independent study continuing education activity” (OAC 4723-14-01 (R)). The Approver Unit of OLN may grant approval to a “provider” dependent upon criteria met, for:

**1. A Faculty-Directed continuing education activity:**

A faculty-directed CE activity “means a continuing education activity in which faculty facilitate the pace and content of the activity, and the activity is one for which contact hours may be awarded. The activity may occur in settings such as a classroom, on-line, or via teleconference provided that one or more individuals is facilitating the pace of the activity.” OAC 4723-14-01 (J)

A Faculty-Directed continuing educational activity that may be approved for two years and presented one or more times during that time.

This includes a **CE application for LPN IV Limited Therapy.**

**2. An Independent Study continuing education activity:**

An independent study CE activity is a “self-paced learning activity” developed and directed by a provider for use by individual learners that “includes both a mechanism for evaluation of learning and feedback to the learner. OAC 4723-14-01 (J)

An Independent Study may be approved for two years and used as often as desired during that time.

**An “Approved Provider Unit,”** as defined by the OBN, “means an entity whose continuing education system has been approved by an OBN approver.” “An approved provider unit is authorized to plan, present and award contact hours for continuing education activities.” **OAC 4723-14-01 (B).** Initial approval for up to two years and reapproval for up to three years shall be based on an in depth analysis of the provider unit’s ability to meet and maintain the OBN CE requirements and standards.

**OLN is also a Provider of CE.**

## CE-03: OLN APPROVER UNIT STAFF

### **Continuing Education Committee (CEC)**

**Composition:** The CEC is a committee of the Ohio League for Nursing. The CEC will:

1. Be chaired by a registered nurse with a minimum of a graduate degree in nursing
2. Consist of the chair and a minimum of four RNs, including both volunteer and paid staff.
3. Have a membership in which 50% of the committee has a master's degree.
4. Meet at least quarterly.

**Qualifications:** All members of the OLN CEC must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a current member of OLN.
2. Have a baccalaureate or higher degree in nursing and at least two years of experience in continuing and/or adult education.
3. Have at least five years of experience in nursing.
4. Possess knowledge of adult learning principles.

### **Selection:**

OLN members are recruited to serve on the CEC. Potential CEC members complete a bio form which is reviewed by the CEC and OLN Staff. Those deemed qualified are appointed to the CEC and oriented to the responsibilities.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. Willingness to accept responsibility for the work of the CEC by attending committee meetings and processing applications by the requested deadline.
2. Use a peer review system to review applications for approval from potential providers and provider units of CE using criteria that have been established by the Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN), listed in OAC 4723-14.
3. Monitor the quality and consistency of the OLN approval system, which will include review of the goals, policies, and procedures for the unit in keeping with the evaluation plan.

### **Conflict of Interest:**

Applications for review will not be sent to CEC members who have any involvement with the applicant that could potentially cause a conflict of interest. (For example but not limited to: employment by the applicant, served as a consultant, is a family member.) Should a reviewer inadvertently receive an application for review that entails a potential conflict of interest, the reviewer shall notify the OLN staff member and return the entire packet of information. The OLN staff member will reassign the review of the application.

Members of the CEC with a real or potential conflict of interest with an applicant shall not review or vote on that application at a meeting.

## CE-04: THE PEER REVIEW PROCESS

### External Applications

All applications submitted to the Ohio League for Nursing for continuing education approval are reviewed by members of the Continuing Education Committee (CEC). Members of the CEC use review forms which outline the requirements and criteria that must be used by individual providers and provider units as established by the OBN ([4723-14 OAC](#)).

1. As applications for continuing education are received, each is assigned a number, entered in the OLN approver log, and is quantitatively reviewed by an OLN staff member to determine completeness.
2. Each individual provider application is then qualitatively reviewed by at least two members of the CEC. Provider Unit applications are qualitatively reviewed by CEC members and then acted upon at a CEC meeting.
3. All reviews are done independently using the appropriate review forms based on criteria set forth in 4723-14-14 ([Approval of a continuing education provider or approved provider unit](#)), 4723-14-15 ([Approval of a faculty-directed continuing education activity](#)) and 4723-14-16 ([Approval of an independent study continuing education activity](#))
4. Reviews are returned to the OLN office by the requested deadline.
5. Action taken on any application may include:
  - a. meets criteria, approved
  - b. does not meet criteria, not approved
  - c. additional information needed, action deferred.
5. OLN staff will consult other CEC members for input if there is not consensus among reviewers for a Faculty-Directed CE activity or Independent Study. OLN staff will bring divergent views to CEC for discussion and clarification to ensure consistency in future reviews.
7. All Provider Unit applications are reviewed by CEC members using an appropriate form based on criteria set forth in [4723-14-17 OAC](#) (Approval of the continuing education system of a provider unit) and discussed and voted upon at a CEC meeting with a simple majority vote of the reviewers needed for approval
8. The review process must be completed and approval granted prior to the date any CE activity is to be offered.



9. Review forms, along with communication with the applicant, are filed with the applications and kept for six years in secure files, accessible only by OLN staff.

### **Internal Applications - OLN as a Provider of CE**

A unit of OLN who wishes to offer a CE program may form a Planning Committee and submit an application for approval of CE using the internal OLN application. All CE provided by OLN shall meet the criteria established by the OBN.

1. Each application, which is assigned a number and entered in the OLN provider log, is reviewed quantitatively by an OLN staff member who is not on the planning committee. The application is then qualitatively peer-reviewed by at least two RNs and at least one member of the CEC.
2. Action taken on an application may include:
  - a. meets criteria, approved
  - b. does not meet criteria, not approved
  - c. additional information needed, action deferred.
3. A CE activity provided by the OLN Approver Unit must be reviewed and approved prior to the date the CE activity is offered and include criteria for successful completion.
4. Records are kept for six years in secure OLN files, accessible only by OLN staff.as follows:
  - a. application
  - b. review forms
  - c. list of participants
  - d. summative evaluation

## CE-05: USE OF THE CONTACT HOUR

1. The contact hour is the official unit of measure of CE for nurses and dialysis technicians in Ohio. Sixty minutes of planned learning activity shall constitute a contact hour.
2. At least one-half contact hour must be included in an application for a Faculty-Directed CE Activity or an Independent Study.
3. Attendance of at least 80% of the Faculty-Directed CE Activity and turning in a completed evaluation form is required to receive contact hours.
4. For an Independent Study, completion of all stated requirements including an evaluation form is required to receive contact hours.
5. The following may be included when calculating contact hours:
  - a. pre and post-tests,
  - b. discussion,
  - c. practice,
  - d. evaluation.
6. Contact hour credit is not awarded for:
  - a. breaks,
  - b. meals,
  - c. registration,
  - d. welcome,
  - e. general introductions.
7. Categories for contact hours:
  - a. “Category A” means the portion of CE that meets the one hour requirement directly related to the Nurse Practice Act and Ohio Board of Nursing Rules.
  - b. Continuing education requirements for non-certified clinical nurse specialists are in rule 4723-8-10 OAC and need to be on the CE certificate when applicable.
  - c. Continuing education requirements for dialysis care are in rule 4723-23-06 and need to be on the CE certificate when applicable.
  - d. Continuing education requirements in advanced pharmacology for a nurse holding a certificate to prescribe are in section 4723.485 of the revised code and need to be on the certificate when applicable.
  - e. Contact hours for the **initial presentation of the CE activity by the presenter** may be given. [https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/rule-4723-14-05-14-05 \(8\) \(a\)](https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/rule-4723-14-05-14-05%20(8)%20(a))

**CE-06: CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF AN INDIVIDUAL FACULTY-DIRECTED CE ACTIVITY**

Application forms for individual Faculty-Directed CE Activities are available on the OLN website. These activities are synchronous learning, whether in person or virtual. All applications are considered new applications; a reapproval process is not used. The following criteria must be adhered to:

1. The application is initiated by the contact person identified on the application form.
2. Resources for administration and planning of the CE activity shall be identified, including identification of the person responsible.
3. The process of assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of a continuing education activity occurs under the direction of a registered nurse or a planning committee that includes at least one registered nurse.
4. The target audience is to be identified. The purpose/expected outcomes for the identified target audience must be stated. When LPNs are included in the target audience, at least one should be on the planning committee.
5. Learning outcomes appropriate for the identified target audience shall be identified for each segment of the CE activity.
6. There shall be an identified content outline reflecting continuing education principles, practice, and needs of the target audience.
7. Credential of all faculty are to be identified. These should include specific qualifications of each faculty member for the topic area to be presented.
8. A process is in place to ensure the individual provider maintains control of, and responsibility for, all aspects of meeting and maintaining the continuing education requirements set forth in Chapter 4723-14 of the Administrative Code.
9. Commercial support and/or co-sponsorship

If any commercial support is provided for an education activity the individual provider will maintain control of the educational content and disclose to the learner the existence of commercial support. Please refer to definitions in CE-01An agreement ensuring that if any commercial support or sponsorship support is provided for an educational activity, the individual provider will:

- a. Maintain control of the educational content and disclose to attendees all financial relationships, or lack thereof, between the commercial supporter or sponsor and

- the continuing education provider or presenter, and;
- b. Ensure that arrangements for commercial exhibits will not influence the planning of, or interfere with the presentation of, educational activities.
10. The individual provider will disclose to learners that there is no conflict of interest involving anyone with the ability to control content of the educational activity, or if there is a conflict that it has been resolved by the provider, the provider will disclose to the learner the name of the individual, the type of relationship and the name of the commercial interest entity.
  11. Evaluation of the CE activity shall include achievement of each program outcome as well as teaching effectiveness of each faculty member.
  12. Criteria for successful completion of the CE activity shall be communicated to the participant prior to the continuing education activity. **Minimum criteria must include** attendance of at least 80% of activity and completion of an evaluation form.
  13. Marketing materials for the CE activity shall be submitted to the OLN for review. A draft may be submitted with the application with a final copy to be submitted for the record.
    - a. All marketing materials shall include the approval status and the OLN approver number.
    - b. If approval by the OLN is pending, marketing for a CE activity shall include a statement that directs any interested party to contact the individual provider to obtain information regarding approval status.
  14. A document verifying completion of a continuing education activity shall be given by the continuing education provider to all attendees who meet the requirements to receive contact hours. The document shall include:
    - a. Space for name of attendee,
    - b. Title of the program,
    - c. Date, city and state of the program,
    - d. Name and address of the provider of CE,
    - e. Name of the OBN approver and OBN approver number,
    - f. Number of contact hours earned, and
    - g. When applicable, a statement that includes the number of category A hours, or a statement that includes the number of contact hours and a description of the following:
      - i. CE for non-certified clinical nurse specialists
      - ii. CE for dialysis care
      - iii. CE in advanced pharmacology for a nurse holding a certificate to prescribe
      - iv. When applicable, indication of contact hours for the initial presentation of the CE activity by the presenter.

15. Records shall be maintained by the individual provider offering the CE activity in a safe, secure, and accessible manner for six years, and shall include the following for each CE activity awarded approval:
  - a. A complete copy (hard or digital copy) of all application data,
  - b. All correspondence with OLN as the OBN approver, including information about any changes,
  - c. A list of all attendees who were issued contact hours for each date the CE activity was offered which includes the number of contact hours granted to each,
  - d. A summary evaluation for each date the CE activity is offered,
  - e. Any changes made to the program during the two-year approval period.
  
16. During the two-year period the individual provider offering the CE activity approved by the OLN shall notify the OLN of:
  - a. Any additional presentation dates; and
  - b. Any changes made to the CE activity as submitted in the original application

## **CE 07: CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF AN INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Applications for Independent Study CE activities shall include documentation of all of the requirements listed for an individual Faculty-Directed CE Activity in addition to the following:

1. Documentation of the qualifications for the authors of the Independent Study, faculty, and those of the individuals providing feedback to the learner.
2. A complete description of the Independent Study should include an outline of all activities, materials, and the methods for the learner to access or interact with the providers of the Independent Study.
4. Documentation on the effectiveness of the Independent Study in meeting outcomes.
5. Rationale used to determine number of contact hours to be awarded.
6. Evaluation mechanisms which shall include a method for providing feedback to the learner.

**CE-08: APPROVAL PROCESS AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL FACULTY-DIRECTED CE AND INDEPENDENT STUDY ACTIVITIES**

1. Application and payment of fee should be received by the OLN six weeks before the first date of the presentation of the CE to be offered. The application must be submitted electronically in addition to one hard copy. Late applications may be accepted and are assessed an additional fee.
2. The application will be quantitatively reviewed by an OLN staff member to determine if it includes all required documentation. When an application appears complete, a number is assigned, and the applicant is notified via email.
3. If the application is incomplete, the applicant is notified via email for missing information. Action on the application will be deferred until the missing information is received.
4. A review to determine adherence to OBN standards is done by members of the CEC.
5. Assigned CEC members will complete review forms and make recommendations based on established criteria. Completed review forms will be returned to the OLN office. Should there not be agreement among the assigned reviewers, OLN staff will consult with other CEC members.
7. Application reviews can result in any of these possible actions:
  - a. Approved
  - b. Not approved - not in compliance with criteria.
  - c. Approval Deferred - a list of requirements is identified that will make the application meet criteria that have not been met. If the required information arrives at the OLN office before the date of the activity, the "approval deferred" status is changed to "approved."
8. The OLN will notify the applicant within four to six weeks after receipt of the application with the CEC's action on the application. If approved, the number of contact hours and any recommendation of reviewers will be indicated. Otherwise, the rationale for "not approving" or "deferring approval" will be noted along with future action required on the part of the applicant.
9. If an application is not approved or deferred, the applicant may revise it within a six-month period with no additional fee. It will be reviewed with the same application number using the same process as described above.
10. An appeal process is available to any applicant who does not agree with the decision of the CEC.
11. One copy of the application, the review forms, and all correspondence will be kept on file by the OLN for six years.

## **CE-09: INITIAL PROVIDER UNIT APPROVAL CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES**

Applicants seeking initial approval as a Provider Unit shall include documentation of meeting the following requirements:

1. Demonstrate an understanding and the ability to meet OBN CE standards and maintain them over time through documentation of past CE activities. (Within the last two (2) years, an applicant must have provided at least three OLN approved CE activities for a minimum total of 12 hours or be able to provide documentation of providing these or being a provider through another recognized agency.)
2. Evidence that the Provider Unit shall be identifiable and demonstrate goals congruent with the controlling agency and the OBN CE rules.
3. Evidence of sufficient resources to meet and maintain board requirements, including a registered nurse with a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in nursing or at least two years of experience planning and implementing CE activities.
4. Ensure that documentation of a planned learning activity satisfies the requirements of [OAC 4723-14-17](#).
5. Evidence of implementation of the following:
  - a. A process requiring that all continuing education requirements outlined in OBN rules and OLN policies can be met and maintained;
  - b. A registered nurse is responsible for the planning and implementation of all continuing education activities;
  - c. A process demonstrating that all the required planning documentation is completed before the presentation of the continuing education activity, and that the required records are completed after the presentation and maintained in accordance with rule [4723-14-12](#) of the Administrative Code;
  - d. A co-providership process requiring a written agreement and a mechanism ensuring the approved Provider Unit maintain control of, and responsibility for, all aspects of meeting and supporting continuing education requirements set forth with rule [4723-14-12](#) of the OAC;
  - e. A process requiring that all marketing used by the approved provider unit meets the requirements of rule [4723-14-14](#) of the Administrative Code;
  - f. A process policy requiring ongoing evaluation of the approved provider unit's system;
  - g. A statement ensuring that if any commercial support or sponsorship is provided for an educational activity, the continuing education provider will:
    - i. Maintain control of the educational content and disclose to attendees all financial relationships, or lack thereof, between the commercial supporter or sponsor and the continuing education provider or presenter, and;
    - ii. Ensure that arrangements for commercial exhibits will not influence the planning of or interfere with the presentation of educational activities.
6. The applicant for approved Provider Unit status shall submit to the OLN complete documentation of a sample application for a CE activity that the OLN has previously approved to demonstrate the ability to meet the requirements for a continuing



education activity outlined in this chapter.

7. There is evidence of written policies to show that educational design standards for Faculty-Directed CE activities and Independent Studies are in place, and will be used and completed before any CE activity is held. Evidence of written policies must include the following:
  - a. Planning and review of CE
  - b. Co-sponsorship,
  - c. Commercial support,
  - d. Advertising,
  - e. Ongoing evaluation of the provider unit, and
  - f. Record keeping for all CE activities.
  
9. A Provider Unit applicant shall agree to the requirement to submit written notification to the OLN within 30 days of any significant change in the:
  - a. Provider system;
  - b. Key personnel directly responsible for the provider system;
  - c. Structure of the administration that influences the functioning of the provider; or
  - d. Ownership or extent of the provider's activities.
  
10. A Provider Unit applicant demonstrates an understanding that it DOES NOT approve activities. When the Provider Unit receives approval from the OLN Approver Unit, the Provider Unit is authorized to award contact hours only for those activities which have been planned and implemented by its Provider Unit following the rules of this chapter as required in rule [4723-14-17](#) (A) (3).
  
11. A Provider Unit applicant understands that records shall be maintained by the Provider Unit in a safe, secure, and accessible manner for six (6) years and shall include:
  - a. A complete copy of the Provider Unit application submitted to the OBN approver and all related correspondence;
  - b. Copies of all continuing education activity files, including:
    - i. Documentation for a Faculty-Directed continuing education activity as outlined in paragraphs (A) to (C) of rule [4723-14-15](#) of the Administrative Code, or documentation for an independent study as outlined in paragraph (A) of rule [4723-14-16](#) of the Administrative Code;
    - ii. A list of all attendees who were awarded contact hours for each date the continuing education activity was offered that includes the number of contact hours awarded to each;
    - iii. A summary evaluation for each date the continuing education activity is offered; and
    - iv. Any changes made to the activity during the time the activity was offered to learners.

## **CE-10: INITIAL PROVIDER UNIT APPROVAL PROCESS AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS**

1. Application and fee for qualified applicants must be received by the OLN at least six weeks before the CEC meeting at which the application will be acted on.
2. The application is reviewed by the OLN staff member to determine if the application is complete.
3. If the application is complete, the applicant is notified indicating that the application has been received.
4. If the application is incomplete, the applicant is notified indicating what is missing and that the application will be held until the missing information is received.
5. Completed applications will be sent to three reviewers (members of the CEC) for a qualitative review. The reviewers present their findings and recommendations at the next CEC meeting when the application is discussed and voted upon.
6. Possible CEC actions include:
  - a. Approval - initial for up to two years - all criteria are met.
  - b. Not approved - not in compliance with criteria.
  - c. Approval Deferred - a list of criteria that have not been met will be provided.
7. The applicant is notified of the decision of the CEC and any action needed on the application within four weeks of committee meeting.
8. If approval of the application is deferred, the applicant may revise the application using the same OLN number and submit it within six months of the original application with no additional fee. If the application is not approved, it may be resubmitted along with an additional fee. The application will be reviewed using the same process as described above.
9. The appeal process is available to any applicant who does not agree with the decision of the CEC.
10. One copy of the application, the review forms, committee discussion, and correspondence will be kept on file by the OLN for six years.

## CE-11: PROVIDER UNIT REAPPROVAL CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES

1. Applications for reapproval may be submitted to the OLN only by OLN approved providers. They must be submitted on the most current forms available on the OLN website and received by the OLN at least six (6) weeks prior to the expiration date of the Provider Unit approval. Providers are advised to refer closely to the directions for completion of the reapproval application.
2. The application must include:
  - a. A description of the Provider Unit and any changes in Provider Unit administration since the last approval
  - b. A description of the process used to review and provide CE activities, including the system in place for ensuring the review is completed prior to offering of any CE activity
  - c. Evidence that the described process is used and working as demonstrated by the total package and evaluation data submitted.
  - d. A complete list of all Faculty-Directed CE activities and Independent Studies offered and/or planned during the previous approval period
  - e. A total package for one Faculty-Directed CE activity and one Independent Study offered during the past approval period (The OLN may request the total packages be from a specific time period.) The packages must have all relevant documents, including review forms, bio forms, advertising, CE certificate, evaluation forms, summary of evaluations, etc.
  - f. Evaluation of the effectiveness of Provider's total program to include:
    - i. Description of methods and time frames for self-evaluation
    - ii. Analysis of data obtained from evaluation
    - iii. Conclusions resulting from data analysis
    - iv. Actions or changes made in response to the conclusions
  - g. List of goals from the previous application and progress in meeting them
  - h. Goals planned for the next approval period
  - i. Description of record storage for CE activity materials, as well as record-keeping for the Provider Unit itself, e.g. minutes, correspondence with OLN, documentation of self-evaluation, etc.

## CE-12: PROCESS AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR PROVIDER UNIT REAPPROVAL

1. Application and fee must be received by the OLN at least six weeks before the scheduled CEC meeting. Please be aware of Provider Unit approval expiration date when preparing application for reapproval.
2. The application is reviewed by the OLN staff member to determine if the application is complete. If the application is complete, the applicant is notified indicating that the application has been received.
3. If the application is incomplete, the applicant is notified indicating what is missing and that the application will be held until the missing information is received.
4. Complete applications will be sent to three reviewers (members of the CEC) for a qualitative review. The reviewers present their findings and recommendations at the next CEC meeting. Reapproval application is discussed and voted upon. A representative from the Provider Unit will be invited to attend the CEC meeting either in person or via distance means. This is a courtesy and attendance is not required.
5. Possible CEC actions includes:
  - a. Reapproval - for up to three years; all criteria are met.  
When reapproval is for three years, review of the Provider Unit may include an interim report, an onsite visit, or submission of other documentation as required.
  - b. Not reapproved - not in compliance with criteria.
  - c. Approval Deferred - a list of requirements is identified that will make the application meet criteria that have not been met.
6. The applicant is notified within four weeks of committee meeting indicating the action on the application.
7. If approval of the application is deferred, the applicant may revise the application using the same OLN number and submit it within six months of the original application with no additional fee. If the application is not approved, it may be resubmitted along with an additional fee. The application will be reviewed using the same process as described above. **NOTE: The applicant may not offer CE if the application is not approved prior to the expiration date of the Provider Unit.**
8. The appeal process is available to any applicant who does not agree with the decision of the CEC.
8. One copy of the application, the review forms, committee discussion, and correspondence will be kept on file by the OLN for six years.

## CE-13: USE OF THE OBN APPROVER NUMBER

1. All providers of Faculty-Directed CE Activities and Independent Studies that have been approved by the OLN must use the OLN OBN Approver Number as well as the assigned OLN program number on all material, including, advertisements, announcements, correspondence, evaluations, and certificates.

### The following statement must be used:

*This CE Activity, [insert assigned OLN#], being offered by [insert provider name] has been approved for [insert number of contact hours and category if applicable] by the Ohio Board of Nursing through the approver unit at the Ohio League for Nursing (OBN-006-92) and this program is approved to be offered through [insert date].*

If approval is pending, the applicant may include a statement in the advertising indicating that an interested person may contact the PROVIDER at a specific telephone number for information regarding approval status.

### Use the following statement:

*For information about contact hours, contact [insert specific telephone number of the Provider].*

2. All Provider Units that have been approved by the OLN must use the OLN OBN Approver Number as well as the assigned OLN provider number on all materials, advertisements, announcements, correspondence, evaluations, and certificates.

### The following statement must be used:

*[Agency Name] [OLN Provider #] is approved as a provider unit of continuing education by the Ohio Board of Nursing through the approver unit at the Ohio League for Nursing (OBN-006-92) and provider unit status is valid through [insert date].*

## 3. APPROVER USE

OLN must use its OBN Approver number on all materials, including advertisement, announcements, and correspondence relating to CE as well as for its own CE programs.

## **CE-14: OPTIONS OF CE APPLICANTS**

All Provider and Provider Unit applicants have the right to take the following action during the course of the application process and after action by the OLN approver unit:

### **Withdrawal of the Application**

An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the completion of the approval process without prejudice to any future applications and without refund of the application fee.

### **Resubmission**

A deferred Provider application may be revised and resubmitted within six months with no additional fee.

A Provider Unit application that was not approved may be revised and resubmitted within six months for an additional fee.

### **Request for Reconsideration**

A request for reconsideration of a not approved or approval deferred action may be made in writing to the CEC within six months of the action of the CEC.

The CEC will consider the request and inform the applicant of the decision by written response within 60 days of the receipt of the request.

### **Appeal of the Action of the CEC**

The decision of the CEC may be appealed in writing to the OLN Board of Directors who will hear the appeal at their next regularly scheduled board meeting. Representatives of the CEC and the applicant may participate in the appeal.

The decision of the OLN Board of Directors is final and will be communicated to the applicant in writing within 30 days of the board meeting at which the appeal was discussed.

**NOTE: The applicant may not offer CE if the application is not approved as of the date of the CE activity.**

## CE-15: WITHDRAWAL OF APPROVAL

1. The OLN CEC may withdraw approval of a Faculty-Directed CE Activity, Independent Study, or Provider Unit as a result of any of the following:
  - a. Failure to comply with the standards and criteria set forth for that particular CE activity.
  - b. Verification of the validity by the CEC of written complaints or charges by consumers.
  - c. Refusal to comply with an investigation by the CEC.
  - d. Falsification of documents.
2. Withdrawal of approval is effective on the **date the registered letter of notification** is received by the provider or Provider Unit. The provider or Provider Unit must remove all statements regarding approval from publicity and certificates printed and/or distributed after that date.
3. At a minimum, the provider or Provider Unit must notify all affected parties by written notice that OLN has withdrawn approval.

**Evidence of this notification must also be sent to OLN.**

## CE-16: SUBMISSION TIMELINES AND FEES

### **Faculty-Directed CE Activity and Independent Study**

Applications for a Faculty-Directed CE Activity or Independent Study may be submitted at any time of the year. Applications are available online at <https://www.ohioleaguefornursing.org/page/CEAppInfo>

To allow time for the CEC to review each application, the OLN must receive both an electronic copy as well as a single hard copy with the required fee no later than four weeks before the first presentation of a Faculty-Directed CE Activity or Independent Study. Earlier submissions are encouraged.

**FEES** Please see the OLN website for [current fee schedule](#).

### **Provider Units**

Applications for a Provider Unit may be submitted at any time, but will be considered dependent upon the meeting schedule of the CEC. The CEC meets at least four times a year. The schedule of CEC meetings is available by contacting the OLN.

To allow time for the CEC to review an initial Provider Unit application, the OLN must receive both an electronic copy as well as a single hard copy of the application with the required fee no later than six weeks before the CEC meeting. Applicants may contact the OLN to inquire about meeting dates.

An Approved Provider Unit should make certain the OLN receives both an electronic copy as well as a single hard copy of the reapproval application with the required fee no later two months before the approval status ends to assure continuity of approval.

### **FEES**

Please see the OLN website for [current fee schedule](#).

**NOTE:** Fees are non-refundable and subject to change without notice.



## CE-17: REPORTING OF CHANGES

### **Faculty-Directed and Independent Study CE Activities**

1. OLN must be notified via email **prior to the event** if major changes in a Faculty-Directed CE Activity occur; e.g. change or addition of date(s) and/or faculty.
2. OLN must be notified via email if major changes occur for an Independent Study.
3. Changes in **content or contact hours** for a Faculty Directed CE Activity or Independent Study require a new application.

### **Provider Units**

OLN must be notified on official letterhead **within 30 days** of major Provider Unit changes, e.g. change in ownership, structure, or administrator.

## **CE-18: ACTIVITIES WHICH DO NOT MEET THE CE REQUIREMENT**

Activities which shall not be used to meet the CE requirement are:

1. Repetition of any educational activity with identical content and course outcomes within the same reporting period;
2. Self-directed learning such as reading of texts or journal articles which have not been approved as independent study or awarded contact hours by an accredited or approved provider or provider unit;
3. Participation in clinical practice or research that is not part of an approved CE activity;
4. A personal development activity;
5. Professional meetings and conventions except for those portions designated as approved CE activities;
6. Community service and volunteer practice; unless the service or practice qualifies under paragraph (L) of rule [4723-14-03](#) of the Administrative Code;
7. Continuing education ordered by the board pursuant to section 4723.28, 4723.282, 4723.652 or 4723.86 of the Revised Code; or
8. Membership in a professional organization.
8. See OAC [4723-14-05](#) for more detailed information.

## **CE-19: OLN RECORD KEEPING SYSTEM**

1. All records shall be maintained by the Ohio League for Nursing. Records are accessible only to OLN staff. During the review process, records are seen only by authorized CEC members.
2. Records are kept for a period of six years and shall include the following:
  - a. A digital copy of each application with all attachments
  - b. Documentation of the review done and action taken on each application
  - c. Copies of all correspondence related to the application.
3. Providers and provider units may access their records by submitting a written request to OLN. A charge will be assessed to cover the cost of administrative processing. A response will be sent within two weeks.
4. If a provider or provider unit wishes to review their records, an appointment will be made within three weeks of the request at the convenience of both parties.
5. Records relating to the Approver Unit; i.e., initial application to OBN and reapproval applications, shall be kept for six years (6). All other correspondence and changes shall be kept for six (6) years.
6. Records which no longer need to be kept are destroyed.

## **CE-20: OLN APPROVER UNIT GOALS AND TOTAL EVALUATION**

1. OLN Approver Unit goals shall be established that are consistent with the requirements of [OAC 4723-14-12](#).
2. The CEC will plan and implement a systematic evaluation of the OLN approver unit and goals during the three year approval period. The Systematic Evaluation of the approver unit during the OBN approval period shall include:
  - a. Approver Unit Goals,
  - b. Policies and procedures,
  - c. Application process,
  - d. Peer review process,
  - e. Services to providers,
  - f. Compliance with OBN rules, including submission of reports to the OBN when requested,
  - g. Periodic review of the organizational chart, and
  - h. Methods to review and communicate with provider units during the three-year approval period.
3. Results of the evaluation may be used in the revision of policies and procedures.

## **CE-21: OLN REPORTS TO OHIO BOARD OF NURSING**

1. The OLN, as an OBN Approver, shall submit written notification to the Ohio Board of Nursing within 30 days of any changes in the:
  - a. Approval system
  - b. Key personnel directly responsible for the approval system
  - c. Structure of OLN which influences the functioning of the approver unit
  - d. Ownership of the OLN Approver Unit activities.
  
2. OLN as an OBN Approver shall submit to the Ohio Board of Nursing all data about its approval activities as requested and within the time frame specified by the board.

## **CE-22: REVIEW PROCESS IN RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS**

1. OLN Approver Unit staff will follow up when a complaint is received about any providers of CE under the OLN Approver Unit.
2. Detailed information about the complaint will be obtained from the person(s) making the complaint to determine if any criteria established by the Ohio Board of Nursing are not being met.
3. OLN Approver Unit staff will contact the provider or provider unit to inform them of the complaint and obtain information about the matter from the provider's perspective.
2. OLN Approver Unit staff will clarify the criteria established by the Ohio Board of Nursing. If the complaint is determined to be valid, the Provider will be required to make needed changes and submit documentation to the OLN.
3. The CEC will review all complaints and their resolution.
5. Documentation of all contacts and information will be done by the OLN Approver Unit staff.
4. OLN Approver Unit staff will follow up with the person making the complaint as well as with Ohio Board of Nursing when requested.
5. If the situation is not resolved, approval will be withdrawn.

# Ohio League for Nursing Organizational Chart

