Continuing Education Policy Individual Activity Applicant Chapters and Non-Chapters

AACN Program Approval Department

Email: programapproval@aacn.org

Continuing Education Policy: Individual Activity Applicant

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Definition of Common Terms

ACCME- [Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education](#)

NCPD- Nursing Continuing Professional Development – learning activities designed to build on the educational and experiential bases of the RN to enhance practice, education, administration, research, or theory development.

CNE- Continuing Nursing Education. This is the preferred term for accredited nursing continuing professional development educational programs. **CE**- Continuing Education may also be used.

Content Expert- An individual with documented qualifications demonstrating education and/or experience in a particular subject matter. The purpose of a content expert is to provide independent and expert evaluation of content to ensure best available evidence is presented, content is balanced, and content is not promotional or biased. The Nurse Planner may function as both the Nurse Planner and Content Expert

Content Reviewer - An individual selected to evaluate an educational activity during the planning process or after it has been planned but prior to delivery to learners for quality of content, bias, and any other aspects of the activity that may require evaluation. This is an *optional* position on the planning committee.

Individual Activity Applicant (IAA) - The organization/AACN Chapter applying for approval of an Individual Activity.

Nurse Planner- The Nurse Planner must be a current licensed Registered Nurse with a baccalaureate or higher degree in nursing AND must be actively involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the CE activity. The Nurse Planner is ultimately responsible and accountable for the online Individual Activity Application and adhering to AACN and ANCC Standards. Please include the Nurse Planner's name as it appears on their valid, current and unencumbered RN license. *Nurse Planner's RN license status will be validated.*

Planning Committee- The Planning Committee must include at minimum two people: the Nurse Planner and a Content Expert. The Nurse Planner may function as both the Nurse Planner and Content Expert; however, two people must be involved with the planning of each CNE activity.

The terms, 'accredited contact hours', 'credits' or '**CEU**' should never be used—CNE contact hours are awarded.

Approval Statements

It is required that the official activity approval statement, worded exactly as indicated below, be disclosed to learners prior to the start of each educational activity and be on each certificate of completion.

If advertising is released prior to approval and after an application has been submitted and paid to AACN, the following statements must be used:

This activity has been submitted to the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses for approval to award contact hours. The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses is accredited as an approver of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

If the advertising is to be released *after approval is received*, the following statements must be used:

This nursing continuing professional development activity was approved by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. Approval refers to recognition of continuing education only and does not imply AACN or ANCC approval or endorsement of the content of this educational activity.

Approval statement as it should appear on all certificates of completion:

This nursing continuing professional development activity was approved by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Use of AACN Logo
AACN Chapters may use the AACN Logo on marketing materials. Non-Chapters may NOT use the AACN Logo. If a *Chapter* would like to utilize the current AACN theme artwork, information can be found on our website here: https://www.aacn.org/aacn-theme

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Approval Eligibility

ACCME/ANCC Eligibility

Is your organization ACCME Eligible?
Organizations eligible to be accredited in the ACCME System (eligible organizations) are those whose mission and function are: (1) providing clinical services directly to patients; or (2) the education of healthcare professionals; or (3) serving as fiduciary to patients, the public, or population health; and other organizations that are not otherwise ineligible.

Companies that are ineligible to be accredited in the ACCME System (*ineligible companies*) are those whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients. Primary examples of ineligible companies are pharmaceutical and medical device companies. More Details

> *If no—you are not eligible to provide CNE.*

Is this continuing nursing education/nursing continuing professional development?
Is this learning activity intended to build upon the educational and experiential bases of the professional RN for the enhancement of practice, education, administration, research or theory development, to improve the health of the public and the RNs' pursuit of their professional career goals?

> *If no—the activity is not eligible for approval.*

Eligibility for Review by AACN

AACN's Chapters and Associations, Foundations, Health Care Systems, Hospices, Hospitals, Medical Centers, Societies, Telehealth and LTACs are eligible to apply for CE. AACN does not approve CE for Legal Nurse Consultants. Independent Nurse Consultants/Independent Education Companies should check with programapproval@aacn.org prior to submitting an online IAA application to determine eligibility.

AACN Accepted Activity Types

We accept Individual Activity Applications for provider-directed activities where the IAA determines the desired learning outcome based on a needs assessment and gap analysis, selects content based on best available evidence, chooses strategies to facilitate learning, and identifies methods for collecting and analyzing evaluation data.

Live one time activity: A live educational activity where the learner participates in person or via the internet at a certain time on a certain date and is only available in real-time, just as if it were a course held in an auditorium. A live activity may be repeated during the two year approval period. Repeated at additional dates/times exactly as previously presented OR the original live activity is recorded and offered as an enduring, learner-paced activity during the approval period.

Enduring, learner paced activity: Enduring material that is printed or recorded and does not have a specific time or location designated for participation. Rather, the participant determines where and when to complete the activity. (Examples: online courses, recorded presentations)

Evidence-based and nursing research poster presentations are accepted when they are presented in conjunction with a live activity or on-demand activity.

Content which has been previously developed, may be appropriate to include within the CE activity. If previously developed content is included, the Nurse Planner is responsible and accountable for ensuring the content meets current, best available evidence and the identified professional practice gap. If applicable, permissions to use this material needs to be obtained by a written statement and furnished to AACN upon request.

Non-Accredited Activities (AACN Chapters only): Activities offered by *AACN Chapters* that do not award CNE, and are not submitted to AACN Program Approval. CERP certificates may be awarded by the Chapter to attendees who complete the activity. Continuing Education Recognition Points (CERPs) are recognized by the AACN Certification Corporation, our credentialing arm, and fulfill educational requirements for certification. Review the Synergy CERP Brochure or Certification Website for more details. Some state boards of nursing and other certification organizations may recognize CERPs as meeting CE Contact Hour requirements. It is recommend nurses consult with their own state board or credentialing organization before submitting CERPs to fulfill CE Contact Hour requirements. *There is no fee, or application process for AACN Chapters to issue these certificates. Non Chapters may not issue CERP certificates.*

Educational Design Process

Professional Practice Gap (PPG)

The problem or opportunity for improvement an activity is designed to address for learners. It is important to consider the target audience when investigating the problem or opportunity and determining the gap. This helps ensure the gap is specific to the problem or opportunity the education is targeting.

Evidence to Validate the Professional Practice Gap

A summary that includes the planning committee's analysis of the data not just the data sources. How does the evidence inform the planning committee that a professional practice gap exists for the target audience? Stating only that there is a "need" or a "request" for the activity is not an adequate response.

Target Audience

Who is this activity designed to educate? Analyzing the PPG and the evidence to support the PPG should help to determine the target audience. The target audience *must include registered nurses* but may include other members of the health care team; might be interprofessional or for a specific subset (e.g. ICU nurses).

Educational Need That Underlies the Professional Practice Gap

The underlying educational need that aligns with the identified PPG and the evidence to support the PPG. Is the PPG related to what the target audience does not know (knowledge); what they do not know how to do (skill); what they do not know how to apply or implement into practice (practice)? The underlying educational need should be reflected in the desired learning outcome(s).

Desired Learning Outcome(s)

Learning outcomes are not learning objectives. A desired learning outcome is a measureable outcome expected of learners at the end of the activity. The learning outcome must tie to the PPG and the underlying educational need and must be written in measurable terms. An underlying educational need of skill or practice requires the assessment of these at the end of the activity. If hands on skills or return demonstrations are not assessed, the underlying educational need and learning outcome should both be related to knowledge and the assessment there of.

Supporting References or Resources

Supporting references or resources should include the best available evidence that appropriately supports the outcome of the educational activity. Best practice is for references and resources that have been developed and/or published within the last 5-7 years. An exhaustive list is not required. The references provided should demonstrate the actions of the planning committee to verify that the content is based on best available evidence.

Learner Engagement Strategies

Learner engagement is different than teaching methods. Learner engagement strategies must be congruent with activity format and the underlying educational needs identified. Learner engagement strategies should be developed by the Nurse Planner and planning committee, in collaboration with the speaker(s). To provide the best opportunities for active participation, a presenter should use a combination of active learning strategies. If an activity is to be provided live and then enduring ensure both types of learners are engaged.

Contact Hour Calculation Method

The number of contact hours for an activity needs to be logical and defensible. If rounding the contact hours, the provider may round up or down to the nearest 1/4 (0.25) hour (i.e., if the calculation is 1.19 contact hours, it may be rounded up to 1.25 contact hours). *California Chapters may not round.*

Contact hours are awarded for those portions of the CE activity devoted to the learning experience and time spent evaluating the activity. One contact hour = 60 minutes. Time frames must match and support the calculation of contact hours. Breaks, meals, housekeeping and introductions are not to be included in the calculation. Time for evaluations and/or post-tests may be included in the calculation, and should be entered in the online system as individual sessions.

Criteria for Awarding Contact Hours

What the learner must do or achieve in order to receive contact hours for the activity. Clearly outline what is expected. The criteria for awarding contact hours should relate to the learning outcome(s) and be enforceable for the activity. It must match disclosures made to learners.

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Criteria for Awarding Pharmacotherapy Contact Hours

IAAs are permitted to submit pharmacotherapeutic content for CE activity approval. Content must be designed for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses' (APRN) scope of practice and delivered by a content expert such as an APRN, Pharmacist, or PharmD. To qualify for pharmacotherapy credit, the content must meet ANCC criteria, and is then still subject to AACN approval. See Guidelines for Pharmacotherapeutic Credit.

Criteria for Awarding Contact Hours for Poster Presentations

Nursing research and evidence-based solutions posters are eligible for Contact Hours when presented in conjunction with a live program. Contact Hours for Posters are awarded 0.05 per poster. Contact Hours are awarded based on participation, not on number of posters available during a poster session. The Nurse Planner must have a system to verify the level of learner participation and award contact hours accordingly. A Poster Session Form must be completed for every poster author. A poster session containing the number of posters, poster titles, and author names should be added to the online application. The total number of posters will be added to the overall awarded Contact Hours.

Evaluation Method

How evidence to show change in knowledge, skills and/or practices of target audience at the end of the activity will be collected. The evaluation method chosen should align with the educational need(s) identified and the expected learning outcome(s) identified. An evaluation form is not required. The description of the evaluation method should discuss how the evaluation data is obtained and analyzed and should clearly describe the data being collected. At the conclusion of the CE activity, we encourage the Nurse Planner and Planning Committee to review the summative evaluation data to assess the impact of the learning activity, and use it to guide future educational offerings, but submission to AACN is not required.

Required Disclosures Provided to the Learner

The Nurse Planner is responsible for ensuring that learners receive required information prior to the start of the educational activity, required information may not occur or be located at the end of the activity. This information includes:

- Approval Statement:
  - This nursing continuing professional development activity was approved by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.
- Learner requirements to receive contact hours
- Disclosure of commercial support (if applicable, absence of support should NOT be disclosed)
- Disclosure of financial relationships between planners, faculty, etc. with ineligible companies
  - Do NOT disclose financial relationships for individuals only involved with non-clinical sessions
  - DO disclose absence of relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies
  - DO disclose all relevant financial relationships:
    - The names of the ineligible companies with which they have relationships
      - Identify ineligible companies by their name only. Do not include ineligible companies' corporate or product logos, trade names, or product group messages.
    - The nature of the relationships
    - A statement that all relevant financial relationships have been mitigated

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Ensuring Independence & Integrity

Many healthcare professionals have financial relationships with ineligible companies. These relationships must not be allowed to influence accredited continuing education. The Nurse Planner is responsible for identifying relevant financial relationships between individuals in control of educational content and ineligible companies and managing these to ensure they do not introduce commercial bias into the education.

Ineligible Companies

Ineligible companies are "…those whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients." (ACCME Standards for Integrity 2020) Primary examples include pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufactures. For a full list see page 4 of Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education 2020.

Identify, Mitigate, and Disclose Relevant Financial Relationships

Nurse Planners must take the following steps when developing accredited continuing education.

1. **Collect information**: Collect information from all planners, faculty, and others in control of educational content about all their financial relationships with ineligible companies within the prior 24 months. There is no minimum financial threshold; individuals must disclose all financial relationships, regardless of the amount, with ineligible companies. Individuals must disclose regardless of their view of the relevance of the relationship to the education.

2. **Exclude owners or <u>employees</u> of ineligible companies**: Review the information about financial relationships to identify individuals who are owners or employees of ineligible companies. These individuals must be excluded from controlling content or participating as planners or faculty in accredited education. There are three exceptions to this exclusion—employees of ineligible companies can participate as planners or faculty in these specific situations:
   - When the content of the activity is not related to the business lines or products of their employer/company.
   - When the content of the accredited activity is limited to basic science research, such as pre-clinical research and drug discovery, or the methodologies of research, and they do not make care recommendations.
   - When they are participating as technicians to teach the safe and proper use of medical devices, and do not recommend whether or when a device is used.

3. **Identify relevant financial relationships**: Review the information about financial relationships to determine which relationships are relevant. Relevancy of a financial relationship is to be determined by the Nurse Planner (not the individual). Financial relationships are relevant if *all* of the following *three* conditions are met:
   1. A financial relationship, in any amount, exists between the individual and an ineligible company.
   2. The content of the education is related to the business lines or products of an ineligible company with whom the person has a financial relationship. (Includes content that is associated with products or business lines, not just the discussion of products. For example a consultant for Medtronic speaking on electrophysiology.)
   3. The financial relationship existed during the past 24 months.

4. **Mitigate relevant financial relationships**: Take steps to prevent all those with relevant financial relationships from inserting commercial bias into content.
   - Mitigate relationships prior to the individuals assuming their roles. Take steps appropriate to the role.
   - Document the steps taken to mitigate relevant financial relationships.

5. **Disclose all relevant financial relationships to learners**:
   - Do NOT disclose financial relationships for individuals only involved with non-clinical sessions
   - DO disclose absence of relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies
   - DO disclose all relevant financial relationships:
     - The names of the ineligible companies with which they have relationships
       - Identify ineligible companies by their name only. Do not include ineligible companies' corporate or product logos, trade names, or product group messages.
     - The nature of the relationships
     - A statement that all relevant financial relationships have been mitigated

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Considerations for Working with Ineligible Companies

- Do not share the names or contact information of learners with any ineligible company or its agents without the explicit consent of the individual learner.
- Ensure that learners can easily distinguish between accredited and non-accredited activities.
- Live (in-person or online) continuing education activities:
    - Marketing, exhibits, and non-accredited education developed by or with influence from an ineligible company or with planners or faculty with unmitigated financial relationships must not occur in the educational space *within 30 minutes before or after* an accredited education activity. Exceptions for smaller conferences may be accommodated with adequate disclosure to learners.
    - Activities that are part of an event, but aren't accredited must be clearly labeled and communicated as such.
- Print, online, or digital continuing education activities:
    - Learners must not be presented with marketing while engaged in the accredited education activity. Learners must be able to engage with the accredited education without having to click through, watch, listen to, or be presented with product promotion or product-specific advertisement.
- Educational materials that are part of accredited education (such as slides, abstracts, handouts, evaluation mechanisms, or disclosure information) must not contain any marketing produced by or for an ineligible company, including corporate or product logos, trade names, or product group messages.
- Information distributed about accredited education that does not include educational content, such as schedules and logistical information, may include marketing by or for an ineligible company.
- Ineligible companies may not provide access to, or distribute, accredited education to learners.
- An ineligible company cannot be a provider or joint provider of an educational activity.
- Accredited CNE must be free of marketing or sales of products or services. Faculty must not actively promote or sell products or services that serve their professional or financial interests during accredited education. *This includes promotion of books/materials authored by the individual.*
- The Nurse Planner must ensure that all decisions related to the planning, faculty selection, delivery, and evaluation of CNE are made without any influence or involvement from owners or employees of an ineligible company.
- Disclosure of relationships, mitigation, and commercial support must be made prior to the start of education. Submission and review of this disclosure is part of the Program Approval process.

Exhibitors

An ineligible company who (usually for a fee) has been given permission by the Chapter/Organization to exhibit in a separate space in conjunction with an accredited educational activity.

- Arrangements to allow ineligible companies to market or exhibit in association with accredited education must not:
    - Influence any decisions related to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of the education.
    - Interfere with the presentation of the education.
    - Be a condition of the provision of financial or in-kind support from ineligible companies for the education.
- Exhibitors must be in a separate space than the space where accredited education takes place.
    - The best option remains physical separation of CNE activities and non-CNE activities.
    - Physical separation for an in-person conference would be an exhibit hall, or separate room.
    - Physical separation for virtual conferences is a separate link and/or platform to host non-accredited education/vendor interactions.
    - If physical separation is not possible, a 30 minute break between accredited and non-accredited activities for longer conferences is required. For smaller conferences, the break can be shorter, but must include a disclosure by the planning committee. Disclosure should include ending of the accredited activity, and informing learner attendance is not required in order to receive CNE certificate. Review of this disclosure by the Program Approval Department is required.

Commercial Support

Commercial Support is defined as financial or in-kind contributions given by an ineligible company which is used to pay all or part of the costs of an accredited CNE activity.

- A Commercial Support Agreement must be completed and submitted to Program Approval.
- AACN Chapters: A Vendor Support Agreement must be approved by a Chapter Specialist, allow two weeks for review and approval.
- The Nurse Planner and Planning Committee must ensure that the activity remains independent of the Ineligible Company and that the support does not result in commercial bias or commercial influence in the activity.
- The Commercial Support does not establish a financial relationship between the Ineligible Company and planners, faculty, or others in control of content of the education.
- The Planning Committee must make all decisions on the receipt and disbursement of the commercial support.
- Ineligible Companies must not pay directly for any of the expenses related to the education or the learners.
- The Chapter/Organization may use commercial support to fund honoraria or travel expenses of planners, faculty, and others in control of content for those roles only.
- The Chapter/Organization must not use commercial support to pay for travel, lodging, honoraria, or personal expenses for individual learners or groups of learners in accredited education.
- The Chapter/Organization may use commercial support to defray or eliminate cost of the education for all learners.
- Ineligible Company employees may attend the educational activity if they register and pay the registration fee.
- Displays or distribution of literature or promotional materials by an Ineligible Company is prohibited in the educational space.
- The Chapter/Organization must keep a record of the amount or kind of commercial support received and how it was used, and must produce that accounting, upon request, by AACN or by the ineligible company that provided the commercial support.

Commercial Support is NOT:

- Financial or in-kind contributions given by an eligible company or non-healthcare related company.
- Exhibitor fees (contributions from an Ineligible Company for permission to exhibit in a separate space in conjunction with an accredited educational activity)
- Financial or in-kind contributions given by an ineligible company for *non-accredited* educational activities.

Other Planning Considerations

Certificate of Completion

A certificate of completion is awarded to the participant who successfully completes the requirements for the individual education activity. Individual Activity Applicants must be able to provide participants with duplicate certificates upon request for six years after the date of the program. *See Page 3 for information regarding use of AACN logo. The certificate must include:

- Title and date of the educational activity
- Name and address of provider of the educational activity (web address or full mailing address)
- Number of contact hours awarded
- Approval statement:
    - *This nursing continuing professional development activity was approved by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.*
- Participant name
- California Chapters, see Continuing Education Policy Supplement for California AACN Chapter for additional requirements.

Chapters may indicate the Synergy CERP category for their programs. It is the responsibility of the nurse planner to determine the appropriate Synergy CERP category for each individual presentation in the program. For more information regarding Synergy CERPs please see the: Synergy CERPs Brochure.

Joint Providership

Joint providership is defined as two or more organizations working together to plan an educational activity. The provider of the activity is the Individual Activity Applicant applying for contact hours via AACN. The joint provider(s) are the other organizations working with the provider. An ineligible company cannot be a provider or joint provider of an educational activity.

A qualified Nurse Planner from the IAA must be involved in determining educational objectives and content, selecting planners, presenters, awarding contact hours, recordkeeping procedures, evaluation methods, and managing commercial support. Decision-making responsibility may be shared collaboratively between the IAA and the joint providing organization(s), however final responsibility rests with the IAA.

Details related to the collaboration are documented in a joint provider agreement. This agreement does not require review by Program Approval. Learners must be informed if the educational activity was joint provided. Materials associated with the activity, such as marketing materials, advertising, agendas and certificates of completion must clearly indicate the organization (provider) awarding contact hours and responsible for adherence to ANCC criteria.

*If you are an AACN Chapter considering a joint providership in planning and executing an educational activity, please contact the Chapter Specialist at chapters@aacn.org for assistance in completing a Joint Provider Agreement. Please allow up to two weeks for review and approval.

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Submitting Your Program

After reviewing this policy and prior to starting your online IAA application:

Have available: Chapter or Organization Name, Chapter or Organization Address and Phone Number, Name and address of Contact Person, Name of Nurse Planner including credentials and contact information.
Review: Required Supporting Documents for Individual Activity Applicants
Complete: Educational Design Process Form
Collect: An Individual Disclosure and Mitigation Form for all individuals in a position to control content: nurse planner, program planning committee member, content expert, content reviewer and all presenters *Note only forms where the individual discloses a relationship with an ineligible company are to be uploaded.
Prepare:
- A copy of the Certificate of Completion
- A copy of the Disclosure Example
- A copy of Agenda or Flyer (if applying for more than 3 Contact Hours)
- A copy of the Commercial Support Agreement (if applicable)
- A copy of the Poster Session Form (if applicable)

*California Chapters, see Continuing Education Policy Supplement for California AACN Chapter **for additional requirements**

Completing Your Program

Individual Applicant Activity Record Keeping

For each provided educational activity, the following documentation must be maintained by the Individual Activity Applicant in a secure and confidential manner for a period of six years.
- List of participants with unique identifier (employee ID, License number etc.)
- Number of CE awarded to each participant (partial or full credit)
- Sample certificate of completion
- Dollar amount or kind of commercial support received and how it was used (if applicable)

Post Activity Report

An email request for a Post Activity Report will be sent within one week of the scheduled activity. The request is to be completed via the Smartsheet link within 30 calendar days of the first presentation date of the activity. For programs repeated on multiple dates, additional email requests will be sent. Future applications from IAAs who are delinquent in submission may be denied by AACN without review**.** Approval holds may also be applied to any applicant failing to submit corrections to a report if requested.

The only required data point is the total number of attendees who were issued Certificates of Completion.

It is strongly suggested that Nurse Planners complete a summary of evaluations to fully evaluate the impact of the program, and assist in planning future offerings, but submission to AACN is not required. **California Chapters, see** Continuing Education Policy Supplement for California AACN Chapter **for additional requirements.**

Additional Information

Application Status

The chapter or organization associated with the Individual Activity Applicants will receive an email confirmation from AACN when an online application is submitted and paid. Applicants may also check on the status of their application by signing in with their customer ID and password at www.aacn.org, click on the arrow next to their name in the top right corner of the screen and select Submissions. The applicant may also print an invoice for their records.
If an application is incomplete or contains errors, applicant will be notified by email. The review process cannot proceed until required revisions have been made. Lack of response from the applicant may delay the review, and therefore initial review deadline may not be met. It is suggested that applicants respond to email requests within two business days to ensure that the review process remains efficient.

Should there be a situation where the Nurse Peer Reviewer has noted areas of deficiency in the application, and satisfactory response to correct the deficiency is lacking after the second request, an additional $50 fee for evidence review will be assessed.

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Approval Period

Programs are granted approval for two years, which begins on the indicated date on your approval notification. During the approval period, the same program may be repeated as approved (single or multi-day program) an unlimited number of times. Program applications cannot be approved retroactively. Approval extensions will not be granted for any reason. Under no circumstances will educational activities be granted tentative approval.

Audits

AACN may perform random quality audits during the six-year period in which the Individual Activity Applicant maintains educational records. If the applicant is selected for audit, records are to be submitted to AACN upon request. AACN may revoke or withdraw approval for non-compliance based on routine audits. Approval may also be denied or revoked if programs are not aligned with AACN's Mission, Vision, or Values.

Cancellation of Activity

An application withdrawal or cancellation of an activity may be requested via email to AACN at any time. If the request for withdrawal is after the review has begun, or after activity has been approved, a refund will not be issued. If an activity is canceled for any reason after receiving approval, the applicant must notify AACN staff immediately. The applicant can reschedule the activity for a later date within the original two-year approval period for no additional fee.

Denied Application

AACN reserves the right to deny in its sole discretion any individual activity application. If an application is denied approval, applicants will be notified via email. Activity application fees relate to the cost of conducting peer review and administrative costs. Payment does not guarantee approval.

Notice of Results

If an application has met all requirements, an email will be sent with an approval notification to the contact person noted in the online application.

Processing Fees and Submission Deadlines

The fees and deadlines vary based on application type and the amount of total contact hours submitted for review. Please see [Fees for Individual Activity Applicant: Chapters](#) or [Fees for Individual Activity Applicant: Non-Chapters](#), documents for current processing fees, deadlines and payment instructions. Once the review process has begun, the fee is nonrefundable. The review process begins when AACN staff begins the initial review process. Activity application fees relate to the cost of conducting peer review and administrative costs. Payment of program approval application fee does not guarantee approval.

Program Approval Department business hours are 8:00am to 4:00pm Pacific Standard Time, Monday through Thursday.

Our offices are closed to observe the following holidays:

New Year's (Eve and Day)

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Presidents Day

Memorial Day

Juneteenth Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Veterans Day

Thanksgiving Holiday (Thursday and Friday)

Christmas Holiday (Eve and Day)

*There is no longer a blackout period surrounding annual National Teaching Institute (NTI) Con National Teaching