

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses

Program Approval Updates July 1 2026

Effective for applications submitted on or after July 1, 2026.

Updates apply to all Program Approval applicants applying to award CE contact hours (not CERPs).

Updated forms and revised policy: www.aacn.org/education/program-approval

We STRONGLY encourage all Nurse Planners to review the revised policy and new forms prior to submission.

New Activity File Requirements

- **Established professional competency(ies)** and **professional source** that developed the competency(ies). See [Competencies for AACN CE Activities](#) for guidance.
- **Assessment method(s)** used to measure change in knowledge or skills (previously: evaluation method).
- **Active learning strategies** used in the activity.
 - Note: Lecture with Q&A is not an active learning strategy. See [Active Learning Strategies](#) resource.
- **Attestation of adherence** to the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education:
 - **Standard 2: Prevent Commercial Bias and Marketing** — Attest the activity meets expectations to prevent commercial bias and marketing in accredited continuing education.
 - **Standard 5: Ancillary Activities** (*if applicable*) — Attest accredited education is separated in time and/or space from marketing activities involving ineligible companies.

Removed Activity File Requirements

- No requirement to identify a content expert on the planning committee.
- No requirement to show the mathematical calculation used to determine contact hours.
 - The number of hours awarded and calculation method remain required.
- No requirement to document the criteria for awarding contact hours.
 - Disclosure to learners remains required.

Required Activity File Documents

- 1. Educational Design Process Form- Formatting updated.**
 - a. New fields:** Competency statement and professional source, assessment method(s), active learning strategy(ies), description of content, description of process ensuring evidence-based content, required attestation checkboxes.
- 2. Certificate Example** — No change in requirements.
- 3. Disclosure Example** — No change in requirements.
- 4. Individual Disclosure and Mitigation Form(s) (if applicable)- Formatting updated.** No change in requirements.
- 5. Agenda (if applicable, required for activities > 3 contact hours)** — No change in requirements.
- 6. Commercial Support Agreement (if applicable)- Formatting updated.** No change in requirements.
- 7. Ancillary Activity Proof (If applicable)- NEW**
 - a. Examples of supporting documentation:**
 - i.** Agenda showing 30 minutes before and after nonaccredited education
 - ii.** Diagram, floor plan, photo, or sketch showing physically separate space for exhibitor(s)
 - iii.** Copies or screenshots of marketing materials

Note: The Poster Session Form is no longer available. Posters must be presented with an active learning strategy and included as a session on the agenda. Passive poster viewing is not acceptable.