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Continuing Professional Development Program (CPDP)

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The Ontario Building Officials Association

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INTRODUCTION

The OBOA Board of Directors approved an enhanced Certification Program for its Members with an implementation date of January 1, 2014. The beginning of this enhanced Certification Program also coincided with the start of a new Maintenance Cycle. The current Maintenance Cycle is a 3 year term and this cycle ends on December 31, 2016.

In light of the enhanced program Certification Program, the Board of Directors, through the Certification Committee has undertaken a review of the current Maintenance Program to ensure that it aligns with the Certification Program and OBOA Strategic Plan. Updates are common for professional organizations to ensure members continue with current trends.

Continued education and training is key to maintaining a Building Officials knowledge base and demonstrates the professionalism and commitment to new education and increased knowledge. The public, employers, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMA) and our colleagues in the industry expect and deserve that building officials remain relevant and are providing high levels of competency for the protection of the public. It is intended that an enhanced Maintenance Program would remain mandatory for all OBOA Certified Building Code Officials (CBCO).

A meaningful and relevant maintenance program is crucial to meeting the objectives of the OBOA Strategic Plan 2016+ in several of the identified strategic priorities and to maintain provincial qualifications.

The goal of the OBOA's certification and maintenance programs is to offer professional programs that provide assurance of building officials' qualifications. Municipalities across Ontario rely on the CBCO certification to ensure that building departments have the best qualifications and that staff's knowledge and competency remain current.

CURRENT PROGRAM

The current Maintenance Program requires a Certified Member to acquire 30 points over a three year Maintenance Cycle. Points are based on a formula of one hour of recognized professional development being equivalent to one Maintenance point.

On the completion of a code training course or attendance at a workshop, AMTS or seminar, the Member submits verification to the OBOA office for recognition of points earned.

It has become apparent that the current program is outdated with respect to the number of points, or credits that are required as well as the types of training that should be considered as counting towards a building officials' continuous training and learning.

NEW PROGRAM

In order to further align with the enhanced OBOA Certification Program, as well as with other professional programs in the building industry, the current Maintenance Program is being revised to a continuing education type of system. The new program is entitled Continuing Professional Development Program (CPDP).

The requirements of this program over a 3 year cycle are:

Type of Member	Number of Credits
CBCO/BCQ Government, Associate or Life Member (non Retired)	60
CBCO/BCQ Retired Member	n/a
Student Member	n/a

The increase in the required number of credits from the previous system is felt to be more appropriate in terms of acquiring and maintaining the necessary knowledge base to effectively and professionally perform the requirements and responsibilities of a building official in Ontario.

One CPDP credit is equivalent to one hour of training or learning with a maximum of 6 credits allowed to be earned in a single day event. Similar to the Certification Program, credits must come from a combination of technical and occupational skills categories.

Due to the nature of the building code business with code updates, provincial initiatives, code cycles and legal precedents, a portion of these credits will also be directly targeted in specific fields of study. These will specifically be divided into three groups:

Structured Learning Credits – Credits earned in this category are considered organized training, courses or events. One CPDP credit is equivalent to one hour of training or learning. A minimum of 50% of the required credits must be Structured Learning Credits. These programs must be a minimum of one hour in length and proof of attendance must be provided. Acceptable proof of attendance can include a certificate, a diploma, a letter of attendance from the provider, etc.

Example of Structured Learning Credits:

- Technical Learning (OBOA education courses, college or university courses, lectures, Lunch & Learns, seminars, workshops, AMTS);
- Occupational Skills Training;
- Distance education courses/training related to the building industry; and
- Presentations & Teaching.

Independent Learning Credits – Credits earned in this category are considered to include learning or training activities completed or attended outside of a classroom. Official proof of independent learning credits will not be required. A member will have to self-track these credits on the “Individual Reporting Form” available on the OBOA website.

Examples of Independent Learning Credits include:

- Committee Meetings;
- Chapter Meetings;
- Meetings for Associations related to the Building Industry;
- Professional Writing;
- Reading;
- Site Tours;
- Mentoring.

Occupational Skills Training – Credits earned in this category are considered to be soft skill-based courses related to job performance such as report writing, communication skills, conflict resolution, customer service, etc. A minimum of 12 credits must be Occupational Skills Training Credits. These credits can be earned through Structured or Independent Learning.

How Credits Are Tracked

A member will be required to continuously track total credits earned in any reporting cycle by self-reporting on the OBOA website.

The OBOA will randomly audit 1-3% of its certified members by asking for proof of total credits earned (as outlined for each type of credit). This audit will be done by the Certification and Review Committee by the end of February following a completed cycle.

The new CPDP will ensure members maintain consistently high levels of training and competency. Together with technical and 'soft' skills training a building official achieves a more balanced professional level of competency increasing a building officials' knowledge base that is, recognized by government, the public and employers.

The following are the credit requirements under the new program:

Structured Learning Credits		
Type of Learning Credits	Description	Minimum/Maximum Credit Requirements*
Total Structured Credits	<p>All structured learning credits require proof of participation.</p> <p>Structured learning credits are credits earned for training directly related to the building industry.</p>	<p>A minimum of 30 credits per cycle or 50% of the required credits if the cycle is prorated</p> <p>A minimum of 3 credits must be acquired through a form directed at identifying revisions to the code where a code cycle falls within a CPDP cycle,</p>
OBOA/College/University Courses, AMTS, Conferences, Lectures, Seminars, Workshops	Organized educational training sessions related to the building industry.	<p>1 credit per hour of learning.</p> <p>Maximum 30 credits per course/conference.</p>
Distance Education	Webinars, courses, and online education modules.	Maximum 30 credits per course.
In-Person Learning	Lectures, Seminars, Workshops, OBOA, College or University Courses	Maximum 30 credits per course.

*members certified during the cycle will have maximum/minimum limits pro-rated based on certification date (see FAQ #11).



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Independent Learning Credits		
Type of Learning Credits	Description	Minimum/Maximum Credit Requirements*
Total Independent Credits	Independent Learning Credits are self-reported on the OBOA "Activity Reporting Form".	Maximum 30 per cycle.
OBOA Board/Committee/Chapter Meetings	Attendance at OBOA related meetings.	Maximum 15 per cycle One credit is equivalent to one hour of meeting time.
Committee Meetings	Attendance at committee meetings as a member of an organized group which relates to the building industry.	Maximum 15 per cycle. One credit is equivalent to one hour of meeting time.
Mentor	Acting as a mentor to an intern building official.	Maximum 15 per cycle. One credit is equivalent to one hour of mentoring.
Professional Writing	A written article related to the building industry that has been prepared by a member and is published for the purpose of educating others.	Maximum 10 credits per cycle. Credits earned will be assessed by the Certification and Maintenance Committee based on the article written.
Reading	Includes the reading of books or journal which are related to the building industry. A summary of the reading will be required to be provided on the Individual Reporting Form.	Maximum 5 credits per cycle. Credits earned will be assessed by the Certification and Maintenance Committee based on the summary report provided.
Presentations/Teaching	Public speaking, teaching and/or training	Maximum 30 credits per



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	including speaking at OBOA Chapter Meetings or AMTS on a topic related to the building industry and teaching at a college or other post-secondary institution.	cycle. One credit is equivalent to one hour of teaching and/or presentation time.
Professional Tours	Organized and guided tours on a topic or location related to the building industry.	Maximum 10 credits per cycle. One credit is equivalent to one hour of tour time.

*members certified during the cycle will have maximum/minimum limits pro-rated based on certification date (see FAQ #11).

FAQ

1. When will the enhanced CPDP program be implemented?

Implementation will be January 1, 2017.

The 1st CPDP cycle will begin on January 1, 2017 and end on December 31, 2019.

2. Why are updates to the current CPDP program required? Why are the number of credits required being doubled?

Upon review of the current program, it was felt that the existing system does not effectively reflect the OBOA vision and commitment towards ensuring a safer and more sustainable and accessible Ontario. The new program raises the bar by showing our credentials are in line with other professional associations and will provide assurance to the public that Ontario's building officials are relevant, highly skilled professionals whose role is to protect the public. This can only be shown through progressive and relevant certification AND maintenance of certification or, a meaningful Continuing Professional Development Program.

Safety is of utmost importance to building officials in Ontario because of the dangers unsafe buildings present to the public. Unfortunately this has been clearly demonstrated by the fatal collapse of the Algo Mall in Elliot Lake.

Continuing education program requirements for similar professional associations across the country were reviewed in developing the new CPDP. We looked closely at the number of credits or hours of training required other groups required and established our numbers accordingly. Based on historic data of our certified member and the current maintenance program, we are confident that the majority of our certified members will have no difficulties in achieving the requirement of 60 credits over 3 years by allowing increased flexibility in both how credits can be earned and expanding the types of training/learning that qualify as credits. This program will provide a building a record of our commitment to on-going professional development.

3. Who does the CPDP program apply to?

The program applies to all Certified Building Code Officials (CBCO) and Building Code Qualified (BCQ) Government, Associate and Life Members.



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4. Who does the CPDP program not apply to?

The program not apply to CBCO and BCQ Retired members and student members.

Members who are currently on maternity, parental, or medical leave or who are currently unemployed may apply for an extension on the timeline to earn their minimum credits in a current cycle.

5. Will I be required to comply with the CPDP to maintain OBOA membership?

Members who are CBCO or BCQ certified are required to comply with the CPDP to maintain their certification. Members who are not currently certified as either CBCO or BCQ will not be required to comply with the program to maintain OBOA membership but are strongly encouraged to pursue certification to provide assurance of their qualifications to the public, their employer and colleagues.

6. Has the MMA endorsed this new program?

The MMA was invited to provide commentary on the proposal and met with OBOA during the development process. Preliminary comments indicate that the new CPDP is a step in the right direction and will closely align with any future MMA continuing development requirements.

7. Will approval of the new CPDP be voted on by members?

Under the OBOA By-law, certification and maintenance programs for members may be revised and established from time to time by the Board and are not required to be voted on by the membership.

The new CPDP program was sent out to the OBOA membership in March 2016 for review and commentary. Comments have been considered and incorporated where possible. We will be monitoring the effectiveness of the program and welcome any feedback from the members.

8. Will the Annual Meeting and Training Session continue to count as credits under the new system?

Certified members will no longer automatically obtain 18 credits for registering as a delegate at the AMTS beginning with the 2017 AMTS. Attendance at technical sessions, the Annual General Meeting, Ministry Updates, etc. will all count as contributing towards credits and will be tracked through attendance at the individual sessions.



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9. Will the OBOA track credits from Chapter meetings as are currently done via chapter meeting minutes and year end reports?

Yes, attendance at all OBOA Chapter meetings will continue to be recorded the same way as in the past (meeting minutes/annual reports) and submitted by the Chapter to the OBOA office for recording.

10. Will other associations' annual meetings count as credits? Eg. The OPIA Annual Meeting?

Yes, these meetings will be eligible as structured learning credits. Proof of attendance is required and credits can be earned at the rate of 1 credit per hour of conference time to a maximum of 30 credits per 3 year cycle.

11. Will newly certified CBCO or BCQ members be required to earn credits in the cycle in which they become certified?

Newly certified members will no longer be exempt from complying with earning credits in the cycle in which they become certified. The requirements for the total number of credits required when a member becomes certified partway through a cycle will be prorated based when in the 3-year cycle they become certified as follows:

Certification Date	Credits Required
Jan 1 st Year 1 – Jun 30 th Year 1	60
Jul 1 st Year 1 – Jun 30 th Year 2	40
Jul 1 st Year 2 – Jun 30 th Year 3	20
Jul 1 st Year 3 – Dec 31 st Year 3	0

Training taken within the cycle a member is certified in (that was not required for certification purposes) can count towards required CPDP credits.

12. How do I ensure a training program/course is acceptable for credit in the CPDP?

Acceptable examples of credits can be found on the OBOA website. A member may request that the Certification Committee review a course/training program to ensure its suitability towards earning credits under the CPDP at any time.

13. What will I be required to provide as proof of training?

All OBOA administered courses, programs and code training events will automatically be recorded.

Members are expected and will continue to track credits earned, using the “Individual Reporting Form” on the OBOA website in the same manner as the old maintenance program.

For structured learning credits, a member will be required to provide proof of attendance/successful completion of courses, programs or training by way of official transcripts, receipt of payment confirming attendance by the course provider, certificate of completion/attendance, or written confirmation from their employer that they attended and passed (if applicable).

Official proof of completion for independent learning will not be required. A member will be required to personally track these credits on the “Individual Reporting Form” available on the OBOA website.

14. How will the CPDP be monitored?

A random sampling of 1-3% of the certified membership will be audited by the Certification Committee for compliance with the requirements of the CPDP.

15. Can I carry over training/courses to the next cycle?

Certified members will be able to carry over a maximum of 10 structured credits and 10 independent credits to a subsequent cycle. Credits will not be permitted to be carried over from the current Maintenance program cycle that ends on December 31, 2016 to the new CPDP in effect as of January 1, 2017.

16. What happens if I don’t meet the minimum credits in a given cycle?

As a member of the OBOA who holds the CBCO or BCQ designations, it is anticipated that you will maintain the certification designation as required by the CPDP in accordance with the Association’s By-law. Certified members may be given a grace period of up to six months to obtain or provide proof of the required



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credits. After this grace period the member will no longer be entitled to use the CBCO or BCQ designation and may be required to re-apply for re-instatement of certification.

In extenuating situations an extension may be granted. See FAQ #16. If an extension is not applied for or not approved the member will no longer be entitled to use their designation.

17. Will extensions be given if I don't meet the minimum credits in a given cycle?

A member can file an application for extension to the Committee prior to the end of the CPDP cycle. In extenuating situations an extension may be granted by the Certification Committee.

If an extension is not applied for or not approved, the member will no longer be entitled to use the CBCO or BCQ designation and may be required to re-apply for re-instatement of certification.