

BACB Newsletter



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Special Edition on Revised BCBA and BCaBA CEU Requirements

The BACB’s accrediting body, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, requires that key certification standards be periodically evaluated by a panel of qualified subject matter experts (SMEs) for possible revision. Thus, the maintenance requirements for BCBA and BCaBA certification were studied by an SME committee (hereafter referred to as “the committee”) in April 2018. The committee was carefully composed to ensure that recommended changes were properly informed by SMEs familiar with the current state of the profession and the BACB’s current maintenance requirements. The committee composition was diverse in terms of professional role (practitioners and faculty members), certification level, gender, and geographic location. The primary goal of SME selection was to ensure that any recommendations made by the committee were informed by a variety of individual histories and perspectives in the profession.

Before the committee reviewed and discussed the current degree requirements, it was provided with data on the growth of the profession, information from the BACB’s internal systems, and comparable requirements from other professions. Ultimately, each requirement under consideration was carefully discussed and was either left intact or revised. Committee decisions were made using a consensus approach. In August 2018, at its annual meeting, the BACB Board of Directors reviewed and unanimously approved the committee’s recommendations, which are described below.

Amount of Continuing Education

BCBAs and BCaBAs are required to maintain their certification by obtaining a specific number of continuing education units (CEUs) within each two-year recertification cycle, as illustrated in the table below.

Certification	CEU Requirement per 2-year Recertification Cycle
BCBA	32 CEUs (including 4 in ethics; 3 in supervision for supervisors)
BCaBA	20 CEUs (including 4 in ethics; 3 in supervision for supervisors)

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When considering whether to revise the *amount* of required continuing education, the committee reviewed the requirements of comparable professions and behavior analyst licensure boards. Given the compatibility of current BACB requirements with these other systems and how well the profession has managed the current requirements, the **committee recommended that the current amount of required continuing education remain unchanged.**

Types of Continuing Education

The BACB currently categorizes CEUs into seven different types, some of which are restricted such that they cannot fulfill the entirety of the continuing education requirement.

Prior to their discussion, the committee reviewed data on types of CEUs submitted by certificants in recent years (almost 80% of all CEUs were Type 2) and data from a recent BACB survey on certificant continuing education practices and preferences. After discussing the types of CEUs, the logistics of keeping track of CEU-type restrictions, the current availability of continuing education opportunities in the profession, and issues related to accessing continuing education by certificants in some rural and international locations, the committee recommended the following modifications to the existing CEU types.

Removal of Restrictions. The committee recommended that restrictions within and across categories be eliminated, which will allow certificants to more efficiently manage their continuing education and obtain all of their continuing education within a single category.

Elimination of Nonauthorized Events (Type 3) and Examination (Type 6) Options. The committee reviewed data indicating that few certificants relied on Type 3 (less than 4%) and Type 6 (less than 1%) continuing education in recent years. These types were important in an earlier time when systems for continuing education in the profession had not yet been well established, making the availability of multiple options valuable. The committee ultimately concluded that the Type 3 and Type 6 categories were no longer necessary and recommended that they be eliminated.

Category Revisions. The committee reviewed the remaining five continuing education categories and noted significant overlap among them. For this reason, they recommended that the remaining categories be collapsed into three categories: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship.

The table below illustrates the relation between the current and new CEU categories.

Current Category	Description	New Category
Type 1	College or university coursework	Learning
Type 2	CEUs issued by authorized continuing education (ACE) providers	
Type 5	CEUs issued by the BACB directly	
Type 4	Instruction of Type 1 or Type 2	Teaching
Type 7	Scholarly activities	Scholarship
<i>Type 3</i>	<i>Non-authorized events</i>	<i>Eliminated</i>
<i>Type 6</i>	<i>Passing the certification exam again</i>	

The new, simplified categories are described below. Additional details about these categories will be published at BACB.com in 2019.

CEU Type	Description	Documentation
Learning	Continuing education by: attending events offered by ACE providers, completing advanced university graduate courses in behavior analysis, and participating in certain BACB certification activities	Certificate from ACE events; syllabi and transcripts from university courses; no documentation is needed for BACB events (these are issued directly into Gateway accounts)
Teaching	Continuing education by: teaching certain ACE events or teaching certain university courses in behavior analysis	Documentation from the ACE provider for teaching an ACE event; a letter from a department chair for teaching a university course
Scholarship	Continuing education by: publishing an applied behavior-analytic article in a peer-reviewed journal OR writing a review or decision letter for an applied behavior-analytic article submitted to a peer-reviewed journal	A PDF of the final published article; a letter from the journal editor or associate editor

Implementation Timeline

- The option to retake the BCBA or BCaBA examination for Type 6 continuing education will no longer be available after the **November 2019 examination window**.
- The new CEU system described above will take effect on **January 1, 2020**. For all CEUs earned on or after this date, the documentation indicated above will need to be submitted in the certificant's Gateway account when entering each continuing education unit.

Behavior Technicians May Not be Independent Contractors in the U.S.

The [U.S. Internal Revenue Service](http://www.irs.gov) (IRS) provides definitions of two primary worker classifications. A worker is an *employee* when the company controls what duties will be performed and how they will be performed. A worker is an *independent contractor* when he/she controls how the duties will be performed (e.g., which procedures are used). Behavior technicians – those who are certified (e.g., as an RBT) and those who are not – have increasingly advertised their availability to provide services as independent contractors. Because over 97% of RBTs reside in the U.S., we provide the following guidance.

The BACB [defines an RBT](#) as “a paraprofessional who practices under the close, ongoing supervision of a BCBA, BCaBA, or FL-CBA.” Because an RBT is not an independent practitioner with control over how his/her duties are performed, in the U.S. an RBT would almost never qualify as an independent contractor as defined by the IRS. Thus, any RBT who is working as an independent contractor and any business that hires RBTs as independent contractors should immediately consult a tax professional to confirm compliance with IRS regulations. The following resources might be helpful during this consultation:

- The July 20, 2017 IRS Interpretation of Employee vs. Independent Contractor (See [FS-2017-09](#), U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2017).
- The California Association for Behavior Analysis ([May 2018](#)) interpretation of this issue.

In addition to this being a serious IRS matter, failure to use the appropriate worker classification for behavior technicians may constitute a violation of the [Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts](#) (e.g., section 1.04). In the event that a Code violation is alleged against you for mischaracterization of RBT services, the BACB will request a copy of the written opinion of a tax professional to demonstrate that appropriate due diligence was exercised in making the classification.

We strongly encourage RBTs who are practicing outside the U.S. to consult with a tax professional in their country to determine compliance with applicable employment laws.

Customer Service Enhancements

We are excited to announce two recent enhancements to the BACB's call center.

Extended Call Center Hours. We have extended our call center hours of operation to provide additional availability of BACB representatives during the day. The new call center hours are 7 AM to 5 PM (Mountain Time), Monday through Friday.

Interpreter Services. To improve the call experience for those whose native language is not English, callers may now request an interpreter when speaking with BACB call center representatives. Callers should let the representative know what language is needed at the beginning of the call.

Call for Nominations for the BACB Board of Directors

The BACB is holding nominations for three openings on its Board of Directors. Nominations must be submitted by BCBA/BCBA-D or BCaBA certificants and self-nomination is permitted. For more information and to submit a nomination, please visit our [BACB Board of Directors: Call for Nominations](#) webpage. Nominations will be accepted until **5:00 PM (Mountain Time) on Friday, November 16, 2018**.

A Summary of Recent and Upcoming Changes to BACB Standards

In an effort to assist certificants in remaining up-to-date with BACB standards, the table below summarizes recent and upcoming changes announced in BACB Newsletters.

Effective Date	Area	Change	Newsletter
March 16, 2018	BCBA/BCaBA Experience & Supervision Requirements	Experience and Supervision Standards Training Module no longer required.	March 2018
October 31, 2018	BCBA Eligibility Requirements	BCaBAs may no longer apply for the BCBA credential using only 500 post-BCaBA masters-level experience hours.	October 2017
January 1, 2019	BCBA/BCaBA Experience & Supervision Requirements	Changes to the Experience Standards and implementation of the monthly experience system.	March 2018
January 1, 2020	BCBA/BCaBA CEU Requirements	Changes to the CEU requirements for the BCBA and BCaBA credentials.	November 2018
January 1, 2022	BCBA/BCaBA Eligibility Requirements	Changes to the coursework requirements for the BCBA and BCaBA credentials.	January 2017
	BCBA/BCaBA Examination Content	All BCBA/BCaBA examinations will be based on the BCBA/BCaBA Task List (5th ed.) .	January 2017
	BCBA/BCaBA Experience & Supervision Requirements	Changes to the experience requirements for the BCBA and BCaBA credentials.	October 2017
	BCBA/BCaBA Degree Requirements	Changes to the degree requirements for the BCBA and BCaBA credentials.	October 2018