

## **New Maintenance of BCCI Certification Requirements by Mark LaRocca-Pitts BCC**

I'm excited to inform our members of two new developments in our maintenance of certification process that were approved by the APC™ Board of Directors at the fall board meeting. The first one involves those who are newly certified through the Board of Chaplaincy Certification Inc.™ (BCCI™), and its goal is to recognize the experience. The second development involves those who are coming up for their five-year peer review, and its goal is to add clarity to the process by providing a clearer focus.

If I remember correctly, becoming board certified chaplain takes a tremendous amount of work. Gathering the right documentation, writing verbatims, completing essays on 29 competencies, and then being interviewed by your peers-to-be is, to put it mildly, arduous. And, when done with mindfulness, it is a significant learning process. Because of this significant learning experienced during the certification process, APC™ is no longer requiring the acquisition of continuing education hours (CEs) for the year in which you are ratified. This applies to all BCCI™ board certified, associate certified and provisional certified chaplains.

As you know, 50 CEs per year, which includes five CEs related to research, are required to maintain active BCCI™ certification status. In the past, the amount of CEs required of newly certified chaplains was prorated for that calendar year in which they became certified. For example, candidates who became certified halfway through the year were required to obtain 25 CEs during the remainder of that year; those certified nine months into the year needed 12.5 CEs for that year. This is no longer the case. Instead, chaplains are no longer required to submit CEs for the calendar year in which their certification is ratified. This is effective beginning in 2016. Please note, the date of certification is the date the certification committee's recommendation is ratified by the board, not the date the certificate is presented at the annual conference. Upon ratification, each candidate is sent a letter notifying them that their certification has been ratified and they year in which they are required to start tracking CEs.

The second development applies to those of us coming up for our five-year peer review. I just had mine in 2015 and, though it was my second round with this process and though I have participated in these reviews for many of my peers, there has always been some ambiguity in terms of what was supposed to be the focus. Hopefully our new process will remove this ambiguity.

Beginning in 2016, the five-year peer review process will focus on our new integrated [Standards of Practice for Professional Chaplains](#) (SOPs). These 15 SOPs can provide the focus that our previous process lacked. For example, how does your current practice measure up to these 15 SOPs? What are your strengths in relation to these SOPs, either individually or collectively? Which SOPs provide a challenge to your current practice? The APC™ board encourages you to utilize these SOPs as a frame of reference for both your daily practice and your five-year peer review for maintenance of BCCI™ certification.

These changes will take effect in January 2016. However, we realize that 2016 will be a year of transition, in which both the old and new requirements are honored. So, if you are a newly certified chaplain and have completed CE in your first year, please go ahead and submit your form to the national office. Likewise, if you have already had a peer review for 2016 or are in the process of one, and have not considered the new integrated SOPs, that's OK. The APC™/BCCI™ office will honor both new and old requirements during this year of transition.

We hope you find these two new developments helpful. If you have any questions regarding these new developments or other [maintenance of certification](#) requirements, please contact the national office at [info@professionalchaplains.org](mailto:info@professionalchaplains.org).

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