Department of Higher Education

DIVISION OF PRIVATE OCCUPATIONAL SCHOOLS
1380 Lawrence Street #1200
Denver, CO 80204

Frequently Asked Questions

concerning
DPOS Instructor Approval Process
EFFECTIVE 9/01/2006

❶ GENERAL QUESTIONS

➔ 1. Why the changes in Board policy to no longer review and approve Instructor Applications for private occupational schools?

Due to the decision by the Colorado Community College System (CCCS), Career and Technical Education (CTE) Credentialing Office to no longer provide instructor credentialing for private occupational schools and because of budgetary constraints, it was the decision of the Board after considering a number of options, to require the schools to verify and ensure instructional staff employed and hired to meet the educational staff requirements as set forth in the Board's rules. The minimum standards remain the same; however, the process of administering the procedures to verify and qualify instructional staff has changed to require schools to "credential" their own instructors.

➔ 2. Who is reviewing and approving Instructor Applications after August 31, 2006?

On September 1, 2006, all approved Colorado private occupational schools will be responsible for the review, process and approval of instructor applications subject to meeting the standards and requirements with **Board Rule III, Minimum Standards, Section D, Administrative Staff and Section E, Educational Instructional Staff.** Schools are required to designate at least one contact person to serve as the school's liaison to the Division for all educational/instructional personnel matters.

➔ 3. Will an instructor credential "certificate" continue to be issued to the school and/or instructor?

No. After August 31, 2006, a state credential certificate will no longer be issued for instructors at private occupational schools approved to operate by the Board. A school may elect to issue a certificate for school records or for school display; however the certificate language should include at a minimum the school name, name of instructor, date instructor is approved by the school and teaching subject area or program and validity for "this school only", for a period not to exceed five years.

➔ 4. Once a school qualifies, approves and hires an instructor, how long is the instructor qualified to teach?

Schools attesting and certifying an applicant application and documentation to the best of their knowledge that an instructor is qualified to teach and meets the educational staff requirements pursuant to Board Rule III.E are qualified to instruct and train at the approving school for the term of employment provided that the instructor demonstrates to the school and the school adequately documents the instructor's continuing competency as specified in Board Rule III.E.2.g.

➔ 5. I have reviewed the rules and procedure set forth, the instructions, and the application. I still have questions. Who do I contact?

Please read all of these **F**REQUENTLY **A**SKED **Q**UESTIONS. If you still have questions, please contact your Division program supervisor. The Division's main number is (303) 894-2960. If you do not know your assigned program supervisor, please contact Arla Hamel at e-mail arla.hamel@state.co.us. (E-mail is highly recommended so that you will have a record of response and directive for your future reference).

➔ 6. Should I call the former Credentialing Office?

No. The office of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Credentialing is no longer providing private occupational school instructor credentialing services on behalf of the Board and Division. Effective September 1, 2006, inquiries regarding private occupational school instructor credentials will not be accepted by the CTE Credentialing Office. Please contact your Division program supervisor.

➔ 7. What if I have submitted an initial instructor application or renewal instructor application before September 1, 2006, and have not yet received the credential?

All complete instructor applications received by the Division and/or CTE Credentialing Office prior to September 1st will be reviewed and the five-year state credential certificate issued. If an application is incomplete, it will be returned for additional information. If the materials are completed and returned to the Division by August 31, 2006, the state credential certificate will be issued. If received after this date, the application materials are returned to the school. The instructor review/approval then becomes the responsibility of the school.

➔ 8. I have a current DPOS state credential that does not expire until 2010. Is it still valid?

Yes. All new or renewal credentials issued by the Colorado Community College System CTE Credentialing Office or the Division prior to September 1, 2006, are valid for five years from the date of issuance indicated on the state credential certificate. Such credential is valid for teaching in any school, in the endorsed subject area(s) identified on the credential.

➔ 9. What if I change schools while the credential is still valid?

If you obtain a copy of your credential from the former school, it will be valid at the new school providing the endorsement area is the same.

➔ 10. What if I am hired to teach in a subject area that is not currently listed as an endorsement on my state credential certificate?

The previous state credential is not valid without the properly related endorsement on it. The school is now responsible for verifying your teaching qualifications based on the new subject area (endorsement) requirements. You will be required to provide the school documentation of related training and occupational experience for this new subject area.

➔ 11. How can I obtain a copy of my state credential certificate when I'm no longer employed as an instructor?

The previous employing school may be able to provide a copy. If you are unable to acquire a copy from the previous employing school new paperwork will need to be filed with the new employing school.

Please note: The state credential is valid for instructing at approved private schools only.

➔ 12. Several of our school's state instructor credentials will be expiring soon. Can we renew them through the state credential process?

No. The deadline to renew the state instructor credential was August 31, 2006. The review/approval of the instructor renewal is now the responsibility of the school. All application materials received by the Division after August 31, 2006, will be returned to the school.

➔ 13. When the state credential expires and the school renews locally, does the instructor approval still require 6 semester hours for renewal?

No. However, schools are still required on a regular basis, not less than every five years, to review, document and verify that instructional staff maintain continuing competency with adequate and recent educational and employment/work experience to assure up-to-date knowledge of content and practice to continue teaching in the occupational filed for which they are employed to instruct.

➔ 14. What is "continuing competency" and how is it documented and verified?

Continuing competency must be documented and demonstrated by successful completion of courses from accredited colleges or universities or board-approved schools, occupational experience, workshops/seminars or continuing education approved by a regulatory agency, organization or recognized professional association, or school-directed education/training, **and** by a written annual performance evaluation of the instructor performed by the school director or other authorized school representative. The performance evaluation must include, at a minimum, an evaluation of the instructor's effectiveness in meeting the stated objectives of the course and his/her performance with respect to properly and accurately maintaining and handling all student records for which the instructor is responsible under school policy, including but not limited to attendance and grades and/or satisfactory completion of lessons, courses or training programs.

In addition, where applicable, it must be documented that all instructional staff shall maintain an active, and in good-standing current license, certification registration, and journeyman's card or similar regulatory credential as required by governmental regulatory agencies or industry standards to practice in the occupational field.

➔ 15. Our school has several locations. Will instructors still be valid for all campuses?

Yes. When multiple locations are involved, an approved instructor at one campus can offer instruction at all campuses of those schools under the same ownership with same school name. Each campus is responsible for maintaining a complete list of approved instructors.

➔ 16. Since the Division or State is no longer issuing state instructor credentials how will the Division monitor and maintain a school's compliance with Board Rule III.E?

The Division will maintain a record of all active instructors. Schools will be required to submit notice to the Division within 30-days of any change in status of instructional staff. In addition, schools are required annually to submit an Instructional Staff List of all instructional staff employed in format provided by the Division (and available on the Division's website) and certified by the school's director or authorized school agent that instructional staff meets all minimum standards required by statute and rules.

In addition, the Board has enforcement powers to investigate, upon a written student complaint or upon its own motion the qualifications of an instructor. If the Board has reasonable grounds to believe that an instructor fails to meet the minimum standards, the Board shall issue a Notice of Noncompliance to the School setting forth the reasons that the school violated or is violating the laws and rules. The school may be subject to penalties, including administrative fines. Refer to Board Rule III.E.2.i.

➔ 17. Is there a specific rule on how instructor approval records should be maintained at the school?

For each instructor employed, schools are required to maintain a school personnel file to contain at a minimum the following documentation as prescribed in the Rules (please refer to Rule III.E.2.d):

- Instructor application;
- Record of applicable education (degree certificate or diploma, transcripts) showing completion of a training or degree in the occupational area(s) to be taught;
- Copy of applicable and in good-standing license(s), certification(s), registration(s), journeyman's card(s) or similar regulatory licensure; and
- Completed Occupational Experience Verification Form INST-2.