## TOPIC: DEGREE AUTHORIZATION – PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CCHE POLICY SECTION I, PART J

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1. **SUMMARY**

This consent item recommends amendments to the Degree Authorization policy (CCHE policy Section I, Part J) in response to HB21-1306 and to provide clarification for operation as private, degree-granting institution or, if applicable, an out-of-state public institution.

## BACKGROUND

The Degree Authorization Act (DAA) outlines the Department’s jurisdiction over private education programs available to Colorado residents. The DAA establishes standards to prevent misrepresentation, fraud, and collusion in offering educational programs to the public and to protect, preserve, foster, and encourage the educational programs offered by private educational institutions which meet generally recognized criteria of quality and effectiveness as determined through voluntary accreditation.

The passage of HB21-1306 requires changes to DAA accreditation requirements for private institutions. Department staff propose additional amendments, clarifications, codifications to other sections to improve the policy.

1. **STAFF ANALYSIS**

The 2021 session of the General Assembly included legislation that requires changes to the approved CCHE policy, Section I, Part J: Degree Authorization. The bill’s prime outcome changed accreditation requirements for freestanding, single-purpose institution of construction education.

Current language requires institutions to seek accreditation through a U.S. Department of Education recognized accreditor but the change to statute (§23-2-101, et seq.) now permits freestanding institutions of construction education to seek accreditation from a Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognized accreditor.

Staff periodically review policy to ensure statutory clarity of process and requirements for institutional compliance. In recent years, policy areas in need of clarification have been identified.

The proposed changes include:

* Clarifying the three-year limit for institutions on Provisional Authorization;
* Clarifying the statutory role of the Commission regarding the review and compliance of Religious Training Institutions;
* Providing a more comprehensive definition for activity that requires authorization, specifically regarding third-party activity within the state;
* Codifying the practice of using information outside of the required materials for Religious Training Institutions; and
* Codifying the requirement of a governing board for Religious Training Institutions
1. **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends approval of the amendments to CCHE policy Section I, Part J: Degree Authorization.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

§23-2-103.1, C.R.S., Commission – department – duties – limitation – reciprocity

(1) The commission shall:

(a) Establish procedures for authorizing, reauthorizing, and revoking the authorization of private colleges and universities and seminaries and religious training institutions in accordance with the provisions of this article, including but not limited to procedures by which an institution may apply for authorization or reauthorization and the procedures the department shall follow in reviewing applications and making recommendations to the commission.

**ATTACHMENT**

Attachment A: CCHE Policy Section I, Part J with proposed additions.