

Health Occupations Program and Mortuary Science Section Modifications

HEALTH REGULATION DIVISION, HEALTH OCCUPATIONS PROGRAM AND MORTUARY SCIENCE SECTION

ATTENTION

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Health Regulation Division (HRD) is temporarily granting a blanket variance of the continuing education requirements for hearing instrument dispensers, speech language pathologists, audiologists, and body art technicians regulated by the Health Occupations Program, and morticians regulated by the Mortuary Science Section, under Minnesota Statutes, chapters 146B, 148, 149A and 153A, through the authority granted in [Minnesota Laws 2020, chapter 74, article 1, section 13](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2020/0/Session+Law/Chapter/74/) (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2020/0/Session+Law/Chapter/74/>).

The COVID-19 peacetime emergency has impacted the ability of licensees to comply with the continuing education (CE) requirements for renewing their license to practice. Due to market conditions and safety concerns, in-person CE courses and professional conferences offering CE courses are limited or cancelled. Given these constraints, the temporary variance authorizes MDH to grant a variance to the CE requirements for specific renewal periods.

Requirements Being Issued a Temporary Variance

[Minnesota Laws 2020, chapter 74, article 1, section 13](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2020/0/Session+Law/Chapter/74/) (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2020/0/Session+Law/Chapter/74/>) allows the Commissioner of Health to temporarily grant a variances on a blanket basis to rules within the commissioner's authority that do not affect the health or safety of persons in a licensed program; identifies the alternative, equivalent measure the licensee must follow to comply with the intent of the regulation, and establishes a time period for the variance. The variance is not subject to appeal.

The following Minnesota Statutes related to the submission of continuing education reports for body art technicians, speech language pathologists, audiologists and hearing instrument dispensers regulated by the Health Occupations Program; and morticians regulated by the Mortuary Science Section are now issued a temporary variance:

- Minnesota Statutes, section 146B.03, subd. 6
- Minnesota Statues, section 148.5191, subd. 1; 148.5193
- Minnesota Statutes, section 153A.14, subd. 2e; 153A.14, subd. 2i
- Minnesota Statutes, section 149A.40, subd. 11

What HRD is Doing Differently

- Extend the reporting period and the date licensees must submit continuing education reports for their March 31, 2020 body art technician renewal; May 31, 2020 and January 31, 2021 speech language pathologist and audiologist renewal; October 31, 2020 hearing instrument dispenser certification renewal; and December 31, 2020 mortician license renewal.
- Authorize practitioners to submit their continuing education report consistent with the first full reporting cycle following termination of the peacetime emergency.
- Post the temporary blanket variance on the Health Occupations Program and Mortuary Science Section websites.

Implementation Guidance

MDH supports healthcare facilities' efforts to protect public health and offers the following guidance to assure safety during COVID-19-related restrictions.

You must:

- Submit your license renewal application and pay the required fees as required by the MDH renewal notice.
- Seek alternative methods to obtain continuing education courses through web-based and online technologies during the COVID-19 peacetime emergency.
- Within 60 days after the COVID-19 peacetime emergency is rescinded, MDH will notify individual practitioners of the due date for submitting their continuing education report and the number of hours to be reported, subject to the temporary blanket waiver.

Timeframe

The temporary blanket waiver of the continuing education requirements applies to licenses that must be renewed during the COVID-19 peacetime emergency, and expire 60 days after termination of the emergency peacetime order.

Situations Not Included in this

The temporary blanket waiver does not affect any educational or continuing education requirements needed to meet the minimum requirements to obtain an initial license to practice in Minnesota.

Questions?

For information about occupations regulated by this Notification, email us at health.hop@state.mn.us for health occupations or visit the [Health Occupations Program website](https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/org/hrd/hop.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/about/org/hrd/hop.html>).

For information about morticians regulated by this Notification, email us at health.mortsci@state.mn.us or visit the [Mortuary Science Program website](https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/providers/mortsci/index.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/providers/mortsci/index.html>).

Minnesota Department of Health
Health Regulation Division
PO Box 64900
St. Paul, MN 55164-0900
www.health.state.mn.us

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-4101.