

**ATTENTION: GA LICENSED PHYSICAL THERAPISTS & ASSISTANTS  
PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT INFORMATION PRIOR TO  
TAKING ANY CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Please note that all of the courses offered on Cheapceus.com are introductory level programs. Georgia physical therapists should carefully review course instructional materials to ensure that the course they have chosen has content that extends beyond their present level of knowledge and competence. (PT Board Rule 490-4-.02., see below)

Introductory courses are generally not recommended for Georgia licensed physical therapists that have an advanced academic degree, clinical specialist certification, or substantial clinical experience in a setting that directly relates to a specific course topic.

Individuals for whom introductory level courses are most appropriate include:

1. Physical therapist assistants
2. Physical therapists with baccalaureate degrees
3. Physical therapists returning to practice after an extended period away from clinical care.
4. Physical therapists practicing in a new clinical environment
5. Physical therapists seeking information on topics that fall outside of their normal routine clinical experiences.

The four hour Georgia Physical Therapy Ethics & Jurisprudence course available on Cheapceus.com is acceptable for all physical therapists and physical therapist assistants. (An individual licensee's present level of knowledge and competence need not be considered for this one specific course.)

**490-4-.02 Continuing Competence Requirements.**

*(1) The Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy requires each licensed physical therapist and physical therapist assistant to participate in a minimum number of thirty (30) clock hours of experience per licensure period to promote continuing competence.*

***The Board has defined the requirements for competence as planned learning experiences which the licensee can show is intended to increase their present skill level and that the content is beyond the licensees' present level of knowledge and competence, which may be subject to audit by the board.***

*Content of the experience must relate to patient care in physical therapy whether the subject is research, treatment, documentation, education, management, or some other content area. The purpose of this requirement is to assist in assuring safe and effective practices in the provision of physical therapy services to the citizens of Georgia. In the event that a licensee does not meet this requirement, the license will not be renewed.*

*(a) Continuing competence requirements may be met through the mechanisms identified in the categories, Class I and Class II.*

*(b) The thirty (30) hours of continuing competence requirements per biennium include a minimum of four (4) contact hours specifically in ethics and jurisprudence as defined in the Georgia Physical Therapy Act or by passage of the Georgia Jurisprudence Examination. Passage of the examination is equivalent to the four (4) hour requirement.*

*(c) The total hours required biennially for continuing competence may be distributed between Class I and Class II activities. A maximum of 10 hours may be obtained through Class II activities. All required hours may be met through Class I activities. Competence credit is the clock hours spent in an activity except as noted below. Any Class I activity without a stated maximum number of hours may be used to accrue all required hours.*

***(d) A maximum of ten (10) continuing competence credit hours will be accepted per calendar day.***

*(2) Class I and Class II acceptable continuing competence credit shall be awarded to programs sponsored by Continuing Competence providers as noted in the board by policy, provided that the content is beyond the licensee's present level of knowledge and competence which may be subject to audit by the Board.*

*(3) Unacceptable activities for continuing competence include, but are not limited to:*

*(a) Orientation and in-service programs;*

*(b) Meetings for purposes of policy decisions;*

*(c) Non-educational meeting at annual association, chapter or organization meetings;*

*(d) Entertainment or recreational meeting or activities;*

*(e) Committee meetings, holdings of offices, serving as an organization delegate;*

*(f) Visiting exhibits;*

*(g) CPR.*

*(4) Continuing competence requirements shall apply within the first biennium that a physical therapist/physical therapist assistant is licensed in Georgia. However, licensees who have graduated during the current renewal biennium and who have passed the National Physical Therapy Examination are exempt from the continuing competence requirement during the biennium in which they have graduated and successfully passed the exam.*

*(5) Individuals licensed during the last six (6) months of a biennium renewal period will not be required to meet continuing competence requirements for that biennium.*

*(6) Individuals who have been reinstated within the last six (6) months of a biennium renewal period may use the continuing competence coursework used for reinstatement, thereby making them exempt from the requirement for that biennium renewal period.*

*(7) Those licensees selected for audit shall submit the Verification of Continuing Competence form and documentation of compliance upon receipt of notice. Acceptable documentation shall include:*

*(a) An official program or outline of the course attended or taught or a copy of the publication which clearly shows that the objectives and content were related to patient care in physical therapy and shows the number of contact hours, as appropriate. The*

information also should clearly identify the licensee's responsibility in teaching or authorship; and,

(b) A certificate or verification of completion of home study which identifies the sponsoring entity or maintain a copy of the final grade report in the case of a University credit course(s), or specialization certificate, or proof of attendance with a copy of the program for the other acceptable activities, or documentation of self-instruction or reading professional literature; or,

(c) Verification of a peer review of practice with verification of acceptable practice by a recognized entity. An example of a recognized entity is the American Physical Therapy Association Board Policy (See APTA Policy G03-05-15-40).

(8) *Responsibilities of the Licensee:*

(a) To maintain the documents identified in number (5) above for no less than three (3) years from the beginning date of the licensure period. These records should be maintained in the licensee's personal files for no less than three (3) years from the beginning date of the licensure period through the even numbered year after the license is renewed.

(b) To complete all steps necessary to meet the relicensure requirements on or before December 31st of the odd numbered years.

(c) To provide the Board with information requested during an audit.

(d) To keep a current mailing address on file with the Licensing Board Office at all times.

### **Policy #7 - Continuing Competence Policy**

*The Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy requires each licensed physical therapist and physical therapist assistant to participate in a minimum number of thirty (30) clock hours of experience to promote continuing competence per licensure period.*

***The Board has defined the requirements for competence as planned learning experiences which have content beyond the licensee's present level of knowledge and competence which may be subject to audit by the board.***

*Content of the experience must relate to patient care in physical therapy whether the subject is research, treatment, documentation, education, management, or some other content area. The purpose of this requirement is to assist in assuring safe and effective practices in the provision of physical therapy services to the citizens of Georgia. In the event that a licensee does not meet this requirement, the license will not be renewed. The following are programs which may be included for approval; however, this list is not limited to these suggested programs.*

***The following programs may be considered for Class I approval, but are not limited to:***

(a) Programs approved by the American Physical Therapy Association and its affiliate components; or

(b) Programs approved by the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia or any other state chapters; or

- (c) Programs approved by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy; or*
- (d) Programs provided at CAPTE-Accredited colleges and universities with programs in physical therapy when the continuing competency course is held under the auspices of the school of physical therapy; or*
- (e) Programs provided by the American Academy of Physical Therapy; or*
- (f) Programs approved by another state board; or*
- (g) Programs provided at JCAHO-accredited healthcare organizations; or*
- (h) Programs provided by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons; or*
- (i) Programs provided by the National Athletic Trainers Association; or*
- (j) Programs provided by the American Dental Association; or*
- (k) Programs provided by the American Association of Nurses; or*
- (l) Programs provided by the American Occupational Therapy Association; or*
- (m) Fifteen (15) hours for undergoing a peer review; or*
- (n) Ten (10) hours for conducting a peer review when that activity is an adjunct responsibility and not the primary employment; or*
- (o) Participation as a presenter for continuing education courses, workshops, seminars or symposia which have been approved by the approved list above; Continuing competence credit is based on contact hours and may not exceed 10 hours per topic;*
- (p) Authorship of a presented scientific poster, scientific platform presentation or published article; Continuing competence credit is 10 hours per event and may not exceed 20 hours;*
- (q) Teaching a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant credit course when that teaching is an adjunct responsibility and not the primary employment; Continuing competence credit is based on contact hours not to exceed 20 hours;*
- (r) Certification of clinical specialization by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties. Continuing competence credit is 30 hours and is recognized only in the biennium in which certification or recertification is awarded.*

***The following programs may be considered for Class II approval (limited to 10 hours):***

- (a) Self- instruction from reading professional literature; Continuing competence credit is limited to a maximum of five (5) hours; or*
- (b) Attendance at a scientific poster session, lecture, panel, symposium or university course that does not meet the criteria for Class I; Continuing competency credit is one hour per contact hour of activity; or*
- (c) Acting as a clinical education instructor for an accredited physical therapist or physical therapist assistant educational program; Continuing competence credit is one (1) hour per eight (8) contact hours; or*
- (d) Acting as a clinical instructor or an intern for a formal, nonacademic, advanced clinical internship or as a mentor or a learner for a formal, nonacademic mentorship. Continuing competency hours obtained between October 31, 2007 and December 31, 2007, which were not used as continuing competency hours for the 2006-2007 biennium, may be used as continuing competency hours for the 2008-2009 biennium. The rolling over of these hours will not be allowed for future bienniums.*