

My prescriptive authority agreement authorizes me to prescribe controlled substances. Do I need to do continuing education activities related to prescribing controlled substances?

Yes, you must complete continuing education related to prescribing controlled substances. The controlled substances continuing education hours are separate and apart from the 20 contact hours related to APRN license renewal. Controlled substances continuing education requirements are also in addition to the five contact hours in pharmacotherapeutics required for renewal of prescriptive authority.

The controlled substances continuing education requirements changed significantly after the 86th regular legislative session in 2019. Three separate bills were filed with separate requirements for continuing education related to prescribing controlled substances. The requirements are summarized below:

- [House Bill 2454](#) applies to all APRNs *who have entered a prescriptive authority agreement that authorizes the prescribing of drugs classified as opioids*. The class includes but is not limited to drugs such as hydrocodone, fentanyl, codeine, acetaminophen with codeine, tramadol, carfentanil, and buprenorphine. APRNs who are authorized by a prescriptive authority agreement to prescribe opioids must complete two hours of continuing education annually (four hours per renewal cycle) related to pain management and the prescribing of opioids. The content is required to include information related to the reasonable standard of care, identification of drug seeking behavior, and effective communication with patients regarding the prescription of opioids and other controlled substances. This requirement is applicable to all renewal applications submitted on or after January 1, 2021.
- [House Bill 3285](#) applies to all APRNs whose *practice includes the prescription of opioids*. Those APRNs who prescribe opioids as part of their practices must complete at least one hour of continuing education annually (two hours per renewal cycle) that covers best practices, alternative treatment options, and multi-modal approaches to pain management that may include physical therapy, psychotherapy and other treatments. The Texas State Board of Pharmacy (TSBP) must adopt rules to establish the required content for these continuing education activities. At this time, TSBP has not published rules for required content. This requirement will expire on August 31, 2023.
- [House Bill 2174](#) is a one-time requirement for APRNs who have been *authorized to receive information from the prescription monitoring program*. This one-time requirement is for two hours of continuing education related to approved procedures of prescribing and monitoring controlled substances. APRNs who were licensed before September 1, 2020, are required to complete this requirement not later than September 1, 2021. All APRNs who are licensed on or after September 1, 2020, must complete this requirement by the first anniversary of the date on which the APRN license was issued.

It is incumbent upon each APRN to ensure that all continuing education requirements are met. More information regarding continuing education requirements may be found on the [continuing nursing education and competency page](#) of our website as well as in [Board Rule 216.3](#).