



APPI

Alberta Professional Planners Institute

Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) Questions & Answers

1. When did Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) become mandatory?

In 2010, under the Professional and Occupational Associations Registration Act (POARA), the Government of Alberta enacted the Professional Planner Regulation. This new Regulation incorporated the new name of the Alberta Professional Planners Institute (APPI) and the new Right to Title, 'Registered Professional Planner' (RPP) for qualified members, previously Alberta Community Planner. When the POARA legislation was amended the Government of Alberta required that the Institute's Code of Professional Conduct be embedded into the Regulation via a Schedule, to ensure consistency with their requirements of other professions and further protection of the public interest. Prior to 2010, engaging in CPL and recording CPL activities was voluntary for APPI members. Since the enactment of the Professional Planner Regulation, only the recording of CPL activities has continued to be voluntary.

www.albertaplanners.com About APPI/Bylaws

The Professional Planner Regulation

<http://www.albertaplanners.com/sites/default/files/downloads/ProfPlanrReg2011.pdf>

POARA

http://www.albertaplanners.com/sites/default/files/PDFS/POARA_0.pdf

2. Why is Council holding a vote and asking members to support mandatory CPL reporting?

APPI Council made a decision in the fall of 2011 to pursue mandatory recording of CPL in order for APPI to meet its obligations under the Professional Planner Regulation and POARA. Council also decided that this matter should be put to the membership to vote on, alongside Council elections, on April 27, 2012.

In order to make the recording of CPL a mandatory activity for our regulated members, an amendment to APPI's bylaws is required. APPI's bylaws require Council to first make a decision by resolution, and then request the membership to ratify Council's decision at the AGM. There are two ways to do this: ask members attending the AGM to simply raise their hands, or ask all members to vote by ballot. Council chose to allow all members to vote by postal ballot.

3. What is APPI's responsibility with respect to the provision and monitoring of the CPL program?

According to the Professional Planner Regulation, APPI's Practice Review Committee is responsible for Continuous Professional Learning. In relation to CPL, the regulation states in Section 12(ii) & (iii) that the powers and duties of the Practice Review Committee are:

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- (ii) the assessment and development of continuing education programs for upgrading and enrichment of Registered Professional Planners.
- (iii) the evaluation of desirable standards of competence for Registered Professional Planners generally.

APPI is expected to administer the CPL program, which includes running educational events, providing CPL opportunities, and promoting CPL activities in general (whether organized by APPI or others).

If the mandatory recording of CPL resolution passes, APPI will be responsible for monitoring the reported units, providing reminders to members to report, performing audits and enforcement of the CPL section of the APPI bylaws.

4. What is the responsibility of the regulated member (RPP and Candidate) when it comes to CPL?

Regulated Members are responsible for meeting the Code of Professional Conduct found in the Schedule of the Professional Planner Regulation. Items 3 and 7 of the Code of Professional Conduct directly relate to continuous professional learning:

- (3) A regulated member must maintain currency in the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out the practice of planning.
- (7) A regulated member must continually seek further knowledge in the theory and practice of planning and all other matters that enhance the reputation of the profession and the regulated member.

Regulated members will have different CPL needs depending on where they are in their career and what geographic region they practice in. With APPI providing organized CPL opportunities along with non-APPI organized CPL activities, members have great flexibility in developing the areas that are relevant to them.

Members have had the responsibility (without the requirement of mandatory reporting) to be familiar with the CPL Guide and the Professional Competencies available on the APPI website.

www.albertaplanners.com Membership/Continuous Professional Learning

CPL Guide:

<http://www.albertaplanners.com/sites/default/files/CPL%20Guide%20July%202013.pdf>

Explanation of the Competency Standards:

<http://www.planningincanada.ca/downloads/Competency-Standards-Task-Force-Report.pdf>

The APPI Competencies tree for ease of reference:

If the mandatory CPL resolution passes, regulated members will have the additional responsibility of reporting their units on the Canadian Institute of Planners website.

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5. What opportunities does APPI currently provide structured learning units?

- ❖ Education Sessions, which are currently held twice a year – one at the annual general meeting and the other at the annual conference (3 or more structured learning units).
- ❖ Annual Conference (approximately 9-12 structured learning units)
- ❖ Regional Events in Calgary, Edmonton, South (Lethbridge/Medicine Hat), Red Deer, and the North (Yellowknife). APPI's Regional Event Committees are continually running high quality events that occur over the lunch hour and in the evenings. These events are considered structured learning, ranging from 1-3 learning units.
- ❖ Giving presentations at conferences, Regional Events, etc (approximately one structured learning unit per hour).
- ❖ Educational partnerships:
 - The City-Region Studies Centre at the University of Alberta. These in-person events (mainly evenings) are broadcast live via the internet. Events at the City Region Studies Centre occur throughout the year.
 - Simon Fraser University, Urban Design Program
 - APPI is in the process of formalizing a partnership with the University of Alberta Faculty of Extension. This partnership will allow APPI members to receive a discount on courses in the Applied Land Use Planning Certificate Program. Look for an official announcement and the launch of this exciting new partnership in April 2012!
- ❖ APPI also often evaluates and advertises workshops/courses/seminars that are provided by private firms for CPL opportunities, many of which are available on via the internet. These can be found on the APPI website, in the e-news, in the LinkedIn APPI Group and under the hashtag #APPILEARN on Twitter.

6. Do non-APPI organized events, courses, webinars count for CPL?

Yes. Many opportunities qualify as structured or unstructured learning units. The learning does not have to be offered by APPI or a CIP affiliate to qualify.

7. What are some examples of non-APPI organized events that may count as structured learning units for CPL reporting?

- ❖ Legal Seminars
- ❖ Online University courses from Royal Roads University, the University of Waterloo, etc.
- ❖ The Form-Based Codes Institute – online courses
- ❖ IAP
- ❖ University of Calgary Design Lecture Series
- ❖ Other professional association events applicable to planning
- ❖ The annual Community Planners Association of Alberta conference
- ❖ NCI Charrette System™ Certificate Training
- ❖ Sustainable Building Advisor Program
- ❖ FireSmart
- ❖ Municipal Affairs programs

CPL can be sourced through many mediums (i.e. print, journals, websites, webinars, in-person events, conferences, etc.) and found in many locations (with online learning, essentially anywhere in the world!).

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8. How can I find out what counts as CPL and how many units my activities are worth? What is the difference between structured and unstructured units?

The rule of thumb is that one hour equals one learning unit, either structured or unstructured. Structured learning units apply to those activities that are structured courses, meetings, seminars and workshops either provided by APPI, CIP and its Affiliates, or by an external provider or group, which *may or may not* be recognized in advance by APPI. These activities would include organized and distance-education activities.

Unstructured learning units apply to activities that are independent and not normally recognized for credit in advance by APPI. These activities must be provide support to the profession planned, must be educational and yield new knowledge for the individual member and apply to the practice of planning. Examples are civic or professional committees (including APPI Council, committees, Chapters or task forces), research or self-designed learning experiences, reading articles and publications, written reviews, mentoring and informal sharing of knowledge.

CPL Terminology - 'Organized' is used on the CIP website and forms to refer to 'structured' learning. 'Individual' and 'Self-Directed' are used to refer to 'unstructured' learning.

Please refer to the CPL guide to see what counts as CPL. You can find it here:

<http://www.albertaplanners.com/sites/default/files/CPL%20Guide%20July%202013.pdf>

9. How many units are members required to accrue annually?

Members are required to accrue 18 units annually – 9 structured units and 9 unstructured, where the rule of thumb is that one hour equals one learning unit. A total of 18 LUs with a minimum of 9 structured and the remaining 9 LUs being structured or unstructured in any combination.

10. How do I report my learning units?

Units are to be reported on the CIP website (<http://www.cip-icu.ca>). Please refer to the reporting tutorial that was included with the email that this was sent to you. The tutorial is available on the APPI website. Instructions for reporting are available in the recent APPI Journal article that addresses CPL and advocacy.

11. What if I do not have access to an urban centre or live in a remote geographic region?

With the internet and distance learning, participating in CPL does not require access to an urban centre. Other examples of unstructured learning units for CPL reporting that do not require access to an urban centre include:

- ❖ Professional planning outreach to your community
- ❖ Preparing and organizing local lectures and workshops outside of work
- ❖ Volunteering with APPI and CIP
- ❖ Attendance at organized walking tours and mobile workshops
- ❖ Serving as a mentor
- ❖ Researching and writing professional articles
- ❖ Participation on civic, advisory boards and committees
- ❖ Self-directed reading and research

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12. What if my employer does not support CPL?

Your employer is not responsible for your participation in CPL. In all professions, individual practitioners are responsible for keeping up their professional accreditation. Many employers support their employees through ongoing training and professional development that is not specific to planning, and some of that learning may qualify as unstructured learning units. You may have more support than you think.

13. What if I cannot afford to pay for CPL activities?

Many CPL activities are free and can be done without travel. Examples of free CPL activities include:

- ❖ Free online courses, such as those provided by Yale and MIT
- ❖ Serving as a mentor
- ❖ Researching and writing professional articles
- ❖ Volunteering with APPI and/or CIP
- ❖ Participating on civic, advisory boards and committees

14. What if the membership does not support APPI Council's resolution?

If the membership is not in support of mandatory CPL recording, APPI will have difficulty demonstrating to the Government of Alberta that it meets the requirements of POARA and the Professional Planner Regulation. Our right to use the title Registered Professional Planner (RPP) may be at risk.

15. When do we officially have to start reporting with the approval of the resolution?

The first reporting year will be January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013. The reporting for that year will need to be completed by February 28, 2014.

16. Why does the process allow a member who is non-compliant with the established criteria of the CPL program and removed from the Register of members in Good Standing, up to six months until June 30th to accrue the outstanding learning units?

The Institute acknowledges that while APPI's members are professionals and are therefore committed to retaining currency in their knowledge of planning and understand the relevance to their careers of continually seeking further knowledge in the theory and practice. The six month extension to June 30th is in place to give members additional time to acquire any shortfall in learning units for a given period and to record those CPL units as well as those already accrued from the previous year. The expectation is that members will engage in CPL on an ongoing and continuous basis throughout their career, the extension provides lenience with respect to the reporting of the learning that has already been acquired.

17. What is the process for a member to be re-activated after being struck off the Register of the Institute for breach of the criteria for the CPL program?

Members who are removed from the Register of members in Good Standing for non-compliance with the CPL program in any given year, but who accrues and reports the outstanding learning units from the year before, and pays the applicable reactivation fee will immediately be reactivated.

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Members who are struck off the Register of the Institute for breach of the criteria for the CPL program after June 30th may not be reactivated, but will need to re-apply as a new member of the Institute and will be required to pay the corresponding application fee and satisfy all the requirements for membership in effect at the time of their re-application. CPL is a professional obligation and the mandatory reporting of CPL and enforcement of the same, is intended to ensure members meet that obligation and the intention of the program is not to collect extra fees from members but to ensure a commitment to the ongoing pursuit of professional competency throughout one's career.

A member who is struck for breach of the criteria for the CPL Program may be eligible to make an appeal to the Practice Review Committee, if there are special circumstances that require consideration.

18. Can a *Regulated* member receive a temporary exemption from CPL Reporting?

Temporary exemptions from mandatory reporting that will be considered include medical leave, leave of absence from work, parental leave, and temporary leave from the profession. Exemption requests must be submitted in writing to the APPI office and will be reviewed and approved on an individual basis.