



Ontario Professional Planners Institute

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How does the Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program benefit the member?

A: OPPI already assures the public that its members meet a high standard to become members. A CPL requirement assures the public that those members continue to meet that high standard, by continually updating and refreshing their knowledge and skills. CPL requirements are common in well-respected professions, and benefit those professionals by assuring the public that they should continue to respect and trust them. OPPI's CPL program is also a necessary step towards possible future professional regulation.

Q: Which OPPI membership types are obligated to meet the CPL requirements of 18 learning units per year?

A: All Practicing Members: Full, Candidate, and Candidate (Provisional).

Q: How much CPL do I have to do each year?

A: Overall, a minimum of Eighteen (18) Learning Units (hours).

Q: What is an organized/ structured activity compared to an independent/ self-directed activity? And how many do I need of each?

A: A minimum of Nine (9) of those Learning Units must be Organized & Structured Activities: these include structured courses, presentations, seminars, workshops and guided tours that are provided by OPPI, an OPPI District, other affiliates, by CIP, or by an external provider or group. These would also include different forms of structured, distance education activities.

Therefore, of the Eighteen (18) Learning Units, a maximum of Nine (9) of those can be Independent & Self-directed Activities: deliberate and educational, these yield new knowledge for the individual Member relevant to their practice of planning. They are generally not organized by a provider nor do they have any structured delivery or requirements, and can include volunteering related to planning issues and the planning profession. Examples include civic or professional committees, teaching, reading, and self-designed learning experiences

Activities that are part of a Member's day-to-day employment responsibilities as a professional will not be acceptable for credit as valid professional learning activities. However, special in-house workplace professional learning or training activities are acceptable.

Q: Can I carry forward CPL units into the following year?

A: A maximum of 9 "Organized & Structured" Learning Units can be carried forward to the following year once you have met the CPL requirements for the current year. Independent & Self-Directed Learning Units cannot be carried forward, and Learning Units cannot be carried forward more than one year.

Q: Does OPPI pre- approve and accredit courses that can be recorded as CPL units (either OPPI or outside courses)?

A: OPPI does not pre-approve or accredit CPL activities. OPPI members use their own professional judgment in claiming CPL Learning Units in accordance with the [CPL Program Guide](#). This even applies to OPPI events, including our conferences and symposiums. Most OPPI events are “courses, presentations, seminars” where the rule is “1 hour = 1 Learning Unit.”

Q: Where do I go to record my CPL activities?

A: CPL can be recorded by accessing the “CPL Activities” link in your [Member Profile](#).

Q: Will OPPI be offering any new courses in the future?

A: OPPI’s [Learning Strategy](#) supports members in meeting their CPL requirements. In addition to the current delivery of OPPI’s [skill-based courses](#), [district and partner events](#), bi-annual conferences and symposiums and the [Ontario Planning Journal](#). OPPI is also active in the development of new learning materials for its members, which may include new or revised courses, workshops, webinars and other digital material.

Q: What if I live in a rural area where there are not many options for CPL activities available or the costs are too great?

A: Up to half of a member’s annual CPL requirement can be met by “independent & self-directed” CPL activities. Members anywhere in the province can easily read the *Ontario Planning Journal* and other planning-related texts and websites to obtain these Learning Units.

OPPI is aware that live, in-person educational activities are not offered equally across the province, however, geographical barriers to participation seem to be becoming less relevant in light of technological developments, such as webinars, distance learning, video, teleconferences and the internet. To that end, OPPI is currently developing OPPI Digital Learning, an online resource centre which will be accessible through your Member Profile. It will host a variety of digital learning materials including videos, recorded webinars, podcasts and other electronic documents to help our members achieve their CPL obligations more easily.

Q: How does maternity leave (or other types of leave) affect requirements/ expectations for CPL recording?

A: CPL requirements do **not** apply to Non-Practicing Members, and Full and Candidate Members can contact OPPI and request to change their membership status to Non-Practicing whenever they are going on leave. While they are on such leaves, members should try to meet a “pro-rated” CPL requirement (i.e., if they are practicing for half of the year, they should meet half of the normal CPL requirement), however, this pro-rated CPL requirement will not be enforced. Please see section 3.3 of the [CPL Program Guide](#).

Q: What happens if I fail to meet the required 18 LU’s in a year?

A: Reporting CPL activities is mandatory for OPPI members under the [OPPI By-law](#). Please see page 11 of the [CPL Program Guide](#). Members who fail to meet the requirement by the deadline will have to pay a fee; members who fail to pay the fee and continue to fail to meet the requirement will not be invited or allowed to renew their memberships. Please note however, that OPPI will work with members sincerely trying to meet the requirement, and enforcement is at the discretion of OPPI.

Q: Is this type of Continuous Professional Learning requirement typical of a professional association?

A: A CPL requirement is very typical of any professional association or regulator. OPPI's CPL requirements are basically identical to those in place for the planning profession throughout the rest of Canada, the US and the UK.

Q: Can I appeal this CPL penalty? (i.e., request reconsideration, an exception, an exemption, mercy, a second chance, etc.)

A: Requests for exemptions to the CPL requirement (and, therefore, exemptions from the associated penalty fee) can be addressed to the Registrar, Brian Brophey at Standards@ontarioplanners.ca for consideration by the OPPI Professional Standards & Registration Committee.

The CPL Program Guide is also available at ontarioplanners.ca/CPLguide