



# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Updated: August 2024

Guidelines for  
Practising and  
Limited Registrants



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## Introduction

Professional Geoscientists registered with Professional Geoscientists Ontario are expected to maintain their competence and develop professionally. Section 5 of the Code of Ethics of Professional Geoscientists (Ontario Regulation 60/01) states that a registrant has a duty to act with “knowledge of developments in the area of professional geoscience relevant to the services being provided”.

This document explains the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program to Full and Limited Practising Registrants and helps them to develop an individual program that is suited to their development goals and takes them through the process of recording their CPD activities.

## Value

Continuing professional development has many associated benefits. It helps to maintain a high level of professional competence by continually building an individual’s skills and knowledge within the context of their discipline(s) and their professional environment. It helps to foster excellence in the profession and enhance professional image. It also provides a mechanism through which professionals are held accountable to remain current in their practice

## Background

Professional Geoscientists Ontario (PGO) is a self-regulatory organization governing the practice of professional geoscientists in Ontario and reporting to the Minister of Mines. Our mandate is to serve and protect the public interest through governing this practice.

To fulfill the mandate, the Province of Ontario has entrusted PGO with the responsibility to register geoscientists, admit only qualified persons who pass standards of knowledge and experience, maintain standards of practice and ethics, respond to complaints concerning our registrants, discipline when necessary and encourage continuing professional competence.

PGO has established the CPD program to help fulfill part of our mandate. The program encourages continuing professional competence building and maintains and updates standards of practice and ethics. The CPD program provides structure and support consistent with CPD programs in other Canadian jurisdictions, facilitating ease of inter-provincial and international mobility for registrants. The program is designed to be equitable to all registrants, regardless of career stage or professional speciality.

## What is CPD?

Continuing professional development or CPD is the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skill, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout a practitioner’s working life.

PGO’s specific continuing professional development categories are:

- Education
- Presentation
- Participation
- Contributions to knowledge

## The continuing professional development program at PGO

Ontario Regulation 324/16 Section 25.4 states: *The member must comply with the continuing professional development requirements set out in the document entitled “PGO Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program Requirements”, this document dated August 2024, and also available at [www.pgo.ca](http://www.pgo.ca). It is the PGO’s role to ensure that registrants meet this requirement.*

## Who is expected to complete CPD Program?

Full and Limited Registrants are expected to complete the CPD program. Temporary Registrants who have transferred from another jurisdiction in Canada are expected to complete the CPD program at their home jurisdiction, and attest to PGO that CPD hours were “Filed in Another Jurisdiction”. CPD hours and/or filings must be completed by signing into the “PGO Members Only Area” of the organization’s website.

Non-practicing, Retired and Former Registrants are not required to accumulate CPD hours or complete the CPD program. However, Registrants, who for any reason, change their designation to non-practicing category, and are expecting to return to practicing, are encouraged to maintain their CPD hours and the currency of knowledge gained, at a level commensurate with CPD objectives.

Geoscientists-in-Training are not required to complete the CPD program, however, they are encouraged to participate in as many professional development opportunities as possible, as part of their training to become practising registrants and as a tangible demonstration of their personal investment in the profession.

The table below provides a summary of the information above:

<b>Registration Type</b>	<b>CPD Program Participation</b>
Full and Limited Practising Registrants	Yes
Temporary Registrants	Submit through home jurisdiction and select “Filed in Another Jurisdiction”
Non-practicing and retired	No

Geoscientists-in-Training	No
Registrants on Leave (i.e. medical, parental, unemployment)	Request an Exemption (see p. 9)

All CPD hours are required to be reported by March 31<sup>st</sup> of the year following the registration year being reported on. New registrants are not required to report their CPD hours for the year in which they became registered with PGO.

## The CPD program

The CPD program facilitates career development in five categories: Education, Presentation, Participation, Contributions to Knowledge and Non-Geoscience (Other).

The CPD program is a requirement to maintain the professional designation. It provides a structure for registrants to keep up with technical and professional changes. Registrants are required to complete thirty (30) CPD hours annually, in a minimum of two (2) of four (4) categories. A maximum of 20 hours is allowed in any one category per reporting year. Excess hours can be carried forward for a maximum of two years. A minimum of 20 **Geoscience** hours are required per reporting year, up to 10 “other” hours may be used each year. If available, hours will roll forward automatically for a maximum of two years.

## Categories

- **Education**
  - Registrants are expected to enhance their technical knowledge, keep up to date with advancements in the industry, and develop their leadership and management skills. Some suggestions include:
    - Formal - it can include structured courses or programs (formally evaluated or certified) provided by universities or colleges, professional/technical bodies and industry, employer training programs, etc.
    - Informal - unstructured courses or programs including self-directed study (e.g. geoscientific periodicals/journals, text books, books on business management, business periodicals/journals etc.), attendance at, workshops, technical talks or lectures (lunch and learn; technical discussion groups), seminars, mentorship by another professional geoscientist, discussion forums, field trips, etc.
- **Presentation**
  - Presentation CPD hours include the following:
    - Technical and professional presentations outside of typical work responsibilities either internal or external to your workplace at conferences, meetings, seminars, field trips, etc.
    - These examples may be of a geoscientific nature, such as making a geoscientific presentation at a convention, conference or discussion group; or may be of an “other” nature, such as a workplace safety a

mentoring activity, or teaching operational or business management pertinent to the industry, etc.

- Please note that preparation time may be included in the hours, not just the time required to deliver the presentation.

- **Participation**

- Active involvement in professional/scientific bodies (work on councils/boards, volunteer work (e.g. assisting with conventions/conferences), panel discussions, etc.).
- Mentoring early career, internationally trained or less senior geoscientists
- Service in public/community groups (coaching, volunteer service, etc.)
- Participating in and becoming a member in learned societies and professional associations (i.e. PGO and other P.Geo. associations, CIM, TGDG, PDAC, etc.)  
Membership/Registration in learned societies, professional associations (1 hour allowed per membership/registration) (PGO and other P.Geo. associations, CIM, TGDG, PDAC, etc.).
- Attendance at conferences.

- **Contributions to knowledge**

- Activities that expand or develop technical knowledge within the professional community
- Examples include:
  - published maps and scientific papers,
  - creating or improving codes and standards,
  - publishing and editing manuals,
  - development of new, or material improvements to, field equipment, techniques, technologies or methodologies, etc. (either internal or external).

The examples above may be of a geoscientific nature, or may be of an “other” nature, such as a workplace safety manual, or a mentoring or business management manual, etc.

- **Non-Geoscience (Other) CPD**
  - PGO recognizes that professional practice is more than technical competence and extends to how we work and interact with others, the public, and the environment.
  - Within each main CPD category (education, presentation, participation, contributions to knowledge), it is possible to allocate up to 10 additional CPD hours for training, development, participation, or contribution in the following categories:
    - Community Volunteer
    - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Awareness
    - Indigenous Awareness Training
  - Non-geoscience training – business administration, business management, business accounting, leadership, human resources, health and safety, sustainable development and environment, etc.

CPD hours should not be part of the major responsibilities of your regular employment but can include training and/or mentorship as described in the below category descriptions.

## Reporting and documentation

### Reporting method

Each practising and limited registrant is required to maintain a suitable record of their personal CPD program, either with a diary or through a computer/mobile device. They should note specific dates and hours of the activity and any details pertaining to the activity, such as title of presentation, association name, etc.

CPD hours are entered online through the Registrant Portal of the PGO website, under the “Continuing Professional Development” menu item. This page will bring the registrant to a CPD summary page, where they will have the option to “Enter/Edit (year) CPD Hours”. This link will open the CPD reporting page where you are asked to fill in the details of the activity you are entering.

The CPD hours are utilised in the order they are entered, not by date. All hours will be utilised in such a manner as to optimise CPD hour distribution in accordance with the PGO’s CPD program.

### Reporting CPD in another jurisdiction

If you report CPD hours in another jurisdiction recognized by the PGO, you can specify this on the CPD by selecting the option “Filed in Another Jurisdiction”. Please note that PGO might contact the specified jurisdiction to confirm the CPD hours reported. PGO may require additional documentation from you if the jurisdiction indicated is not currently recognized by the PGO.



## Documentation

Registrants are encouraged to document their activities in relation to their CPD hours to make reporting easier at the end of the year. Records should be kept detailing the event, the date and the duration of the event, the title of the event and a description of the event. Registrants will be asked to enter this information when they fill in the CPD hours utilising the CPD Online Module in the Registrants Portal.

## Carry over of hours

CPD hours accumulated in excess of the annual maximums in any category may be carried forward in the same category for up to two years.

## When do exemptions apply

### Part-time Employment or Unemployment

If you do not practice full time, you might not be able to meet the requirements of the CPD program as readily as those who are practicing full time.

### Registrants on Dues Relief

If you are a registrant who is unemployed, ill or disabled, on parental/maternity leave, or enrolled in certain full-time educational programs, you may have applied for, and been granted dues relief by the Registrar. Unless you have changed your designation to non-practicing, you still have an obligation to comply with the CPD program.

### Health/Disability

If you have not been earning an income from employment because of health/disability reasons and are not practicing, you may ask for a change in designation to non-practicing and be exempted from the requirements of the CPD program.

### Registrants in Full-time Educational Programs

If you are enrolled in full-time education and not practising, you may ask for change of designation to non-practicing and be exempted from the requirements of the CPD program. PGO does, however, encourage such registrants to keep accruing the CPD hours as time permits. If you are enrolled in full-time education and wish to maintain your practising registration while in the educational program, then CPD requirements are still mandatory.

## Registrants in Management Positions

If your work does not fall within the legal definitions of geoscience and if you do not have technical influence over the professions, you can change your designation to non-practicing and be exempted from the CPD requirement. If your work does fall within the definition or if you technically influence staff, you are considered to be engaged in professional practice and cannot ask for non-practicing designation. However, PGO encourages such registrants to participate in a number of non-technical professional development activities that can qualify for the required yearly minimum average of 30 CPD hours.

## Role of the Employer

PGO encourages employers to support the continuing professional development efforts of their registrant employees. Registrants should discuss their professional development objectives with their employer or mentor.

Employer support can include:

- consultation during the development of your program;
- provision of learning opportunities;
- assistance in developing job expectations and responsibilities;
- periodic review of your performance and progress;
- assistance in documenting activities and effort through company performance and management systems;
- financial support of activities;
- release of time to participate in activities.

Ultimately the responsibility for continuing professional development and maintaining competency rests with you.

## Consequences of Non-Compliance

Continuous professional development is a requirement of maintaining registration as Practicing or Limited Practicing member of PGO. PGO has a program to review and audit CPD submissions by members. Failure to meet the requirements of the CPD program could lead to a suspension of registration as a Practicing or Limited Practicing member of PGO.

## Compliance and auditing

### CPD Auditing

As part of the responsibility and privilege of professional self-regulation, PGO has a duty of governance and accountability to audit registrants for compliance with respect to CPD

requirements. The Registrar will undertake or direct the task of auditing registrants' reported CPD hours.

Auditing of individual registrants reported CPD hours will be undertaken by random selection. Should an audit be initiated, registrants may be contacted and requested to submit any records or documentation that they have for that activity. The purpose of such an audit will be to confirm that the selected registrants have complied with the requirements of PGO's CPD program.

## Confidentiality

A registrant's CPD declarations, and any other material submitted to PGO as part of a registrant's individual CPD program, will be confidential. Material submitted as part of the auditing process will only be available to the CPD Audit Panel. Once the audit has been completed and concluded to the satisfaction of the CPD audit panel, the material will be returned to the registrant, or removed from digital storage.

All CPD committee members and all members of the CPD audit panel are subject to the confidentiality provisions of the *Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000*.

All registrant information acquired by PGO as part of the CPD program, is subject to the confidentiality provisions of the *Professional Geoscientists Act, 2000*, and also, where it may apply, to the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* ('PIPEDA').

## References

- APGO CPD Guide – Version – 13 December 2004
- CPD Audit – Summary of Findings – 2011 – 2018
- CPD Audit – Observations 2018
- Association of Professional Engineers, Geoscientists and Geophysicists of Alberta, September 2004. Continuing Professional Development Program [www.apega.com](http://www.apega.com)
- Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Newfoundland, 1998. Professional Development Newsletter (5/XI/1998): [www.apegn.nf.ca/pdp.htm](http://www.apegn.nf.ca/pdp.htm).
- Irish Association for Economic Geology, 1997. Continuing Professional Development: Guidance Notes for Professional Members. Dublin.
- Institution of Civil Engineers, 1998. Continuing Professional Development: A guide for all members. London. Also [www.ice.org.uk](http://www.ice.org.uk).
- Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, circa 1998. Continuing Professional Development for You. London.
- Rhoden, H.N., 1999. CPD, Program Record and Annual Activity Record for 1998. Reno, Nevada.

## Appendix 1

**Conferences:** (Participation) Maximum 7 hours (in attendance) a day with short breakdown of all the activities. Although one date per activity is accepted for a conference in the system. Registrant must mention in the remarks the actual dates covered. e.g. PDAC Conference (March 3, 4 and 5) etc. All abbreviations must be defined at least once in the remarks.

**Seminars, Symposium, Workshop, Lecture, Tutorial:** (Education, Presentation, Participation) Actual duration of attendance of such events and a brief description of the topic covered with timeline. All abbreviations must be defined at least once in the remarks.

If PGO Registrant was presenting at such events then presentation preparation time should be mentioned separately with short details. All these activities should be outside the normal scope of work of a PGO Registrant. Preparation time should be reasonable as per the industry standards per contribution piece per year.

**Technical Courses:** (Education, Presentation, Contribution to Knowledge) Actual duration of the course attended and the title of the course is mandatory. Topics covered are optional but encouraged. If PGO Registrant has taught the technical course then preparation time should be mentioned separately with short details. All these activities should be outside the normal scope of work of a PGO Registrant. Preparation time should be reasonable as per the industry standards per contribution piece per year.

**Presentations:** (Presentation, Participation) Technical and professional presentations which are outside the normal scope of work should be entered. Preparation time should be reasonable as per the industry standards per contribution piece per year. For example, 20 to 30 minutes presentation should not take more than two hours.

**Mentoring:** (Participation) Spending time outside of your normal scope of work with early career, internationally trained or less senior geoscientists to help them improve their skills can be entered as participation hours. Preparation time should be reasonable as per the industry standards per mentor per year.

## Version Control

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