

Information About Initial and Continued Recognition as Qualifying Sponsor of Continuing Professional Education Programs for Enrolled Actuaries

General Information

An organization that wishes to provide programs that can be used by enrolled actuaries to satisfy the continuing professional education (CPE) requirements for renewal of enrollment must be recognized as a qualifying sponsor by the Joint Board. To be recognized as a qualifying sponsor, an organization must file a sponsor agreement with and receive approval from the Joint Board.

In general, recognition as a qualifying sponsor is effective when approved and terminates at the end of the sponsor enrollment cycle. A sponsor enrollment cycle is a three-year period that begins one year after the enrollment cycle for individual enrolled actuaries.

An organization that is an approved qualifying sponsor for the cycle ending December 31, 2020, must file a request for renewal by that date in order to retain its qualified status for the next cycle, which runs from January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2023. It is each sponsor's responsibility to initiate the renewal request. The Joint Board does not send renewal reminders to sponsors. The Joint Board has notified qualifying sponsors selected for review of the status of its review of their CPE programs offered in the sponsor enrollment cycle 2015 -2017. As part of the renewal process, qualifying sponsors may be asked to respond to issues raised in the Joint Board's review.

Upon initial recognition or renewal of an organization's qualifying sponsor status, the Joint Board will issue a letter to the organization indicating that the organization has been recognized or renewed as a qualifying sponsor and specifying the period of recognition. Only those organizations that have received an initial recognition or renewal letter for the applicable sponsor enrollment cycle are considered qualifying sponsors for that cycle. However, an organization that was an approved qualifying sponsor for the cycle ending December 31, 2020, and submitted its request for renewal to the Joint Board by that date, may continue as a qualifying sponsor beyond that date until it receives notice from the Joint Board of its approval or denial of renewal for the cycle beginning January 1, 2021. Qualifying sponsors who do not request renewal by December 31, 2020, will be removed from the list of qualifying sponsors on that date, but may renew again effective at a later date.

Qualifying sponsors are reminded that they are responsible for providing certificates of completion to all attendees they have verified to have successfully completed a qualifying CPE program. Such certificates of completion must include all the information listed in section 901.11(f)(3)(iv) of the Joint Board regulations. Qualifying sponsors are also responsible for providing certificates of instruction to each instructor, discussion

leader, or speaker of a qualifying CPE program. Such certificates of instruction must include all the information listed in section 901.11(f)(3)(v) of the regulations.

Qualifying sponsors are also responsible for maintaining certain records to show that programs are qualifying programs under the regulations. Such records must include all the information as described in section 901.11(j)(1) of the Joint Board regulations and must be retained by the qualifying sponsor for a period of six years following the end of the sponsor enrollment cycle in which the program is held.

Qualifying sponsors should keep in mind that section 901.11(n) of the Joint Board regulations provides the Executive Director may request and review the records of a qualifying sponsor to determine compliance with the above referenced requirements.

Requesting Recognition as Qualifying Sponsor

An organization that wishes to become a qualifying sponsor should contact the Joint Board's office at NHQJBEA@irs.gov for information about the sponsor agreement process. In addition, organizations should review the qualifying CPE requirements, which are set forth at section 901.11(f) of the Joint Board regulations.

Requesting Renewal of Qualifying Sponsor Status

An organization that wishes to renew its qualifying status should submit its request to the Joint Board's office.

To facilitate review, the renewal request should include (1) the name and address of the sponsor, (2) the name and contact information for the person responsible for the continuing education programs, (3) a description of any changes to be made to its process and programs to respond to issues raised in the Joint Board's review of the CPE programs for 2015 to 2017, and (4) a statement, signed by an individual in a position to speak for the sponsor, that the sponsor would like to renew its qualifying sponsor status for the sponsor enrollment cycle of January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2023, and that it understands and will comply with the requirements set forth at section 901.11(f) of the Joint Board regulations.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, renewal requests must be submitted by e-mail to NHQJBEA@irs.gov.

Understanding that many of the traditional digital tools may not be at the disposal of those only able to telework, the Joint Board approves the following alternatives to a traditional signed document. However, to qualify as a signed document, the signature must adequately verify the identity of the signing individual. Examples of qualified signatures are:

- Traditional "wet" signature scanned and attached to an email;

- Certificate-based digital signature; and
- Electronic signature such as a typed name or digitally handwritten signature sent specifically from an email address on record with the Joint Board.

10/2020