# NC State Board of Environmental Health Specialist Examiners (aka NCREHS Board)

https://ncrehs.com/

## **Credentialing Resources**

(updated to reflect new registration standards effective 10/1/23)



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### What is the NCREHS Board?

- Occupational Licensing Board
  - Governor Appointed
  - Represents a cross-section of Environmental Health stakeholders
    - NCREHS representatives, 2 (each) from Eastern,
       Piedmont & Western Districts, 1 At-Large
    - 1 Health Director
    - 1 Public-Spirited Citizen
    - 2 DHHS representatives
    - 1 Education representative

## **Board Officers**

- Chair—Felissa Vazquez, REHS
- Western District

- Vice Chair Larry Michael, REHS
- NCDHHS

- Secretary Treasurer –Rebecca Rosso, REHS
- Piedmont District



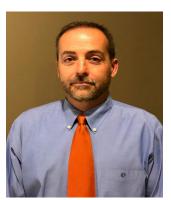




# **Board Members**



Brenda Bass, REHS DHHS



Greg Caulder, REHS Public Spirited Citizen



Bibianna Contti, REHS Eastern District



William Hill Educator



Victoria Hudson, REHS Piedmont District



Lillian Koontz, REHS Health Director



Jason Masters, REHS Western District



Wilson Mize, REHS Piedmont District



Alicia Pickett, REHS Eastern District



Donna Coffey Board Assistant

## What Does the Board Do?

- Oversees activity of NCREHS professionals to ensure compliance with NC General Statute 90A-50 and NC Rule 21 NCAC 62 .0100
  - Confirm Applicant Eligibility
  - Review/Approve continuing education (CE) requests to ensure education is relevant to Environmental Health
  - Administer NCREHS Exams
  - Investigate complaints regarding violations of a statute or rule governing the practice of Environmental Health
  - Audit annual renewals to confirm attendance

## Board Responsibilities Initial Registrations

- Determine applicant's eligibility, appropriate registration category and if applicable, confirm current/previous credentials and experience
- Approve applicants' registrations
  - □ Per NC General Statutes, your registration approval date is the date of Board approval and not your first date of employment.
- Assign 4-digit NCREHS registration number after receipt of registration application from new applicant and create registrants' RSTAS profile



## Pathway to Successful Environmental Health Career in North Carolina

### **Understand Your Registration Category**

#### Registration Types and Credentialing, Effective October 1, 2023

Registration Type	Applicant/Degree Type	Science Hours Required	Eligible for NCREHS Exam	Eligible for Full NCREHS Credentials (1)
ntal Health REHSI)	Environmental Health Bachelor's or Postgraduate Degree from National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC) Accredited Program	Minimum of 30		<ul> <li>Earliest – Upon meeting statutory requirements (1)</li> <li>Latest – 2 years after registration</li> </ul>
stered Environmental Health Specialist Intern (REHSI)	Public Health Bachelor's or Postgraduate Degree	semester hours or its equivalent 45 quarter hours in physical, biological, natural, life or	<ul> <li>Minimum - After board approves registration</li> <li>Maximum - 2 years</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Earliest – 1 year after registration</li> <li>Latest – 2 years after registration</li> </ul>
Registered Specia	Non-Environmental Health or Public Health Bachelor's or Postgraduate Degree	health science		<ul> <li>Earliest – 1 year after registration</li> <li>Latest – 2 years after registration</li> </ul>
ation with S	Applicant with Previous Qualifying REHS Experience in North Carolina	Minimum of 30		
tional Registration es for Those with Previous REHS Experience <sup>(2)</sup>	Applicant with Previous Qualifying REHS Experience Outside of North Carolina	semester hours or its equivalent 45 quarter	Determined on a case-by-case	Earliest – Upon meeting statutory requirements (1)  Letter 2 years ofter
Additional Registration Types for Those with Previous REHS Experience (2)	Military Applicant with Environmental Health Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)	hours in physical, biological, natural, life or health science	basis	<ul> <li>Latest – 2 years after registration</li> </ul>
Ac	Military Spouse Applicant			

<sup>(1)</sup> In addition, all applicants must (1) satisfactorily complete NC Centralized Training (CIT), a course in specialized instruction and training approved by the Board in the practice of environmental health, (2) attain NCREHS authorizations, and (3) pass the NCRHES exam

#### Additional Registration Type, Effective May 1, 2024

Health Associate (REHSA)  Associate, Bachelor's, or Post Graduate Degree	Minimum of 15 semester hours or its equivalent 45 quarter hours in physical, biological, natural, life or health science	<ul> <li>Minimum – After board approves registration</li> <li>Maximum – N/A</li> </ul>	Earliest - After 5 or more continuous years as a REHSA
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<sup>(2)</sup> Applications for previous experience applicant qualifications determined on a case-by-case basis. Contact rehs.board@dhhs.nc.gov for further information

## **Applicant Responsibilities**

- If you have not already done so:
  - □ Submit your NCREHS registration packet to the Board use this form for now 2019-Registration-Application.pdf (ncrehs.com)
    - Updated forms reflecting new statutes currently in production
  - □ Pay the \$50 registration fee (<u>www.ncrehs.com</u>)
  - Have your official transcripts sent directly to Board from college/university
    - □ Electronic via email to <a href="mailto:rehs.board@dhhs.nc.gov">referred</a>
    - Mailed paper transcripts to PO Box 238, Efland, NC 27243 also accepted
- Attend Centralized Intern Training (CIT)
- Attain Authorizations
- □ Subscribe to the EH Listserv by emailing <u>cleven.dunn@dhhs.nc.gov</u>.

  Make sure the subject line of the email reads "Subscribe to EHS Listserv
  - An excellent tool to stay in touch with training opportunities, exam dates, law changes, form updates, etc.
  - Caution This is a "public" email address as are your work emails. As such, all posts and replies are part of the public domain. It is not a forum for confidential matters to be shared or for public debate.

(continued on next slide)

## **Applicant Responsibilities**

(continued from previous slide)

- Pass full complement of NCREHS Exam (timelines discussed later in presentation)
- Complete NC Environmental Health Law course hosted by NC Environmental Health State of Practice (NCEHSOP) within 4 years of registration date
  - NCEHSOP is an excellent source for training offered by EH professionals
  - Law course offered one-time per year typically spring/summer timeframe
  - https://ncehsop.org/cms-sop
- Attend at least 15 Hours of Board approved Continuing Education each year
  - Verify Attendance
    - ▶ If in person, sign attendance roster
    - Include certificates with annual renewal form
- Submit annual registration renewal (via RSTAS) between October 1 and December 31 of each year
  - Summary of continuing education you completed during the year
  - Submit renewal application and pay \$50 annual renewal fee
- □ Adhere to Code of Ethics throughout your NCREHS career

#### **NCREHS Code of Ethics**

As a Registered Environmental Health Specialist or Registered Environmental Health Specialist Intern, I pledge:

- To practice my profession following recognized scientific principles with the full realization that the lives, health, and well-being of people may depend upon my professional judgment and I pledge to protect the health and well-being of the citizens of my community.
- To be qualified for my position in the field of public/environmental health, and to maintain an acceptable level of competence by continued study, observation, and personal investigation.
- To perform services only in the areas of my competence, and to properly represent my professional education, credentials, and experience.
- To act responsibly to uphold the integrity of my profession, to avoid conduct or practice that may appear to or in fact discredits my profession.
- To conduct myself in such a manner that the public is not deceived or misled.
- To be ethically loyal, professional and impartial to all parties: governmental, industrial, institutional or public.
- To uphold and enforce the applicable laws, rules, and principles of public health to ensure equitable protection to the public.
- To promote the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination based on race, religion, cultural background, economic or social condition.

# **EXAM?** I thought I was done with taking tests!



# No Need to Panic About the NCREHS Credentialing Exam

- Credentialing exam's primary objective is to ensure that you have attained practical and relevant skills required to practice Environmental Health in North Carolina.
- You are eligible to take the exam any time after Board approves your registration
- Apply for exam through the Board website ncrehs.com

### **NCREHS Exam Components and Scoring**

- National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) exam
  - ► Taken at PEARSON VUE testing center at date, time and location convenient to you
- Handwritten essay response to practical environmental health related situation
- Individual interview with group of 3-to-4 Board members

- Scoring Equation
  - ► ((NEHA score \*2) + essay score + interview score)) ÷ 4
  - Must attain at least 60 on each portion AND a weighted average of 70
    - ▶ Law of mathematics if you make a 60 on each portion, you will not attain an overall average of 70

# Tell me more about the essay/interview portion of the exam.

- In-person interview with Board members
  - Comparable to mini job interview
  - Dress to impress
- Handwritten essay
  - Choice of Topic On-Site or Food and Lodging
  - Details of the essay are confidential in nature and disclosure of such is a serious professional breach of confidentiality
  - Each essay is graded by 3-to-4 individual board members in accordance with a grading rubric, and your final essay score is calculated as an average of the individual scores
  - ▶ Graded by board members on content, grammar, spelling, etc.
- Both portions occur simultaneously
- 2 hours to complete both portions
- Offered at least 3 times per year at various locations across NC
  - Cost \$50 per interview/essay



### NCREHS Exam Overview

Chart can be viewed via this link <a href="https://ncrehs.com/exam/">https://ncrehs.com/exam/</a>

#### **NCREHS Exam Overview**

The NCREHS exam consists of three components – National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) standardized exam, face-to-face Board interview and handwritten essay. The NEHA portion of the exam is a timed electronic exam administered at a Pearson VUE testing center. The essay and interview portions are administered by the NC State Board of Environmental Health Specialist Examiners (Board) on specific dates throughout the year (see Board Calendar on www.ncrehs.com). The chart below offers additional information regarding the exam components.

Who is Elig	ible	to
Take the No	CRE	HS
Exam?		

NCREHS Interns are eligible to take the NCREHS exam at any time after the Board has approved their initial registration application. They have a maximum of three years from the date of registration approval to pass the exam. (NOTE: Registration date is date Board approves registration application at a Board meeting; it is not the first date of employment.)

	NETA EXAIII
IDESCRIPTION	Standardized online (via Pearson VUE computer only) timed exam consisting of 225 multiple-choice questions

#### NCREHS Portion of Exam

Handwritten essay and face-to-face interview with Board

#### **Exam Logistics**

Administered by	Pearson VUE and NEHA
Exam Length	4.25 hours (including a break)
Type of Exam	On Computer
Location	Pearson VUE Testing Center
Exam Date	Date and location selected by Intern via Pearson VUE's scheduling calendar
How to Apply	Directly to NCREHS Board via application form

NCREHS Board
2.5 hours
Handwritten (essay) and face-to-face (interview)
Board specified location
Board specified dates (calendar published annually in
January)
Directly to NCREHS Board via application form

#### **Payment Information**

Who to Pay	NCREHS Board
Cost	\$280 per exam date (set by NEHA)

NCREHS Board	
\$50 per exam date	

## NCREHS Exam Overview (cont'd)

Chart can be viewed via this link <a href="https://ncrehs.com/exam/">https://ncrehs.com/exam/</a>

	NCREHS Board approves Intern exam application and forwards Intern information to NEHA		NCREHS Board notifies Intern of application approval
	Within a few weeks, Intern will receive an exam authorization number and instructions via an email directly from Pearson VUE.		Intern reports to NCREHS testing location on designated date/time and completes the handwritten essay and face-to-face interview with Board members
	Intern works directly with Pearson VUE to schedule the exam at a local Pearson VUE testing Center (NOTE: Intern has ONE YEAR from date of approval to take NEHA exam)		NCREHS Board informs Intern of essay and interview scores approximately 4 weeks after exam date.
What Happens After Applying?	Intern reports to Pearson VUE Testing Center on designated date/time and takes exam		
	Intern informed of NEHA <i>unofficial</i> exam score at completion of exam (NOTE: NCREHS Passing score for NEHA Exam is 568)		IMPORTANT!
	NOTE: NCREHS passing score for the NEHA exam is 568 while NEHA's passing score is 650. There may be instances when an Intern does not meet the NEHA passing score yet does meet the NCREHS passing score.		IMPORTANT!
	NEHA reports <b>official</b> NEHA exam score to NCREHS Board, and NCREHS Board informs Intern of <b>official</b> score.		•
When to Expect	4 Weeks		At least 8 weeks
Scores	Compiled Exam Score - no sooner than 8	we	eks of completing all 3 exam components

## NCREHS Exam Overview (cont'd)

Chart can be viewed via this link <a href="https://ncrehs.com/exam/">https://ncrehs.com/exam/</a>

Retesting	Intern can reapply to the NCREHS Board for a retake at any time after completing the previous exam.  No limit on number of times Intern may retest  NOTE: NCREHS passing score for the NEHA exam is 568 while NEHA's passing score is 650. There may be instances when an Intern does not meet the NEHA passing score yet does meet the NCREHS passing score.	No limit on number of times Intern may retest
No Show or Cancel with Less than 24- Hour Notice	NEHA retains an administrative fee for canceling at any time after application is processed. If canceling with less than 24-hour notice or not showing, NEHS retains full exam cost  Questions? Email or call the board office at rehs.bo	Forfeit \$50 exam cost ard@dhhs.nc.gov or (919) 304-1168.

### **NEHA Study Guides**

- Some counties have invested in NEHA study guides for interns to use
- ► For counties that do not have NEHA study guides on hand, the Board has a limited number of study guides in a lending library. If interested in reserving a guide, contact board office at <a href="mailto:rehs.board@dhhs.nc.gov">rehs.board@dhhs.nc.gov</a>

# What happens if I don't pass the NCREHS exam by the end of my 2<sup>nd</sup> year?

- North Carolina General Statues and laws do not allow the board to simply extend an intern's registration, if they do not pass the exam by the end of their second year of registration.
- If you do not pass the exam within the mandated maximum two-year period, your registration and authorizations will expire, and you will no longer be eligible to practice environmental health in North Carolina unless you reapply for registration.
- At your employer's discretion, you can reapply to the Board as an Intern with Previous NC Experience. You will be assigned a new REHS number. Current authorizations and previous exam scores will transfer to your new registration number
- As soon as you pass the NCREHS exam, the Board will allow you to "fast track" to full NCREHS status.



## What is RSTAS and Why Is It Important?

- RSTAS is an acronym for the Registered Sanitarian Training
   Authorization System
  - A data warehouse that allows you to view /manage your NCREHS related information (for example your continuing education, address, employer, training, and authorizations)
  - Access your RSTAS profile by going to the Board's homepage (<u>www.ncrehs.com</u>) and selecting the <u>blue</u> "My REHS" button located on the right-hand side of the page
  - Your password to system is last 4 digits of your Social Security
     Number
  - YOU are responsible to update your continuing education, personal and professional contact information in RSTAS.
  - Without your current information, the Board is unable to send you important correspondence on testing and maintaining your credential.

#### **Logging Into RSTAS**

#### Step 1 - www.ncrehs.com

#### NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST EXAMINERS

WELCOME APPLICATIONS & FORMS COMPLAINT PROCESS MEET THE BOARD CODE OF ETHICS CONTINUING EDUCATION DIRECTORY EXAM FEES INTERN APPLICATION LAWS & RULES RECIPROCITY MEETINGS REGISTRATION RENEWAL FAOS CONTACT THE BOARD



#### Welcome

#### Click Here To Pay Fees!

September 20: Governor Cooper has declared September 20-26, 2021, as Registered Environmental Health Specialist Week in North Carolina. The Board extends a heartfelt "thank you" to each of you for the pandemic-related work you're doing for your community while also maintaining our core environmental health services. As we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, you are on the front lines of preventive public health services delivery and our ongoing work demonstrates the vital role of environmental health during this response. Thank you for all that you do!

#### WHAT'S NEW?

2022 June Updates

2022 March Updates

2021 December Updates

2021 November Updates

2021 October Updates



COMMUNITY

#### **Logging Into RSTAS**

#### Step 2 - Log In to RSTAS

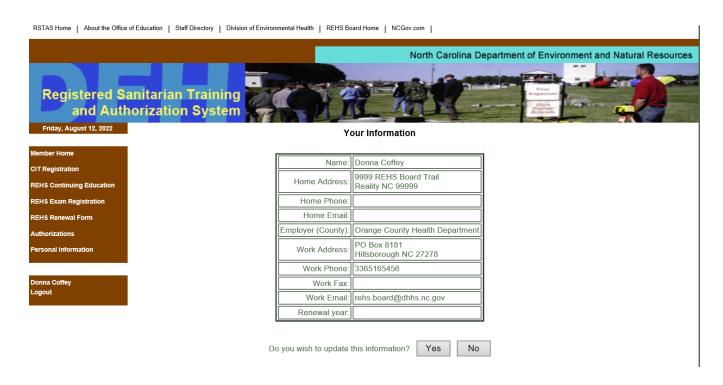
1. If you don't know your REHS #, search for your last name (only) here to locate it, and then follow directions in #2 below (do not complete fill in all fields, only last name)

2. If you know your REHS #, log in here using your REHS # and password (last 4 digits of SS#



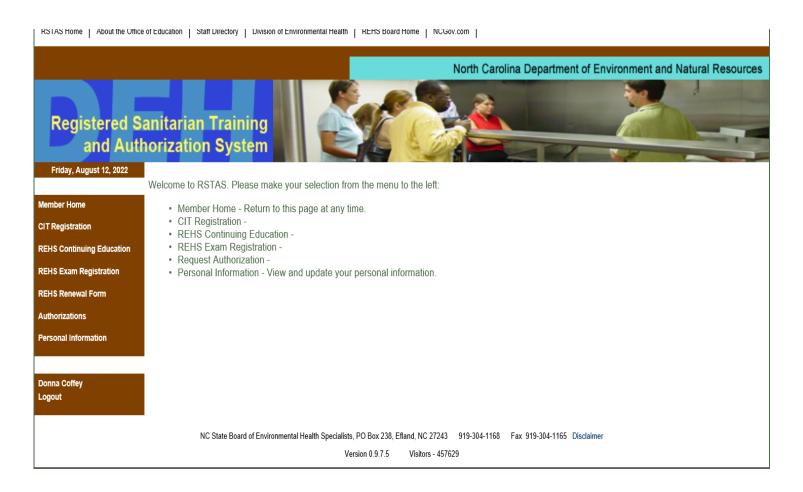
# RSTAS "Your Information"

RSTAS Opening Screen - Once logged in, you have the option to click "yes" to update your personal data or "no" to advance to the next screen



### **RSTAS**

On this screen, select one of the links in the brown box to the left of the screen view the items listed. NOTE: The REHS Exam Registration link is not functional. Registering for exams will be discussed later in this presentation.



### **RSTAS**

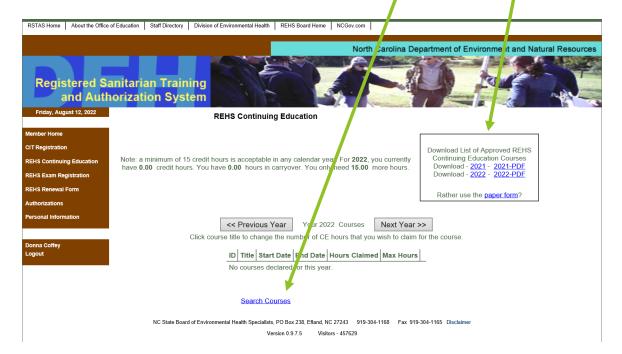
## To Enter Completed Continuing Education

On the previous screen click the "REHS Continuing Education" link on the left hand side of the screen, and a screen similar to the one below will pop up

Two options to search for approved CEs:

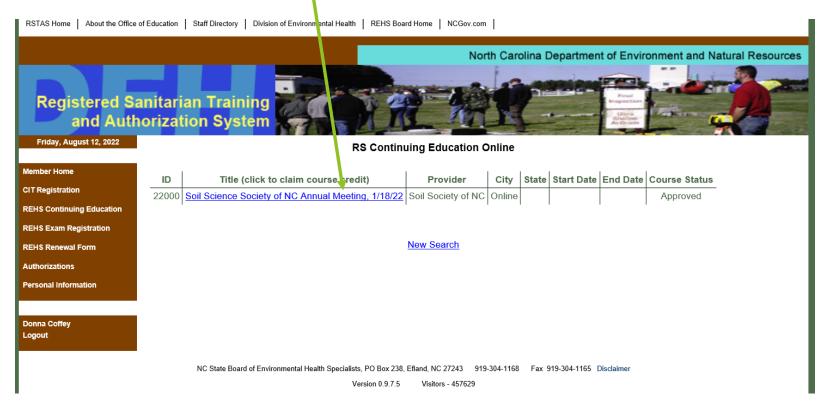
- For a full list of approved CEs, click the year hyperlink in the rectangular box in the upper right hand side of the screen

For locating a particular CE, click the "Search Courses" hyperlink located in the lower middle of the screen



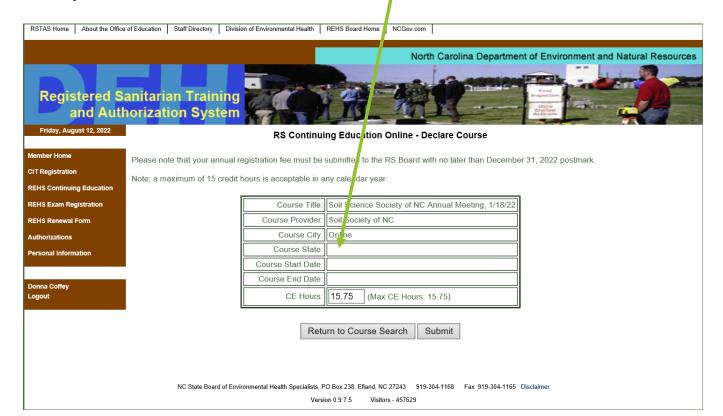
# RSTAS Viewing Continuing Education

In this example, I searched for CE #22000 and this screen popped up. In order to "claim" hours, click the course title hyperlink to take the next step.



# RSTAS Claiming CE Hours

This is the screen that will populate and appear on your profile page (after you select "Submit" under Continuing Education. NOTE that if you did not attend the entire session, change the CE hours to reflect the actual time you attended. Make sure to click "submit" to complete your entry.



## RSTAS Annual Registration Renewal

- Between mid-to-late October through December of each year, you renew your registration
- Renewal requirements include:
  - Complete 15 hours of Board approved continuing education (CE) each year
  - Update your RSTAS CE records (see previous slides)
  - Choose "REHS Renewal Form" on the left hand side of the RSTAS screen
  - ☐ If you have at least 15 CE hours, your populated renewal form, in pdf format, will appear on a pop up screen
    - You are allowed to carry over 5 hours from the immediate previous year, IF you attained more than 15 the immediate previous year
  - Save the pdf renewal form to your computer and submit it along with your attendance certificates, if you have them, and the required \$50 renewal fee BEFORE 12/31.
    - Electronic submissions are encouraged
  - If you do not renew each year, your registration will lapse, and you will not be allowed to continue practicing EH in NC

## **RSTAS** Annual Registration Renewal Form

#### North Carolina State Board of Environmental Health Specialist Examiners

RENEWAL APPLICATION TO PRACTICE AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST OR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST INTERN IN 2022

Note: If you complete this form on-line using the Registered Sanitarian Training and Authorization System, RSTAS (https://rstas.dhhs.state.nc.us:8443/), The system will automatically complete Sections 1 and 2 of this form for you after you enter your

ull Name: Do	nna	Coffey		_	REI	HS/REH	SI Numb	er:	0000
itle of Present Po	sition	Admin to the Board	Work I	Email Add	lress:	rehs	board@c	ihhs.n	c.gov
mployer:		Orange County Health Department	Tel #:	336516	5456		FAX#		
mployer Address	:	PO Box 8181		City:	Hills	boroug	ı	Zip:	27278
Iome Address:	999	9 REHS Board Trail		City:	Real	ity		Zip:	99999
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charges on all returned checks. The Board now offers opportunities for you to make online payments. To findout more, visit the Borad's website norehs.com. If you choose to pay with a check or money order, mail your payment to: NC State Board of Environmental Health Specialist Examiners, PO Box 238, Efland, NC 27243

## Further Down the Road

- Once you achieve your full NCREHS status, never allow your registration to lapse, even if you leave the profession
- RSTAS maintenance is your responsibility, not your employer's
- Always have a contingency plan for obtaining your CEUs don't wait for that December course
- Pay fees online and submit electronic documents when possible

