



**Dora**  
Department of Regulatory Agencies

# Continuing Competency Manual Colorado Electricians

Division of Registrations  
Colorado State Electrical Board



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Welcome to the Continuing Competency (CC) program for electricians licensed in Colorado. The purpose of this manual is to provide every Colorado electrician with general background information concerning the Continuing Competency initiative and how it will affect renewal of licensure.

This manual serves as your full instructional guide to the CC program. Additional information may be found at the CC website at [www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc](http://www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc). Questions and inquiries may be sent to [continued.competency@dora.state.co.us](mailto:continued.competency@dora.state.co.us).

# Continuing Competency Overview

## What is Continuing Competency?

Continuing Competency (CC) is an individualized program created to help licensees assess their professional work, identify areas of growth, and stay current with the profession.

The Colorado approach to Continuing Competency for electricians has 3 components:

1. An Individual Assessment of knowledge and skills;
2. A Learning Plan containing Continuing Competency Activities designed to obtain required knowledge and skill; and
3. Documentation of those Activities to demonstrate compliance.

The CC program requires licensees demonstrate 24 Professional Development Units (PDUs) in order to renew a license. An electrician may be awarded up to 24 PDUs for their performance on that Assessment. If they are awarded fewer than 24 PDUs, they will need to execute a Learning Plan to accrue PDUs.

## Who is required to participate?

All Colorado licensed Residential Wiremen, Journeymen and Master Electricians are required to participate in the CC program in order to renew, reinstate or reactivate their license. For the full statute text, please refer to §12-23-106, C.R.S.

## Why is Continuing Competency important to the State Electrical Board?

The Colorado State Electrical Board is responsible for protection of the public through the regulation of safe and effective electrical practices. In order to become licensed, all regulated electricians must demonstrate minimum competence by successfully meeting the requirements set by the Board. Because best professional practices and National Electrical Code (NEC) change rapidly, entry-level minimum competence can quickly become obsolete. As a result, safe practice is dependent upon the Continuing Competency of regulated professionals. The Colorado State Electrical Board is committed to promoting the professional development of licensed electricians in Colorado.

## How does the program work?

The CC program has three steps. Licensees will begin by participating in the Individual Assessment. A licensee may be awarded up to 24 Professional Development Units (PDUs) for their performance on the Assessment. If a licensee is awarded fewer than 24 PDUs, they will need to draft a Learning Plan and acquire PDUs by undertaking Continuing Competency Activities. PDUs may only be accrued after the licensee has taken the Individual Assessment. Licensees participating in Continuing Competency Activities should document their PDUs. The detailed requirements of each of step are elaborated below.

# Completing the CC Program

## Step 1: Individual Assessment

Licenses are required to complete the Individual Assessment once each renewal cycle prior to renewing their license. The Assessment is based upon the most recent National Electrical Code (NEC) and is divided into four core competency areas identified by the Board:

- **Grounding and bonding**
- **Code changes**
- **Wiring methods**
- **Theory and calculations**

The Individual Assessment consist of 25 multiple choice questions, randomly pulled from a larger pool of questions. Licensees are given an hour to complete the open book assessment.

The Assessment is made available on July 1 of renewal years (which occurs every three years). Licensees may complete the Assessment at any Pearson Vue location across the nation ([www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com)). Pearson Vue also provides guidelines for registering, attending and completing the Assessment. This includes information on the materials licensees may use to complete the Assessment, such as the most recent NEC codebook.

The Individual Assessment is updated every three years using the most recent NEC adopted by the Board. Licensees must participate in the Individual Assessment each renewal year corresponding to the most recently adopted NEC. For example, licensees must participate in the 2011 Individual Assessment prior to renewing their license which expires on September 30, 2011. They must subsequently participate in the 2014 Individual Assessment (based on the 2014 NEC) to renew their license expiring September 30, 2014.

### **Individual Assessment Awards:**

Individual Assessment scores are uploaded from Pearson Vue onto the licensee's personal user account on the online CC Portal. The Portal may be accessed at [www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc](http://www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc). A Learning Plan is generated for each licensee based on their performance on the Individual Assessment.

A licensee may be awarded up to 24 Professional Development Units for their performance on the Assessment. They may do this by achieving the Acceptable Level of Performance (ALP) which is a score established by the Board. If a licensee receives the full 24 PDUs on the Individual Assessment, their license will be renewed and no additional PDUs are necessary.

If a licensee is awarded fewer than 24 PDUs for their performance on the Assessment, they will be required to execute a Learning Plan and accumulate PDUs to bring their total to 24 PDUs. Electricians that were awarded fewer than 24 PDUs on the Individual Assessment proceed to Step 2.

Regardless of a licensee's performance on the Individual Assessment, they may still renew their license. Performance on the Individual Assessment simply determines the number of PDUs that a licensee must accrue prior to the next renewal of their license.

## Step 2: Personal Learning Plan

Once Individual Assessment scores are uploaded from Pearson Vue to the licensee's online user account, a Learning Plan is generated based on their Individual Assessment performance. There are four possible Learning Plan scenarios which are described below:

**No PDUs Required:** If the licensee attains the Acceptable Level of Performance (ALP) in all four core competency categories on the Assessment, their score will be uploaded to their user account. Their Learning Plan will reflect that all 24 PDUs were attained through their performance on the Assessment. No additional PDUs are required.

**8 PDUs Required:** If the licensee attains the ALP in three core competency categories, but requires improvement in one category, then 8 PDUs will be required. Their Learning Plan will reflect the area in which the licensee must accrue 8 PDUs.

**16 PDUs Required:** If the licensee attains the ALP in two core competency categories, but requires improvement in two categories, then 16 PDUs will be required. Their Learning Plan will reflect the areas in which the licensee must accrue 16 PDUs.

**24 PDUs Required:** If the licensee attains the ALP in one core competency category, but requires improvement in three categories, then 24 PDUs will be required. Their Learning Plan will reflect the areas in which the licensee must accrue 24 PDUs. Likewise, if the licensee is unable to attain the ALP in all categories and requires improvement in all four categories, then 24 PDUs will be required. In this circumstance, the licensee may select three of the four categories in which they would like to accrue their 24 PDUs.

Additional PDUs must be acquired in the areas identified for improvement through the Individual Assessment. For example, if a licensee is awarded 16 PDUs on the Assessment but did not achieve the Acceptable Level of Performance in the "Wiring Methods" category, they will be required to accrue 8 PDUs in "Wiring Methods." The PDUs must be accrued prior to the next expiration of that license. For example, PDUs assigned as a result of the 2011 Individual Assessment must be completed prior to renewing a license in 2014. PDUs may only be accrued after the licensee has taken the Individual Assessment. PDUs accrued prior to the Individual Assessment will be disallowed.

Licensees must develop a Learning Plan using the online CC Portal at [www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc](http://www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc). Licensees requiring accommodation and who must renew manually may complete a manual Learning Plan using the worksheet provided on page 14. Licensees who do not complete the program online must retain their Learning Plan for 7 years after the expiration of the renewal cycle for which it was built. Please see page 7 for additional information on audit procedures.

Licensees develop a Learning Plan by logging the courses or training programs they will take in the respective core competency categories. A sample Learning Plan is provided on page 13. The Learning Plan should be updated if anything changes or as activities are completed. At the end of the renewal cycle, the Learning Plan should reflect the activities the electrician undertook to accrue their PDUs and for which they are able to produce documentation. Licensees are able to access their Personal Learning Plan online throughout the renewal cycle. Once a Learning plan is completed on the CC Portal and prior to renewing a license, the licensee must submit a completed Learning Plan by clicking the “Submit” button on their online Learning Plan. Licensee will be ineligible to renew online until they have submitted an online Learning Plan. Once a Learning Plan is submitted it will be locked to further changes and becomes subject to an audit for compliance. For that reason, all updates to the Learning Plan must be completed prior to renewing a license.

The exceptions to this requirement include licensees: 1) who were not required to implement a Learning Plan given their high-ranking performance on the Individual Assessment or 2) who complete the program manually and renew manually. For manual renewals, the licensee must attest that they have completed the Learning Plan and will provide evidence of its completion upon the request of the Board.

**Professional Development Units (PDUs):**

One Professional Development Unit or PDU is equivalent to 50 minutes of instruction, presentation, or activity intended to increase knowledge and competence in the core competencies of grounding and bonding, code changes, wiring methods, theory and calculations as identified by the Board.

**Continuing Competency Activities:**

The Board deems the following types of learning activities to be acceptable; on-line training programs or courses are acceptable:

- Non-credit academic courses
- For credit academic courses, and
- Industry training programs

To qualify for the program’s PDU credit, Continuing Competency Activities must be structured educational efforts meeting all six criteria identified by the Board. Those six criteria are as follows. Continuing Competency Activities must:

1. Include technical and practical applications which impact core competency areas identified by the Board;
2. Improve, expand or enhance the quality of the electrician’s existing technical knowledge; or develop new and relevant professional skills and knowledge;
3. Have clear purposes and objectives;
4. Be well-organized and provide evidence of pre-planning;
5. Be current and presented by qualified and technically competent instructors; and

6. Provide certificates of completion or other documentation for the electrician and maintain records of electrician attendance.

As licensees accrue PDUs, they should update their Learning Plan on their user account accessed at [www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc](http://www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc).

**Please Note:**

- PDUs must be accrued in the area(s) assigned to the licensee based upon their performance on the Individual Assessment.
- **The Board and DORA do not accredit or approve continuing education courses.**
- Documentation (e.g. certificates) of the 24 PDUs should not be sent to DORA or the Board unless specifically requested.
- The 24 PDU requirement for license renewal applies to all Residential Wireman, Journeyman and Master Electricians regardless of current employment status. The 24 PDUs may be accrued through the Individual Assessment, Continuing Competency Activities or a combination of both.

### **Step 3: Documentation**

It is necessary for electricians to track and document their PDU accruals in a process approved by the Board. Licensees must retain their documentation for a minimum of 7 years.

Documentation of PDUs must include:

1. Electrician name;
2. Activity type;
3. Activity location and date(s);
4. Activity title and description of content and objectives;
5. Name and contact information of the sponsor or Continuing Competency provider (e.g. organization, institution, association, employer, vendor, publication);
6. Instructor or speaker name, as applicable;
7. Monitor/Facilitator/Mentor name and contact information, as applicable;
8. Certificate of Completion;
9. Number of PDUs; and
10. A declaration that the PDUs are considered applicable to consumer protection and one (1) of the core competencies identified by the Board.

### **Step 4: Individual Assessment (repeat)**

All licensees are required to complete the *next* Individual Assessment based on the *new* NEC. This must be completed prior to licensure renewal. The new Individual Assessment will be released on July 1 of renewal years.

All licensees, regardless of whether they were required to accrue additional PDUs in the previous cycle, must complete the updated Individual Assessment every renewal year.

## **Additional Information**

### **Audit of Continuing Competency Compliance**

A random audit of licensees will occur after the closing of each renewal cycle. The audit will evaluate the licensee's compliance with the CC program by requiring the licensee submit documentation of any PDU accruals they were required to complete. To pass an audit, the licensee's documentation must meet the documentation standards specified above. Documentation must also match the Learning Plan which the licensee executed during the corresponding renewal cycle. If the licensee completed the CC program manually and is selected for an audit, the licensee will be required to submit documentation of their PDU accruals as well as a copy of their completed Learning Plan. Please note: per Board Rule, documentation of CC compliance including PDU accruals must be retained for 7 years from the expiration date of the renewal cycle in question.

Failure to respond to an audit notification is cause for discipline by the Board. Likewise, licensees found to be in non-compliance as a result of an audit are also subject to discipline by the Board.

### **Exemptions**

The Board may grant CC exemptions for individuals serving in active military duty or for individuals working outside the United States who are required to hold an active license in order to perform that work. Licensees seeking an exemption must submit a request in writing to the Board along with additional documented evidence that the licensee is either serving in active military duty or employed outside of the United States during the renewal cycle for which they are seeking an exemption. Written requests and supporting documentation may be sent to:

Division of Registrations  
Attn: Continuing Competency  
1560 Broadway, Suite 1350  
Denver, CO 80202

Once the Board considers an exemption request, it will issue written notification of the request approval or denial. If approved, an exempted licensee may attest to their exemption through the CC Portal. Exemptions are still subject to an audit. If selected for an audit, the licensee will be required to submit the Board's letter documenting their approved exemption.

### **Pearson Vue**

Reservations for the Individual Assessment can be made at any Pearson Vue site in the United States. Reservations will not be accepted until June 22, 2011. Reservation information will be made available on the Pearson Vue website beginning June 22, 2011. Licensees may make a reservation by phone or online. Fees for the Individual Assessment are calculated on a sliding scale dependent on the date of the assessment reservation.

Assess between July 1 and August 15	\$30
Assess between August 16 and October 15	\$45
Assess between October 16 and November 30	\$60
Reinstatements/Reactivations (year round)	\$35

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Why is Continuing Competency being required?**

In 2009 the Colorado State Legislature passed HB09-1136 entitled “Concerning Continuing Professional Competency to Perform Electrical Work.” This bill was introduced by industry professionals and supported by DORA.

Continuing Competency is different from Continuing Education in that it bases training requirements upon an assessment of skill and knowledge. This makes Continuing Competency a highly individualized program and rewards licensees who already remain current in their field.

## **Which electrical professionals will this affect?**

All licensed Residential Wiremen, Journeymen and Master Electricians are required to complete the Continuing Competency program to renew, reinstate or reactive a license.

## **When does the Continuing Competency program go into effect?**

The Colorado Legislature mandated that licensees demonstrate their continuing competency in order to renew, reinstate or reactive a license after January 1, 2011. This means the CC program requirements affect licensure renewal beginning in 2011.

## **When and how often do I need to participate in the Continuing Competency program?**

You will need to complete the Individual Assessment for each renewal cycle. You have the full timeframe of the renewal cycle (3 years) to complete your Personal Learning Plan, Professional Development Units, and any required documentation.

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**DO NOT SEND DOCUMENTATION OF YOUR PDUs TO THE BOARD.**

**If you are selected for an audit, you will be notified and instructed how to submit your documentation to the Board.**

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## **Do I need to send Continuing Competency materials to the Board?**

No. However, you do need to retain documentation of your PDUs for 7 years. If you are selected for an audit, the Board will require you submit the appropriate documentation.

### **Can I take Continuing Education courses?**

Yes, Continuing Education coursework can be counted toward your Professional Development Units. In fact, you can use several types of coursework to accrue PDUs. These include non-credit academic coursework, for-credit academic coursework and industry training programs. Refer to the criteria identified in the section titled “Professional Development Units.”

### **How soon do I need to start my Personal Learning Plan?**

You will be able to view your PDU requirements as early as one business day after completing the Individual Assessment. The Board recommends that you draft your Personal Learning Plan if it is required, immediately after taking the Individual Assessment. The Individual Assessment will identify the areas of focus. By starting early, you will also ensure there is ample time to change your plan if something comes up.

### **What if I miss every single question on the Individual Assessment? Will I lose my license?**

No, the Individual Assessment is *not* a re-licensure exam. The Individual Assessment simply determines the number of PDUs you will need to accrue over the next renewal cycle. The maximum accrual is 24 PDUs. All licensees will be able to renew their license(s) regardless of their performance on the Individual Assessment. This means that you can miss every single question on the Individual Assessment **and** still renew your license. The only requirement is that you participate in the Individual Assessment! Likewise, if you are required to accrue additional PDUs, you will need to complete them prior to renewing your license at the next expiration.

For example: Larry takes the 2011 Individual Assessment on July 1, 2011 and fails to answer a single question correctly. Larry renews his license in 2011 and then drafts his Learning Plan on his online user account. Larry accrues his required 24 PDUs and updates his Learning Plan as he completes them. He does this prior to his next renewal. Larry then takes the 2014 Individual Assessment. No matter how Larry performs on the 2014 Individual Assessment, he is still able to renew his license in 2014.

### **Who can I take my PDUs from?**

The Board does not approve PDU providers. Licensees are welcome to source their learning from the provider of their choice. Any coursework, training or other learning activity should comply with Board rule however. Please see page 5 for details and refer to Board Rule 9.7 for specific requirements.

Don't forget: you need to document your PDUs. Board rules require your documentation meet certain standards (see Board Rule 9.7 and page 6). If the provider of your PDUs is unable to supply you with documentation that meets the Board's guidelines, it is recommended you select a different PDU provider. This includes:

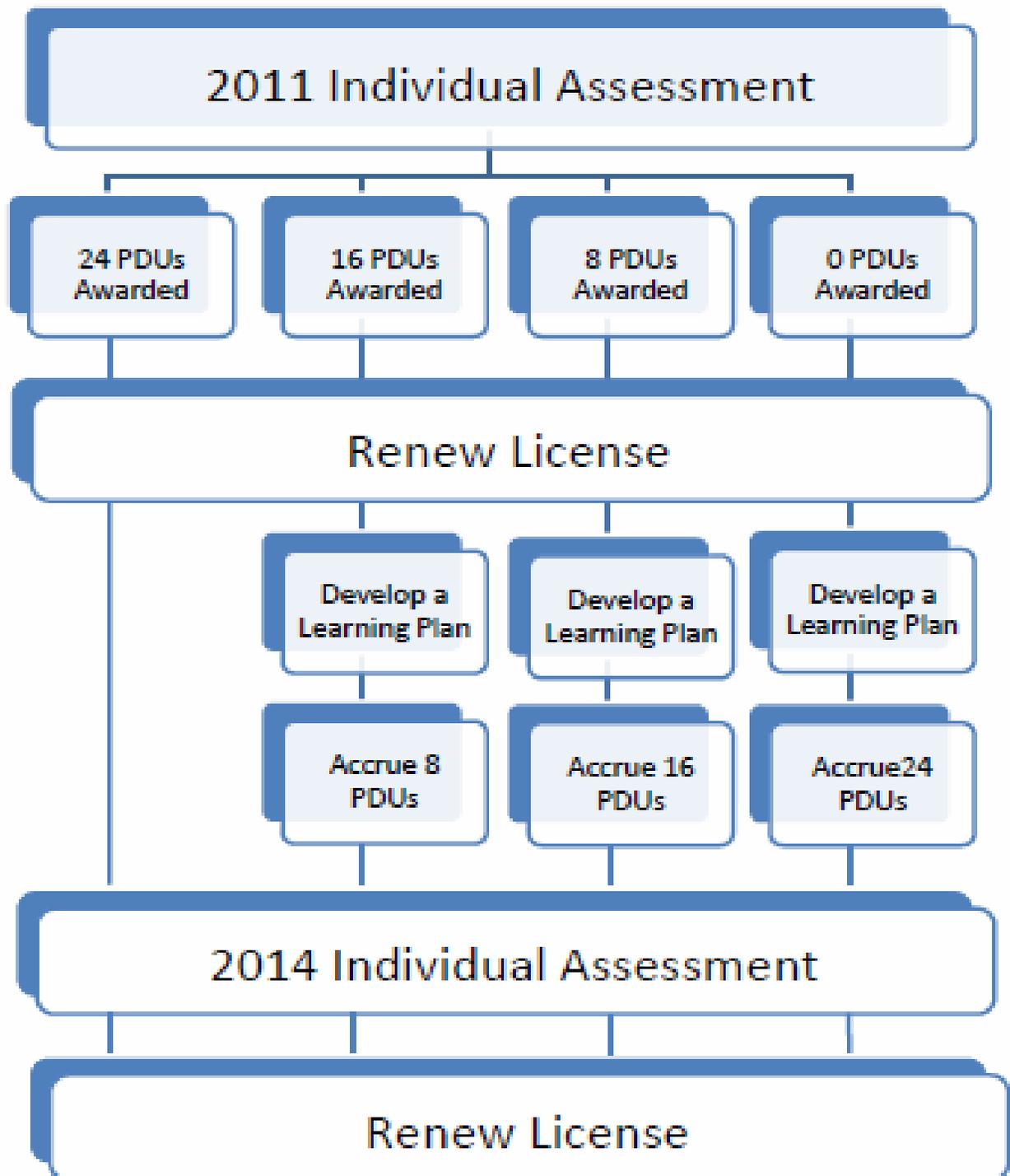
1. Electrician name;

*(continued next page)*

2. Activity type;
3. Activity location and date(s);
4. Activity title and description of content and objectives;
5. Name and contact information of the sponsor or Continuing Competency provider (*e.g.* organization, institution, association, employer, vendor, publication);
6. Instructor or speaker name, as applicable;
7. Monitor/Facilitator/Mentor name and contact information, as applicable;
8. Certificate of Completion;
9. Number of PDUs; and
10. A declaration that the PDUs are considered applicable to consumer protection and one (1) of the core competencies identified by the Board.

# Continuing Competency Process

The following chart illustrates the Continuing Competency program using the example of the 2011 renewal cycle. Each renewal period will require licensees to repeat the cycle.



# Checklists

## RENEWAL CHECKLIST 2011

- Complete the 2011 Individual Assessment
- Renew my License!

## RENEWAL CHECKLIST 2014

- Develop Personal Learning Plan on the CC Portal  
(based on the 2011 Individual Assessment)
- Implement Plan
  - Continuing Competency Activity
  - PDU Value
  - Date Accomplished
- Document my Activities
- Complete the 2014 Individual Assessment
- Renew my License!

Access the CC Portal at [www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc](http://www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc).

# Learning Plan Sample

Larry attained the “Acceptable Level of Performance” (ALP) in one category. Larry must accrue 24 PDUs. If Larry had attained the ALP in more than one category, his PDU requirements would be lessened. Larry takes three Continuing Education courses in the three core competency categories assigned to him. He fills in the course information in the corresponding boxes on his online Learning Plan which he accessed through his personal user account on the CC Portal at [www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc](http://www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc). Larry has fulfilled his PDU requirements for this renewal cycle.

Your Individual Assessment Score surpasses the ALP on one core competency category. You need to accrue 24 PDUs addressing the low rated Core Competency Categories.

Core Competency Category	Provider	Course Name	Date of Planned Accomplishment	Date of Actual Accomplishment	PDU	Documentation*
<b>Individual Assessment</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a
<b>Grounding and Bonding</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Code Changes</b>	Arapahoe Community College	Code Changes 101	1/15/12	1/15/12	8	√
<b>Wiring Methods</b>	Red Rocks Community College	Wiring Methods 234	5/1/12	8/15/12	8	√
<b>Theory and Calculations</b>	Red Rocks Community College	Math for Electricians	2/15/13	2/15/13	8	√
<b>Total</b>					<b>24</b>	

# Learning Plan Worksheet

The blank Learning Plan below is for your planning purposes. Learning Plans should be completed online using the CC Portal. The Portal may be accessed at [www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc](http://www.dora.state.co.us/electrical/cc). Individuals who renew manually may use the blank Learning Plan below to plan and log their Continuing Competency Activities.

Learning Plan requirements are determined by the licensee’s performance on the Individual Assessment. Please see page 4 of this Manual and your Individual Assessment score to determine your Learning Plan requirements.

<b>Core Competency Category</b>	<b>Provider</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Date of Planned Accomplishment</b>	<b>Date of Actual Accomplishment</b>	<b>PDU</b>	<b>Documentation*</b>
<b>Individual Assessment</b>						
<b>Grounding and Bonding</b>						
<b>Code Changes</b>						
<b>Wiring Methods</b>						
<b>Theory and Calculations</b>						
<b>Total</b>						