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# PRACTICE GUIDANCE

## Competency Support

Approved by Council: June 24, 2016

*The intent of this document is to provide practice guidance to members regarding their obligations under the Competency Support Program as listed in Association By-laws in accordance with the Professional Foresters Act, 2000.*

# PRACTICE GUIDANCE

## COMPETENCY SUPPORT

### SUMMARY OF GUIDANCE

The purpose of the Competency Support Program is to ensure that Members of the Association remain informed and current with respect to the knowledge and skills necessary to practise professional forestry in Ontario in a safe, competent, and ethical manner and for Members to constantly enhance their quality of practice.

The Competency Support Program is approved in the OPFA By-laws (Article 14).

**Adherence to the Competency Support Program is mandatory for all Full, Associate and Non-resident members.** Annual competency reporting is due by Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> following the end of the OPFA fiscal year. Failure to meet Competency Support requirements may result in late reporting fees and suspension of a member's license to practise until obligations are met.

Other OPFA members (e.g. Inactive, Life, Honourary, Provisional, Student) have no obligations under the Competency Support Program, however the tracking and recording of relevant continuing education hours is encouraged, if a member may want to return to Full or Associate membership in the future.

The following table summarizes the key components and requirements of the Competency Support Program (for Full, Associate and Non-resident members only):

Component	Requirement and Timing
<b>Personal Practice Focus (PPF)</b> <a href="#">&lt;example of PPF form&gt;</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• must be completed and filed prior to being licensed to practise</li> <li>• must be renewed every three (3) years and reviewed annually</li> </ul>
<b>Learning Plan (LP)</b> <a href="#">&lt;example of LP form&gt;</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• must be completed and filed prior to being licensed to practise</li> <li>• must be renewed every three (3) years and reviewed annually</li> </ul>
<b>Continuing Education (CE)</b> <a href="#">&lt;example of CE forms&gt;</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minimum of sixty (60) hours of relevant, new learning during every rolling three-year period</li> <li>• maximum six (6) hours per day allowed</li> </ul>
<b>Recording and Reporting</b> <a href="#">&lt;mandatory CSR form&gt;</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annual Competency Support Report to be completed through the OPFA website</li> <li>• Annual reporting required by Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> following the end of the fiscal year</li> <li>• retain all records for seven (7) years</li> </ul>
<b>Peer Review</b> <a href="#">&lt;mandatory PR form&gt;</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Voluntary only</u>, recommended once every three (3) years.</li> <li>• Confidential Peer Review Worksheet used to record particulars.</li> <li>• Peer Reviewer to notify OPFA after completion of Peer Review</li> </ul>
<b>Audit</b>	Not applicable - not yet implemented
<b>Practice Assessment</b>	Not applicable - not yet implemented

# PRACTICE GUIDANCE

## COMPETENCY SUPPORT

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*Practice Guidance – Competency Support replaces the OPFA Competency Support Guide, updated October 2012, which was rescinded effective June 24th, 2016.*

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE COMPETENCY SUPPORT PROGRAM

The purpose of the Competency Support Program is to ensure that Members of the Association remain informed and current with respect to the knowledge and skills necessary to practise professional forestry in Ontario in a safe, competent, and ethical manner, and for Members to constantly enhance their quality of practice.

A cornerstone of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA) Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice is that OPFA members strive to continually upgrade and develop their knowledge and skills. OPFA members are responsible for developing and maintaining their professional competence including the knowledge, skills, ethics, attitudes and values relevant to them within their professional environment.

The Competency Support Program reinforces the credibility of the Registered Professional Forester designation and serves to maintain public trust that qualified, competent individuals are licensed to practise professional forestry in Ontario. The public can be assured that professional foresters are accountable for their competency and for their practice; a factor that is not formally common to all other forest practitioners.

The Competency Support Program is approved in the OPFA By-laws (Article 14).

This practice guidance is a reference for members. It presents a recommended process to assess and document competency to practise as a registered professional forester in Ontario. It has been designed to facilitate self-assessment, and to serve as a tool to focus career development, using a format that meets the OPFA's standard for quality assurance.

Any information discovered in the administration of the Competency Support Program shall not be used in a disciplinary process (except in "egregious" instances as per OPFA by-law Article 14.14).

Members may, however, voluntarily choose to provide Competency Support Program documents as evidence of continuing education and competency. Such documents may support a member's request to change membership categories from a non-practising category to Full; or, Associate membership when current competencies are evaluated by the Registration Committee. In addition, these documents may be helpful in support of current competencies in the event of a competency-related complaint against the member.

## 2.0 REQUIREMENT TO REPORT

**Adherence to the Competency Support Program is mandatory for all Full, Associate and Non-resident members.** Annual competency reporting is due by Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> following the end of the OPFA fiscal year (November 30<sup>th</sup>). Failure to meet Competency Support Program requirements may result in late reporting fees and suspension of a member's license to practise until obligations are met.

Every Member licensed to practise professional forestry shall ensure awareness of technical standards and acceptable practices that relate to their area of professional forestry in which they practise or intend to practise. Every Member shall maintain competency in each area of professional forestry in which he or she practises.

Other OPFA members have no obligations under the Competency Support Program. However the tracking and reporting of continuing education hours is encouraged, especially if a return to Full or Associate membership may be considered in the future.

## 3.0 COMPONENTS OF THE COMPETENCY SUPPORT PROGRAM

The key components of the Competency Support Program are:

- a) Personal Practice Focus,
- b) Learning Plan,
- c) Continuing Education,
- d) Recording and Reporting,
- e) Peer Review,
- f) Audit, and
- g) Practice Assessment

Components a) through e) have been approved for implementation by OPFA Council, and confirmed by the membership. Components f) and g) are not approved nor being implemented at this time. Components and requirements of the Competency Support Program are detailed in the following sections:

### 3.1 PERSONAL PRACTICE FOCUS (PPF)

The Personal Practice Focus (PPF) identifies areas of existing competency, and is a tool to help determine what additional knowledge, skills and experience would maintain or enhance a member's competency, or facilitate career development.

Professional forester competencies are the skills, knowledge and abilities that form the core requirements necessary to successfully undertake activities within the professional forester's Scope of Practice. The *Professional Foresters Act, 2000* defines the scope of professional practice in forestry to be the "provision of services in relation to the development, management, conservation and sustainability of forests and urban forests ...". [\*Practice Guidance – Scope of Practice\*](#) lists many examples of activities that fall within the scope of professional forestry.

A member may choose to focus on those competencies that have relevance to his/her current or intended practice. Consideration should also be given to developing or enhancing other competencies that may be challenged by your employer, a client, in a Peer Review, or in a complaint or future OPFA competency program Audit (if approved for implementation).

The OPFA recognizes the needs and advantages for members to hold diverse and multi-disciplinary skill sets. Within reason, complementary competencies that will allow a member to be more effective in his/her practice of forestry can also be considered in the PPF. For example, a member's professional practice may integrate aspects of communications, business administration, and human resources management. Providing the complementary competencies are not far removed from having influence over the sustainable development of Ontario's forests, it is not unreasonable to include such competency development and maintenance in your PPF. Identifying and providing for growth in these complementary areas is important for effective professional practice management. OPFA members might also consider taking up activities to share their knowledge, or to expand the knowledge-base that professional foresters, and the public, might draw upon to advance sustainable forest management.

The Personal Practice Focus is divided into three elements, presented here as questions to be answered by the member:

**1. What are my current competencies?**

Members might opt to update a resume, draft a job description, or address the following supporting questions:

- What DO I know or am able to do?
- What MUST I know or be able to do?
- What do I consider to be my specialty(ies)?

**2. What competencies should I build or strengthen?**

Members might opt to identify new knowledge or skills you anticipate needing for your current job, for professional interest, or for career progression. You might also consider refreshing knowledge and skills in order to do something better, to learn the latest state of practice, or to become a recognized expert. The following supporting questions can help frame this assessment:

- What do I WANT to know or be able to do?
- How are my profession or my specific practice changing?
- What are my short-, medium-, and long-term career goals?
- What additional skills do I need to undertake current work more efficiently?

### **3. How do I plan to build or strengthen key competencies?**

Members might opt to identify strategic actions you feel are necessary to continue competent practice in your job, and/or to facilitate achieving your career goals (e.g. improve my knowledge of silvicultural practices). This element need not identify specific courses or activities – this will be addressed as part of a Learning Plan.

Appendix 2.1 includes an [example PPF template](#) for a Personal Practice Focus, however members may use an alternate format if they wish. See the OPFA website for a sample of a [completed Personal Practice Focus](#), and the blank PPF form in electronic format suitable for use by the member (download by preferred format: [MS WORD](#) or [ADOBE PDF](#)).

A member's Personal Practice Focus should be revisited every three years or whenever a significant change in career responsibilities occurs.

## **3.2 LEARNING PLAN (LP)**

The Learning Plan is a tool to help members maximize the effectiveness of continuing education, by identifying in advance (where possible and where appropriate), what courses and activities can help build or strengthen the competencies needed in current practice and/or for career progression.

The Personal Practice Focus should identify general areas of existing and desired competency. The Learning Plan should identify select competencies that you expect to address within the next three years, and for each of them, identify specific courses, activities or certifications to pursue in the coming year(s).

Many employers require their staff to have a Learning Plan in place. If you feel the Learning Plan you developed for your employer sufficiently addresses the competency needs you've identified in your Personal Practice Focus, then it is acceptable to use it as a component of your OPFA Competency Support documentation.

Should you have difficulty finding the training you've identified in your Learning Plan as an immediate competency need, consider alternative formats for learning, such as self-study, online learning or volunteer opportunities. The OPFA website lists upcoming [forestry events](#), links to various [training](#) and learning opportunities, and links to [other organizations](#) that may provide continuing education opportunities.

The OPFA recommends also consulting other members who hold such competencies, to ask what activities they undertook, or whether they could provide you with training and/or knowledge (e.g. on-the-job training or volunteer opportunities).

Appendix 2.2 includes an [example LP template](#) for a Learning Plan, however members may use an alternate format if they wish. See the OPFA website for examples of a [completed Learning Plan](#), and a blank Learning Plan form in electronic format suitable for use by the member (download by preferred format: [MS WORD](#) or [ADOBE PDF](#)).

Your Learning Plan should be reviewed and updated annually.

### 3.3 CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE)

The core purpose for having a Personal Practice Focus and a Learning Plan is to assist members in identifying continuing education needs, so that the member can efficiently and effectively develop and maintain the competencies that were identified as being important.

Continuing education is measured by the “hour” of learning activity. Any relevant learning, whether a component of your employment, or undertaken through other voluntary or unpaid learning opportunities, all may be considered towards reported continuing education. Learning may involve taking courses, attending presentations, self-study/reading, participating on field trips and learning through discussions with other professional foresters – it is up to the member to self-assess what is “new learning” for them.

The Member’s first rolling three-year period, and first year for required reporting of Continuing Education hours, shall commence on December 1st following the date when the Member became registered in the Full Membership or Associate Membership category. Continuing education reporting may be updated anytime throughout the year; annual CE hours and three-year CE hour summaries are totaled by OPFA fiscal year (Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> to Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>).

**REQUIRED:** The OPFA requires practising members to undertake no fewer than 60 hours of continuing education, averaged over any rolling three-year period. Members may count up to a maximum of 6 hours of learning per day.

Members are responsible for self-assessing what represents a “learning” opportunity; however, only core learning time should be counted. For example, travel time, breaks, and other downtime should not be counted towards CE hours. Time spent reviewing material well known by the member should not be counted as continuing education. If applicable, members may count time preparing for presentations if research is required and results in personal “new learning”.

Personal learning, through on-line coursework or reading forestry publications can be considered as continuing education. A member may count CE hours for relevant meetings or tailgate sessions with colleagues if discussions result in new learning. Above all, members should consider continuing education to be dynamic and changeable. Members are encouraged to capitalize on interesting new learning opportunities as they occur, regardless of having foreseen them in your Learning Plan.



**Up to three (3) hours of the time spent each year developing and/or updating your Personal Practice Focus and your Learning Plan can be claimed as continuing education hours.**

**Members may count up to two (2) hours continuing education in any given year in which they underwent a Peer Review, or acted as a Peer Reviewer for another member.**

Appendix 2.3 includes examples of record formats ([Example 1](#), [Example 2](#)) for a Continuing Education Record, however members may use any alternate format if they wish. See the OPFA website for samples of [completed Continuing Education Records](#), and the blank CE Record forms in electronic format suitable for use by the member (download by preferred format: [MS WORD](#), [ADOBE PDF](#), or [MS EXCEL](#)). Members are encouraged to record continuing education activities shortly after the learning is completed, rather than assembling all information only at annual renewal time.

Continuing education documents must be updated annually.

### **3.4 RECORDING AND REPORTING**

Members are required to document and archive their Personal Practice Focus, Learning Plan, and Continuing Education Record of activities they have undertaken. Members are required to report annually on the status of their Personal Practice Focus, Learning Plan, and total continuing education hours accrued in each fiscal year ended November 30<sup>th</sup>. Members are recommended to retain all reporting documents for a period of seven (7) years.

The annual Competency Support Report (CSR), or the equivalent questions accessed through the member's page on the OPFA website, must be answered and submitted annually. Submissions of the CSR to the OPFA office may be made via email with the completed, signed CSR form attached in pdf format.

All Competency Support Program reporting must be completed by Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> following the end of the OPFA fiscal year.

The annual Competency Support Report (CSR) [mandatory form](#) is provided in Appendix 2.4 (or the same questions may be answered on the OPFA website as noted above). See the OPFA website for the blank Competency Support Report form in electronic format suitable for use by the member (download by preferred format: [MS WORD](#), or [ADOBE PDF](#)).

The OPFA requires only that you report on the status of your competency plan (Personal Practice Focus, Learning Plan, and record of Continuing Education hours). You are not required to submit any of these documents outside of a quality assurance audit. You may, of course, offer these documents in defence of any complaint made against you, but the OPFA will not of its own accord, compel you to produce them in a professional assessment.

**It is important to note that your competency documents are professional development tools, and are not legally-binding documents.**

It is important to note that your competency support documents are not static. If at any time, you identify new competency needs, then it is important to add them to your PPF, identify a means to gain the competency in your Learning Plan, and list the activities you took in your Continuing Education records. **You are bound by the OPFA Code of Ethics, and may not practise forestry where you are not competent to do so, unless under the direct supervision of a qualified member.**

### **3.5 PEER REVIEW**

The main purpose of a Peer Review is to ensure that members maintain competency in their areas of practice, and to provide a trail of documentation that can stand up in the event of a complaint. Peer Reviews reinforce that the public can rely on the professional competency of the professional forester managing their land.

The goal of a Peer Review is to elevate a member's level of practice through mentorship and confidential advice offered by a trusted colleague. A Peer Review is a collegial, non-confrontational process to allow one member to look over another member's Personal Practice Focus, Learning Plan and related documents and make suggestions to improve the member's competency, the member's continuing education, or their documentation. There is no "pass or fail" or judgement on its content. Peer Review is to be a positive process, not negative. With prior submission and review of documents, the meetings should not take more than an hour or so. Where possible and practical, face to face meetings are encouraged.

**Peer Review is a voluntary process which can be initiated at any time by a member.** It is recommended that Peer Reviews occur at least once every three (3) years. Members are encouraged to participate in the Peer Review component of the Competency Support Program. Members decide whether they want to participate in Peer Reviews as either a reviewer or the participant.

The member is responsible for finding their own Peer Reviewer. Any willing OPFA member in good standing, except Student or Provisional members, is eligible to be a Peer Reviewer. The Peer Review can be between members who know each other, who work for the same organization, a friend or someone randomly chosen from the membership list.

The Peer Review will check to ensure that the various Competency Support Program components are clearly linked. Continuing Education (CE) should tie to the Learning Plan (LP) which should tie to the Personal Practice Focus (PPF) which should tie to the annual Competency Support Report (CSR).

The following elements of the Competency Support Program are to be included in a Peer Review:

**1. Review of member's current Personal Practice Focus and Learning Plan:**

- Has the member identified their current and desired competencies?
- Does the Learning Plan reflect desired competencies?
- Is progress being made towards goals in the Learning Plan? If not, what changes are suggested?

**2. Review of member's Continuing Education Records**

- Are CE records for the past three years available?
- Do the total annual CE hours recorded match those reported annually?

**3. Review of member's Competency Support Reports for past three years** (or earlier Competency Reporting Questionnaire if applicable):

- Are annual CSR reports for past three years available?
- Did the member report completion of the PPF, LP and CE hours each year?

**4. Joint review OPFA Professionalism and Ethics practice guidance:**

- Review and discuss the Code of Ethics, Acts of Misconduct and Standards of Practice
- Is the member aware of OPFA Practice Guidance or Practice Bulletins relevant to his/her area of practice?
- Discuss any relevant professional or ethical challenges the member has experienced, and options to deal with these challenges
- In general terms, discuss benefits and challenges to mentoring or sponsoring new applicants

**5. Complete the Peer Review Worksheet**

- The member and the Peer Reviewer jointly complete and sign the worksheet
- Both participants should retain a personal copy of the Peer Review Worksheet for seven (7) years (paper or electronic copies are acceptable).
- The Peer Review Worksheet is confidential and should not be submitted to the OPFA.

**6. Peer Reviewer to report to the OPFA completion of the Peer Review**

- The Peer Reviewer is responsible for contacting the OPFA office in writing (email, fax or letter), confirming the date of completion of the Peer Review, and reporting the names and membership numbers of both the member and the Peer Reviewer.

The date of completion of the Peer Review should be recorded on the member's Competency Support Report at the end of the fiscal year in which the Peer Review occurs.

The actual Peer Review experience undertaken by most members proves to be worthwhile in that both parties get to know each other, the differences in their particular fields of work, and the constantly changing aspects of forestry practices, as well as providing other useful feedback to each other.

Appendix 2.5 includes the [Peer Review Worksheet](#) or see the OPFA website for the blank Peer Review Worksheet form in electronic format suitable for use by the member (download by preferred format: [MS WORD](#), or [ADOBE PDF](#)).

Members are encouraged to provide feedback on the Peer Review process to the OPFA office via email. Member comments and suggestions will be considered in confidence, and will serve to improve practice guidance and training material related to the Competency Support Program.

### **3.6 AUDIT**

### **3.7 PRACTICE ASSESSMENT**

The final two components of the Competency Support Program are:

- 3.6 Audit – an OPFA audit of a member’s competency support records, and
- 3.7 Practice Assessment of a member’s practice as it relates to competency, professionalism and ethics.

While these two components of the Competency Support Program are listed in the OPFA By-laws, they have not been approved by Council for implementation. Implementation of the first five components of the Competency Support Program is expected to provide appropriate support to a practising member to achieve professional growth and maintenance of competency in his/her area(s) of practice.

*This document has been developed to give guidance to members with respect to the Competency Support Program so that the public interest, and the public expectation of the profession, is served and protected. Members are encouraged to contact the Executive Director of the OPFA should they wish to discuss specific applications of this practice guidance document.*

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: OPFA LEGISLATION, REGULATION, AND BY-LAW REFERENCES

#### PROFESSIONAL FORESTERS ACT, 2000

A copy of the *Professional Foresters Act, 2000* is available on the Ontario Government's e-laws site at: [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_00p18\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_00p18_e.htm)

##### Objects

5. (1) The principal object of the Association is to regulate the practice of professional forestry and to govern its members in accordance with this Act, the regulations and the by-laws in order that the public interest may be served and protected. 2000, c. 18, s. 5 (1).
- (2) For the purpose of carrying out its principal object, the Association has the following additional objects:
  2. To establish, maintain and develop standards of knowledge and skill for members.
  3. To establish, maintain, develop and enforce standards of qualification and standards of practice for the practice of professional forestry.
  5. To establish, maintain, develop and enforce standards of professional ethics for members.

##### By-laws

53. (1) The Council may pass by-laws,
  31. prescribing and governing standards of practice for the practice of professional forestry;

#### ONTARIO REGULATION 145/01

A copy of the regulation is located at:

<http://www.opfa.ca/regulation-enforcement/regulation-profession/legislation/regulations>

##### PART I - CODE OF ETHICS

1. (1) A professional forester shall be governed by the Code of Ethics set out in this section in carrying out his or her professional duties. O. Reg. 145/01, s. 1 (1).
- (2) A member of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association observes the duties of the profession and honours his or her duties to citizens, employers and clients, fellow members and Ontario's forests by embracing the following values:
  3. Credibility — A member shall undertake only work that he or she is competent to perform by virtue of training and experience and, where advisable, shall retain and co-operate with other professional foresters and specialists and, further, shall endorse only those plans, reports, maps and specifications that he or she produces or directly supervises.

7. Commitment to learning — A member shall dedicate himself or herself to continuous improvement of his or her forestry science skills and use their knowledge and skills to aid public awareness of forestry in Ontario. O. Reg. 145/01, s. 1 (2).

## **OPFA BY-LAWS: ARTICLE 13.4 - STANDARDS OF PRACTICE**

<http://www.opfa.ca/regulation-enforcement/regulation-profession/legislation/laws>

### **Standard 3 - Competency**

A member of the Association shall undertake only such work, as he/she is competent to perform by virtue of training and experience.

## **OPFA BY-LAWS: ARTICLE 14 – COMPETENCY SUPPORT PROGRAM**

<http://www.opfa.ca/regulation-enforcement/regulation-profession/legislation/laws>

### **Article 14.1 – Purpose: Competency Support Program**

The purpose of the Competency Support Program is to ensure that Members of the Association remain informed and current with respect to the knowledge and skills necessary to practise professional forestry in Ontario in a safe, competent and ethical manner and for Members to constantly enhance their quality of practice.

### **Article 14.2 – Member Participation**

Every Full, Associate and Non-Resident Member of the Association is required to fulfill the requirements set out in this Article.

### **Article 14.3 – Member Cooperation**

Every affected Member shall cooperate with the Association with respect to the Competency Support Program which includes continuing education and quality assurance components.

### **Article 14.4 – Member Competency Maintenance**

Every affected Member shall ensure awareness of technical standards and acceptable practices that relate to the area of professional forestry in which the Member practises or intends to practise and every Member shall maintain competency in each area of professional forestry in which the Member practises.

### **Article 14.5 – Program Components**

The following are prescribed as the key components of the Competency Support Program:

- a) Personal Practice Focus,
- b) Learning Plan,
- c) Continuing Education,
- d) Recording and Reporting,
- e) Peer Review,
- f) Audit, and
- g) Practice Assessment

Elements and Members' obligation commence at such time and with such administrative processes as Council approves.

### **Article 14.6 – Personal Practice Focus**

Every Member shall create, as a condition of registration and at least once every three years and in conjunction with any major job change, a record of their Personal Practice Focus in accordance with the forms and requirements approved by Council.

**Article 14.7 – Learning Plan**

Every Member shall, at least once every three years, develop a written Learning Plan reflecting their Personal Practice Focus, in accordance with the forms and requirements approved by Council, which considers:

1. environmental, technological and other changes in their area of current and/or planned practice,
2. areas in which the Member wishes to excel,
3. general awareness of issues and trends in professional forestry beyond the area of current and planned practice, and
4. continuing professionalism and ethics and sets out the manner in which the Member plans to acquire necessary knowledge and skills

**Article 14.8 – Continuing Education Activities**

Every Member shall undertake the continuing education activities necessary for him or her to maintain competency and make reasonable effort to meet other objectives in their Learning Plan.

**Article 14.9 – Minimum Hours**

Every Member shall accumulate a minimum of sixty (60) hours of relevant continuing education activities during every rolling three-year period, plus such further learning as is suggested by their Learning Plan and shall retain a record of the nature of these learning activities and shall annually report the activities in the manner established by Council.

**Article 14.10 – Initial Rolling Three-Year Period**

The Member's first rolling three year period and first year for required reporting of Continuing Education hours, shall commence on December 1<sup>st</sup> following the date when the Member became registered in the Full Membership or Associate Membership category.

**Article 14.11 – Record Retention**

Every Member shall retain their records relating to Personal Practice Focus, Learning Plan and Continuing Education Activities for at least seven (7) years and shall annually report the activities in the manner established by Council.

**Article 14.12 – Records to Association Upon Request for Audit**

Every Member shall provide or provide access to their Personal Practice Focus, Learning Plan and Continuing Education Activities records to the Association upon request, for audit purposes.

Members shall cooperate with Audits of their records.

**Article 14.13 – Peer Review and Practice Assessment**

The Peer Review process is implemented on a voluntary basis by members. A Member may select their own Peer Reviewer and does not require approval by the Association of the Peer Reviewer.

Every Member who is selected to participate in a peer review or assessment of their practice shall participate in the manner established by the Council and shall cooperate with any peer or any assessor appointed or approved by the Association. Such cooperation shall include providing access to or copies of documents related to the Personal Practice Focus, Learning Plan, Annual Records and to the practice of the Member, answering oral or written questions, participating in evaluations or assessments, providing access to the Member's premises and records, distributing survey forms to colleagues and clients, providing access or introductions to colleagues or clients and/or allowing the peer or assessor to accompany the Member when and where appropriate on their work.

Where the results of a peer review or assessment indicate that a Member has gaps relevant to their practice, in their knowledge, skill or judgment, the Member shall remediate those gaps in the manner and timelines agreed to with the Association. Should an agreement not be reached, the Association, bearing in mind matters raised by the Member, may specify actions the Member shall take to remediate the gap. The Association may, if warranted, require the Member to undertake not to perform practice activity relevant to the gap(s).

**Article 14.14 – Respect for Privacy**

In administering the Competency Support Program, the Association shall respect, to the extent reasonably possible,

the Member's right of privacy and shall treat materials as confidential to the Member and/or employer.

Information discovered in the administration of the program shall not be used in a disciplinary process. However, in egregious instances, the Registrar may be advised of reasonable and probable grounds to initiate a separate investigation.

**Article 14.15 – Suspension for Non-Compliance**

Subject to Article 15, the Registrar may suspend the certificate of registration of a Member who does not fulfill any one or more of their obligations relating to the Competency Support Program, without reason acceptable to the Registrar.

**Article 14.16 – Application for Reinstatement**

A Member whose certificate of registration has been suspended under this Article within the previous two years may apply, in writing, to the Registrar to request that the suspension be lifted.

**Article 14.17 – Test for Reinstatement**

The Registrar shall lift the suspension and any limit imposed on a certificate of registration under this Article if the Registrar is satisfied that the Person has fulfilled all of their obligations related to the Competency Support Program and has paid any outstanding fees and met any other outstanding obligations to the Association and there is no other valid reason for denying reinstatement.

So long as it does not result in allowing a Member to practise in an area beyond their current competence and despite Article 14.15, the Registrar may lift the suspension and any limit imposed on a Member's certificate of registration under this Article if the Registrar is satisfied that the Member has embarked on a satisfactory process to meet the obligation.

**Article 14.18 – Where No Action Taken**

If, at the end of two years from the date of suspension, the reasons for suspension have not been resolved, the certificate shall be cancelled.



## **APPENDIX 2: COMPETENCY SUPPORT FORMS and TEMPLATES**

The following suggested formats for Competency Support Program forms may be used to meet requirements of the Competency Support Program and annual reporting:

### **Appendix 2.1: Personal Practice Focus (PPF) - example**

### **Appendix 2.2: Learning Plan (LP) - example**

### **Appendix 2.3: Continuing Education Record (CE) - examples**

Members may use other formats of the above documents, if preferred (except as noted below), however all required information must be included.

### **Appendix 2.4: Competency Support Report (CSR) – mandatory format**

Annual **Competency Support Report** (CSR) information may be reported by the member directly on the OPFA website, after logging in to the member page. Alternately, the CSR form may be completed, signed and submitted electronically (pdf format file) to the OPFA office via email. The specific Competency Support Report questions are mandatory and may not be altered by the member.

### **Appendix 2.5: Peer Review Worksheet – mandatory format**

The **Peer Review Worksheet** is a required form for recording information and suggestions in a Peer Review. The completed form is confidential and must be signed and retained by the member and the Peer Reviewer upon completion of a Peer Review. The form is not to be submitted to the OPFA office.

## Appendix 2.1: Personal Practice Focus (PPF) - example

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ OPFA # \_\_\_\_\_

Date updated: \_\_\_\_\_

### Current competencies:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

### Competencies to develop:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

### How will I acquire new competencies?

- 
- 
- 
-

## Appendix 2.2: Learning Plan (LP) – Example

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ OPFA # \_\_\_\_\_

Date updated: \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Practice:**

**Career Interests:**

What	How	When

## Appendix 2.3: Continuing Education Record (CE) - example

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ OPFA # \_\_\_\_\_

OPFA Fiscal Year: December 1<sup>st</sup>, \_\_\_\_\_ to November 30<sup>th</sup>, \_\_\_\_\_.

Date	Activity Name	Comments/Learning Method	CE Hours
<b>Total CE Hours</b>			

**Note:** Up to 6 learning hours may be counted per day. A practicing member needs 60 hours for every rolling three-year period to maintain "Good Standing" (registration to practise).

## Appendix 2.3: Continuing Education Record (CE) – example

Ontario Professional Foresters Association Continuing Education Records					
<b>NAME</b>	Member: XXXX				
<b>Reporting Year:</b>	Dec. 1, 20XX - November 30, 20XX.				
			Current Practice Needs	Desired Competencies	Professionalism & Ethics
Activity Date	Learning Activity	Net CE Hours			
	SUBTOTAL	0	0	0	
	ANNUAL TOTAL	0			
<b>NOTE:</b> Up to 6 learning hours may be counted per day. A practicing member needs 60 hours for every rolling three-year period to maintain "Good Standing" (registration to practise)					

**Appendix 2.4: Competency Support Report (CSR) – mandatory format**  
**ANNUAL COMPETENCY SUPPORT REPORT (CSR)**

**OPFA Fiscal Year:** December 1<sup>st</sup>, \_\_\_\_\_ to November 30<sup>th</sup>, \_\_\_\_\_.

*Please answer the following questions online, or send to the OPFA office (via email, fax or mail):*

**1. Personal Practice Focus (PPF)**

- a) I had a Personal Practice Focus (PPF) in place for the past year Yes / No
- b) My PPF has been prepared, updated or confirmed within the past 3 years and since my last significant job change Yes / No

**2. Learning Plan (LP)**

- a) I had a Learning Plan (LP) in place for the past year Yes / No
- b) My LP has been prepared, updated or confirmed within the past 3 years and since my last significant job change Yes / No
- c) Over the past fiscal year, the goals in my Learning Plan
  - i. have been met
  - ii. are progressing as planned
  - iii. have not been fully met due to...

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Record Retention:** I have copies of these documents on file for possible Peer Review or Audit along with my current and previous PPF and LP. Yes / No

**4. Continuing Education:**

During the past fiscal year, I completed \_\_\_\_\_ hours of relevant Continuing Education.

**5. Professionalism and Ethics:**

- I have reviewed the OPFA Code of Ethics in the past year (Reg. Part I) Yes / No
- I have reviewed the OPFA Acts of Misconduct in the past year (Reg. Part II) Yes / No
- I have reviewed the OPFA Standards of Practice (By-law 13.4) Yes / No
- I am familiar with approved OPFA Practice Guidance and Practice Bulletins Yes / No

**6. Date of last Peer Review:** \_\_\_\_\_ *(this question is optional)*

**Associate Members Only:** I have reviewed my approved Scope of Practice, and confirm that I continue to only work with it. Yes / No

I certify that information contained in this Competency Support Report is accurate, complete and true:

OPFA SEAL

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

OPFA number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2.5: Peer Review Worksheet – mandatory format**  
**PEER REVIEW WORKSHEET**

**CONFIDENTIAL RECORD BETWEEN MEMBER AND PEER REVIEWER**

Member Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ OPFA # \_\_\_\_\_

Peer Reviewer (print): \_\_\_\_\_ OPFA # \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Completion of Peer Review:** \_\_\_\_\_.

(use additional sheets for comments if desired)

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**1. Review of member's current Personal Practice Focus and Learning Plan:**

- Has the member identified their current and desired competencies?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Does the Learning Plan reflect desired competencies?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Is progress being made towards goals in the Learning Plan? If not, what changes are suggested?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Review of member's Continuing Education Records**

- Are CE records for the past three years available? YES / NO
- Do the total annual CE hours recorded match those reported annually?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Review of member's Competency Support Reports for past three years (or earlier Competency Reporting Questionnaire if applicable):**

- Are annual CSR (or CRQ) reports for past three years available? YES / NO
- Did the member report completion of the PPF, LP and CE hours each year?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**4. Joint review of OPFA Professionalism and Ethics practice guidance:**

- Review and discuss the Code of Ethics, Acts of Misconduct and Standards of Practice.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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- List OPFA Practice Guidance relevant to the member's area of practice

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Discuss any relevant professional or ethical challenges have you experienced, and options to deal with these challenges.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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- In general terms, discuss benefits and challenges to mentoring or sponsoring new applicants.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. Complete the Peer Review Worksheet**

- The member and the Peer Reviewer jointly complete and sign the worksheet
- Both participants should retain a personal copy of the Peer Review Worksheet for seven (7) years (paper or electronic copies are acceptable).
- The Peer Review Worksheet is confidential and should not be submitted to the OPFA.

**6. Peer Reviewer to report to the OPFA completion of the Peer Review**

- The Peer Reviewer is responsible for contacting the OPFA office in writing (email, fax or letter), confirming the date of completion of the Peer Review, and reporting the names and membership numbers of both the member and the Peer Reviewer.

**I actively participated in this Peer Review, and will retain this Peer Review Worksheet in my Competency Support Program files for seven (7) years:**

Member: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

Peer Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_