



Mental Health America National Certified Peer Specialist (MHA NCPS)

CREDENTIAL STANDARDS

The Mental Health America National Certified Peer Specialist (MHA NCPS) designation is a professional, advanced-level peer support specialist credential for persons who have the lived experience, training, and job experience to work alongside healthcare teams in a peer specialist role. The NCPS requires a minimum of a high school diploma or general equivalency degree and applicants must demonstrate competency through verifiable training and experience in the performance domains of:

- Foundations of Peer Support
- Foundations of Health Care Systems
- Mentoring, Shared Learning and Relationship Building
- Activation and Self-Management
- Advocacy
- Professional and Ethical Responsibilities

MHA NCPS applicants have passed a 125 item exam, practice under a code of ethical and professional conduct and complete a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education, annually.

The MHA NCPS credential does not allow for independent practice. All MHA nationally certified peer specialists must work under an agency/organization which is licensed, certified or otherwise approved to provide services in its state or jurisdiction.

The FCB administers the NCPS credential on behalf of Mental Health America. Individuals seeking the NCPS credential must meet all FCB administrative requirements and all MHA NCPS credential specific standards and eligibility requirements that have been established for the credential. When all requirements have been met, candidates are approved to register for the MHA NCPS certification examination. The credential is awarded after a passing score has been earned on the examination.

There is not a grandparenting period for the MHA NCPS credential. All applicants must meet the full standards and requirements established for the NCPS credential.

MHA NCPS STANDARDS AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

TOPIC	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
Formal Education	High School Diploma or General Equivalency Degree or higher.
Content Specific Training	<p>Hold current state certification with a minimum training requirement of 40 hours</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Hold a certificate of completion of an MHA approved training program. Approved training programs are posted on the MHA NCPS website at www.centerforpeersupport.org</p> <p>All training must have been completed within the last 10 years. Applicants who completed required training more than 10 years ago and have been consistently working in the field may appeal for a waiver of the timeframe requirement.</p>
Related Work Experience	<p>3,000 hours of paid or volunteer work experience providing peer support services within the last 6 years.</p> <p>All work experience (paid and volunteer) must be supervised.</p> <p>Individuals claiming volunteer work for certification purposes must average 20 hours of volunteer work per week.</p>
Recommendations	<p>1 Professional letter of recommendation for certification.</p> <p>1 Supervisory letter of recommendation for certification.</p>
Exam	MHA NCPS 125-item, multiple choice exam.
Continuing Education	10 hours per year. CEUs are verified at renewal. NCPS' must document a total of 20 hours of training each renewal period. The first time the NCPS credential is renewed, only half of the CEUs are due. All CEUs are required for subsequent renewals. Training content must be related to at least one of the NCPS performance domains.
Online FCB Account	All applicants MUST establish an online account with the FCB. A 'how to' is posted online at http://flcertificationboard.org/resources/training-and-tutorials/
Criminal History	The FCB does not conduct a criminal background check during the application process. Applicants attest they are eligible for employment. Employers MUST verify criminal history according to their policy/procedure. Should the applicant be found to falsify eligibility in regard to a criminal history, the applicant is subject to an ethics investigation. The FCB does respond to allegations of criminal conduct AFTER certification award, which is detailed in the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. See http://flcertificationboard.org/ethics/
Code of Ethics	Applicants must agree to follow the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures, which is posted online at http://flcertificationboard.org/ethics/

APPLICATION AND MANDATORY FORM REQUIREMENTS

All applicants must establish an online account with the FCB. A 'how to' is posted online at <http://flcertificationboard.org/resources/training-and-tutorials/>

Please Note: the FCB cannot accept and/or apply any documents or fee payments until you have created your online profile in the FCB's certification system.

The NCPS application is currently paper-based. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SUBMIT AN ONLINE APPLICATION OR PAYMENT AT THIS TIME. In addition to the MHA NCPS Application, all other credential-specific requirements are documented on FCB provided forms, which are posted online at www.NationalCertifiedPeerSpecialist.org. You can and should complete these forms electronically. The FCB accepts electronic signatures and attachments through email.

- The applicant completes and submits the following documents to the FCB directly:
 - The MHA NCPS Application and attaches documentation of the formal education requirement;
 - The MHA NCPS Training Verification Form and attaches supporting documentation for the training requirement.
- The applicant will also:
 - Download the Work Experience and Recommendation for Verification Forms (posted at <http://flcertificationboard.org/certification/nationally-credentialed-peer-specialist/>)
 - Save the form(s) to your computer.
 - Complete Part 1 of the Work Experience and the Recommendation for Certification Forms.
 - Provide the partially completed form to your employer/references to complete and submit to FCB on your behalf. FCB will not accept work verification or recommendation documents from the applicant.

MHA NCPS Applications, mandatory forms, supporting documentation and fees may be submitted by US Mail, Fax or email to:

US MAIL: FCB ♦ Attn: MHA NCPS Scholarship ♦ 1715 South Gadsden Street ♦ Tallahassee, FL 32301

FAX: 850-222-6247

Email: afarrington@flcertificationboard.org

Phone (credit card payments only): 850-222-6314

DOCUMENTATION SUBMISSION PROTOCOL

STANDARD	APPLICANT PROVIDED	NON-APPLICANT SOURCE
MHA NCPS Application	Complete application in its entirety.	N/A. No documentation required from a non-applicant source.
Formal Education	On application, report degree(s) & attach a copy of your High School Diploma/GED or an unofficial college or university transcript.	N/A. No documentation required from a non-applicant source.
Work Experience	On application, report employer(s) who will document and submit your paid or volunteer work verification documentation. Download the Work Verification Form, complete Part 1 and provide a separate form to each employer to complete and submit to the FCB on your behalf.	Employer completes and submits Work Verification Form and supporting documentation directly to the FCB.
Content Specific Training	Complete Training Verification Form & attach copies of supporting documentation for reported training events.	N/A. No documentation required from a non-applicant source.
Recommendation for Certification	On application, report each individual who will submit a Recommendation for Certification. Download the Recommendation for Certification Form, complete Part 1 and provide a separate form to each reference to complete and submit to the FCB on your behalf.	Each reference completes and submits a Recommendation for Certification Form directly to the FCB.
Fees	The FCB accepts personal checks, money orders, VISA, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. Personal checks/money orders should be made out to the Florida Certification Board. Call the FCB at 850-222-6314 to make a credit card payment. If you have been awarded a scholarship, attach the award letter to your application at the time of submission.	N/A. No documentation required from a non-applicant source.

CERTIFICATION FEES

The NCPS application is forwarded to a Certification Specialist for processing once the MHA NCPS Application form and certification fee payment is made. Exam fees are not paid until the applicant is approved to register for the exam by the FCB. All fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Fees may be paid by check, money order, VISA, MasterCard, Discover or American Express. The FCB typically charges a \$5 convenience fee for credit card payments made over the phone. This fee is waived for MHA NCPS applicants until further notice.

MHA has a limited number of scholarships available to pay the \$225 Application for Certification fee and/or \$50 toward the Certification Exam Fee. If you have been awarded a scholarship, please attach a copy of the award letter to your MHA Application for Certification. The scholarship application is posted online at <http://flcertificationboard.org/certification/nationally-credentialed-peer-specialist/>

FEE	AMOUNT	NOTES
Application for Certification	\$225	This is a one-time fee. Upon payment, the application is assigned to a specific certification specialist, who is the applicant's primary point of contact until the credential is earned.
NCPS Exam	\$200 per attempt	The exam fee must be paid with each exam attempt. Some test sites charge an additional test site proctoring fee. This fee is paid directly to the test site and will not exceed \$30.
Renewal	\$200	The credential renews biennially. The renewal fee is due on or before the credential expiration date.

CERTIFICATION PROCESS CHECKLIST

Eligibility Criteria: You must read the following documents. Submission of your application carries the attestation that you have read, understood and agree to be bound by the policies and procedures in these documents.

- MHA NCPS Candidate Guide.** This document is posted online at <http://flcertificationboard.org/certification/nationally-credentialed-peer-specialist>
- Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.** This document is posted online at <http://flcertificationboard.org/ethics/>

FCB System Registration, Certification Application and Supporting Documents

- Create FCB online account.
- Submit MHA NCPS application and supporting documentation.
- Submit MHA NCPS Training Verification Form and support documentation.
- Pay MHA NCPS Certification Application fee (or scholarship approval paperwork).
- Download, save and complete Part 1 of the Work Experience Verification Form and provide to current or former employer(s) to complete and submit to FCB on your behalf. A separate form must be completed by each individual employer.
- Download, save and complete Part 1 of each Letter of Recommendation for Certification Form and provide to each reference to complete and submit to FCB on your behalf. A separate form must be completed by each individual reference.

Exams: You are eligible to register for the NCPS exam AFTER your application and all supporting documentation has been approved.

- Receive approval from FCB (via email) to register for the exam.
- Pay MHA NCPS Exam Fee
- Register for the exam(s)
- Take the exam(s)

The MHA NCPS credential is awarded after the applicant has earned a passing score on the exam. Please see the MHA NCPS Candidate Guide for detailed application, examination, credential award and maintenance policies.

Publication and Revision History:

Version 1.0	Original Publication. 3-11-17
Version 1.1	Publication reordered and scholarship information added. 3-16-17