



Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS)

STANDARD APPLICATION PATHWAY

Requirements and Application Process

The FCB is pleased to offer the Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) credential.

A *prevention specialist* is someone who works with individuals, families and communities to create environments and conditions that support wellness and the ability of individuals to withstand changes. Prevention specialists are qualified to work in the field of substance use only.

The CPS designates competency in the domains of

- Planning and Evaluation
- Prevention Education and Service Delivery
- Communication
- Community Organization
- Public Policy and Environmental Change
- Professional Responsibilities

A CPS is not qualified for independent practice and must work under appropriate supervision.

This document outlines CPS requirements, application policies, and procedures. Additional policies can be found on the FCB website and in the FCB Candidate Guides.

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Reciprocity

The Florida Certification Board is a member of the International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC). Professionals holding an eligible certification or license in another state may be able to transfer their credentials. To transfer a Prevention Specialist (PS) credential into Florida, please contact your issuing board to initiate the reciprocity process. The FCB will contact you once we receive the required paperwork from the IC&RC.

The CPS/CPP is the reciprocal-level credential for individuals transferring into Florida with the [IC&RC Alcohol and Drug Counselor \(ADC\) credential](#). All CPS applicants will automatically earn the IC&RC Prevention Specialist (PS) credential at no extra cost.

Certified professionals must maintain their FCB prevention credential to maintain the IC&RC Prevention Professional credential; however, the IC&RC credential does not need to be renewed to practice in Florida.

Application Pathways

There are two pathways to apply for the CPS credential: the Standard pathway and the Provisional/Upgrade pathway.

Standard: for applicants who have completed all requirements prior to application.

Provisional/Upgrade: For applicants who have completed training and need to fulfill 2,000 hours of supervised experience, a provisional credential is available. This credential is issued after meeting the training and testing requirements and is valid for 12 months, providing time to complete the required work experience. Once the 2,000 hours are completed, the applicant may apply to upgrade to a full credential. The upgrade application must include documentation of work experience, supervision and letters of recommendation.

**This document is for applicants completing the
STANDARD APPLICATION PATHWAY.**

The Application Process

Step 1: Creating and Accessing Your FCB Account

Before applying for the CPS credential, you must have an FCB online account. You can create or access your FCB account and find the CPS credential applications on the website flcertificationboard.org.

Step 2: Understanding the Credentialing Process

The process of applying for the CPS credential involves several steps:

Create or Access an FCB Account: You need an FCB account to access the CPS online applications.

Complete an Online Application: Start by filling out the online application to provide initial information about yourself; note that this does not constitute the complete application.

Upload Training Verification Documents: Attach all required documents to your application.

Download and Distribute Required Forms: Obtain necessary forms from the FCB website and distribute them to the appropriate individuals who must complete and submit them on your behalf.

Monitor Your Email and FCB Account: Regularly check for emails from your assigned Certification Specialist and for automatically generated system emails. Log in to your FCB account frequently and respond promptly to any inquiries or required actions to move your application process forward.

After your account, online application, and supporting documents are approved by FCB, you will be eligible to take the CPS examination. Upon passing the exam, FCB will issue your CPS credential.

Step 3: Connecting with Your Certification Specialist

After you submit the online application and fee, a Certification Specialist will be assigned to you. This specialist will serve as your primary point of contact throughout the credentialing process.

You should receive an email from your assigned Certification Specialist within 30 business days after your application submission and approval. Email is the primary means of communication; make sure to regularly check your inbox for messages from your Certification Specialist and for automatically generated system emails. These emails will instruct you to log into your account, view updates, and perform any necessary actions.

If you need immediate assistance or prefer to speak directly, you may also call the office to speak with your Certification Specialist.

Timeframes

Certification Specialists will notify applicants of the results of the initial application review within 30 days of receiving a complete, paid application. The time needed to process an application varies based on the current workload and the quality of the supporting documents submitted. Applicants have up to 12 months from the date of application acceptance to obtain their credential, including passing any required exams. If needed, a continuation fee can be paid to extend the processing period by an additional 12 months.

CPS STANDARD APPLICATION Requirements

Table 1 outlines the full requirements to earn the Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) credential under the standard application pathway. Table 2 describes the necessary supporting documentation requirements.

Table 1: CPS Requirements – Standard Application

Topic	Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) Requirements																				
Background Screening	Applicants are required to pass a Level 2 employment background screening as specified by section 397.417(4) F.S. The FCB does not perform these background checks; instead, it verifies the applicant's eligibility to work with the credential's target population through access to the state's Background Clearinghouse. The Certification Specialist will guide the applicant on the necessary steps to take.																				
Formal Education	Applicants are required to hold a high school diploma or higher. Eligible high school diplomas are recognized by the issuing state's Department of Education as eligible for pursuing higher education. A copy of the diploma or unofficial college transcripts may be submitted to fulfill the requirement.																				
Content Specific Training	Applicants are required to complete and document 120 hours of content-specific training that took place within the 10 years prior to the application date. However, coursework from a degree does not expire. <table> <tr> <th>Training Topic</th><th>Training Hours</th></tr> <tr> <td>Understanding Addiction</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prevention-specific Ethics</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr> <td>Planning and Evaluation</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prevention Education and Service Delivery</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr> <td>Communication</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr> <td>Community Organization</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr> <td>Public Policy and Environmental Change</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr> <td>Professional Responsibilities</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total Training Hours</td><td>120</td></tr> </table> Eligible training must be taken within the last 10 years (no time limit on college coursework taken as part of a degree program). FCB Eligible Training Providers are listed online at http://flcertificationboard.org/resources/approved-education-providers/	Training Topic	Training Hours	Understanding Addiction	24	Prevention-specific Ethics	6	Planning and Evaluation	30	Prevention Education and Service Delivery	15	Communication	10	Community Organization	15	Public Policy and Environmental Change	10	Professional Responsibilities	10	Total Training Hours	120
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Related Work Experience	Applicants must complete 2,000 hours of relevant work experience. Eligible CPS work experience must document the applicant's non-clinical responsibility to provide prevention-related services in the area of addiction. To qualify, the experience must (1) have occurred within the 10 years preceding the application and (2) be verified by current or former employers.																				

Topic	Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) Requirements
	Cross-over Work Experience: only addiction related prevention experience will be credited for the CPS credential.
On-the-Job Supervision	Applicants must complete 120 hours of direct supervision. To qualify, the supervision must (1) have occurred within the 10 years prior to the application, (2) not exceed 3 hours per week or 156 hours per year, and (3) be documented by current or former qualified supervisors.
Recommendations for Certification	Applicants must submit three professional letters of recommendation for certification. These recommendations should be (1) written by individuals familiar with the applicant's work history and job performance, (2) completed using an FCB recommendation form, and (3) sent directly to the FCB on the applicant's behalf. Eligible recommenders must know the applicant in a professional capacity and should not be subordinates, relatives, or anyone else who might have a conflict of interest.
Exam	Applicants must achieve a passing score on the IC&RC Prevention Specialist exam. Please download and review the Candidate Guide for the IC&RC Prevention Professional Exam. The guide is available on the CPP section of the website.
Credential Award	The credential is awarded upon achieving a passing score on the exam. To maintain certification, individuals must: 1. Adhere to the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct. 2. Complete 20 hours of continuing education annually. 3. Renew their credential every other year by June 30th. For more detailed information, please refer to Table 3: Credential Award and Maintenance Requirements.

CPS STANDARD APPLICATION Documents and Submission Protocols

Overview

As a CPS applicant, you are required to submit documentation for each credential requirement. Some documents must be submitted by **you directly**, while others must be submitted **by third parties** on your behalf. These supporting materials are critical for verifying your eligibility and must be submitted in accordance with FCB policies.

Required Documentation

The following documentation must be provided as part of your application:

Education

- A copy of your high school diploma *or* an unofficial college transcript.

Training

- Content specific training certificates.

Work Experience

- Verification of related work experience in a prevention setting.

Supervision

- Verification of on-the-job supervision specific to your prevention responsibilities.

Recommendations

- Letters of recommendation in support of your certification.

Application Forms

The documents listed above must be submitted **with or on the appropriate FCB forms**, all of which are available on the FCB website. The following forms are **required** for the CPS application process:

- ☐ **CPS Training Verification Form**
- ☐ **CPS Work Experience Verification Form**
- ☐ **CPS On-the-Job Supervision Verification Form**
- ☐ **Recommendation for Certification Form**

Each form must be **accurately completed** and accompanied by the relevant documentation. Incomplete or incorrectly submitted forms may delay your application review.

Third-Party Submission Requirements

Please be aware that the following documents **must not be submitted by the applicant directly**. Instead, they **must be submitted by appropriate third parties** (e.g., supervisors, employers, professional contacts) **directly to the FCB**:

- Verifications of work experience

- Verifications of on-the-job supervision
- Letters of recommendation

The FCB will not accept these documents if they are submitted by the applicant. Ensuring that third parties submit these materials on your behalf is your responsibility.

Final Reminders

- All documentation should be uploaded or attached to the appropriate application forms.
- Verify submission requirements and methods with each third-party contributor early in the process.
- Maintain personal copies of all submitted documents.

Table 2: CPS Standard Application – Supporting Documents Requirements

Topic	Documentation Requirements
Formal Education	Applicants are required to document their formal education in the online application by filling out the necessary data fields and uploading a copy of their high school diploma or GED.
Content-Specific Training	Applicants must document their content-specific training within the online application. They will complete the appropriate training verification form, available online, and upload both the completed form and the training certificates for each event listed on the form to the online application.
Related Work Experience	Applicants are required to enter details of their work experience in the online application. They must provide their employers with the CPS Work Experience Verification Form, which is available online. Employers are then responsible for completing this form and submitting it to the FCB on the applicant's behalf, along with an attached position description for the role they are verifying.
On-the-Job Supervision	Applicants must record details about their direct supervision and supervisors in the online application. They should provide their supervisors with the CPS Supervision Verification Form, available online, to be filled out and submitted directly to the FCB on the applicant's behalf.
Recommendations	Applicants must list individuals who will provide recommendations for certification in the online application. They should give each reference an FCB Recommendation for Certification form, available online, to complete and submit directly to the FCB on the applicant's behalf.

CPS EXAM Candidate Guide, Registration, and Retesting

Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) candidates must take the IC&RC Prevention Specialist exam. If you pass, you will earn both the FCB's Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) credential and the IC&RC Prevention Specialist (PS) credential.

For step-by-step instructions and study information, download and review the ***Candidate Guide for the IC&RC Prevention Specialist Exam***. The guide is available on the CPP section of the website.

Registration Process

You may register for the CPP exam only after the Board has approved all components of your application and supporting documentation. Once approved, you will receive a system-generated email confirming that you are eligible to register for the exam.

Your assigned Certification Specialist will assist you throughout the registration process. They will provide you with two important documents:

- **Exam Confidentiality Agreement**
- **Exam Pre-Registration Form**

After you complete these documents, they will be uploaded to your application record. The Exam Pre-Registration Form will also be sent to the Board's Testing Unit.

Next, you will receive an email from the ***IC&RC's testing vendor*** with instructions on how to complete your exam registration online.

If you need to reschedule your exam, contact the Board at least **three business days** before your scheduled test date. The Board will assist you with the rescheduling process.

Retesting Guidelines

- Contact your Certification Specialist to schedule a retest.
 - Retests require payment of the **exam fee**.
 - There is a **90-day waiting period** between test attempts.
 - You must request a retest **before the 12-month application period expires**. If you do not, your record will be closed, and a continuation fee will be required to reopen it.

CPS Credential Award, Maintenance, and Renewal

The CPS credential is awarded when a passing score on the CPS exam is entered into the certification database. To maintain certification, you must meet the maintenance and renewal requirements detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Credential Award, Maintenance, and Renewal Requirements

Topic	Minimum Requirement
Credential Award	The CPS credential is issued for a one-year period. Since credentials are issued throughout the year, the initial expiration date may be slightly more or less than a full year from the issue date. After the first renewal, the credential will expire annually on June 30 th .
Ethical Conduct	Uphold the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and comply with reporting, investigation, and disciplinary procedures.
Continuing Education	Twenty hours (20) of continuing education are required for each renewal and must be submitted to the FCB during the renewal period. The training must be relevant to at least one of the CPS performance domains. CE credits or hours must be non-repetitive, meaning the same course cannot be counted more than once during each credentialing period, even if it is taken annually.
Renewal	Timely renewal requires submitting an online renewal application, paying the renewal fee, and confirming compliance with continuing education requirements. The credential expires annually on June 30 th . A 30-day grace period is allowed for late payments, but any renewal submitted in July must include CE documentation. Credentials not renewed by August 1 will be placed in inactive status. To reactivate or reinstate an inactive credential, applicants must contact the FCB directly.

Certification Application Process Checklist

Account & Application

- ☐ Create an online FCB account.
- ☐ Create an online CPS application.

Documentation

- ☐ Identify the highest level of education you have completed and upload a copy of your high school diploma, GED or unofficial college transcript.
- ☐ Upload completed Training Verification Form(s) and supporting documentation to demonstrate compliance with the content-specific training requirements.
- ☐ Identify current and/or past employers who will verify your work experience. Download the CPS Work Experience Verification Form, provide it to each employer, and have them complete and submit it to the FCB on your behalf.
- ☐ Identify current and/or past supervisors who will verify your direct supervision. Download the CPS On-the-Job Supervision Verification Form, provide it to each supervisor, and have them complete and submit it to the FCB on your behalf.
- ☐ Identify individuals who will submit a letter of recommendation in support of your CPS certification application. Download the Recommendation for Certification Form, provide it to each reference, and have them complete and submit it to the FCB on your behalf.

Fee Payment

- ☐ Pay the non-refundable application fee. This is the final step in the online application process. Applications that remain unpaid for 30 days will be automatically deleted, requiring the applicant to start the process over. The application will enter the work queue once the online payment is completed.

Monitor Email

- ☐ Within 30 days, you will receive an email from your assigned Certification Specialist with the status of your application, indicating whether the requirements are approved, pending, or denied.
- ☐ Continue to monitor your email for updates and information from your Certification Specialist. Applicants have 12 months to resolve any deficiencies and pass the exam.

Examination

- ☐ Receive approval to register for the examination.
- ☐ Follow exam pre-registration and registration procedures (directions are given after application approval).
- ☐ Take the examination.

Certification Application Process Flowchart

