

Child Welfare Certification Educational Waiver Policy

Effective Date: 4-29-15

1. Educational Background Requirement. All child welfare certification applicants must hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 65C-15.017(3) further states that "Agency staff responsible for performing casework services shall have a bachelor's degree in social work or a related area of study or a master's degree in social work or a related area of study from an accredited college or university."
 - a. Individuals seeking the Child Welfare Protective Investigator (CWPI) credential are not required to hold a degree in a specified area of study and do not need to submit an educational waiver request.
 - b. Individuals seeking the Child Welfare Case Manager (CWCM) or the Child Welfare Licensing Counselor (CWLC) credentials are required to hold a degree in Social Work or a related area of study. Individuals who do not hold a degree in any of the following areas of study MUST petition the Department of Children and Families for an Educational Waiver. For certification purposes, related areas of study include: Human Services, Education, Human Sciences, Law, Behavioral Sciences, Human Development, Psychology, Social Policy, Social Work, Sociology, Public Administration, Education, Community Development, Health Science, Political Science, and Criminal Justice/Criminology.
2. The Florida Certification Board (FCB) does not have a role in the Educational Waiver Process: The employing agency must submit a formal Petition for Waiver of Rule 65C-15.017(3) to the DCF Agency Clerk for review and action.
3. The FCB has published a Petition for Waiver of Rule 65C-15.017(3) application template to guide the process; however, please refer to the DCF Agency Clerk, Office of General Counsel memorandum dated April 16, 2015 to Program Offices and Regional Counsel regarding *Variances From and Waivers of Department Rules* for detailed information. The template does contain all required information specified in the April 16, 2015 memo.
4. If a certification applicant requires an educational waiver, a copy of the applicants Petition for Waiver of Rule 65C-15.017(3) must be attached to the *FCB's Degree and Background Verification Form* as a condition of Child Welfare Provisional (CWP) certification.
5. The employer must submit a copy of the Department's order granting or denying the waiver request. If the order grants the waiver, no additional action is required. If the order denies the waiver request, the individual is not eligible for child welfare certification and all active credentials will be changed to the status of "voluntary relinquishment."
6. The following "Suggestions for Petitions for Educational or Experience Waivers for Child Placing Agency and Residential Child Caring Agency Personnel" are excerpted from the DCF Agency Clerk, Office of General Counsel memorandum dated April 16, 2015 to Program Offices and Regional Counsel regarding *Variances From and Waivers of Department Rules*. The FCB's Petition for Waiver of Rule 65C-15.017(3) application template reflects the information in this document.

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Suggestions for Petitions for Educational or Experience Waivers for Child Placing Agency and Residential Child Caring Agency Personnel

Generally: Petitioners should review general information on the proper form of a petition for a variance or waiver. The Department needs sufficient information to be able to make a decision whether a petition meets the standards for a waiver. If the petition does not include sufficient information, the Department will require that information be submitted before a decision can be made. If sufficient additional information is not provided, the Department may deny or dismiss the petition.

Guidance: It is recommended that petitions for educational or experience waivers:

- Clearly explain why the individual's education, experience and training should be accepted as meeting the purposes of the rule requirements.
- Ensure that the above explanations are specific to the position in which the individual will be employed.
- Include a summary of the individual's education, training and experience and provide an explanation of how that education, training and experience justify a waiver of the specific rule requirement that is not being met.
- Be accompanied by the following:
 - A position description for the position for which the waiver is sought;
 - A copy of the transcript, if any, for any post-secondary education completed by the individual (unofficial is sufficient) listing the individual's coursework and degree earned (if any);
 - A detailed description of any specialized child welfare or related training the individual has completed, including dates of training and copies of any certificates or equivalent documentation of completion. This includes whether the individual has completed any professional certification coursework and passed the relevant competency examination;
 - With regard to work history or practical experience that is being relied on to support the waiver, signed letters of reference from the organizations with whom or for whom the individual has worked or gained the experience that describe the relevant work or activities performed by the individual; and
 - Any additional information or documentation that Petitioners believe demonstrates the individual possesses the knowledge, skills, and abilities signified by the education qualification in the subject rule.

Petition for Waiver of Rule 65C-15.017(3)

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Submit this completed form and any attachments to:

Agency Clerk
Department of Children and Families
1317 Winewood Boulevard, Building 2, Room 204
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700
Phone: (850) 488-2381
Fax: (850) 922-3947
Agency.Clerk@myflfamilies.com

Petitioner Contact Information

Name	Position Title		
Employer	Email Address		
Mailing Address	City	FL State	Zipcode
Phone Number	Fax Number		

Contact Information of the Individual for which the Waiver is being Sought

Name	Position Title		
Employer	Email Address		

Waiver Rule:

Request for a waiver to FAC 65C-15.017(3) as required by Florida Statute 120.542.

FAC 65C-15.017(3) states "Agency staff responsible for performing casework services shall have a bachelor's degree in social work or a related area of study or a master's degree in social work or a related area of study from an accredited college or university."

Action Requested:

Grant a permanent waiver to FAC 65C-15.017(3) to allow _____
to work in a position responsible for performing casework services with a bachelor's or master's degree from
an accredited college or university in an area of study other than social work or related area or study.

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Summary of the education, training, and experience of the person requesting the educational waiver and a description explaining why the individual's education, experience, and training should be accepted as meeting the purposes of the rule requirement.

Explain why the waiver will serve the purpose of the underlying statutes.

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Additional Comments:

Attachments:

- Position description for which the waiver is being sought.
- Transcript (may be an unofficial transcript)
- Detailed description and supporting documentation of any specialized child welfare training and/or examination results.
- Other (specify) _____

Signatures:

Petitioner's Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Signature of Individual
for whom the waiver is
being sought: _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Human Resources
Officer Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____