

# Certification Guidelines and Requirements: **A Candidate Guide**

## Application Process



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# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

## About Us

The Florida Certification Board (FCB) is a nationally recognized, non-profit professional credentialing organization that has been operating in Florida for over 30 years. It currently credentials over 15,000 individuals working in the related fields of addictions, prevention, criminal justice, mental health, child welfare and behavioral health.

Once certified, each professional is required to strictly observe a Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and participate in annual continuing education events.

### Mission

The FCB serves the public interest by developing, administering and maintaining certification programs that reflect current standards of competent practice for health and human services professionals.

Our mission is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Florida by regulating our certified professionals through experience, education, and compliance with professional and ethical standards.

### Property of the Board

Materials submitted to the FCB as part of the certification process are considered property of the Florida Certification Board. Materials include but are not limited to applications, evaluations, transcripts, and certificates. Applicants are encouraged to keep copies of all materials and paperwork submitted for certification. Certification wall certificates and wallet cards are the property of the FCB and must be surrendered upon Board request.

### Board Policy and Procedures

All FCB requirements, policies and procedures are maintained on our website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org). Applicants and certified professionals are individually responsible for ensuring they are following current FCB policy and procedures.

### Target Audience

The policies and procedures herein apply to all certification applicants, regardless of credential, EXCEPT CHILD WELFARE candidates. Please see the *Child Welfare Candidate Guide* for child welfare specific application, examination, credential award and maintenance/renewal policies and procedures.

### Key Terms for the Certification Process

**APPLICANT:** A person who has submitted an *Application for Certification* but is not yet certified.

**CERTIFICATION:** Testifies to the basic knowledge, skills and experience required to carry out professional work.

**CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL:** Any person who holds any credential issued by the FCB.

**CREDENTIALING:** Confirms proof of completion of specified training and experience requirements.

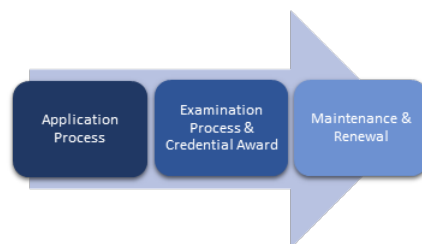
**DESIGNATION:** Earned by a person qualified to perform a job or task by a professional body acting to safeguard public interest.

**LICENSURE:** The granting or regulation of licenses, as for professionals.

## SECTION 2: CERTIFICATION

### Certification Process Overview

Earning a professional credential is a multi-step process. The following information provides a high-level overview of the certification application, examination, award and maintenance processes. Please read all FCB Candidate Guides, credential-specific certification standards tables, and related FCB policy documents for guidance.



#### Step 1 – Application Process

The purpose of the Application Process is to ensure that each applicant provides verifiable documentation that they have met the education, training, and experience standards necessary for certification. A complete application is called the Application Portfolio and includes:

1. FCB Online Certification System Account
2. *Application for Certification*
3. Paid Fees
4. Mandatory forms and supporting documentation

Your *Application for Certification* and supporting documentation will not be assigned to a Certification Specialist for review and action until you have (1) created an account in the FCB Online Certification System, (2) submitted an *Application for Certification*, and (3) paid the certification application fee.

Detailed policies and procedures that apply to ALL APPLICANTS are contained in this [Candidate Guide: Application Process](#). Please see your credential-specific certification standards table for additional application requirements.

## Step 2 – Examination Process and Credential Award

FCB exams are developed for candidates who have met the minimum education, training and experience standards set for the credential. As such, the FCB will not allow applicants to register for the exam(s) until their *Application for Certification* and supporting documents have been approved. All FCB exams are multiple-choice. FCB exams are administered at approved testing sites across Florida, and in some cases, nationally. Approved applicants select the test date, test time and test location that best meets their needs.

Detailed policies and procedures that apply to ALL EXAMINEES are contained in the Candidate Guide: Examination Process and Credential Award. Please see your credential-specific certification standards table for additional examination requirements.

## Step 3 – Maintenance and Renewal

When the exam is passed, the applicant becomes a certified professional and enters the maintenance and renewal phase. Credential maintenance requires you to complete a minimum number of annual continuing education (CE) credits and to follow the FCB's Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures in your daily practice. Credentials renew either annually or biennially. Timely payment of renewal fees and completion of CE documentation is required to prevent inactive status.

Detailed policies and procedures that apply to ALL CERTIFIED PROFESSIONALS are contained in the Candidate Guide: Maintenance and Renewal. Please see your credential-specific certification standards table for additional maintenance and renewal requirements.

## General Timelines

- You must create your online certification account BEFORE submitting any application documents, supporting documents or fees.
- The FCB will “hold” any supporting documents that cannot be linked to a paid *Application for Certification* for a maximum of 6 months from date of receipt. After 6 months, documentation will be destroyed and you will be required to resubmit those documents.
- The FCB’s online application system will “hold” an incomplete application for a maximum of 45 calendar days. If your application is not complete and submitted to the FCB, including fee payment, within 45 calendar days of initiating the application, the system will delete the record entirely.

You have 12-months from the date your application is assigned to a Certification Specialist to earn the requested credential. The FCB will provide eligible applicants with directions to continue the certification process if the expiration date is reached.



# Credential Standards

Credential standards are the minimum requirements applicants must meet to be approved to take the specified certification exam(s) and earn the credential. Credential standards are released in three versions: Grandparenting Standards, Full Certification Standards, and in some cases, Provisional Standards.

## Grandparenting Standards

Grandparenting standards are a sub-set of the credential's full certification standards. Grandparenting standards are set when a new credential is opened for application for the express purpose of allowing persons who are currently "doing the work" to earn the credential without meeting the credential's Full Certification Standards. Typically, a credential is open under grandparenting standards for a 12-month period. Grandparenting standards tend to focus on degree, training and experience requirements and omit supervision and exam requirements.

There is not a designation that will allow the public to determine if a credential was earned under grandparenting or full standards. All applicants earn the credential regardless.

However, individuals who earn a credential under grandparenting standards are subject to the following policies:

1. Grandparenting standards and time frames are specific to each credential. During the active grandparenting period, the FCB publishes a separate, credential-specific Grandparenting Period Candidate Guide to include specific certification standards, policies, procedures and time frames.
2. Once a grandparenting period has closed, it will not be reopened. The credential must be earned within **4 months** after the date the grandparenting period closes.

If a credential earned during the grandparenting period ever becomes inactive or suspended, you are required to meet any additional credential standards. This includes earning a passing score on the examination(s).

## Full Certification Standards

Full certification standards take effect when a grandparenting period closes. All FCB credentials specify certification standards in the following areas:

1. Formal Education
2. Content-Specific Training and/or Academic Coursework
3. Related Work Experience
4. On-the-Job Supervision
5. Professional Recommendations
6. Certification Exam(s)

## Provisional Certification Standards

The FCB offers several credentials that allow the applicant to apply for certification under a provisional status. The provisional certification indicates that the individual has passed all FCB policy and background requirements, completed formal education and credential specific training, and earned a passing score on the exam. The provisional credential is awarded after the applicant earns a passing score on the exam. From that date, the provisionally certified individual has 12-months to complete the on-the-job work experience and supervision requirement necessary to demonstrate competency and earn the full credential.

Provisionally certified individuals are under the FCB's Code of Ethics and are required to work under, seek out and respond to intense supervision as necessary until competency is gained.

With rare exceptions, a provisional credential cannot be extended and it can never be reinstated.

## Credential-Specific Certification Standards

Credential-specific certification standards are the specific eligibility criteria for the credential you are applying for. Credential-specific standards are set in the following categories:

- Formal Education
- Content-Specific Training
- On-the-Job Supervision
- Related Work Experience
- Professional Recommendations
- Examination
- Continuing Education Credits
- Renewal

The Candidate Guides provide global policy that relates to all applicants, regardless of credential. You must be familiar with the policies in each Candidate Guide and the specific requirements detailed in the credential-specific certification standards table. Credential-specific certification standards table for a specific credential are available on the FCB website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org) under Credentials.

# SECTION 3: GENERAL POLICIES

The following section provides the general policies that affect all certification applicants, regardless of credential. In this section you will find policies that you need to know BEFORE applying for certification, policy related to the mandatory use of the FCB's online certification system, and certification application methods. The next section, Section 4, provides policies that are specific to the application process, including how to submit eligible supporting documentation for each certification standard.



# General Policies

## Address of Record

Each applicant and certified professional is solely responsible for maintaining his or her current primary mailing address, primary email address, and primary phone number in their online system account. This information may be updated at any time by logging into your online account.

The FCB will use US mail to the primary mailing address in your online account, which constitutes adequate and sufficient notice to you for any official communication from the FCB, with the exception of notice regarding allegations of ethical misconduct.

The FCB will use certified US mail to the primary mailing address in your online account and the primary email address on file with the FCB to notify you of any accepted allegation of ethical misconduct. The FCB will attempt delivery by certified mail twice. Failure to accept certified mail or failure to receive certified mail due to an incorrect address may result in additional allegations regarding failure to follow FCB policy and procedures.

## Confidentiality Policy

Except as otherwise provided herein, all personal information, notes, reports, transcripts and documentation of any kind generated or received during the course of application for certification, certification examination, and certification award and renewal shall be kept confidential by the FCB. The FCB will not release any confidential information or material to any third party without the express written consent of the applicant or certified professional. Should you wish to allow another individual access to your file, the FCB maintains a *Release of Information Form* on FCB's website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org) under Policy & Procedure.

The FCB does not sell or provide mailing lists of applicants for certification or certified professionals to any other organization or agency.

## Disclosure of Social Security Number

Consistent with State of Florida licensing boards and in alignment with the Federal Welfare Reform Act which requires Social Security Numbers (SSNs) to be recorded on all professional and occupational license applications (Welfare Reform Act, 104 Pub. L193, Section 317), the FCB uses the SSN for the sole purpose of allowing for efficient screening of applicants and certified professionals. The FCB maintains SSNs in a secure database with access limited to FCB personnel with password protected logins to ensure access to confidential information by authorized personnel only. Under the Federal Privacy Act, disclosure of social security numbers is voluntary unless specifically required by federal statute. The FCB online database and application system will not allow you to apply for certification without disclosing your SSN. If you are absolutely unwilling to disclose your SSN, please contact the Director of Certification at 850-222-6314 for assistance.

## Nondiscrimination Policy

The FCB prohibits discrimination against and harassment of any applicant or certified professional because of race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, veteran status or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law.

All personnel who are responsible for reviewing applications for certification, administering examinations for certification, award and renewal of certification and for the development and implementation of certification related programs or activities are charged to support this effort and to respond promptly and appropriately to any concerns that are brought to their attention.

The FCB encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is the policy of the FCB to promptly and thoroughly investigate such reports. The FCB prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports.

## Background History

The following information is collected when you create your online account.

### Criminal History

The FCB requires all certification applicants to pass a Level 2 Background Screening as a condition of certification. The FCB is authorized to access the statewide screening database, “The Clearinghouse”, to initiate a Level 2 background screening and/or access existing results for FCB certification applicants and certified professionals.

Please note:

- Effective July 1, 2019, all Certified Recovery Peer Specialist (CRPS), Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) and Certified Recovery Residence Administrator (CRRA) applicants MUST pass a Level 2 Background Screening as a condition of certification (397.4073, F.S. and 394.4571, F.S.).
- Effective January 1, 2020, all applicants, regardless of the credential sought and the response to the criminal history section of the online account MUST pass a Level 2 Background Screening as a condition of certification.

The *Clearinghouse Applicant Request Form* and *Privacy Policy Form* required to initiate a Level 2 Background Screening will be emailed to the applicant by their assigned Certification Specialist once an application has been submitted and the application fee paid. These forms must be completed and returned. For additional information, please refer to the Criminal History Policy on FCB’s website at <https://flcertificationboard.org/policy-procedure/>.

### Ethical Responsibilities

The FCB is dedicated to the principle that certified professionals must conform their behavior to the highest standards of ethical practice. To that end, the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct (the Code) is applied to all professionals, certified or seeking certification.

The FCB requires all applicants to agree to follow the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct as a requirement of certification. Applicants who answer “No” when completing their background profile questions to either question regarding Ethical Responsibilities are not eligible to apply for certification.

The FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures is maintained on the FCB website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org) under Policy & Procedure.

## Other Licensure or Certification Background

The FCB requires all applicants to indicate any current or former state licenses or other certifications as well as any ethical or administrative action taken against the applicant regardless of time frame. If you answer “Yes” on the background profile question regarding this subject, the FCB will contact you for additional information before allowing you to complete the application process.

## Professional Background

The FCB requires all applicants to indicate if they have ever been the subject of an Inspector General, Internal Affairs or equivalent action regardless of time frame. If you answer “Yes” on the background profile question regarding this subject, the FCB will contact you for additional information before allowing you to complete the application process.

# Online Certification System

The FCB maintains an online certification system that must be used by all applicants and certified professionals.

## Individual Online Certification Account

The very first step in applying for certification is to create an individual account in the FCB online certification system. The FCB will not accept certification application documents or application fees until you have created your online account.

A training document and video on how to create an online certification system account is maintained on the FCB website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org) under the specific credential information.

When you create your account, you will need to provide the following information:

- Legal name and demographic information;
- Primary contact information;
- Current employer and contact information;
- Information regarding your criminal history, if any;
- Information regarding any history of professional misconduct; and

- Your agreement to follow the FCB Code of Ethics and participate in any investigation and disciplinary process, if necessary.

After entering all requested information, the system will provide you with a username and temporary password.

- Your username is your primary email address. The FCB strongly recommends using your primary personal email address and NOT your work email address. **Your username must be a complete and valid email address.**
- Please reset your temporary password to something that you will remember. You are able to recover a forgotten password, as long as you have access to the email address you use as your username. Please contact FCB should you require assistance in obtaining your username and password. Do not create a new account if you already have one.

## Application Methods

### Online Certification Applications

The FCB only accepts online applications unless indicated in the credential-specific certification standards table. Applications are generated from your individual account. A training document on how to create an online application is maintained on the FCB website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org) under the specific credential information.

Please see Section 4: Application Portfolio for detailed application-related instructions, policies and procedures.

### Hard Copy Applications

Unless otherwise indicated in the credential-specific certification standards table, hard copy applications are only available for applicants who meet ADA requirements related to accommodations for using computers and related technologies. Please contact the FCB for additional assistance.

### Application Documents and Mandatory Forms

All applicants must submit an *Application for Certification* and supporting documents for review and approval. Some of the information/documents will be submitted by the applicant to FCB however other documents must be submitted directly to the FCB by those completing forms on the applicant's behalf. **Please note information required from non-applicant sources will not be accepted if provided by the applicant.**

The individual certification account and the online application for certification are created online. All other certification application activities are documented on mandatory FCB forms, which are posted online under the credential-specific information on our website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org) under Credentials.

All forms are editable PDFs. **Handwritten forms will be denied.** To use these forms, please following these directions:

1. Download the form file to your computer.
2. Rename and save the file to your desktop.
3. Open the file and type all requested information. FCB will accept both electronic and manual signatures.
4. Save the completed form to your computer.
5. Email, fax, or print/mail the form to the FCB.

## SECTION 4: APPLICATION PORTFOLIO

### Application for Certification and Supporting Documents

To apply for certification, you must complete the following steps:

1. Create an individual online certification account. The applicant is the only person who can complete this requirement as the account includes statements related to criminal history, professional conduct history, agreement to follow the Code of Ethics, agreement to participate in investigations and/or disciplinary sanctions if necessary, and attestations related to the credentialing process.
2. Complete the *Application for Certification*. The online certification application includes the following sections:
  - a. Other Certification and/or Licensure History
  - b. Formal Education (list highest level earned)
  - c. Content Specific Training
  - d. References and On-the-Job Supervision Contact if necessary
  - e. Related Work Experience
  - f. Application Fee Payment
3. Request supporting documentation from current and/or former employers, supervisors, and others as directed by the credential-specific certification standards. The following forms and supporting documentation must be submitted directly to the FCB on your behalf and will not be accepted if submitted by the applicant:
  - a. Official college or university transcripts/eTranscripts
  - b. *Related Work Experience Verification Form(s)* and supporting documentation
  - c. *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Form(s)* and supporting documentation
  - d. *Professional Recommendation for Certification Form(s)*

## Important Information

- **ALL CERTIFICATION FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE AND NON-TRANSFERABLE.**
- The FCB will hold documents that cannot be attached to a paid *Application for Certification* for a maximum of 6 months.
- You may stop and resume an online application for 45 days. The online application system will save your information as you enter it, allowing you to complete the application at a later date. Please note to continue your online application, you will need to click on Apply for New Certification again however the system will pull previously-entered information allowing you to continue with the online application.
- Once the application fee has been paid, the application is locked and you will no longer be able to edit or upload documents to your application.
- If the application is not completed and the fee is not paid within 45 days, the system will automatically delete the application.
- The FCB will assign a Certification Specialist when your *Application for Certification* has been received and the application fee has been paid. The Certification Specialist is your point of contact until your credential is earned. You can expect additional information regarding your next steps in the process from your Certification Specialist within 3-4 weeks.
- Individuals seeking certification under grandparenting standards have a maximum of 4-months from the date the grandparenting period closes to earn their full credential.
- Individuals seeking certification under full standards have a maximum of 12-months, from the date the *Application for Certification* is assigned a Certification Specialist, to earn the credential, including passing the credential-specific exam.

## Formal Education/Degree

Each credential has its own formal education/degree requirement. Refer to the credential-specific certification standards table for the minimum required degree. You are encouraged to report the highest degree earned regardless of the requirement.

### Formal Education/Degree Documentation

Documentation requirements are specific to the type of formal education/degree required.

1. High School Diploma or General Equivalency Degree
  - a. Eligible High School Diplomas or General Equivalency Degrees are granted by institutions recognized by the issuing institution's state Department of Education. The HSD/GED must be eligible for acceptance by colleges or universities holding nationally recognized accreditation through the US Department of Education or Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

NOTE: The Florida Department of Education does not approve high school diplomas or general equivalency degree (HSD/GED) providers. The only requirement is that the educational institution identify itself to the state. Therefore, recognition of the institution by the state is not necessarily sufficient to ensure eligibility by FCB for certification purposes. An eligible HSD/GED is accepted by colleges or universities holding federal recognized accreditation.

If the FCB cannot easily verify the eligibility of an applicant's HSD or GED, the applicant has the option of appealing the denial by completing the *Educational Requirement Appeal Application*. The appeal application must be given to the educational institution for completion. The appeal application must be notarized and detail how the educational institution is accredited and accepted at a higher education level. The appeal will be reviewed by the appropriate advisory council at their next regularly scheduled quarterly meeting.

- b. A copy of a High School Diploma or General Equivalency Degree may be provided to the FCB by the applicant. A copy of Military DD Form 214 will also be accepted in lieu of the diploma or GED copy.
- c. An unofficial community college, vocational college, or other college/university transcript may be provided to satisfy the High School Diploma or GED documentation requirement. The unofficial transcript may be provided to the FCB by either the applicant or the college/university.

## 2. College or University Degree

- a. Eligible college or university degrees must be awarded by an institution accredited by an accreditation body recognized by the Federal Department of Education and/or Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The college or university must have been accredited at the time the degree was awarded. For additional information regarding if your college/university is accredited, please see CHEA's website at <http://www.chea.org/>.
- b. Official transcripts are required to document post-secondary education/degrees. Official transcripts may only be provided to the FCB by the college/university or other institution issuing the degree to the applicant. The FCB will not accept transcripts provided by any source but the degree issuing institution. The FCB will accept hard-copy transcripts or official college/university provided eTranscripts.
- c. If you have outstanding debt or other issues which prevent the college/university from releasing your official transcripts, you must resolve all issues with the school prior to applying for certification.

**Please note the only document which can be moved from one credential to another for certification purposes is your formal education.**



## Related Degrees

Specific credentials require applicants to hold a degree in a related field. The FCB has established related Bachelors and Masters degrees. Please see the credential-specific certification standards table for a list of related degrees required for the specific certification.

## Related Degree Equivalency Review

If applying for a credential that requires a related degree and you feel your Bachelor's and/or Master's degree is equivalent to one of the related degrees, FCB has developed a process for an equivalency review. For additional information regarding the *Related Degree Equivalency Review Policy and Application*, please refer to the FCB website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org) under Policy & Procedure. The approval for a degree equivalency is valid for 12-months from the time of approval. Application for certification must be completed prior to the 12-month expiration.

## Foreign Education

If you earned your High School Diploma, GED or higher at an institution outside of the United States, you must have your educational credentials evaluated by an organization approved by the FCB. This listing is provided as general information and does not constitute an endorsement of any organization. If you choose to use another evaluation service, please ensure that FCB will accept the report before initiating the evaluation.

### FCB Approved Translation Service Providers:

Educational Credential Evaluators  
International Education Research Foundation  
Josef Silny & Associates  
World Education Services

### Additional guidance and information:

- All documents in a foreign language must be translated by a certified translator into English.
- All costs for translation services are the responsibility of the applicant.
- The evaluation must provide documentation that formal education/degree is equivalent to an accredited US institution and the course work met the contents and hour requirement for a degree awarded in the US.
- The FCB must receive an original evaluation submitted directly from the educational evaluation service.

## Content-Specific Training

Each credential has its own content-specific training requirement. Refer to the credential-specific certification standards table for the required total number of training hours, the breakdown of training hours by topic area, and any other credential-specific training requirements. All non-college/university coursework must have been completed within the last 10 years. Anything past 10 years must be Board approved. College/university coursework does not expire.

You are required to complete the *Training Verification Form* and submit supporting documentation for each training event and/or academic course claimed for certification purposes, i.e., course descriptions and certificates of completion.

Training claimed for initial certification credit must be **non-repetitive**, i.e., the same training course cannot be claimed more than one time, even if the course is taken on different dates and from different providers.

### Eligible Providers

The FCB will only accept content-specific training and academic coursework offered by FCB approved providers.

FCB approved providers are:

1. Colleges or universities holding accreditation recognized by the Federal Department of Education or Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).
2. Providers approved to offer continuing education (CEs) by other licensing or certification boards, i.e., FADAA, DCF, etc.
3. FCB-approved training providers. The FCB maintains a database of approved providers on our website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org) under Education & Training.

### Eligible Documentation

Each training event and/or academic course claimed for certification purposes must be individually listed on the appropriate *Training Verification Form* and supporting documentation must be clearly identifiable. Do not refer to an attached resume, transcript or other document in lieu of completing the *Training Verification Form*. **The FCB staff is not responsible for researching and allocating training hours across domains.** Incomplete *Training Verification Forms* and supporting documentation may be returned to the applicant for completion and/or re-documentation.

Eligible documentation includes:

1. Certificates of attendance or completion issued by the provider of the educational event. Certificates must include the following minimum information:
  - a. Name of attendee

- b. Date of event
- c. Number of hours of education
- d. Name of event provider
- e. Title of event

If the title of the event does not clearly indicate the educational content, attach a copy of the event description.

2. Official or unofficial college or university transcripts. List course numbers and titles on the *FCB Training Verification Form* as they appear on the transcript. You must submit a course description from the school's course catalog or course syllabus for all courses listed on the *Training Verification Form*.
3. Official employer training tracking system/learning management system reports. These reports must include the following information:
  - a. Name of record holder
  - b. Date of print-out
  - c. Title of event
  - d. Date of Event
  - e. Number of hours of education per event

If the title of the event does not clearly indicate the education content, attach a copy of the event description. Flyers and training sign-in sheets are not acceptable.

In the absence of complete documentation, contact the training provider and request documentation of all required information on their official letterhead. You may submit these letters as supporting documentation of successful completion of training requirements.

### Calculating Eligible Training Hours

One Continuing Education (CE) credit is equal to 60 minutes of instruction.

College/university coursework is credited based on the course content and semester or quarter hours. General coursework is credited at no more than 20 clock hours per 3-semester hour course. Content specific coursework may be credited up to 45 clock hours per 3-semester hour course. For example, a course in General Psychology is eligible for 20 clock hours of training credit however a course in Counseling Theories is eligible for up to 45 clock hours of training. For quarterly hours, it's 10 hours per quarterly credit. You must attach a course description from the school's course catalog or a course syllabus to your *Training Verification Form* if you claim academic coursework for certification credit.

Partial-day, full-day and multi-day training events are credited for instructional time only. Breaks are deducted from the total hours claimed. Please include a copy of the conference agenda.

Conferences are credited for break-out sessions and plenary sessions only. Breaks are deducted from the total hours claimed. You must attach a copy of the conference agenda to your *Training Verification Form* if you claim conference training events for certification credit.

## Recommendation for Certification

Unless otherwise indicated in the credential-specific certification standards table, all credentials require applicants to seek out at least three professional recommendations for certification.

Recommendations for certification may not be provided by a relative, any person sharing the same household, or any person in a romantic, domestic, or familial relationship with the applicant. The same person may not complete more than one recommendation per applicant per credential.

### Definition of a Professional Recommendation

#### **PROFESSIONAL RECOMMENDATION:**

A professional recommendation is provided by an individual who has direct knowledge of the applicant's on-the-job performance. Individuals providing a professional recommendation may not be in a non-subordinate position to the applicant. The professional recommendation should discuss the applicant's professional and work-related traits, and insights into work habits, talents and skills.

### Documentation Requirements

**APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY:** In your *Application for Certification*, you are required to identify your references. Contact your Certification Specialist if information entered into your submitted application changes. Provide individual(s) completing the reference on your behalf with the required *Professional Recommendation for Certification Form*. Please note *Professional Recommendation for Certification Forms* submitted by the applicant will be denied.

**REFERENCE RESPONSIBILITY:** All reference letters must be documented on the required FCB *Professional Recommendation for Certification Form*. This form and any supporting documentation must be submitted directly to the FCB by the individual completing the recommendation.

## On-the-Job Supervision

Unless otherwise indicated in the credential-specific certification standards table, all credentials require applicants to seek out clinical on-the-job supervision. Refer to the credential-specific certification standards table for the required total number of hours of on-the-job supervision, the breakdown of hours by domain, and any other credential-specific on-the-job supervision requirements.

Unless otherwise specified, all on-the-job supervision must have occurred within the last 5 years and must be provided by a qualified supervisor. On-the-job supervision may not be provided by a relative, any person sharing the same household, or any person in a romantic, domestic, or familial relationship with the applicant.

## Eligible Supervision

Each credential has a different definition of who is considered a qualified supervisor for certification purposes. If the credential requires on-the-job supervision by a licensed or certified professional, the credential must be active, issued by the State of Florida, and in good standing. If the supervisor is licensed or credentialed in a state other than Florida, you must contact the FCB to ensure that the supervisor meets qualified supervisor requirements.

Individuals in “applicant” or “registered intern” status are not eligible to provide on-the-job supervision.

FCB recognizes that there are two distinct forms of supervision – administrative and clinical. Only clinical supervision is eligible for certification purposes. The FCB defines and differentiates between the two types of supervision as follows:

- Administrative Supervision is focused on ensuring staff compliance with agency and regulatory body’s policies and procedures. It requires the supervisor to oversee managerial functions and daily administration of staff.
- Clinical Supervision focuses on improved client care and improved job performance. Clinical supervisors teach counselors how to promote client welfare and increase their skills and knowledge in order to effectively treat their client base.

Eligible clinical supervision can be individual, one-on-one supervision and/or observation of skills OR group supervision/case staffings. At least 50% of the hours of clinical supervision must be individual, one-on-one supervision and/or observation skills. No more than 50% of the required hours of supervision may be in a group setting.

National research indicates that reasonable and achievable clinical supervision in behavioral health settings is 3 hours per week. For certification purposes, the FCB will benchmark On-the-Job Supervision claimed hours as “reasonable and achievable” at the rate of 3 hours per week/156 hours per year.

- A supervisor/agency may petition the FCB if the agency’s clinical supervision program exceeds the 3 hours per week average.
- The FCB may place *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Forms* in “pending” status and request supporting documentation from the qualified supervisor who completed/submitted the *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Form(s)*.

Best practice, national accreditation, and many agencies dictate the minimum clinical supervision elements that must be documented. The FCB does not want to create additional work for supervisors, however, we do want to ensure that certification applicants have completed the specified minimum number of hours of clinical supervision required for certification. The FCB has identified minimum required clinical supervision documentation elements (see QUALIFIED SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY below). Should the FCB request supporting documentation to approve *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Form(s)* and any of the required elements are missing, the documentation and claimed hours of supervision may be denied.

## Documentation Requirements

**APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY:** In your *Application for Certification*, you are required to identify at least one supervisor who provided you with on-the-job supervision for certification purposes. If multiple supervisors provided you with on-the-job supervision for certification purposes, identify each supervisor during the application process. Contact your Certification Specialist if information entered into your submitted application

changes. Provide individual(s) completing supervision on your behalf with the required *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Form*. Please note *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Forms* submitted by the applicant will be denied.

**QUALIFIED SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY:** Qualified supervisors must document their on-the-job supervision of your performance of core competencies on the FCB *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Form*. The hours on the verification form are an aggregate of supervision hours provided to the applicant. Complete the form and submit it directly to the FCB.

## Supervisor Requirements

The FCB requires each person who is providing on-the-job supervision for certification purposes to:

1. Ensure understanding of the FCB's on-the-job supervision requirements for certification.
2. Provide the minimum specified number of hours of supervision by performance domain as well as the total overall hours.
3. Maintain documentation of supervision. Copies of documentation may be requested by Certification Staff at any time. FCB has documentation templates that may be used. Minimum documentation requirements include:
  - a. Supervisee name, current position and credential sought.
  - b. Date of supervision, start and end time of supervision, and number of supervision hours accrued.
  - c. Supervisor name and title.
  - d. Methods of supervision (individual, group, observation, review clinical documentation).
  - e. Summary of supervision offered during session.
  - f. Other comments, if applicable.
  - g. Signature of both Supervisee and Supervisor.
4. Determine that the applicant is capable of providing competent and safe services to the population served.
5. Advise the FCB if they have received any complaints about the applicant or have any reason to suspect the applicant is less than fully ethical, professional and qualified for certification.
6. Complete and submit the *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Form* directly to the FCB. **Do not give form to applicant to submit. Completed forms submitted by applicant will be denied.**
7. Submit proof of licensure or certification (if required by the credential-specific certification standards).

If the on-the-job supervision is denied, the qualified supervisor may request an appeal on behalf of the applicant. The qualified supervisor may be asked to provide documentation logs regarding when and how supervision was given. The appeal will be reviewed by the appropriate advisory council at their next regularly scheduled quarterly meeting.

## Work Experience

Each credential has its own related work experience requirement. Refer to the credential-specific certification standards table for the required total number of hours of related work experience and any other credential-specific work experience requirements.

Unless otherwise specified:

1. All work experience must have occurred within the last 5 years and ***must be reflective of the core competencies in which you are seeking certification***. Please see specific credential standards for information regarding acceptance of cross-over work experience.
2. The *Work Experience Verification Form* may not be completed by a relative, any person sharing the same household, or any person in a romantic, domestic, or familial relationship with the applicant.
3. The following is not acceptable as work experience:
  - Volunteer Work (unless specifically allowed, such as for the CRPS, CRSS and CRRRA credentials).
  - Time spent participating in or facilitating mutual support groups, i.e., Alcoholics Anonymous, SMART Recovery, etc.
  - Internships, with the exception of clinical internships at the Master's level. Individuals completing a clinical internship at a Bachelor's level may petition the Behavioral Health Advisory Council to review and determine if any credit can be approved toward the work experience requirement.

## Documentation Requirements

**APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY:** In your *Application for Certification*, you are required to identify all employers where you gained related work experience for certification. If multiple employers should report work experience for certification purposes, identify each employer during the application process. Contact your Certification Specialist if information entered into your submitted application changes. Provide individual(s) completing work experience verification on your behalf with the required *Work Experience Verification Form*. Please note *Work Experience Verification Forms* submitted by the applicant will be denied.

**EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITY:** Employer(s) must document work experience on the FCB *Work Experience Verification Form* and submit it with an official position description on agency letterhead directly to the FCB. Required documentation from the employer includes the dates of employment to and from, employment status (full-time or part-time), official position description on agency letterhead, and the average number of hours per week the applicant provided related services. Title of position description and subsequent details of responsibility must match that on the *Work Experience Verification Form* and be directly related to the core competencies of the credential being applied for.

If the position title of the applicant and the submitted job description do not match, the work experience will be denied. In this event, the employer's personnel officer or designee can initiate an appeal on behalf of the applicant. The appeal will require the ***agency CEO or designee at no less than the executive level*** to clarify the duties performed by the applicant and address why the position description of the applicant does not match the actual duties of the applicant as claimed. This must be on agency letterhead, include a correct position description on agency letterhead, be signed by the agency CEO or designee and notarized. The appeal application will be reviewed by the Director of Certification for action.



If the employer is unable or otherwise refuses to provide an official position description, the application will not proceed further in the process and certification will be denied. The FCB will not accept paystubs as eligible documentation for work experience standards.

## Application Processing

The FCB strives to certify applicants as quickly and efficiently as possible, however, the certification application, examination and award process is lengthy. If you are seeking certification as a condition of hire, you are encouraged to initiate the certification process as soon as possible.

The FCB does not assign applications until three criteria are met:

1. Applicant has established an online certification system account.
2. The *Application for Certification* is received.
3. The application fee has been paid and processed.

Applicants can expect to receive an email notification within 3-4 weeks of assignment to a Certification Specialist with the current status of the application and any pending requirements. You are also able to track your application review status in real time by accessing your online certification account.

## Application Continuation

An applicant has 12-months from the assignment of a Certification Specialist to complete their certification, including passing the exam. If an applicant is unable to earn the certification within one year, they may pay a continuation fee to extend their application another year. **Please note FCB will only allow one continuation per applicant per credential.** Should you fail to complete the certification within that two-year period, the applicant would need to re-apply and start the process over.

## Application Portfolio Approval

An approved application portfolio includes:

1. Online *Application for Certification*
2. Documentation of formal education/degree
3. *Training Verification Form* and supporting documentation
4. *Professional Recommendation for Certification Forms*
5. *On-the-Job Supervision Verification Forms* and supporting documentation
6. *Work Experience Verification Forms* and supporting documentation

When the application portfolio is approved, you will receive official notification that you are approved to test. Please refer to the [Candidate Guide: Examination Process & Credential Award](#) for detailed policies and procedures.