

Certification Guidelines and Requirements: A Candidate Guide

Maintenance & Renewal Process



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

About Us

All FCB requirements, policies and procedures are maintained on our website at 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 certified professionals, regardless of credential.

Key Terms for the Maintenance and Renewal Process

PROFILE: Account created in FCB's online database for primary contact information and required criminal background history.

RENEWAL: Annual or biennial requirement for each credential which must be paid in order to maintain active status.

REINSTATEMENT: To restore an inactive credential to active status.

CEs: Continuing Education credits, which are required annually as part of your credential maintenance and help to maintain your current knowledge and skill base for your certification.

Purpose of Maintenance and Renewal Candidate Guide

The Candidate Guide: Maintenance and Renewal is designed to provide certified professionals with the policies and procedures related to renewal requirements, continuing education requirements, profile maintenance, and reinstatement. Additionally, this guide will provide information on ethics and potential repercussions if policies and procedures are not followed.

SECTION 2: CREDENTIAL MAINTENANCE

Overview for Maintaining a Credential

Earning a credential is just the beginning when it comes to being a certified professional. Maintaining a credential in good standing is very important and is a multi-step process.

Step 1 – Maintenance

Before applying for a certification, you must complete the online system account. During the application period, and especially after you earn your credential, it is extremely important that you maintain your account information. FCB uses your primary email address, primary contact address and primary phone number to communicate with you regarding renewal, possible ethics investigations, and important alerts. As a certified professional, it is your responsibility to review and update your account information on a regular basis. Failure to maintain your account information can result in your credential going inactive or in an ethics violation.

Step 2 – Continuing Education

Each certified professional is responsible for completing a specified number of continuing education credits every year to maintain their credential. The number of hours required for continuing education credits, or CEs, are specified in the credential-specific standards table for each credential. Unless otherwise indicated, CEs must be within the domain topics related to your credential.

Step 3 – Renewal

Every credential issued by FCB must be renewed on either an annual or biennial basis in order to maintain active and in good standing status. Failure to renew your credential by the specified date will result in your credential going inactive.

Updating an Account

Each 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 can be updated at anytime by accessing your account.

FCB recommends reviewing your account information periodically to ensure that we have current information. All renewal invoices will be mailed to your primary mailing address. Failure to receive a renewal invoice if your address has not been updated can result in your credential going inactive and having to pay a reinstatement fee. **Late fees or reinstatement fees will not be waived if your address is not correct in our system.**

Additionally, if you change employers, it is recommended that you also update your work contact information. Depending on the type of credential you have, employer information can be critical to maintaining your certification. It is the certified professional, and not the employer or agency, responsibility to maintain this information.

Name Change

If your name changes as a result of marriage, divorce, or court order, this information must be updated by FCB staff. Before we can make a name change for you, we will need a copy of one of the following:

- Updated Driver's License
- Marriage License
- Divorce Decree
- Court Document Specifying Name Change

A copy of the document can be emailed to admin_assist@flcertificationboard.org. Please note a new wall certificate will not be automatically issued with a name change. You can purchase an updated wall certificate on FCB's website www.flcertificationboard.org under Study Guides and Other Products. There is a \$15.00 fee for a replacement FCB wall certificate and a \$35.00 fee for a replacement IC&RC wall certificate.

Maintaining a Credential

To remain in good standing, certified professionals must:

- Actively participate in annual continuing education to maintain current knowledge and skill base.
- Follow the FCB [Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct](#).
- Complete the renewal process in a timely manner.

CE compliance and renewal are separate activities, however the FCB has tied CE timelines to your expiration date for renewal. You must meet both the CE requirement and timely renewal fee payment in order to renew your credential.

Continuing Education Requirement

Each certified professional must complete a minimum number of continuing education credits (CEs) per year to maintain their credential. One CE is equal to 60 minutes of instruction. Please read the credential-specific standards table to ensure you know how many CEs are required for credential maintenance.

CE Proration

Depending on your initial credential award date and expiration date, your CEs may be prorated the first time you renew your credential:

- If you held your credential for 6 months or more before your renewal is due, then only half of the CEs are required for your first renewal. All CEs are required for subsequent renewals.
- If you held your credential for 6 months or less before your renewal is due, then you are not required to complete any CEs for your first renewal. All CEs are required for subsequent renewals.

Eligible CE Training Content

The FCB does not mandate continuing education in a specific topic. The certified professional is responsible for attending training that is related to at least one or more of the credential's performance domains. Please refer to the credential-specific standards table for related training topics.

If there is a significant issue that requires training for all certified professionals, the FCB may require a minimum number of hours in a particular topic area. In this case, the FCB will provide at least 9-month notice to the certified population to allow time for compliance with the requirement.

Training content must be non-repetitive (i.e., the same course cannot be claimed more than one time during each credentialed period, even if the course was taken annually).

Approved Education Providers

Continuing education credits must be earned from a FCB recognized and/or approved CE training provider. Some training providers hold approval from other entities that are recognized by FCB; other training providers apply for and hold FCB Education and Training Provider status.

The FCB will honor CEs issued by any of the following providers:

- College or university coursework offered by institutions holding Federal Department of Education and/or Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognized accreditation.
- Training providers approved to offer CEs by other state or national professional licensing or certification boards, i.e. FADA, DCF, etc.
- FCB approved education and training providers. The FCB will award FCB Education and Training Provider status and a provider number to approved applicants. A searchable database of approved FCB Education and Training Providers is maintained on FCB's website www.flcertificationboard.org under Education & Training.

If you are interested in becoming an approved provider, please review the information and forms located on www.flcertificationboard.org under Education & Training.

Documenting Compliance with CE Requirements

The certified professional is responsible for maintaining CE documentation for a minimum of 3 years. Valid documentation includes certificates of completion, official employer training transcripts, or college/university transcripts that provide the following **minimum** information:

- Participant Name
- Title of Course/Training/Educational Event
- Event Sponsor/Provider Name
- Delivery/Attendance Date(s)
- Number of Contact Hours

If the event title does not clearly identify the instructional content, attach an official description of the event, such as an agenda or syllabus.

In the absence of complete documentation, contact the training provider and request documentation of all required information on their official letterhead. This letter may be submitted as supporting documentation of successful completion of the training requirement.

If you use college coursework for training credit, you must provide a copy of your transcript *and* a copy of the course description as published in the course catalog. It is not the responsibility of FCB staff to locate a course description on your behalf.

Calculating CE Hours

One continuing education 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.

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.

CE Audit

During renewal cycles, FCB will randomly select 5% of the certified population for a CE audit to ensure compliance with the CE requirement.

Audited individuals will be notified via email and must submit CE documentation to the FCB for review and approval. **Please note that failure to meet CE requirements may result in disciplinary action.**

Although only audited individuals are required to submit CE documentation to the FCB as part of the renewal process, **ALL** certified professionals must maintain documentation of compliance with the CE requirement for 3 years, in case of future audit.

CE documentation will be approved if:

- The documentation includes all required information;
- The training was received from a recognized or approved education provider;
- The training was completed during the correct renewal year; and
- There is a clear link between the training event and the scope of service for the specific credential.

If you hold multiple credentials, documentation must be for the highest credential held.

SECTION 3: RENEWAL

Once an applicant has become a certified professional, the renewal maintenance begins. Each credential issued by the FCB requires either annual or biennial renewal in order to maintain active status. There are three renewal cycles depending on the credential:

- March 31st
- June 30th
- October 31st

The specific renewal date and cycle for each credential can be found in four ways:

1. Credential-specific standards table
2. Online Account
3. Wallet card
4. Verify Certified Professional from the FCB website

FCB will mail a renewal invoice to each certified professional using the primary mailing address found in your account. **You are individually responsible for ensuring that you meet the renewal requirement before the credential's expiration date.**

Credential Renewal

Depending on the date your initial credential is awarded, you may be certified for more or less than 12 or 24 months.

Annual Credentials

- Annual credentials issued between July – March, will renew for the first time on the upcoming June 30th.
- Annual credentials issued between April – June, will renew the following June 30th.

- After the first renewal, the credential will renew on June 30th every year.

Biennial Credentials – March Cycle

- Biennial credentials issued between April – December (21-month period), will renew for the first time on the upcoming March 31st.
- Biennial credentials issued between January – March (last three months of a 24-month period), will renew the following March 31st.
- After the first renewal, the credential will renew every two years on March 31st.

Biennial Credentials – October Cycle

- Biennial credentials issued between November – July (21-month period), will renew for the first time on the upcoming October 31st.
- Biennial credentials issued between August – October (last three months of a 24-month period), will renew the following October 31st.
- After the first renewal, the credential will renew every two years on October 31st.

Renewal Timeframes

Timely Renewal

Depending on your credential, renewal fees must be paid before **March 31st, June 30th or October 31st** of the renewal year. Your renewal payment can be submitted three ways:

- Online through your account (preferred method)
- Mailing a check or money order
- Contacting our office by phone with a credit card payment (there is an additional \$5.00 convenience fee for this type of payment)

Late Renewal

Renewal is considered late if it is not paid by midnight on the date of your credential expiration. The FCB does offer a late renewal period.

- For the March renewal cycle, late renewal is offered during the month of April.
- For the June renewal cycle, late renewal is offered during the month of July.

- For the October renewal cycle, late renewal is offered during the month of November.

A late fee will apply during the late renewal period. The late fee **CANNOT** be waived by FCB certification staff and will only be considered if extreme extenuating circumstances exist and with the approval of a FCB Director.

During the late renewal period, your credential will remain in active status.

At the end of the late renewal period, if renewal payment has not been received, your credential will **automatically** be placed in inactive status and you are no longer eligible to use your credential until reinstated.

SECTION 4: INACTIVE STATUS

If renewal payment is not received, a credential will be automatically placed in inactive status. A credential may remain in inactive status for a maximum of 3 years. During the 3-year period, you may reinstate an inactive credential. If the credential is inactive for more than 3 years, you will need to re-apply for certification.

If a credential was earned during a grandparenting period and goes inactive, in order to reinstate within the 3-year period, you will need to complete all additional standard requirements (i.e., On-the-Job Supervision requirement, etc.) *and* pass the credential exam.

You may not use your credential for professional purposes while it is in inactive status.

Reinstatement

When a credential goes inactive, there is a 3-year period in which a reinstatement may be requested. The following is required to reinstate an inactive credential:

- Completion of the *Reinstatement Application* found on FCB's website www.flcertificationboard.org under Policy & Procedure.
- Pay the \$150.00 reinstatement fee.
- Pay the renewal fee per credential(s) being reinstated.
- Pass a Level 2 Background Screening as a condition of recertification.
- Submit CEs required for renewal of your credential. CEs must be dated between the credential's inactive date and the date of the *Reinstatement Application*.
- Pass credential exam if test scores are older than 3 years old.

If the credential was earned during a grandparenting period, in addition to the above, the following will also be required:

- Submit credential standard requirements not necessary during the grandparenting period (i.e., On-the-Job Supervision).
- Pass the credential exam.

If your credential has been inactive for more than 3-years, you will not be able to reinstate. In this case, you will need to re-apply for the credential and submit all required supporting documentation again. The only item which can be used from your existing credential is your formal education.

Retirement Status

FCB allows individuals who are no longer practicing to place their credential in retirement status. Retirement status lets the individual retain their certification however acknowledges that they are no longer practicing. **Retirement status does not allow the individual to practice as a certified individual.** There are two levels of retirement status – Retired and Emeritus.

Retired Status

- A. Individuals with less than 20 years practice will be granted “retired” status.
- B. Individuals must request retirement status in writing using the *Retirement Policy and Request Form*, and provide a current resume.
- C. There is no fee for transitioning a credential from active to retirement status.
- D. Individuals granted retirement status will not be required to submit annual CEUs.

Emeritus Retired Status

- A. Individuals with 20 or more years of practice will be granted “emeritus” status. Years of practice will be verified through an updated resume and are not based on years certified.
- B. Individuals must request emeritus retirement status in writing using the *Retirement Policy and Request Form*, and provide a current resume.
- C. There is no fee for transitioning a credential from active to emeritus retirement status however individuals granted emeritus retirement status must pay 25% of the standard annual renewal fees each year.
- D. Individuals granted emeritus retirement status will not be required to submit annual CEUs.

Deceased Status

In the event that someone is deceased and their family wishes to notify FCB regarding their credential, a request can be made in writing to change their status to deceased. FCB requires a copy of a death certificate.